

COUN 636- 7901, Online

Couple and Family Counseling Fall 2026, Online, August 24th- December 18th Chadron State College

Part 1: Course Information

Instructor Information

Instructor: Michael Steube
Office: Distance Faculty
E-mail: msteube@csc.edu
Office Hours: Hours By Appointment
CSC Online Address: <https://chadron.instructure.com/>

Credit hours

3 credit hours

Course Description

Examines the dynamics of family counseling and family systems. Satisfactory completion of this course gives students a fundamental understanding of family systems theory and other leading theories of family counseling, and their application in the counseling process.

Textbook & Course Materials

Required Text(s):

Gladding, S. T. (2019). *Family Therapy: History, Theory, and Practice, 7th Edition*. Boston: Pearson Publishing. ISBN-13: 978-0-13-478539-4

Additional assigned readings will be posted in CSC Online.

Method(s) of Instruction

Group and individual activities will facilitate the learning for this course. A combination of exams, readings, forum discussions, and online activities and assignments will be used to meet the outcomes of this course.

Course Requirements

COUN 636 Family Counseling is an online course that explores the theories of family dynamics. Requirements of the course are to maintain an online presence in the class through completion of weekly assignments including reflection assignments, class readings, forum postings, and major paper assignments.

Course Assignments

1. Attendance, Participation, and Professionalism

Part of being a professional counselor requires you to adhere to a strict professional standard. This includes engaging in considerate discussions, respecting one another's opinions, displaying proper online etiquette, regular attendance during face-to-face and online classes, timely submission of assignments, among other characteristics. During this class and your future career you must follow our professions code of ethics. This includes professional dress when working with clients, respect towards peers, faculty and others, engaging in professional wellness, timeliness, and attentiveness.

Online attendance is mandatory and essential for learning, therefore, missing an entire week's worth of assignments will result in a 10-point deduction.

2. Quizzes

There are 18-chapter quizzes throughout the duration of this course. Quizzes can be taken 1 time and can be accessed in the Quiz tab on CSC Online.

a. Points vary per quiz, see CSC Online for specific points.

b. Due Sunday evening on CSC Online

3. Assignments

The purpose of assignments is to reflect upon the week's readings and apply key concepts from the week's readings. While a forum is a public discussion, an assignment is an individual response that will not be read by any peers. Students should aim for a length of at least 1.5 pages double spaced, times new roman, 12-point font in order to provide a sufficient reflection that addresses the readings and supplied prompts.

a. 8 Reflections total worth 10 points each

b. Due Sunday evening on CSC Online

4. Family Groups Forum Discussions

The goal of the online discussions is to review theory, ethics, and other related counseling concepts. You will be assigned to "family groups" and remain with your groups for the entirety of the class. Caution will be taken when discussing personal material. Further, confidentiality will be practiced if group members share any personal information. If necessary to discuss a situation, pseudonyms for all involved family members are required. Initial forum posting is due Wednesday and a reply to a minimum of two classmates is due Sunday. Replies should contribute to the overall discussion or understanding of the topic. They should be in detailed, reveal reflection, and depth of thought.

a. Initial Posting due Wednesday a reply to a minimum of two classmates due by Sunday

b. 8 Forums total worth 10 points each

5. Healthy Family Interview

Due: Week 8 to CSC Online

Students will interview a family or couple (other than your own) with a focus on existing strengths and coping skills. Anticipate a meeting of approximately 2 hours in length. This is not to be a counseling session. *Anticipated length: 4-5 pages with a minimum of 2 references.* Within this assignment, address CACREP II Standard F.3.a and F.3.i (see page 1 & 2 of syllabus). See rubric at the end of syllabus for grading specifics.

The structure of the paper is to include:

1. Introduction of Couple/Family (using pseudonyms) (10 pts.)
2. Application of Individual & Family Life Cycles (10 pts.)
3. Interview Summary (10 pts.)
4. Self-critique (10 pts.)
5. Professional Reflection (10 pts.)
6. Integration of CACREP Standards (10 pts.)
7. Supplemental Research (minimum of 2 references) (10 pts)
8. Quality of Writing (10 pts.)

