

## **VII. Appendices**

### **A. Course Syllabus**

*Kansas State University*  
*FSHS 853: Family Systems in Cultural Context*  
**Course Syllabus – Spring 2007**  
**Class day/time: Wed 9.00 – 12.00pm; Location: CCC 214**

***“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” Martin Luther King, Jr.***

Instructor : Joyce Baptist, Ph.D.  
Office : CCC 212  
Office hours : TBA  
Office phone : (785) 532 6891  
E-mail : jrbaptist@ksu.edu

---

#### **Course Description:**

This course will help students integrate an understanding of individuals, couples and families within the context of culture. A major goal will be to help participants to listen and respond in a thoughtful and sensitive manner to the individuals and families they serve professionally, especially those from diverse cultural backgrounds. Students will become more aware of their own cultural memberships, and develop a framework for appreciating the cultural context of the profession of family therapy.

#### **Course Objectives:**

Students will be required to demonstrate the following competencies:

1. understanding of the impact of group oppression, acculturation and assimilation on individuals and family systems
2. understanding of the impact of privilege of race and class and prejudice on the therapeutic process
3. ability to articulate different approaches to delivering cultural- and ethnic-sensitive therapy
4. ability to recognize the limits of their competencies related to providing therapy to individuals who are culturally and ethnically different
5. articulate the process used to develop their multicultural competencies
6. skills in cross cultural interaction with others as they immerse in culturally different environments

#### **Method of Instruction:**

Involvement and learning in the course will be facilitated through discussion of assigned readings, class lectures, viewing and discussion of videos, and assignments. Lecture notes, class reading assignments and resources will be made available to students via KSU Online.

#### **Required Texts:**

1. Hitchcock, J., & (2002). *Lifting the White Veil: An Exploration of White American Culture in a Multiracial Context*. Crandall Dostie & Douglass Books: Rosell, NJ.
2. Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (2005). *Counseling the Culturally Diverse: Theory and Practice*. Wiley: New York.

#Additional required readings (listed below) are available on KSU Online.

### **Course Requirements:**

1. **Attendance:** Attend and be on time for the beginning of class. Absents and missing major portions of the class may result in make-up assignments. Substantial absents will result in grade reduction.
2. **Participation:** Be prepared to actively participate in class discussions and activities. A protocol of respect and professional ethics will be observed in all class discussions. Active participation is essential to your learning process. \*Refer to Grading Scale.
3. **Reading:** Complete all reading assignments prior to each class in order to facilitate discussion, understanding of class lecture and to enrich the learning experience. Come to class prepared to discuss impressions, questions and remain open to the ideas and reactions of others. As you complete your readings, you are advised to consider how the new information you acquire will inform your treatment of the different cultural groups.
4. **Reflective journals:** Maintain a weekly journal from Jan 24<sup>th</sup> – Apr 18<sup>th</sup> (12 journals). This is an opportunity to reflect on your attitudes, thoughts and feelings as you increase your awareness of multicultural issues and for you integrate the readings, discussions and other class materials. Occasionally, you may be asked to respond to a particular question, issue or theme. You will not be graded for having politically correct entries. In fact, confronting and challenging your biases and prejudices in an honest way would be indicative of a good faith effort. In your final journal, provide a summary of your learning process over the course of the semester and include future plans for growth in multicultural awareness. The instructor assures the privacy of your journal entries. Journals will be due periodically during the semester. \*Refer to Grading Scale.
5. **Cultural immersion exercise/paper:** This is an opportunity to take a cultural immersion of more than 4 hours to explore a culture different from yours. A list of suggested immersion exercises is provided below. You will need to get the prior approval of the instructor before carrying out the exercise. You are encouraged to engage in this experiential learning on your own as the intent is to be immersed in the group, i.e., being deeply engaged or involved with persons from the group. After the immersion, write a 5 - 6 page paper. The paper will include: (i) the reasons for choosing the particular activity, (ii) a description of the activity, (iii) your feelings and reactions to the experience, (iv) what you learned from the experience including what you learned about yourself, and (iv) how your experience relate to the concepts covered in this course. \*Refer to Grading Scale.
6. **Cultural paper (10-12 pages):** Write a paper on a group that is culturally or ethnically different from yours. To complete this paper, read one (1) book featuring

the chosen group and supplement it with about 4-5 academic journal articles on the same group. A list of appropriate books is provided below. You may deviate from the list with prior approval of the instructor. To gain the most out of this exercise, read a book that they have not yet read and on a group that you are unfamiliar with. Retrieve relevant articles using the library's databases such as PsycINFO.

