

**AMBERTON UNIVERSITY**  
**SYLLABUS FOR LECTURE/CLASSROOM COURSE**

**CSL6792.01 Couples Therapy**  
**Summer 2026**  
**Location: Garland Campus**

**PROFESSOR INFORMATION:**

Name: Dr. Don Hebbard  
Phone Number: 972-279-6511 ext. 157  
Faculty Fax #: 972-686-5890  
Office Location: Garland or Room 17  
Office Hours: Meetings scheduled as needed.  
Email Address: DHebbard@Amberton.edu

**COURSE INFORMATION:**

CSL6792.01 Couples Therapy  
Level: Graduate  
Beginning Date of Session: Saturday, June 13, 2026 Class Meets First Time June 20  
Ending Date of Session: Thursday, August 20, 2026  
The first class meeting is **June 20**, in Room **17 (Garland)**

**Holiday Closing:**

**4<sup>th</sup> of July Holiday: There will be no classes held and no assignments due on Saturday, July 4, 2026.**

All Monday-Thursday lecture classes begin promptly at 6:30 p.m.  
All Saturday lecture classes begin promptly at 8:30 a.m.

**COURSE PREREQUISITES:**

None

**TEXTBOOK(S) AND REQUIRED MATERIALS:**

Title: Doing Couple Therapy  
Author: Robert Taibbi  
Publisher: Guilford Press  
Year Published: 2017  
Edition: 2  
ISBN: 10: or 13: 9781462520137  
Price: Available at <http://amberton.ecampus.com>

Title: ReMatch: Love in Extended Adulthood  
Author: Don Hebbard  
Publisher: Credo Publishing  
Year Published: 2025  
Edition: 1  
ISBN: 10: or 13: 9781625863034  
Price: Available at <http://amberton.ecampus.com>

Title: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy With Couples and Families  
Author: Frank Datillio  
Publisher: Guilford  
Year Published: 2014  
Edition: 3rd  
ISBN: 10: or 13: 978462514168  
Price: Available at <http://amberton.ecampus.com>

Amberton University has an agreement with eCampus.com to provide a full-service online bookstore to students. The Amberton University Virtual Bookstore is accessible through the University's website, [www.Amberton.edu](http://www.Amberton.edu). There is also a bookstore link in the Student Portal.

The AU Virtual Bookstore provides an easy to use interface, online buyback of books, and same day shipment of most titles with an average delivery time of 2-3 days depending on the student's location. Textbook options include new, used, rental, and electronic media as available.

Since no books are sold on campus, students should plan accordingly and purchase their books in advance of the first day of class, allowing time for shipping. Be certain you are enrolled in the course before purchasing your book(s). All textbook information (Title, Author, ISBN, etc.) is available in course syllabi so students can shop competitively. Most textbooks can be purchased from many different textbook vendors. Some textbooks may only be available on the University's Virtual Bookstore. Students should be careful to obtain the exact resource(s) required for the course.

## **LINKS TO COUNSELING HANDBOOKS**

### **MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

<https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/CMH-Handbook-1-5-26.pdf>

### **MA in Marriage and Family Therapy**

<https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/MFT-Handbook-1-5-26.pdf>

### **MA in School Counseling**

<https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/MA-SC-Handbook-June-2025.pdf>

## **APA Requirement**

APA (American Psychological Association) style is most commonly used to cite sources within the social sciences. This resource, revised according to the 7<sup>th</sup> edition, offers examples for the general format of APA research papers, in-text citations, endnotes/footnotes, and the reference page. For more information, please consult the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, (7<sup>th</sup> ed.). All coursework at Amberton University will comply with the standards contained in the APA Publication Manual.

## **COURSE COMPETENCIES:**

This course will focus on the theory and practice of couples therapy. Relevant theories and techniques addressing the formation, growth and renegotiation of the couple relationship will be explored. Therapeutic approaches to understanding attraction, mate selection, couples therapy along with special issues such as extra-marital affairs, divorce, and attachment will be discussed. The ethical and professional role of the therapist in the process of couple's therapy will be examined.