The following questions are to be used a guide or suggestions for your interview. The family you choose is not to be considered clients; the purpose of this assignment is only to identify positive, functional, interactive strengths. The interviews ARE NOT INTENDED TO BE THERAPEUTIC, and it is suggested that this point be emphasized to the family.

Suggested Questions

1. What individual strengths do each of you bring to this family or relationship?
2. How do you balance the relationships within your immediate family and your extended family?
3. What are your goals or hopes for your family?

4. How are each of you unique?
5. How do your differences bring strength to your family?
6. How do your family roles complement each other?
7. What family rules do you have that help the family as a whole?
8. How do you support each other in tough times?
9. What are the ties that hold you together as a family?
10. How do you maintain fun and/or play in your family?
11. What is the best part of being in your family?
12. How do you express your caring or love for each other?
13. How have you successfully handled stress and change?
14. How have your roles changed over the years?
15. How do you support each other after a crisis?
16. When do you feel closest as a family?
17. How do you work together as parents?
18. How do you use humor in your family?

Source: Wallerstein, J. & Blakeslee, S. (1995). The good marriage: How and why love lasts. New York, NY: Warner Books, Inc.

6. Bowenian Family of Origin Exploration

DUE: Week 15 to CSC Online

Each student is expected to complete a three-generation genogram of their own family of origin. Students should interview at least 3 family members, preferably from different generations and from different sides of the family. If family members are not proximate to your residence, the interviews may be conducted via phone or email. Family interviewees should be briefed on the purpose of this assignment including a description of how the information will be used. They should also know about how the information will be represented in the form of a genogram and who will have access to seeing the information (instructors and your family group). Family member's identity can be protected when sharing by using a different name. Students should not only pay attention to the structure but they should also pay close attention to the relational patterns between members. In your paper discuss your reaction to the experience and the insights you have learned regarding your family of origin. Discuss how this knowledge could impact your work as a professional counselor. The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate an in-depth exploration of how your family of origin experiences, messages, etc. impact your development as a professional counselor. *Anticipated length of this paper is 8-10 pages with a minimum of 5 references.* Within this assignment, address CACREP II Standards F.3.f and F.7.j

The structure of the paper is to include:

- | | |
|---|----------------|
| 1. 3-Generation Genogram | 20 pts. |
| 2. Family Interview Summary | 20 pts. |
| • Family Strengths | |
| • Family Challenges | |
| • Family Themes & Patterns (Based on Bowen) | |
| 3. Professional Implications | 20 pts. |
| 4. Integration of CACREP Standard | 12 pts. |
| 5. Quality of Writing | 8 pts. |
| | 80 pts. |

Sample Interview Questions

- 1) Family Genogram (diagram & notes): Include all marriages and significant relationships for parents.
 - a. How do family members get along? (Indicate any history of abuse: sexual, physical, emotional or chemical.)

- b. Who is closest to whom?
- 2) What is the ethnic\cultural background of your family?
- 3) What is the religious background of your family?
- 4) What kind of work do family members do?
- 5) What level of education have family members attained?
- 6) How has your family gotten along financially?
- 7) Who does the disciplining in your family? How is it done?
- 8) Have any family members had significant problems or difficulties (emotional, mental health, physical health, legal, sexual dysfunction...)?
- 9) Describe the problem(s) / concerns.
 - a. How did you find out about the problem / concern?
 - b. How did you feel?
- 10) Has anyone been involved in counseling or treatment and/or been hospitalized or incarcerated? Where, when and with whom?
- 11) Where did you learn about sex and intimacy?
- 12) How were sex and intimacy discussed in your family? By whom? How?
- 13) What messages did you receive from the family regarding sex? Masturbation? Sexual/Affectional Orientation? Intimacy?
- 14) How was the issue of privacy handled in the home?
- 15) What stories do you know about your father and mother before they were married? Before they had children? Do they provide any clues to your character?
- 16) Which family stories do you embrace and celebrate?
- 17) What is your favorite family story?
- 18) What are some of the earliest stories you remember being told in the family?