In the paper, include: (i) a description of the group, (ii) what you learned about the group, (iii) reflections on your personal reactions in regards to the impact of oppression, acculturation and/or assimilation on the group, (iv) how therapists' privilege and prejudice could impact the therapeutic process with the group, (v) illustrate specific cultural norms that need to be considered when providing therapy to members of the group. \*Refer to Grading Scale.

7. **Class presentation:** Do a 20-minute presentation of your cultural paper to the class. You can be creative and use visual and audio effects, elicit your classmates' participation if you wish. You will be provided with a guideline to follow and the grading scale later in the semester.

- If you are unable to meet any of the requirements above you must discuss with the instructor before the second class of the semester.
- Adhere to the latest APA publication guidelines in terms of font size and type, spacing, pagination, margin size, cover sheet and references.

**Final grade:** Your final grade will be based on the aggregate of the grade earned for Participation, Reflective Journals, Cultural Immersion Paper, Cultural Paper and Class Presentation.

Incompletes: Under a policy among the MFT faculty, any student desiring an "Incomplete" for this course will have to negotiate a specific date of completion, and a final grade will be lowered by 10%.

**The following is included under university policy:**

Academic Honesty: Students, by registration, acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Honor System. The policies and procedures of the Honor System apply to all full and part-time students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses on-campus, off-campus, and via distance learning. A component vital to the Honor System is the inclusion of the Honor Pledge that applies to all assignments, examinations, or other course work undertaken by students. The Honor Pledge is implied, *whether or not* it is stated: **"On my honor, as a student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work."**

The default in this class is that ALL work will be accomplished individually, UNLESS my permission is given in advance of an assignment/quiz/exam/take-home exam/final. If you are in doubt, please ask. A grade of XF can result from a breach of academic honesty. The F indicates failure in the course; the X indicates the reason is an Honor Pledge violation. For more information, visit the Honor System home web page at: <http://www.ksu.edu/honor>.

Accommodations for Disabled Students: Any student with a disability who needs an accommodation or other assistance in this course should make an appointment to speak with the professor as soon as possible.

Copyright Notification: During this course students are prohibited from selling notes to or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the professor teaching this course.

Expectations for Classroom Conduct: All student activities in the University, including this course, are governed by the Student Judicial Conduct Code as outlined in the Student Government Association By Laws, Article VI, Section 3, Number 2. Students that engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment may be asked to leave the class.

**#The following additional readings are available online.**

**Classism:**

1. Liu, W. M., Soleck, G., Hopps, J., Dunston, K., & Pickett, T. (2004). New Framework to understand social class in counseling: The social class worldview model and modern classism theory.

**African Americans:**

1. Cole, E. R., & Omari, S. R. (2003). Race, class and the dilemmas of upward mobility for African Americans.

**Asian Americans:**

1. Akutsu, P. D., & Chu, J. P. (2006). Clinical problems that initiate professional help-seeking behaviors from Asian Americans.
2. David, E. J. R., & Okazaki, S. (2006). The Colonial Mentality Scale (CMS) for Filipina Americans: Scale construction and psychological implications.
3. Alvarez, A. N. (2001). Asian Americans and racial identity: Dealing with racism and snowballs.

**Chicanos/Latin Americans:**

1. Manoleas, P., & Garcia, B. (2003). Clinical algorithms as a tool for psychotherapy with Latino clients.

**Lesbians, Gays and Transgenders:**

1. Katz, J. N. (1990) The invention of heterosexuality. In Paula S. Rothenberg, (2001). Race, Class and Gender in the United States.
2. LaSala, M. C. (2001). Monogamous or not: Understanding and counseling gay male couples.
3. LaSala, M. (2002). Walls and bridge: How coupled gay men and lesbians manage their intergenerational relationships.
4. Negy, C., & McKinney, C. (2006). Application of Feminist Therapy: Promoting resiliency among lesbians and gay families.
5. Pachankis, J. E., & Goldfried, M. R. (2004). Clinical issues in working with lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients.