## **UPON COMPLETION OF THE COURSE, THE STUDENT WILL BE COMPETENT IN:**

1. Examining the major theories of couple's therapy including traditional approaches, integrative approaches, and post-modern approaches.
2. Explaining the major concepts of cognitive-behavioral couple's therapy.
3. Describing the methods of clinical assessment in couple's therapy.
4. Discussing the stages of couple's therapy including initial contact, assessment and developing a treatment protocol, therapeutic contracts, and conducting therapy with a couple.
5. Exploring strategies for restoring commitment and trust in a relationship.
6. Examining strategies for building effective communication skills in couple relationships.
7. Discussing approaches to resolving conflict in marital interactions.
8. Identifying approaches to problem solving, decision-making and the allocation of power in decision making with couples.
9. Exploring the role of the family of origin in mate selection, attachment, and the formation of unconscious marriage.

10. Describing the theories of attraction, mate selection and the process of pre-marital counseling.
11. Describing the types of extra-marital affairs and the various treatment protocols appropriate to each.
12. Explaining the process of separation and divorce and the role of therapy in the decision-making and reconstruction phases.
13. Discussing the impact of sexual abuse and trauma on marital interaction patterns.
14. Examining the role of neurobiological process as they impact marriage.
15. Exploring the role of the marriage and family therapist professionally and personally as a facilitator of growth in couple's relationships.
16. Understanding the AAMFT professional code of ethics and the Texas LMFT professional code of ethics in the practice of marriage and family therapy.
17. Assessing how couple therapists and couples therapy online can leverage Artificial Intelligence AI in the treatment of relationships in couples therapy.

### **ACQUIRED SKILLS:**

1. Students will have the ability to utilize a six-stage model of couples therapy.
2. Students will be able to assess and treat five major forms of extra-marital affairs.
3. Students will be able to assess couples who are candidates for couples therapy.

### **COURSE POLICIES:**

1. **Meetings:** The class meets: **June 20, no class July 4, July 18, August 1 and August 15.**
2. **July 4:** In lieu of class July 4 students will have **assignments on Moodle to complete.** This will be covered the first day of class.
3. **Attendance:** Class **WILL meet in person all other Saturdays**, and **attendance at the other sessions is required** to prevent a reduction in the final grade, no exceptions. The final grade will be assessed based in part on attendance, preparation and participation.
4. **June 20: Students are expected to be PRESENT THE FIRST SATURDAY** for introduction and orientation or have the final grade reduced. Failure to attend the first class means the student would not be present until the third-class period and therefore unable to actively engage with the course.
5. **Moodle:** The **Moodle Course will contain additional course materials** to complete between each of the Saturday meetings.
6. **Final Exam:** The Final Exam will be given online, **Tuesday evening August 18<sup>th</sup>** following the final Saturday class on August 15. No late testing is allowed due to end of Session that week.
7. **Due Date Policy:** All assignments are **due on the due date** given in the course orientation. Late work is reduced **one letter grade for every day late** with no work accepted following one week.
8. **Textbooks:** Students are **expected to have books and materials the first-class meeting.** Assignments are not delayed for books to arrive. It is the students' responsibility to be prepared.
9. **Course Notes:** The Professor has prepared a comprehensive **course outline, course schedule and course notes given the first day** of class.
10. **Communications:** It is the students' responsibility to **notify the Professor of issues encountered immediately** to be dealt with in a timely manner. Waiting until the end of the course will either limit or eliminate academic options.
11. **Graduate Level Work:** This is a graduate level 6000 course. **Graduate students are expected to write, communicate and critically think on a high level and present work that is reflective of a 6000-level student.** Grades will be automatically reduced for work that does not reflect academic competence. **Course work that does not follow the instructions for the assignment will be returned to the student without grading and result in a failing grade.**
12. **Counseling Knowledge Base:** Couples Therapy is both a theoretical and methodological course. It assumes student knowledge of Family Systems Theory, marriage and the family and basic counseling skills in order to grasp concepts and complete the skills assignments of the course.

