

## UNIT INFORMATION

UNIT CODE	FR550	
UNIT NAME	Family and Relationship Counselling I	
ASSOCIATED HIGHER EDUCATION AWARDS	Master of Counselling	
DURATION	One semester	
LEVEL	Level 9	
UNIT COORDINATOR	Toni Neil	
TEACHING STAFF	Neil Roberts	
CORE / ELECTIVE	Elective	
WEIGHTING	Unit credit points	10 (0.125 EFTSL)
	Course credit points	240 (3.0 EFTSL)
DELIVERY MODE	Face to face	
STUDENT WORKLOAD	Contact hours	35 hours
	Reading, study and assignment preparation	115 hours
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150 hours</b>
	Student requiring additional English language support are expected to undertake an additional one hour per week.	
PREREQUISITES / COREQUISITES / RESTRICTIONS	<i>Prerequisite</i> CO514 Foundational Counselling Skills	

## RATIONALE

Many of the issues that encourage people to seek the help of a professional counsellor arise from their primary relationships. In order to equip professional practitioners for appropriate interventions in the area of family and relationship counselling, a number of theories and perspectives that are relevant to family and relationship counselling need to be considered. In particular, it can be helpful to understand the family as a system and each person within the family as one part of the system.

The aim of this unit is, therefore, to ensure students have a sound knowledge and understanding of these theories and perspectives of family functioning through application to the experience of their own and other families, and through the development of specific skills and strategies for addressing relationship issues. The unit that follows in this focus area will address working with two people together, so the focus of this unit is to learn skills for working with one person on issues in the relationship system.

## LEARNING DELIVERY PROCESS

***This unit will contain one two-day intensive with synchronous online classes prior to the intensive. Please check the CHC timetable available on the CHC website for the times and dates of both the virtual classes and the intensive.***

### INTENSIVES

Students are expected to attend **at least 80% of every session** for Intensives; unless a legitimate reason for absence (such as traffic hold-ups, mechanical breakdown, illness, serious personal difficulties, major accident or

other extenuating circumstances) has been approved by the course coordinator. Students who are unable to attend classes on a given day should phone the CHC Reception by 9.00am so that lecturers can be notified.

## Some guidelines for intensives:

- 80% attendance – a roll will be taken before and after lunch each day.
- Classes go from 9.00am to 5.00pm everyday unless told otherwise by the lecturer.
- The intensives are very interactive, so please come prepared to contribute and you will get a lot more out of the intensives.

## VIRTUAL CLASSES

Students are expected to attend at least 80% of online classes unless there is a legitimate reason for absence that has been approved by the course coordinator. Your lecturer should be informed as soon as possible regarding any absence.

## Plus, CHC learning portal resources:

- Power points of lectures.
- Essential readings and other useful resources.
- Learning guides.
- Assessment guides.
- Discussion forums.
- News forum.
- Turnitin assessment and feedback tool.

## IMPORTANT STUDENT INFORMATION

Whilst studying counselling, students are often required to record demonstrations of their counselling skills and practice. When submitting written transcripts, reports, reflections or other work, you must ensure that the “client” (this may be a fellow student or another person) has been de-identified. Initials or pseudonyms may be used instead.

Your “client” should be made aware when consenting to the recording of sessions, that the recording and/or transcripts *may be* viewed by academic staff and study support staff.

**Students are required to only use initials of clients / peers / family / friends when they write their reflective papers / transcripts, etc.**

## STUDENT FEEDBACK

You will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the unit throughout and at the of semester to enable us to continually improve the subject. Feedback from previous years has been vital in reshaping course and unit content, materials and assessments.

The Family and Relationship Counselling units as a set have been restructured based on student enrolment patterns. This unit now includes a skills component.

## CONTENT

1. Understanding the family system from biblical, psychological and sociological perspectives:
  - Current understandings and historical expressions of the family system.
  - Shifts in the family system over time.
  - Biblical perspectives on the family.
  - Exploring personal family and relationship histories.
2. Family and relationship diversity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century:
  - Different cultural expressions of family and relationship systems.
  - Diversity in the family unit.