6. Carroll, L., Gilroy, P. J., & Ryan, J. (2002). Counseling transgendered, transsexual, and gender-variant clients.
7. Ellis, K. M., & Eriksen, K. (2002). Transsexual and transgenderist experiences and treatment options.

Other minority groups:

1. Cates, J. A. (2005). Facing away: Mental health treatment with the old order Amish.
2. Ali, S. R., Liu, W. M., & Humedian, M. (2004). Islam 101: Understanding the religion and therapy implications.
3. Schlosser, L. Z. (2006). Affirmative psychotherapy for American Jews.
4. Roysircar, G. (2003). Religious Differences: Psychological and sociopolitical aspects of counseling.
8. Broadkin, K. (1994). How Jews Became White. In Paula S. Rothenberg, (2001). Race, Class and Gender in the United States.

The elderly:

1. Clarke, L. H. (2006). Older women and sexuality: Experiences in marital relationships across the life course.

The disabled:

1. Oliveira, R. A., Milliner, E. K., & Page, R. (2004). Psychotherapy with physically disabled patients.
2. Navon, S. (2005). The illness/non-illness treatment model: Psychotherapy for physically ill patients and their families.
3. Navon, S. (2005). Medical Family Therapy Casebook: Listening to illness/nonillness motifs: A case of Fibromyalgia.

### **COURSE OUTLINE (subject to changes):**

Class	Topic and Activity	Readings/Assignment
Week 1	Introduction & syllabus Cultural competency	
Week 2	Ethnocentrism, Oppression Social segregation and group identification	Sue & Sue: Chap. 1 & 3 Hitchcock: Chap. 1 & 2
Week 3	Racial identity development Dimensions of worldviews	Sue & Sue: Chap. 8, 9 & 10 Hitchcock: Chap. 7 <b>Reflective journal 1 due</b>
Week 4	White American culture	Hitchcock: Chap. 3, 4, 5 & 6 <b>Reflective journal 2 due</b>

Week 5	Poverty and classism	Sue & Sue: Chap. 4 <b>Reflective journal 3 due</b>
Week 6	African Americans Collectivist cultures	Sue & Sue: Chap. 6 & 11 <b>Reflective journal 4 due</b>
Week 7	Immigrants and refugees Asian Americans	Sue & Sue: Chap. 13 <b>Reflective journal 5 due</b>
Week 8	Natives of Our Land Non-western methods of healing	Sue & Sue: Chap. 7, 12 <b>Reflective journal 6 due</b>
Week 9	Chicano/Latin Americans	Sue & Sue: Chap. 5 & 14 <b>Reflective journal 7 due</b> <b>Cultural immersion paper due</b>
Week 10	Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgenders	Sue & Sue: Chap. 16 <b>Reflective journal 8 due</b>
Week 11	The elderly The disabled	Sue & Sue: Chap. 17 & 19 <b>Reflective journal 9 due</b>
Week 12	Other minority groups: Jewish, Amish, Arab Americans, Muslims, Wiccans	<b>Reflective journal 10 due</b>
Week 13	Multiracial descent Transracial adoption	Sue & Sue: Chap. 15 <b>Reflective journal 11 due</b>
Week 14	Prisons, Gender and Justice	Sue & Sue: Chap. 18 <b>Reflective journal 12 due</b>
Week 15	Class presentations	
Week 16	Class Presentations	<b>Cultural paper due</b>

### Grading Rubrics

#### ***1. Participation:***

- **Excellent (A)** – Proactive participation: leading, originating, informing, challenging contributions that reflect in-depth study, thought, and analysis of the topic under consideration. This does not mean dominating discussion or using a lot of words to say little.

- **Satisfactory (B)** – Reactive participation: supportive, follow-up contributions that are relevant and of value, but rely on the leadership and study of others, or reflect opinion rather than study, thought, and contemplation.

- **Poor (C)** – Passive participation: present, awake, alert, attentive, but not actively involved.
- **Unsatisfactory (D or less)** – Uninvolved: present but not attentive, sleeping, irrelevant contributions that inhibit the progress of the discussion.

## ***2. Cultural Immersion Paper & Cultural Paper:***

- **Excellent (A):** The writing is focused, purposeful, and reflects insight into the writing situation. The paper conveys a sense of completeness and wholeness with adherence to the main idea, and its organizational pattern provides for a logical progression of ideas. The support is substantial, specific, relevant, concrete, and/or illustrative. The paper demonstrates a commitment to and an involvement with the subject, clarity in presentation of ideas, and may use creative writing strategies appropriate to the purpose of the paper. The writing demonstrates a mature command of language (word choice) with freshness of expression. Sentence structure is varied, and sentences are complete except when fragments are used purposefully. Few, if any, convention errors occur in mechanics, usage, spelling, punctuation, and APA style.