### **Student's Responsibilities**

This syllabus contains information, policies, and procedures for a specific course. By enrolling, the student agrees to read, understand, and abide by the policies, rules, regulations, and ethical standards of Amberton University as contained in the current university catalog and schedule of classes.

### **Attendance Policy:**

Regular and punctual class attendance and engagement is expected at Amberton University. In case of an absence, it is the student's responsibility to contact the professor as soon as possible. If a student intends on withdrawing from a course, it is the student's responsibility to follow the university's policy on formally withdrawing from a course. **Ceasing to attend classes does not constitute an official withdrawal.**

Attendance in a lecture course is defined as punctual arrival to, and engagement in, a full lecture session. A Student in a lecture course missing more than 20% (two class periods for weekday classes or one class period for Saturday classes) of the class meetings may be assigned a grade of an "F" or withdrawn at the discretion of Amberton University.

Attendance in a distance learning course is defined as active participation in the weekly online class sessions. "Active participation" can be defined as: submitting an academic assignment, taking an exam, engaging in an interactive tutorial, participating in an online discussion forum (or chat session), or initiating (or responding to) a communication with a faculty member about an academic assignment or the subject matter of the course. A student not meeting these requirements may be assigned a grade of an "F" or withdrawn at the discretion of Amberton University.

### **Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work as though it were your own. If you use another person's words, ideas, or information; or if you use material from an outside source – whether a book, magazine, newspaper, business publication, broadcast, speech, or electronic media – you must acknowledge that source. Plagiarism is a violation of the University's code of student ethical conduct and is one that is taken seriously. Amberton University operates on an honor system; therefore, honesty and integrity are essential characteristics of all who are associated with the institution. All Amberton students are expected to abide by the honor system and maintain academic integrity in all their work. Amberton University and its instructors monitor student work for plagiarism and reserve the right to submit such work to technology-based plagiarism detection services and applications at any time.

Self-plagiarism means reusing work that you have already published or submitted for a class. It can involve:

- Resubmitting an entire paper
- Copying or paraphrasing passages from your previous work

Self-plagiarism misleads your readers by presenting previous work as completely new and original. Students may not submit the same paper in substance in two or more classes without prior written permission of the instructors involved.

Amberton University students who use Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated content must adhere to the following policies:

**Originality:** Students must avoid presenting AI generated content as their own original work. It is essential to acknowledge the involvement of AI in the content creation process in order to maintain academic and ethical standards.

**Paraphrasing:** When using AI generated content, students must rephrase and/or modify the generated text. Paraphrased AI generated content should also be properly cited.

**Acknowledgement:** When using AI generated content in any assignment, proper credit must be given to the AI system that generated the content. <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

Students agree that by taking this course, all required assignments may be subject to submission for a textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism and self-plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in future papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com website.

Turnitin is a writing improvement and plagiarism prevention tool which uses special algorithms, to compare text-based student submissions to the Turnitin database and other online sources. Turnitin produces a detailed **similarity report** that can be customized and viewed by instructors and students.

Turnitin “Draft Coach” is a Google based add-on to Turnitin which supports students in developing high-quality academic writing; and serves as an integrity coach. Draft Coach helps address errors and improve the quality of student’s writing by highlighting grammar mistakes, identifying incorrectly cited sources, and scanning for similarity across several databases. By providing formative feedback on how to address citation issues, incorrect grammar, and matches with the Turnitin database, Draft Coach provides explanations to help students become more confident writers, capable of producing higher quality work both in academics and in the workplace.

Please see below for instructions.

**COURSE DELIVERY METHODOLOGY:**

This course is offered as a Lecture/Classroom course. This course requires that students meet at a designated time in the classroom.

