### Attachment Theory and Clinical Practice (CAMS-UA.0206)

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<th>Session #</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>OVERVIEW OF CLASS, INTERFACE OF PSYCHOLOGY PRACTICE AND ATTACHMENT THEORY</td>
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Attachment theory and research have greatly enhanced our understanding of the role of parent-child relationships in the development of psychopathology. Illuminated are the ways that early experiences of separation and loss can lead to a range of psychological, behavioral, and psychosomatic problems, and how these can be addressed in the context of a healing relationship. Attachment theory is a psycho-bio-social theory, which is increasingly influential in clinical thinking and practice. It offers a model of emotional, cognitive and behavioral development, which is founded in the work of John Bowlby and has been developed in a number of directions in the years since its conception. The model is embedded in parent-child relationships and emphasizes the impact that this reciprocity has on the development of the child.

In this session, we will begin our discussion of attachment theory, its early development, and its basic concepts. In addition, we will review course requirements and expectations. The objective of this session is to define the terms and concepts utilized when discussing attachment and to outline the overall objectives of the course.

*Readings:*

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<th>2 – 3</th>
<th>ROOTS OF ATTACHMENT THEORY I-II</th>
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In these sessions, we will explore the history and development of attachment theory and attachment behavior. Part one will focus on the emergence of attachment theory at the same time as, and in contrast to, the development of object relations theory. Next, we will discuss attachment as a system in its own right, as a control system, and discuss Harlow’s research with monkeys. Attachment behavior provides a balance between safety and exploration. The caregiver provides a secure base from which the child can explore the world. Attachment is a process that involves a synchrony between the infant and the mother. We will also discuss the intergenerational transmission of attachment and its implications in child welfare practice.

Part two will discuss key concepts in the development of emotions. When separation is threatened, the child feels anxious and angry. Early experiences of the caregiver are
crucial for the child’s developing working model of relationships, the child’s place in the world, and the world itself. We will discuss the results of care that is attuned to a child’s needs and the effect on the child when that is not the case. We will discuss Mary Ainsworth’s work and types of attachment styles (i.e. secure, anxious, avoidant, disoriented/disorganized). The stability of these patterns will be examined and evaluated by exploring current research. We will talk about revisions to the theory and Mary Main’s classifications. The infant strange situation method of classifying attachment type will be described in detail, and we will review the procedure from printed materials. The class will discuss how attachment develops and first and second year cycles. We will then explore how we account for the persistence of attachment patterns and the concept of working models of self, other, and the world.

Readings:
Holmes, PART I, pp. 13-60.
Becker-Weidman & Shell, CHAPTERS 1-4, pp. 7-108

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<th>ROOTS OF ATTACHMENT THEORY III</th>
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<td>In this session, we will explore the second major round of research and work on attachment theory (i.e., the work of Mary Main, George Solomon, and Erik Hesse). We will learn how Foster Cline applied attachment theory to treatment and the early foundations of attachment therapy. We will cover the neurobiology of attachment and affect regulation. We will review Bowlby’s “working model” in detail and look at supporting evidence of the stability of attachment classification.</td>
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Readings:
Holmes, PART II & III, pp. 61-216
ACES Study, Felitti 1998
Hesse and Main Article

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<th>5</th>
<th>ATTACHMENT THEORY APPLIED TO CHILD DEVELOPMENT</th>
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<td>In this session, we will focus on infant and child assessments. To elucidate these points, clips will be shown of the strange situation protocol, highlighting the behaviors of infants with varying types of attachment. We will discuss the normal attachment process and difficulties and disruptions of attachment. We will also address the concept of loss and explore how loss creates increased vulnerability.</td>
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Readings:
Cassidy & Shaver, chapter 7 (Psychobiological origins of infant attachment and its role in development), chapter 12 (Normative development: The Ontogency of Attachment)

| 6 | DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSES AMONG CHILDREN AND ADULTS |
In this session, we will discuss the differential diagnosis of Reactive Attachment. The symptoms of Attachment Disorder and Complex Trauma will be addressed in detail. In addition, we will discuss child maltreatment and its effects on attachment. We will study the diagnoses most often confused with Reactive Attachment Disorder, including Bipolar Disorder I, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Disorder, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. We will look at symptom overlap and how to tease apart the differences.