- **Satisfactory (B):** The writing is generally focused on the topic but may include extraneous or loosely related material. An organizational pattern is apparent, although some lapses may occur. The paper exhibits some sense of completeness or wholeness. The support, including word choice, is adequate, although development may be uneven. There is little variation in sentence structure, and most sentences are complete. The paper generally follows the conventions of mechanics, usage, spelling, and APA style.

- **Poor (C):** The writing is generally focused on the topic but may include extraneous or loosely related material. An organizational pattern has been attempted, but the paper may lack a sense of completeness or wholeness. Some support is included, but development is erratic. Word choice is adequate but may be limited, predictable, or occasionally vague. There is little, if any, variation in sentence structure. Knowledge of the conventions of mechanics and usage is usually demonstrated, and commonly used words are usually spelled correctly. Some APA style errors are evident.

- **Unsatisfactory (D or less):** The writing is related to the topic but includes extraneous or loosely related material. Little evidence of an organizational pattern may be demonstrated, and the paper may lack a sense of completeness or wholeness. Development of support is inadequate or illogical. Word choice is limited, inappropriate, or vague. There is little, if any, variation in sentence structure, and gross errors in sentence structure may occur. Errors in basic conventions of mechanics and usage may occur, and commonly used words may be misspelled. APA style errors are evident.

## ***3. Reflective Journals:***

	<b>Excellent (A)</b>	<b>Satisfactory (B)</b>	<b>Unsatisfactory (C)</b>	<b>Below graduate level (D or less)</b>
<b>Material from readings &amp; classes</b>	Uses material and terminology accurately and in a sophisticated manner. Applies material appropriately and accurately. Looks at the implications of the material, not all of which are discussed in the class.	Uses material in rigid manner. Terms are used accurately, but material only describes. Does not lend insight or include synthesis or original thinking.	Material is used in a superficial manner, with some minor mistakes in application. Journal is a weak description of material.	Material does not apply to person/situation, or is used inappropriately.
<b>Insight</b>	Insightful about self/other/material. Recognizes context and exceptions. It makes the reader go "Wow!"	Journal is somewhat insightful -- you tease rather than satisfy!	Journal does not help the reader understand the self/other/material.	Journal is off-track in its conclusions.
<b>Divergent thinking</b>	Approach issues from multiple viewpoints, recognizes multiple contributions to issues, and sees pros and cons.	Approach problems well, but from only one or two viewpoints.	Issues are approached weakly from a single vantage.	Issues are approached poorly from a single vantage.

The overall grade of your Reflective Journals will be based on the aggregate of all 12 journals.

#### **4. Presentation Grid:**



## FSHS 853 – Spring 2007 Class presentation

Date:\_\_\_\_\_ Evaluator:\_\_\_\_\_

	Amateur (<6)	Acceptable (7)	Admirable (8)	Exceptional (9-10)	Total
Organization	Presentation lacks sequence and audience cannot understand or follow	Jumps from one topic to another making it difficult to understand and follow	Presents in a logical sequence that audience can understand and follow	Presents in a logical, interesting sequence that audience can understand and follow	
Subject knowledge	Do not have a grasp on material and cannot answer questions about subject	Uncomfortable with material and able to provide only rudimentary answer to questions	Comfortable with material and answer questions but fail to elaborate	Demonstrates clear understanding of the material and can answer all class questions with explanations and elaboration	
Integration of material	Cannot identify source material and fails to integrate material from articles and book	Can partially identify source of material and marginally integrates material from articles and book	Can identify source of material and integrates material to provide a comprehensive overview of population/group	Can identify source of material and integrates material using the articles to support the material in the book	
Eye contact	Reads the paper with no eye contact	Occasionally uses eye contact, but still reads most of the paper	Maintain eye contact most of the time and reads when refer to paper, failing to elaborate	Maintain eye contact with audience and refers to paper for cues followed by an elaboration and explanation	
Elocution	Mumbles and speaks too softly for audience to hear presentation	Moderately articulation and voice is soft making it difficult for audience to hear presentation	Good articulation and intonation, and voice is clear and most audience can hear presentation	Good articulation intonation, and voice is very clear. All audience can hear presentation	
Time management	Pays little attention to time management	Occasionally attempts to manage time	Maintain control of time of presentation	Demonstrates full control of time of presentation	
				TOTAL SCORE	