**COURSE OUTLINE AND CALENDAR:**

1. This is a lecture-based course. It will meet every Saturday except July 4<sup>th</sup> and use in class instruction not available online or in the textbooks.
2. The course will utilize Course Skills assignments to role play the various instigations taught in class.
3. The course will utilize online lectures to supplement in class lectures to cover the competencies.
4. The course will utilize various clinical practice videos to give students exposure to and experience with various couples therapy tools and techniques.
5. The course will utilize course readings from three textbooks covering various aspects of both the theory and practice of couples therapy.

Week	Topic	Assignment	Competencies Covered	Due Date
1				Get 3 textbooks; Taibbi, Datillio, and Hebbard
2 First Class Saturday June 20	Course Introduction Introduction to the Field Attraction, Mate Selection,	ReMatch Reading Questions 1-9		Nothing Due
3	ReMatch Process Dating Traditional and Online	Complete ReMatch Reading Questions 1-9		Due Friday July 3 ReMatch Questions
4 July 4 No Saturday in person class. See Moodle.	Stage One of Couples Therapy	2 Video Summaries: Harville Hendricks Prepare/Enrich Inventories Moodle Lectures; Social Learning Commitment Building, Basic Rules of Relationships, Caring Days		Due Thursday July 9 Video Summaries Hendricks and Prepare
5	Stage One Skills	Taibbi Reading Questions Caring Days Assignment Gottman Video		Nothing Due

6 Third Class Saturday July 18	Stage Two of Couples Therapy	Speaker Listener Technique Conflict Resolution Models		July 18 Caring Days Due Taibbi Questions Due Gottman Video Due
7		Datillio Reading Questions Speaker Listener Role Play Conflict Role Play Videos-DCTCT and Divorce Therapy		Nothing Due
8 Fourth Class Saturday August 1	Stage 5 of Couples Therapy	Datillio Chapter 6 Two Skills Role Play read and select.		August 1 Datillio Questions Speaker Listener and Conflict Role Plays Videos-DCTCT and Divorce Due
9	Special Topics and Approaches in Couples Therapy	2 Skills Role Play from Datillio Chapter 6 ReMatch Questions 10-17 Video: Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy		Nothing Due
10 Fifth Class Saturday August 15	The Treatment of Extra-Marital Affairs	Review for Final Exam-Closed Note and Text.		August 15 ReMatch 10-17 2 Datillio Skills EFT Video
		Final Exam Tuesday August 18 6:30-8:00 p.m. No text or notes allowed.		

### GRADING CRITERIA:

Grading Scale:

Final Exam	25%
Course Skills	25%
Course Videos	25%
Reading Questions	25%

Grades may be lowered for poor performance in one's own academic organization or failure to perform as a potential clinical professional in counseling.

Graduate	
92 – 100	A
82 – 91	B
72 – 81	C
62 – 71	D
Below 62	F

## **GRADE NOTIFICATION AND INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK:**

Each assignment/exam submitted will be reviewed, graded, and returned to the student in a timely manner, along with appropriate commentary.

Final grades are processed approximately one week after the last day of the session and may be located in the My Grades section of the online registration portal as well as being emailed to the student's Amberton University email. Amberton University staff will not release grades over the phone. University instructors will not leave a message with comments or grades in any type of media that is not secure.

For questions regarding grades after the semester has ended, students should use their email account and contact the instructor at the faculty email address as provided above in *Professor Information* area.

### ***Incomplete Grades***

An "I" (incomplete grade) is given at the discretion of the professor and may be given only when an emergency or illness prevents the student from completing course requirements. Should an "I" be granted, the student has 30 days from the end of the session to complete the conditions of the incomplete. An "I" which is not properly removed within 30 days following the session enrolled will become an "F" grade.

### ***How to Withdraw From a Course***

To be official, the class withdrawal must be in writing and signed by the student requesting the withdrawal; no withdrawal is accepted verbally. Please review the "Schedule of Classes" for procedures for class changes or withdrawals and the refund policy and schedule.

## **COURSE COMMUNICATIONS:**

This course is offered as a lecture course; however, several technological options are available to faculty and students that can enhance communication both during the session and after the session has ended.