Note: ALL Papers must meet most current APA guidelines and standards

Mental Health & Wellbeing

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning. These might include strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. CSC Health Services is here to help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus at <https://www.csc.edu/healthserv/counseling-services/> or by calling (308) 432-6232 or visiting Crites Hall 343. Help is always available.

Nebraska State College Board Policy 4141

For a 1-credit hour course, [Nebraska State College Board Policy 4141](http://www.nscs.edu/Policy%20Manual/Policy%20Manual%20Master/Policy%204141.pdf) (<http://www.nscs.edu/Policy%20Manual/Policy%20Manual%20Master/Policy%204141.pdf>) suggests that you spend at least 45 hours per credit hour in learning activities. Since COUN 636 is 3-credit hour course, you should plan to spend a **minimum** of 135 hours in learning activities.

A combination of the following learning activities will support you in attaining the course Student Learning Outcomes described in Part 2 of this syllabus. Be prepared to devote the Hours per Week associated with each of the course activities or components listed below.

Learning Activity	Hours per Week	Total for Course
Direct Instruction	1 X 16 weeks	16
Reading	3 X 16 weeks	48
Assignments	2.5 X 16 weeks	40
Weekly Forum Postings and Discussions	2 X 16 weeks	32

Learning Activity	Hours per Week	Total for Course
Total		136

The actual hours spent on individual learning activities will vary from student to student depending on prior knowledge; however, 135 hours represents the minimum expectation for any student.

****Disclaimer:** The completion of the minimum time commitment does not ensure a passing grade. Achievement of the course competencies must be demonstrated.

Part 2: Student Learning Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes:

Chart for Course learning objectives and how the accreditation learning objectives align as well as the hours for the learning objectives.

COUN 636 Family Counseling	CACREP and CSC Learning Objectives	Assessment
Critically evaluate counseling approaches to determine a personal theory of counseling and the associated skills and techniques for appropriate implementation, including knowledge of family systems, crisis intervention, and emergency management models of counseling.	CSC SLO 5	Bowenian family of Origin Paper
Understand a systems approach to conceptualizing clients.	CACREP II.F.5.b	Bowenian family of Origin Paper
Understand theories of individual and family development across the lifespan	CACREP II F.3.a	Healthy Family Interview
Review ethical and culturally relevant strategies for promoting resilience and optimum development and wellness across the lifespan	CACREP II F.3.i	Healthy Family Interview
Understand systemic and environmental factors that affect human development, functioning, and behavior	CACREP II F.3.f	Bowenian family of Origin Paper
Demonstrate use of environmental assessments and systematic behavioral observations	CACREP F.7.J	Bowenian Family of Origin paper
Explore theories and models related to clinical mental health counseling	CACREP CMHC 1.b	Bowenian family of Origin Paper

Part 3: Grading Policy

Graded Course Activities and Letter Grade Assignment

Course Evaluation:

Quizzes	168 points
Reflection Assignments (8 Reflections @ 10pts each)	80 points
Family Forum Groups (8 forums @ 10 points each)	80 points
Healthy Family Interview	80 points
Bowenian Family of Origin Exploration	80 points
Total	488 points

Final grades will be assigned according to the scale below:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	90% - 100%
B	80% - 89%
C	70% - 79%
D	60% - 69%
F	Less than 60%

Late Work Policy

To ensure your success in learning, you are responsible for completing all assigned work as high quality submissions in the time frame allowed for each unit. You are also responsible for prioritizing your time accordingly to ensure timely completion of assigned course work and activities. Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines—there will be no make-up assignments or quizzes or late work accepted without a serious and compelling reason and instructor approval.

Viewing Grades in CSC Online

I will update grades in CSC Online each time a grading session has been completed—typically 5 days following the completion of an activity.