Presenter:\_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

### B. Example of Student Work

## 1. Cultural Immersion Paper

2

Complete involvement, absolute commitment, undisturbed focus, undivided attention, endless energy, and invested time are phrases that invade my thoughts when the word immersion is suggested. To immerse oneself in or within something requires figuratively and actually drowning self; submerging your complete mind, body and soul. Immersion ignites the potential for one to lose, disconnect, or even surrender thy self at the hand of fate, the new, and the quite possibly unknown.

When mentioning immersion, I can't help but think of my "Christian inauguration." According to my faith, the beginning of your life as a Christian is acknowledged by a complete immersing in a baptismal bath. Baptisms symbolize and remind us of our rebirth, complete change, and new life meaning. After Baptism, it is expected that Christians begin living, learning, and understanding their new way of life via their holy immersion.

✓  
you exposed  
yourself well

Far too often I feel as though I should be the poster child for cultural immersion. Unfortunately, living a life marked by inevitably frequent and highly unavoidable cultural immersions, dimmed the glimmer and appeal of yet another opportunity to voluntarily reinstate my "misfit" status. Needless to say, receiving a class assignment designed to encourage students to immerse in another culture was less than appealing and almost comedic. Wasn't the pure "Kansas INexperience" an overdose of immersing culturally for a nonwhite, city born and bread, college student? I was on cultural immersion overload; a culturally immersed binge! Wouldn't a better form of detox for a "misfit" be to relieve themselves by re-immersing them into their own culture? I found myself developing a rather cynical attitude toward immersing in anything other than a bottle of wine!

As I came to terms with the inevitable assignment I decided to have fun with this adventure by challenging myself to see if in fact there *was* something I was missing and could find through another grueling culturally immersed experience. I wanted to find a population that I knew the least about yet had a working knowledge and concept of the challenges that particular population experiences. Since I didn't want to choose a culture that was "simple" or easy to access I had to not only exhaust my mind but my gas fund in order to retrieve that subject.

I decided to celebrate the existence, awareness, accomplishments and struggles of same sex cultures during Gay pride week in Lawrence, Kansas. The week was filled with speakers, seminars, shows, and fellowship. Deciding on which event to attend was difficult because I wanted to choose something that was insightful without bore. Events ranged from drag shows to sex talks to political concerns immediately effecting the community to even petitions and community poles supporting the continued push toward equality. I decided that since I work with military populations that learning more information about how the gay population interacts within the military would best inform and influence my work as a therapist, and at becoming a better, more informed person.

The panel spoke about the "don't ask don't tell (DADT)" statute. This law essentially states that people can be gay while in the military as long as they don't physically show their affection for someone of the same sex, attempt to marry someone of the same sex, or make a statements or insinuations about their sexuality (talk about a closed door!). Rhonda Davis was one of the panel speakers who spent the majority of her speech discussing the myths and problems associated with the DADT statute. Rhonda had formerly been in the navy and hid her sexuality for many years before she publically



outed herself and consequently became discharged. She was a fun speaker with a very dry yet engaging humor. She spoke to the audience and was real with her thoughts and emotions. The most engaging aspect of her information was the presence of the ongoing theme and assumption that being in the military and being gay were mutually exclusive. Essentially, having both identities was impossible and that if anyone discovered your secret, you would be dishonorably discharged.

Overall, it seemed that if you wanted to be gay you could as long as no one in the military found out. Being gay in the military meant that you could never openly act on your sexual desire nor could you tell anyone about your sexual preference. Living life as a gay soldier meant that anyone and everyone was not trustworthy. And that even the slightest speculation of homosexuality would get you discharged. People could be accused of being gay without any substantiated evidence pertaining to the accusation. In fact people have recently begun using false accusations of homosexuality and its surefire path to discharge as a way to dodge deployment and the stop clause.