- The impact of sociocultural issues on families.
- 3. Stages of family development:
  - Family life-cycle theory.
  - Grief and loss in relationship and family therapy.
- 4. Models of family functioning:
  - Genograms.
  - Distinguishing between functional and dysfunctional systems.
- 5. What brings families to therapy?
  - Managing conflict.
  - Finances, work.
  - Children, parenting challenges.
  - Sexuality.
  - Extended family.
- 6. Skills and strategies for working with relationship issues:
  - Facilitating awareness of how the emotional system works.
  - Increasing levels of differentiation.
  - De-triangulation.
- 7. Approaches to family and relationship counselling:
  - Bowen's family systems.
  - Structural family therapy.
  - Strategic family therapy.
  - Experiential family therapy.
  - Narrative family therapy.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of this unit, students will have *demonstrated* that they have:

1. Exhibited an advanced understanding of concepts and theories relevant to family and relationship functioning.
2. Critically reflected on the functioning of their own family, drawing on relevant family and relationship theories.
3. Critically examined a number of perspectives on the family, including sociological, multicultural and Christian worldview perspectives in relation to family and relationship counselling.
4. Evaluated approaches to family and relationship counselling from evidence-based, practice-based, and Christian worldview perspectives.
5. Developed specific skills and strategies for counselling people with relationship issues.
6. Communicated at an appropriate tertiary standard with special attention to correct grammars, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, usage, sentence structure, logical.

## ASSESSMENT TASKS

**ALL LEARNING OUTCOMES MUST BE PASSED IN ORDER TO PASS THE UNIT.**

### TASK 1: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL CASE STUDY

Reflect on your family of origin experience and analyse the family's functioning using theories studied in this unit.

Word Length/Duration: 1,500 words  
 Weighting: 30%  
 Learning Outcomes: 1-3, 6  
 Assessed: Week 6  
 Method of Submission: Turnitin

### TASK 2: RESEARCH REPORT

Present a research report on one approach to family therapy to the class for discussion.

Word Length/Duration: 2,000 words  
 Weighting: 35%  
 Learning Outcomes: 1, 3, 4, 6  
 Assessed: Week 10  
 Method of Submission: Turnitin

### TASK 3: VIDEO OF SKILLS DEMONSTRATION AND PROCESS REPORT

You are to video record a 20-minute role-played counselling session demonstrating skills developed in the unit. You are then to write a process report analysing your skill use and understanding of concepts and issues present in the session.

Word Length/Duration: Video: 20 minutes and Process report: 1,500 words  
 Weighting: 35%  
 Learning Outcomes: 1, 4-6  
 Assessed: Week 16  
 Method of Submission: Turnitin

## ASSESSMENT ALIGNMENT

Assessment Task	Learning Outcomes	Content	Course Outcomes	PACFA Course Objectives
Task 1	1-3, 6	1-4	K4, K5, S1, S2, S5, S7, S8	A, B, E, F, J
Task 2	1, 3, 4, 6	1-5, 7	K4, K5, S1, S2, S7, S8	A, G, J
Task 3	1, 4-6	1-6	K4, K5, S4, S7, S8	A, E, I, K

## SPECIALIST FACILITIES OR EQUIPMENT

Digital recording device.

## PRESCRIBED TEXTS

Griffin, W. & Greene, S. (2011). *Models of family therapy*. Brunner Routledge.

Brown, J. (2017). *Growing Yourself Up How to bring your best to all of life's relationships* (2nd ed.). Exile

## RECOMMENDED READINGS

### BOOKS

Balswick, J. & Balswick, J. (2021). *The family: A Christian perspective on the contemporary home* (5th ed.). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Capuzzi, D., & Stauffer, M. (Eds.). (2015). *Foundations of couples, marriage and family counseling*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Conger, R., Lorenz, F., & Wickrama, K. (Eds.). (2014). *Continuity and change in family relations: Theory, methods and empirical findings*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Goldenberg, H., & Goldenberg, I. (2017). *Family therapy: An overview* (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage.

- Lerner, H. (1989). *The Dance of intimacy: A woman's guide to courageous acts of change in key relationships*. New York, NY: HarperRow.<sup>1</sup>
- McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Petry, S. (2020). *Genograms: Assessment and intervention* (4th ed.). New York, NY: Norton.
- McGoldrick, M., Carter, B., & Garcia-Preto, N. (2016). *The expanded family life cycle: Individual, family and social perspectives* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Nichols, M. P., & Schwartz, R. C. (2017). *Family therapy: Concepts and methods* (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.
- Titelman, P. (Ed.). (2014). *Differentiation of self: Bowen family systems theory perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge.

## JOURNALS

*Family Process*

*Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*

*Journal of Marriage and Family*

*Journal of Psychology and Theology*

## OTHER

In addition to the resources above, students should have access to a Bible, preferably a modern translation such as The Holy Bible: The New International Version 2011 (NIV 2011) or The Holy Bible: New King James Version (NKJV).

These and other translations may be accessed free on-line at <http://www.biblegateway.com>. The Bible app from LifeChurch.tv is also available free for smart phones and tablet devices.

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<sup>1</sup> Seminal text.

SAMPLE