Part 4: Course & Institution Policies

Academic policies, including the selected policies detailed in this syllabus section, can be found on [Chadron State College's Policy Website](http://www.csc.edu/policy/).
(<http://www.csc.edu/policy/>)

Student Behavior

Academic Honesty

Students are encouraged and expected, with the assistance of the faculty, to conduct themselves in conformity with the highest standards with regard to academic honesty. Violation of college, state, or federal standards with regard to plagiarism, cheating, or falsification of official records will not be tolerated. Students violating such standards will be advised and disciplined. Violations of these standards may result in course failure, suspension, or dismissal from the college. Students are encouraged to seek the advice of instructors as to the proper procedures to avoid such violations.

The following acts are examples of academic dishonesty:

1. Cheating – intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.
2. Fabrication – intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
3. Facilitating Academic Dishonesty – intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another in an act of academic dishonesty.
4. Generative AI – the use of artificial intelligence platforms and/or content produced by AI assistive software (e.g. ChatGPT, Dall-E 2, CodePilot, etc.) against course use parameters.
5. Plagiarism – appropriating or imitating language, ideas, and thoughts of another author, representing them as one's own original work. The following acts are examples of plagiarism:
 1. Submitting an assignment that someone else has written and claiming the work as one's own.
 2. Submitting an assignment that contains sections, paragraphs, sentences or key phrases that someone else has written without appropriately documenting the source(s) for each portion of the assignment not written by the student submitting the assignment.
 3. Submitting an assignment that contains paraphrased ideas from another source, published or unpublished, without appropriately documenting the source for each paraphrase. (Changing around a few words in a sentence from the source is not sufficient to avoid plagiarism.)

Note: "Someone else" in the three statements above may refer to a published author, another student, an internet source, or any person other than the student claiming credit for the assignment. If an individual is unsure in how to document sources used within an assignment, they are encouraged to ask their professor or the reference librarian for assistance.

View the [Academic Honesty Policy](https://app.policyiq.com/ChadronStateCollege/Content/View/3419?Key=c320bad9-cae1-4820-bac1-ec7a3b6d69ba) on CSC's Policy Website.
(<https://app.policyiq.com/ChadronStateCollege/Content/View/3419?Key=c320bad9-cae1-4820-bac1-ec7a3b6d69ba>)

Class Attendance/Participation Policy

The College assumes that students will seek to profit from the instructional program and will recognize the importance of attending every class meeting of courses for which credit is expected. Responsibility for notifying faculty of absences, and for arranging potential make-up, rests with the students. In courses that utilize an online format, students are expected to participate in an appropriate and frequent manner, as determined by course instructor.

View the [Class Attendance and/or Participation Policy](https://app.policyiq.com/ChadronStateCollege/Content/View/3432?Key=c320bad9-cae1-4820-bac1-ec7a3b6d69ba) on CSC's Policy Website.
(<https://app.policyiq.com/ChadronStateCollege/Content/View/3432?Key=c320bad9-cae1-4820-bac1-ec7a3b6d69ba>)

Civility and Netiquette

Civil behavior enhances the learning environment and is expected at all times. The academic environment welcomes a difference of opinion, discourse, and debate within a civil environment. All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all communications (including email messages, discussion, and chats). You may find these guidelines helpful:

1. Clearly label posts and emails with a relevant subject heading.
2. Use capital letters sparingly. THEY LOOK LIKE SHOUTING.
3. Forward emails only with a writer's permission.
4. Be considerate of others' feelings and use language carefully.
5. Cite all quotations, references, and sources.
6. Use humor carefully. It is hard to "read" tone; sometimes humor can be misread as criticism or personal attack. Feel free to use emoticons to let others know you are being humorous.
7. Use complete sentences and Standard English grammar to compose posts. Write in proper paragraphs. Review work before submitting it.

Equal Education Opportunity Policy/Nondiscrimination Policy

CSC is committed to an equal opportunity program to encourage admission and employment, and to provide procedures which will assure equal treatment of all students and employees. The College administers its academic and employment programs and related supporting services in a manner which does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status. Its policies are consistent with nondiscriminatory policy, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, as amended; and Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The College's written policy regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) may be reviewed in the office of the Director of Human Resources or in the Library Learning Commons, along with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the rights provided.