Taking the information on a more clinical route, in essence, we are asking our soldiers to lie or live a lie. Clearly administration has created a double bind, yet, more importantly who in fact are they hurting, and what type of message are sending to our troops? Several substantiated reports of homosexual have led to the discharge of several elite soldiers fluent in Arabic and foreign affairs. Ultimately, this isn't a law that was put into practice to protect our soldiers but to protect the prejudices that the ignorant "powers that be" uphold. Legislature claims that having a homosexual person in your unit disrupts unit camaraderie, yet forcing a soldier to lie doesn't. And taking a even step further

clinically, how else is society offering gay people the choice to lie or live a lie, versus facing the consequences of their honesty.

After listening to the heartfelt accounts of soldiers and family members, I privately asked the panel a couple of clarifying questions. To my pleasure, they posed an invitation to attend a local bar which reserved one night of the week strictly for the gay community. When I walked in I noticed several banners and rainbow flags welcoming gays and lesbians. The tempo was very similar to straight clubs I had attended. Honestly, the only thing different was the sexual selection dominating the population. The atmosphere and interactions were extremely similar to those found in any bar in Kansas. Yet, I did find it strange that men and women were at the gay bar together. Typically, gay bars are tailored to occupy one crowd over the other; either gays or lesbian not coed or all LGBT populations on the same evening.

After getting a feel for the environment, I grabbed a drink and sat at a table in between two lesbian couples. I engaged in casual conversation but nothing too in depth, I wanted to get lost in my own thoughts. As my thoughts faded in and out of normalizing the population, the sadness of the "secret" began to take its toll on me. Many thoughts flooded my peace of normalcy. I wondered how isolated LGBT populations must feel to only be "comfortably" invited to a local bar once a week, as if the LGBT population wasn't free to attend bars on any night. I wondered if the reason for the invitation was so that other gay people could identify potential partners. I wondered if LGBT populations avoided the "gay bar night" for that very same reason, anonymity. I wonder if popular athletes were forced to infrequent scenes like these due to the power of guilt by speculation. I also wondered how other gay people felt about the drag queens that



parlayed around the dance floor. I wondered if, just like being black, being gay was on a continuum where you were more comfortable in less "stereotypically" flagrant bars. I wondered if some gay people were embarrassed by the association mainstream society makes with gay men, and if that wasn't how they wanted to be stereotyped too. I wondered if I fit in or if people new I wasn't gay and felt as if I was exploiting them. ✓

But uncomfortably, what I wanted more than anything was to blend in. I wanted to blend not for my aversion to being the "misfit" but for the risk of exploitation. I felt sick to my stomach when I envisioned someone passing me, realizing I was <sup>you will</sup> gay, and feeling as though their life was an exploit or worse part of a research project. After an hour or so one of my female colleagues entered the bar and sat beside me. Immediately the lump of fear lodged in my chest began to allay, not only because that meant we could leave but that also meant, that I inherently was "gay" and she was my beloved partner (smile, win win situation).

As we greeted one another and proceeded to exist the building a roller coaster of emotion began to evolve. We were leaving and luckily we made it to our cars safely, but what if we hadn't. People who hate gay people lurk around gay bars waiting to harass and prey on gay people. Hate crimes and those that support them wait for nights like these and weeks that celebrate or "point out" the gay people in the community so that they can find their victim easier. I was terrified and asked my colleague if she too felt fear, her response, "no, why?" Although, Anglo and culturally immersing, the project had failed for her and I'm sure for most all others too, until I informed her of what being a "misfit" really, vividly means. And that is fearing those, places, and people who can and might ✓ hate you to the point of harm. For her, if even for a second, she began to understand what

being different really means and all that it really threatens. For a second, things weren't about punishing white people, affirmative action, and having a black or female president, but it was about never being safe and always lurking on the side of caution. ✓

I felt sad that LGBT people only had one day out of the week where they could be themselves, in all their completeness, and that every other day they have to lie in order to prevent any ramifications. I was angry that our world was that judgmental and "exclusive." That people are forced to fit into a cookie cutter no matter how much of them they have to leave behind. And to add insult to injury, the cookie cutting business has further allowed minorities to turn against one another. That black people didn't want to empathize with any other minority and women don't want to sympathize with gays. Society has forced minority populations to pit against one another to see who has suffered the most, and if your suffering doesn't match that of the other, then inevitably it doesn't exist.