**Readings:**
Becker-Weidman & Shell, CHAPTER 6 & 7, pp.130-204
Cassidy & Shaver, chapter 18 (Measurement of attachment security), chapter 25 (The adult attachment interview), chapter 27 (Attachment and psychopathology in childhood).

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<th>7</th>
<th>CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM</th>
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<td><strong>Literature Analysis Due</strong></td>
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<td>During this class we will discuss the child welfare system. Students will analyze policies using attachment theory. We will learn about the foster care system, residential treatment facilities, and child protective services. Material and readings will be applied to narratives of real placement histories.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
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<td>Folman, RD (1998). I was to ken: How children experience removal from their parents preliminary to placement into foster care. Adoption Quarterly, 2, 7-35.</td>
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<td>This session will focus on international adoption. We will first discuss how agencies prepare families (or rather, do not prepare families). We will then talk about orphanage care, life in an institution, and its effects on the child. The class will also learn about US adoption policies, legislation, and international agreements on adoptions.</td>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
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<td>*Students will be guided to find one article on attachment theory and adoption and prepare a critique. Deveny-Leggit 2012</td>
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<td><strong>Additional articles will be distributed by professor.</strong></td>
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| 9 | ATTACHMENT THEORY AND FOSTER-CARE/ADOPTION (Cont.) |
This session will focus on foster care and domestic adoption from the child welfare system. We will first discuss how agencies prepare and train foster parents. We will then talk about foster care and impermanent settings and the effects of these on the child. The class will also learn about factors that facilitate or impede child mental health in the foster care system.

Readings:
Committee on Early Childhood, Adoption and Dependent Care, (2000). Developmental Issues for Young Children in Foster Care, Pediatrics, 106:1145-1150.

10 TREATMENT OF CHILDREN USING ATTACHMENT THEORY: PARENTING PRINCIPLES

For children with an attachment disorder, the birthmother and their foster or adoptive mother are profound sources of ambivalence and conflict. The birthmother is typically the one the child most wanted to connect with and also the one who caused the most pain. She is dangerous, anxiety provoking, an object of love and fear. These children confuse that mother with their new mother. Increased intimacy commonly leads to increased acting out to protect against abandonment, or it may lead to hypervigilence and superficial engagement to avoid another loss. This session will turn the emphasis to attachment-focused treatment. We will first discuss parenting principles using attachment theory. The child needs understanding, not arguing; acknowledging feelings is a beginning. We will discuss the attitude parents should adopt when interacting with their child. Discipline should be intended to teach, not punish; thus, the child learns his behavior has consequences but never feels abandoned. Finally, we will talk about facilitating developmental attachment and the twelve principles of parenting.

Readings:
Becker-Weidman & Shell, Chapters 8, 9, & 10, pp.204-287.

11 TREATMENT OF CHILDREN USING ATTACHMENT THEORY

*Critical literature review due

In this class, we will begin to discuss treatment using attachment theory, starting with an overview of attachment-focused therapy. The central issues addressed in treatment are separation and loss, trust, rejection, shame and guilt, identity, intimacy, loyalty, and power and control. The primary experience of the child is abandonment, and the core issues tend to be the loss and fear of further abandonment. We will discuss the symptoms of fear and loss and how these are expressed in the child’s behavior. Next, we will talk about the phases and structure of treatment, as well as the process of therapy; core components will include engagement, therapeutic guidelines, and terminating treatment. We will discuss


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<td>In this class we will examine the relationship between attachment and culture. We will consider cultural differences and how these relate to the development of attachment. We will review relevant studies and discuss how to integrate cultural considerations into what we have learned so far in the course.</td>
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**Readings:**
Chapter 5 in Grossman’s *The Major Longitudinal Studies* (Bielesfeld and Regensburg studies)

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<td>In this class, we will focus on how attachment theory applies to adults. We will first discuss how attachment theory applies to romantic relationships and conceptualize love as an attachment process. We will review the assessment of attachment in adults and discuss the Adult Attachment Interview. We will talk about the presentation of insecure attachment in adults and its manifestations. Finally, we will cover how attachment theory applies to couples therapy and more general family therapy.</td>
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**Readings:**
Chapter 9 in Grossman’s *The Major Longitudinal Studies* (Stony Brook Adult Relationship project)
Fraley, R. C. (2002). Attachment stability from infancy to adulthood: Meta-analysis and
**ATTACHMENT THEORY AND SOCIAL WELFARE POLICY**