This lecture course utilizes several technological tools to enhance communication among faculty and students, both during and after the session.

- Email Access via Single Sign-On (SSO):

You must use your SSO credentials to access your email.

- **Access the SSO Gateway:** The Student Portal can be accessed through a link on the University's website at <http://www.Amberton.edu> or directly at <http://sso.amberton.edu>.
- Moodle Messaging:

For quick, course-specific communication, please utilize the messaging feature available within Moodle. This is often the fastest way to reach your instructor or classmates regarding course topics.

### **Email Communication**

Each student enrolled is assigned an Amberton email account, which gives the student access to the Amberton email system ([my.Amberton.edu](mailto:my.Amberton.edu)). This email account is provided by Google Apps for Education. Students are encouraged to check their email regularly for University news, notices, and to communicate with instructors.

## **SINGLE SIGN-ON (SSO) INSTRUCTIONS FOR AMBERTON UNIVERSITY**

Amberton University uses a Single Sign-On (SSO) portal to provide secure, one-time access to various systems like Moodle, Amberton Email (Gmail), and Campus Web.

### **Here are the step-by-step instructions for logging into the SSO portal:**

#### **1. Access the SSO Portal**

You have two main ways to reach the login page:

- Direct URL: Open your web browser and go directly to the SSO login page:

<https://sso.amberton.edu>

- Via University Website (Alternative):

1. Go to the Amberton University website: <http://amberton.edu>.
  2. Click the menu icon (often represented by 3 horizontal bars typically found on the right side of the screen).
  3. Click the SSO Login link.
2. Enter Your Credentials
- When prompted, enter your Amberton University credentials:
- Username: This is the same as your University email account name (the part before @my.Amberton.edu).
  - Format: Your capitalized first name initial + your entire last name + the last three digits of your SSN.
  - Example: If your email is JSmith789@my.Amberton.edu, your Username is JSmith789.
  - Password: This is your Amberton University ID # (AUID), and it must include the dashes.
  - Example: 07-999-876
3. Set Up Multi-Factor Authentication (Initial Login Only)
- First-Time Users: During your initial log-in, the system will prompt you to set up Two-Factor Authentication (2FA) for added security.
  - Follow the on-screen steps to establish your preferred authentication method (e.g., text message, or an authenticator application like Google Authenticator).
4. Access Your Applications
- Once successfully logged into the SSO portal, you will see a dashboard with icons or links for the various applications you can access.
  - Click on the application you wish to use (e.g., Moodle, Gmail, or CampusWeb), and you will be taken directly to it without needing to log in again

If you have lost or do not know your University email address or have access issues, please contact the IT Help Desk at:

(972-279-6511 ext. 128  
[e-sysop@amberton.edu](mailto:e-sysop@amberton.edu))

### **INSTRUCTOR/COURSE EVALUATION:**

Each session, all Amberton students are requested to evaluate their courses. The evaluation process is an important one and provides students with an anonymous and confidential way to give meaningful feedback to the University. Summary information and comments are provided to faculty after the close of the session. Students' identities are not disclosed.

Students will be notified through the Amberton email system of the Course Evaluation procedures. Usually, the evaluations take place in class during week 9 of the session. Please take advantage of this opportunity and participate in the evaluation process.

### **RESEARCH RESOURCES:**

The Library provides access to full-text, and peer reviewed articles, and digital research tools. Students can search Library holdings through the online catalog and databases search engines available on the Library website or browse the physical library space and holdings located at the Garland campus.

Research items not contained in the Amberton Library collection can be located through interlibrary Loan (ILL) or through the TexShare program with the help of the Library staff. Students with questions about available services, resources, or research, may contact the Library via email at [Library@amberton.edu](mailto:Library@amberton.edu).

### **RESEARCH ACCESS:**

Databases can only be accessed by authorized users, and students at Amberton must enter their Amberton ID credentials-same as Moodle login-to gain access when off-campus. Use an Amberton website, such as the University site ([Amberton.edu](http://Amberton.edu)) or the library site ([Library.amberton.edu](http://Library.amberton.edu)) to find links to databased and digital books. Online resources are available all day, every day.