View the [Equal Employment and Education Opportunity Policy](https://app.policyiq.com/ChadronStateCollege/Content/View/3443?Key=c320bad9-cae1-4820-bac1-ec7a3b6d69ba) on CSC's Policy Website.
(<https://app.policyiq.com/ChadronStateCollege/Content/View/3443?Key=c320bad9-cae1-4820-bac1-ec7a3b6d69ba>)

Equal Access

Chadron State College works to ensure that all programs, activities, and services, including electronic and remote services, are accessible to people with disabilities. Upon request, CSC will provide reasonable accommodations to ensure students have equal access to programs, activities, and services. For assistance, contact the Equal Access Coordinator, Deena Kennell, at 308.432.6467 or by email at dkennell@csc.edu.

Personal Emergency & Academic Attendance

In the event a personal emergency (such as hospitalization, accident, death of an immediate family member, family crisis) requires an absence from courses and on-campus, students need to contact their instructors as soon as possible.

If the emergency should cause an extended absence (3 or more consecutive class days), you may contact the Dean of Student Affairs at studentaffairs@csc.edu for assistance. In the event of an extended absence, it may be possible for students to work with their instructors to complete coursework at a later date.

If the extended absence is near the end of the current term, students are encouraged to talk with their instructors about the Incomplete process. This process is ideal for students who have completed a minimum of 75% of the coursework already. If the instructor agrees, the student and the instructor will agree upon an appropriate timeline for the course to be completed. The instructor will file the appropriate paperwork to be approved by the Dean of Curriculum.

If a student's situation is such they are no longer able to complete the course and an Incomplete is not a viable option, the student may be encouraged to withdraw from their course(s).

If a student's absence pertains to specific academic accommodations, students will be strongly encouraged to request assistance from Disability Services in the Library Learning Commons.

Student athletes who are injured and need accommodations due to their injury/injuries are assessed by CSC Athletic Training staff with any needed assistance from area medical professionals. The Athletic Training staff will communicate the accommodation needs to the Dean of Student Affairs who will communicate this to all instructors and if appropriate, the Disability Services office

CSC Mission & Master Academic Plan (MAP)

Mission Statement

Chadron State College delivers experiences that foster knowledgeable and engaged leaders and citizens to enrich the High Plains region and beyond.

Disclaimer

This syllabus and schedule is articulated as an expectation of class topics, learning activities, and expected student learning. However, the instructor reserves the right to make changes in this schedule that, within my professional judgment, would result in enhanced or more effective learning on the part of the students. These modifications will not substantially change the intent or outcomes of this course and will be done within the policies and procedures of Chadron State College.

Part 5: Course Topic Schedule/Outline

CSL 636 Tentative Schedule

Week of:	Topics	Assigned Readings	Class Activities and Assignments
Unit 1			
August 24th-30th	<i>The History of Family Therapy: Evolution and Revolution</i>	Gladding-Prologue, Chapter 1	Chapter 1 quiz Family Forum #1
August 31-Sept 6th	<i>The Theoretical Context of Family Therapy</i>	Chapter 2	Assignment #1 Chapter 2 quiz

September 7th-12th	<i>Types and Functionality of Families</i>	Gladding Chapter 3	Chapter 3 quiz Blended Family Forum #2
September 13th-20th	<i>Working with Single-parent and blended families</i>	Chapter 4	Chapter 4 quiz Assignment #2
September 21st- 27th	<i>Working with Culturally Diverse Families</i>	Gladding-Chapter 5	Chapter 5 quiz Blended Family Forum #3
September 28th- October 4th	<i>Ethical, legal, and professional issues in family therapy</i>	ASCA or ACA Code of Ethics Chapter 6	Chapter 6 quiz Assignment #3
October 5th - 11th	<i>The process of family therapy</i>	Gladding-chapter 7	Assignment #4 Chapter 7 quiz
October 12th- 18th	<i>Couple and marriage therapy and enrichment</i>	Chapter 8	Chapter 8 Quiz Healthy Family Interview Blended Family Forum #4
October 19th- 25th	<i>Psychodynamic Family theory</i>	Gladding-chapter 9	Assignment #5 Chapter 9 Quiz
October 26th- November 1st	<i>Bowen Family Systems Theory</i>	Chapter 10	Chapter 10 quiz Blended Family Forum #5
November 2nd-8th	<i>Behavioral and Cognitive-Behavioral Family Therapies</i>	Gladding-chapter 11	Assignment #6 Chapter 11 quiz
November 9th- 15th	<i>Experiential Family Therapy</i>	Chapter 12	Chapter 12 quiz Blended Family Forum #6
November 16th-22nd	<i>Structural Family Therapy Strategic Family Therapies</i>	Gladding-chapter 13 and 14	Assignment #7 Chapter 13 quiz Blended Family Forum #7 Chapter 14 quiz
November 23rd-29th Fall Break	-	-	-
November 30th- December 6th	<i>Solution Focused Brief Therapy</i>	Chapter 15 and 16	Bowenian Family of Origin Exploration Chapters 15 and 16 quizzes