Even though I felt that with all the suffering I had experienced as a black female I had no room nor did I want to feel an overdose of compassion for another oppressed culture. It seemed that by being black my suffering, my fears were worse and more deadly than any other marginalized population. I didn't want to consider another populations hardships and when I did try to feel them I wouldn't dare rival them against mine. I am a strong BLACK WOMAN, what more of a curse, of a struggle, of a fear could exist beyond that!

Yet, just as I found myself bleeding for the soul of Jewish families, that same blood was shed for those battling with sexual orientation and identity. Even though I have



8

spent countless hours of my life in cultural immersions, this time I was able to access a different lens which regulated my comfort and awareness of self.

Ultimately, we all face battles and that it isn't important whose load is heavier but how much you decide to help them carry. I felt that the impact of the experience could have been greater if we were encouraged to spend several weeks in a different culture. Reason being, the project design was geared toward gaining awareness and empathy for other minorities through the direct interaction with someone from an opposing "world." Furthermore, unless advised, I don't think white people understand the core of social prejudices which is the impinging fear that another's harm or hate of who we are could endanger our self image or greater, our life. I don't think they realize that The prejudice and racism is hiding in every dark alley or empty parking lot. That safety isn't something we expect law enforcement to protect but something we gamble on which ultimately relies on our ability to defend ourselves or precisely we conceptualize an emergency escape everywhere we go.

Having only one day to experience a different culture only tickled their curiosity but made a mockery of our fears and reality of life's threat. We read a book about lifting the white veil, but when listening to the culture immersions of other classmates, most didn't truly lift anything nor challenge themselves to really take the project seriously. Without disclosing the fallacy of my classmates immersions, they took it as a joke and not as an opportunity to grow. Maybe the timing of the class and the project was poor and that it was too difficult to experience a "real" immersion within this 8 week course but maybe not. I am glad that I shared the trip with a classmate because we were able to talk about our experiences on the drive back, and I was able to challenge her to see things



differently and on a deeper level. Some of the things I saw were directly different from her account which challenged us both to take a second look at our own interpretation of the events. Also, I don't know if I would have done the same immersion if I hadn't had the comfort of a driving buddy. I definitely wouldn't have gone to a club by myself, gay or straight. But felt that being at the club was the most rich and real experience of the time spent culturally immersing and the experience wouldn't have impacted me the same without that piece. Even though we road together we were able to experience the immersion at our own pace and separate space. Further, we were able to challenge the view at which we comfortably saw that world and create a new interpretation of our cultural baptism.

But possibly, even more important, I realized that we are ALL in this battle together. The feelings that class and our journal entries flirted with came to a head during that humbling drive home to Manhattan. I realized that the same fear I had when going into certain areas of the Midwest is the same fear that LGBT populations face. The similarities were startling. Not only did I have the all too familiar fear of being accosted or harmed because I am black, but now, I had experienced the fear that someone would try and hurt me due to my assumed sexual preference.

In conclusion, as I waded in my own self righteousness I baptized myself in wisdom and change, I realized that just as my feuding married couples bring up the past and the pain as if their hurt was more valued than their spouses, I was doing the same thing. I realized that when spouses refuse to validate their feelings that the need to "one up" persists. I feel that if black people as a nation was given validation that proving their world to be more difficult than any other population would be null and void. Having that

validation would increase inter-minority alliances which in turn would create the recipe for revolt and ultimate change.

Thanks for challenging yourself to expand your worldview to include the LGBT community. Your personal experience of marginalization has helped you embrace and understand the plight of LGBTs with compassion. A person who hasn't experienced the same often is unable to reach the same level of understanding as you. Your generosity to teach another is also appreciated.

Excellent job.

Terrell A.  
~~the~~

## **D. Reflective Interaction Memos**

### **1. First post class visit memo**

TO: Joyce Baptist  
FROM: Michelle Bemiller  
RE: Post Visit Memo  
DATE: January 30, 2007

The purpose of the January 24 course that I attended was to disseminate information and stimulate discussion on oppression. The intended purpose of the class was to provide information to students and to encourage students to understand and empathize with those in oppressed groups-a necessity for individuals who plan to be therapists. The objective for this class falls in line with the general objective of the whole course-understanding the impact of oppression on individuals and family systems.

I found the structure of the class to be directly in line with the above-stated objectives. You created a well-organized lecture on the topic and stimulated discussion in a safe environment. You were very articulate and clearly demonstrated mastery of the information. I was particularly impressed with your ability to start discussion amongst students and to validate the experiences of all of the students. I found the conversations to be intellectually stimulating and to challenge each student's particular point of view.