This week we will continue to expand upon our discussion of attachment theory and how it relates to social policy. We will explore social welfare policy, the current standards and regulations, research, data, and outcomes, and discuss conflicts. The class will start with an overview of the history and evolution of adoption and the key features of modern adoption laws. We will further discuss important federal legislation that guides adoption practices, especially as related to special needs adoption, transracial adoption, and the adoption of children under the supervision of public child welfare agencies. Since the passage of the federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) in 1997, adoption services at the state level have noticeably changed; we will explore the impact of this legislation on safety and permanency for children and termination of parental rights. Finally, we will discuss international adoption in the context of human rights issues.

*Readings:*

**WHERE ARE WE? CURRENT RESEARCH ISSUES, TRENDS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

In this class we will wrap up class presentations of papers and projects. The second half of this session will serve as an opportunity for students to synthesize what has been learned throughout the course and to discuss how perspectives on attachment theory may be expected to evolve in the future. We will address remaining questions and consider what we as a society and as individuals can do for children and adolescents with attachment disorders.

*Readings:*
- Cassidy & Shaver, (2009), Chapter 37, 880-905.
Readings:


Committee on Early Childhood, Adoption and Dependent Care, (2000). Developmental Issues for Young Children in Foster Care, Pediatrics, 106:1145-1150


Folman, RD (1998). I was taken: How children experience removal from their parents preliminary to placement into foster care. Adoption Quarterly, 2, 7-35.


**REQUIRED TEXTS**


Additional Optional Texts: Any of these texts will provide you with practice specific methodologies.


van der Kolk, Bessel A., McFarlane, Alexander C., & Weisaeth, Lars, Editors. 1996. Traumatic Stress: The Effects of Overwhelming Experience on Mind, Body, and
Grading:

a. Class participation (10%)

b. Beginning the second week and continuing through the remainder of the term, students will submit a two-paged, double spaced, summary of the readings due at the beginning of class, with a cogent, well-thought-out question (20%). The paper may be a summary of the major points of the readings, or a more in depth discussion of a particular point of interest. The question must be for class discussion. You will be evaluated on the depth of your understanding of the material and the pertinence of your question. Keep one copy for use during class and turn in the second copy at the beginning of class.

c. Literature Review (20%): These papers may be completed at any point during the course but are to be turned in no later than session 10. Paper should be six to eight pages, double-spaced. Students are to select a confined area of study and thoroughly read and critique a minimum of 6 journal articles beyond those required in the course syllabus. These articles must be on recent (2000-2013) attachment research as it pertains to one of the following areas of study: (1) Infant and/or early child development, (2) adolescent development, (3) adult development, (4) adult romantic relationships, (5) adult or child psychopathology, (6) cross-cultural issues, (7) clinical practice, or (8) child maltreatment and/or child welfare. The paper should be a summary and critique of the articles, including implications for practice. The paper will be graded as follows: Explanation of the research (30%), critique of the research (25%), implications for practice and/or policy and recommendations for future research (30%), writing style and use of correct APA formatting (15%). Students must make copies of all articles addressed and submit them with the literature review.

d. Literature Analysis Paper (20%): Due at week 7. Students are required to read one of the following stories:
   v. Pinocchio

Students must then analyze the story from an attachment perspective. The analysis should focus on the relationships or character development and its association with attachment theory and research. The papers must be four to six pages in length and utilize at least three references.
e. FINAL PAPER (30%): Due at the final class session. Students are to critically review the evidence for one subtopic in attachment theory, using recent empirical literature. All topics must be reviewed and approved by the instructor. The paper should critique the methods of research presented (i.e. point out strengths and weaknesses of design, sampling, measurement, analysis, interpretation, etc). Sample topics include: Maltreated children show disorganized attachments; children’s attachment security changes when they are exposed to negative events and negative parenting styles; mothers with insecure attachments have children with insecure attachments; and aspects of maternal versus paternal attachment.

All papers must be typewritten with a font size of 12pt. and 1" margins. Two unstapled copies of each paper must be provided. Students must reference using APA style. Students are strongly encouraged to carefully proofread their papers. Poorly written papers will be penalized. Late papers will not be accepted and will receive a score of zero.