	<i>Narrative Family Therapy</i>		
December 7th - 13th	<i>Research and Assessment in family therapy</i> <i>Working with substance-related disorders, domestic violence, and child abuse</i>	Chapter 17, 18	Assignment #8 Blended Family Forum #8 Chapters 17 and 18 quizzes
December 14th - 18th	-	-	-

Rubrics

Healthy Family Interview

	0-3	4-6	7-9	10
Introduction to Couple/Family	Vague introduction to couple/family provided.	Basic introduction to couple/family provide.	General introduction to couple/family provided	An in-depth introduction to the individuals and family is provided (using pseudonyms).
Application of individual and family lifecycles	Displays no evidence of understanding the influences of family and lifecycles	Displays a basic understanding of the influences of family lifecycles	Displays a proficient understanding of family lifecycles.	Demonstrates content knowledge of family lifecycles and correctly applies an understanding to the family interviewed.
Interview Summary	Lacks evidence of a summary from the interview	Basics of interview summary provided. Missing depth	Adequate understanding of interview summary provided. Missing depth and application	Summary of interview is sufficiently addressed fully and in detail.
Professional Reflection	Vague professional reflection	Basic professional reflection provided. May be lacking depth and/or not fully integrate information gained with content knowledge/research.	General professional reflection provided. Brief integration of information gained from interview with content knowledge/research.	An in-depth professional reflection that connects information gained from interview with research and/or content knowledge is provided. Information from sources is integrated and correctly cited.
Self-Critique	Vague understanding of areas of strengths and improvements.	Basic understanding of areas of strengths and improvements. Lacking depth.	General understanding of areas of strengths and improvements.	An in-depth self-critique is provided. Areas of strengths and improvements are identified. Specific steps to take to improve are identified.
Integration of CACREP standards	Lacks evidence of understanding CACREP standards.	Basics of CACREP standards explored. Missing depth	Adequate understanding of CACREP standards. Missing depth and application	CACREP standards are sufficiently addressed fully and in detail.
Supplemental Research	Paper may be missing supplemental research articles, articles may not be relevant, or research may not be discussed fully.	One relevant, academic peer-reviewed journal article is cited with minimal contributions to the essay	Two or more relevant, academic peer-reviewed journal articles are cited and briefly explored.	Two or more relevant, academic peer-reviewed journal articles are cited and explored in depth.
Quality of Writing	APA style not followed	Multiple errors throughout paper.	Minimal APA style errors. Two or fewer grammatical mistakes	APA style is followed. Paper is grammatically correct

Forums

0	0= Does not meet	5= Progressing	10 = Proficient
Missing	Response is not directly related to the topic or reveals some misunderstanding of the topic. No evidence of readings being read.	Response demonstrates insight and provides depth or integration with other counseling topics. Missing either responses to classmates or initial response	Response and reply to two classmates demonstrates insight and provides depth or integration with other counseling topics. Clear evidence and integration of readings.

Assignments

0	0 = Does not meet	5 = Progressing	10 = Proficient
Missing	Assignment response is not directly related to the topic or reveals some misunderstanding of the topic.	Assignment response is relevant to the topic, lacks insight and depth.	Assignment response demonstrates insight and provides depth. Includes a reflection and application of key topics.