I did notice that some of the students are more willing to share their experiences and thoughts than other students. I have a couple of suggestions for this: 1) perhaps going around the table and encouraging all students to respond to a point might create more of an interactive environment for all students or 2) asking students to write a response to a discussion point in their notes and then go around the room and share.

I feel that for the most part, from my observation, that your goals were met. Students seemed to better understand oppression after listening in the class and engaging one another in discussion. I believe that they also understand the importance of this topic for them as therapists. There are some students who appear to come from a more privileged background (I am gauging this from their individual comments on oppression) and I think that they may benefit from a discussion on perspective, privilege, and entitlement. I have some information on perspective and entitlement that I can send to you.

When looking around the room, I did notice two female students (in the back on the left-hand side of the room) who were regularly chatting between themselves. I don't know if these students did not do the reading for the week, or if they were discussing the material between themselves. I thought that it seemed disruptive and was disrespectful to you as the professor. I would pay more attention to these two and make certain that they are reading and discussing the material for the week. One way to ensure that students have read the material would be to emphasize that they need to integrate their thoughts on the readings into your discussion for the day. When they revert to personal experiences (as occurred a couple of times from the one African American one in question), you can then

request that she discuss her experience as it relates to the readings (i.e., compare and contrast, does her experience match what she read or is it an exception? What has she learned from the material about herself and about family therapy?).

Overall, I found the course to be quite stimulating. I thoroughly enjoyed the discussion and thought you did an excellent job.

## **2. Second post class visit memo**

TO: Joyce Baptist  
FROM: Michelle Bemiller  
RE: Post Visit 2 Memo  
DATE: February 16, 2007

I found this class meeting to be quite amazing in all honesty. I thought that the class was run very well and that you managed the students' questions, comments and concerns like a true professional. In fact, I was in awe of your ability to engage students in such sensitive material. The class was emotional and quite powerful. I believe, from my observation, that the students really learned a lot about white privilege and racism from one another.

I think that it was very smart of you to open up the discussion with the very general question, "what has been the most important part of the semester for you so far." This allowed all students to engage in the discussion and also provided a safe starting point. Students really could have gone a number of directions with that question. While the topics discussed elicited powerful and often painful responses from students, I felt that students were very respectful of one another and that you created a very safe environment for them and also provided leadership for the students. There were a couple of times where I felt that you might have jumped into the discussion and directed things a bit more, but I can also see why you may have wanted the students to direct their own discussions to a large extent. Overall, I thought this class was fabulous and I learned a lot from observing (teaching strategies as well as material discussed).

## **3. Third post class visit memo**

TO: Joyce Baptist  
FROM: Michelle Bemiller  
RE: Third Visit  
DATE: April 4, 2007

This memo is in reference to the third class visit regarding Hispanic families. I found this material to be intriguing. I thought that the class was well organized and that you demonstrated an excellent command of the information. You were very articulate and fielded student's questions and concerns exceptionally well. I felt that the film for the day did an excellent job of illustrating the key concepts discussed for the day. I thought that using the small group discussion after the film was a really good idea. It was especially

useful because you used the small group data for further use for the large group discussion. This was an excellent strategy.

In assessing student performance, I would have to say that some students seem to be much more prepared than others. I don't know if this is an indication that students are not reading, or that they are simply disconnected from the topic of the day-which could be the case if they don't feel an affinity towards the topic. In other words, if they don't feel that they will ever come into contact with this population, they may see it as irrelevant. Perhaps you could find a way to discuss/demonstrate how they may in fact come into contact with this population. Or, perhaps you could develop an activity for early in the semester that demonstrates to them what it might be like for them as therapists if they came into contact with a client that they had not anticipated. For example, perhaps they could do "mock" counseling sessions with one another using characteristics/scripts that you give them. They could then discuss what it felt like to work with a group that they are unfamiliar with and could explore how their lack of knowledge could have negatively impacted this group as you move throughout the semester. In other words, perhaps you could continue to revisit this activity as you discuss different populations, reiterating the importance of having knowledge about diverse groups. Anyway, this is just a thought, and clearly not a very developed one. Overall, I enjoyed the class and felt that you did a superb job in working with the students.

## **E. In-class activity**

### **1. Profile Sheet**