### ***Library Live Chat Feature***

Library staff are available to assist students with research problems or questions during Library hours through a live online chat feature, telephone, email, "How-to" videos, or in person. The library telephone is (972-279-6511 ext. 185. You can email questions to [library@amberton.edu](mailto:library@amberton.edu) or visit the library in person on the Garland campus for assistance.

### **Microsoft Office 365 Education:**

Amberton University students have access to a license for Office 365 Education, a comprehensive suite of productivity tools. This package includes:

- Microsoft Word for document creation
- Excel for spreadsheets and data analysis
- PowerPoint for presentations
- OneNote for digital note-taking
- Microsoft Teams for collaboration
- Additional classroom tools to enhance your learning experience

To set up your student account and access these resources, please follow the instructions provided in our step-by-step guide: [https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Office365\\_Setup\\_Students.pdf](https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Office365_Setup_Students.pdf)

### **Google Workspace for Education:**

All students are assigned a Gmail account in Google Workspace for Education.

To set up your student account and access these resources, please follow the instructions provided in our step-by-step guide: [https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Google\\_Drive\\_Students.pdf](https://amberton.edu/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Google_Drive_Students.pdf)

Once logged into your student account, you'll have access to a suite of tools designed to enhance your learning experience:

- Google Docs: Create and edit essays, reports, and other written assignments
- Google Slides: Develop engaging presentations for projects and class discussions
- Google Sheets: Perform data analysis, create charts, and manage calculations
- Google Drive: Store, organize, and easily access all your files in the cloud
- Google Calendar: Schedule study sessions, track assignment deadlines, and manage your academic timetable
- Google Keep: Take and organize quick notes during lectures or study sessions
- Google Meet: Attend virtual classes, participate in group study sessions, or meet with teachers
- Google Classroom: Access course materials, submit assignments, and receive feedback from instructors
- Google Forms: Create surveys for research projects or participate in class quizzes
- Google Sites: Build websites or digital portfolios to showcase your work

### **Turnitin Draft Coach**

Instructions for Accessing Turnitin Draft Coach in Google Docs

Turnitin Draft Coach is typically available as an add-on or extension within Google Docs, allowing you to check for similarity, citations, and grammar *before* final submission.

Important Pre-requisites:

- Institutional Access: Draft Coach must be licensed and enabled by your school or institution's Turnitin and Google Workspace administrators. If you cannot find the extension, contact your instructor or IT support.
- Account: You must be signed into Google Docs using your institutional/school email account, not a personal Gmail account, for the extension to appear and work correctly.
- Document Type: The document must be a native Google Doc (not an uploaded .doc, .docx, or .pdf file opened in Docs). If you have another file type, copy and paste the text into a new, blank Google Doc.

### **Step-by-Step Guide**

1. Open Google Docs: Sign in to your institutional Google account and navigate to Google Docs.
2. Open Your Document: Open an existing assignment draft or start a new document and paste your writing into it.
3. Access the Extension: In the top menu bar of your Google Doc, click on Extensions.

4. Select Draft Coach: Hover over or click Turnitin Draft Coach, and then select Turnitin Draft Coach again from the submenu.
    - *Note: If the option does not appear immediately, refresh your page and try again.*
  5. Draft Coach Panel: The Draft Coach panel should now appear on the right-hand side of your screen.
  6. Get Started: The first time you open it, you may need to click a "Get Feedback" or similar button, and you will likely need to read and accept the Terms and Conditions to continue.
  7. Run Reports: Once loaded, you can select the tabs or cards in the panel to run different checks:
    - Similarity Check: Checks against Turnitin's database. (*Note: You typically have a limited number of checks for similarity, often three.*)
    - Citations Check: Analyzes your document for correct citation and referencing practices.
    - Grammar Guide: Provides feedback on grammar and mechanics (usually US-English rules).
- You are now ready to use Turnitin Draft Coach to review and improve your writing!