

CP5103 Marriage and Family Counselling

 On Campus, Saskatoon 'A' Livestream



October 20-24, 2025
Fall 2025 Module
Monday-Friday, 9 am-4 pm SK

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Please note: This course requires substantial reading and preparation work before and during the module.

Course Goals

Course Description

This course is an introduction to theory and practice in marriage and family counselling, with a special focus on attachment and systems theories. Relational patterns and significant stressors that affect children, youth, couples, and families are examined, including the issues of intimate partner and domestic violence. Counselling theories and approaches to support the well-being of children, youth, marriages, and families are explored.

Relationship to Horizon's Mission

This course helps equip students to work with families in a skilled and understanding manner, building the health of the church by enhancing the health of families within it.

Course Competencies and Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate competency in *the theory and methods of Marriage and Family Therapy*, students will:

1. Articulate and apply the theoretical concepts of family system theory and other foundational approaches to systemic family therapy.
 - *Assessment:* Role Playing; Group Interactive Discussion; Reading (Nichols and Davis, Chapters 4-6); Case Study Presentation; Resource List; Reflection Paper on Your Family of Origin; Integration Paper
2. Critically assess family interactional patterns, relational processing, and difficulties using the concepts of family systems theory, structural theory, and attachment theory.
 - *Assessment:* Role Playing; Experiential Exercises; Group Interactive Discussion; Reading (Nichols and Davis, Chapter 3); Case Study Presentation; Reflection Paper on Your Family of Origin; Integration Paper
3. Analyze and apply emergent models that evolve from the family systems models (such as solution-focused, narrative, and emotionally focused therapy), and their concepts of change, assessment, and interventions.

- *Assessment*: Role Playing; Case Study Vignettes; Case Group Interactive Discussion; Reading (Nichols and Davis, Chapters 10-13); Case Study Presentation; Integration Paper
4. Develop awareness of one's personal values, spirituality, and preferences regarding therapy and exploring which models might be integrated into one's therapeutic practices.
 - *Assessment*: Reading of Academic Journals; Group Discussion; Case Study Presentation; Reflection Paper on Your Family of Origin; Integration Paper
 5. Effectively implement basic techniques, therapeutic strategies, self-care, and referral in counselling couples and families.
 - *Assessment*: Reading of Academic Journals; Group Discussion; Reading (Nichols and Davis, Chapter 2, 7-9); Case Study Presentation; Resource List; Integration Paper

Course Work

Required Readings

Nichols, Michael P., and Sean D. Davis. *Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods*. Eleventh edition. Boston: Pearson, 2017. ISBN: 978-0133826609.
DTL: <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/921141293>

Scholarly Research Articles (Available on Populi):

Yeo, GeckHong. "Emotional Disclosure and Secrecy in the Development of Autonomous-Related Self among Singaporean Adolescents." *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 30, no. 2 (2021): 350–63. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-01899-2>.

Carona, Carlos, Helena Moreira, and Ana Fonseca. "Maternal Depression and Anxiety in an Interpersonal Context: The Effects of positive–negative Self-Expressiveness within the Family: Research and Reviews." *Current Psychology* 42, no. 12 (04, 2023): 10324-10333. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-02302-5>.

Recommended Reading

Friedman, Edwin H. *Generation to Generation: Family Process in Church and Synagogue*. New York: The Guilford Press, 1985.
<https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.dtl.idm.oclc.org/lib/dtl/detail.action?docID=4731187>

**While students have the benefit of accessing many of their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library.

Course Assignments and Activities

Pre-Module & During the Module Work

1. Reading: Family Systems Theoretical Concepts, Techniques, and Interventions

Purpose:

This reading prepares students to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the functioning of the family system and its impact on individuals within the family, including its techniques and interventions, past and present.

Instructions:

Required Readings:

- Textbook: Nicholas & Davis, Chapters 1 – 12
- Reading Scholarly Research Articles (available on Populi):
 - Yeo, GeckHong. "Emotional Disclosure and Secrecy in the Development of Autonomous-Related Self among Singaporean Adolescents." *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 30, no. 2 (2021): 350–63. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-021-01899-2>.
 - Carona, Carlos, Helena Moreira, and Ana Fonseca. "Maternal Depression and Anxiety in an Interpersonal Context: The Effects of positive–negative Self-Expressiveness within the Family: Research and Reviews." *Current Psychology* 42, no. 12 (04, 2023): 10324-10333. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-021-02302-5>.
- Related learning outcomes: #1, 2, 3, 4, and 5
- **Assignment length:** Read 12 Chapters from the textbook and 22 pages from the research articles.
- **Due date:** October 18, 2025.

2. Case Study Presentation (15%)

Purpose:

This assignment aims to stimulate and help students become more aware of the lived experience of marriage and family conflicts and develop creative ways to intervene, seek advice, and connect those seeking support with relevant resources.

Instructions:

Part I: Written Assignment

Write a case scenario about a family conflict or issue, such as issues related to domestic violence, parenting, or other marital issues, for class discussion. It can be a real-life situation or a fictional one.

Please list the outcome you want to see for this couple or family, and the questions you would like to ask the class to discuss, or other insights and supports to resolve issues.

Part II: Verbal Presentation

You will present the case study to the class on the day that you have selected (students will sign up on the first day of class). Present your perspectives and ways to resolve the issues.

- Related learning outcomes: # 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.
- **Assignment length:** 1 page (Written); 20 minutes (Presentation and Class Discussion)
- **Due Date:** October 18 (Written); October 20-24 (Verbal Presentation)

3. Resource List (10%)

Purpose:

This assignment enhances students' self-efficacy. Having the local resources list helps counsellors connect clients to community support and resources without feeling helpless and inadequate in their support for clients.

Instructions:

Written Assignment:

Write a one-page local support resource list for a counsellor, such as emergency support, addiction treatment, distressed Centre, food bank, free counselling services, psychological assessment, shelter, Kids Help Hotline, and other mental health services.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1 and 5
- **Assignment length:** 1 page.
- **Due date:** October 24, 2025.

Post-Module Work

4. Reflection Paper on Your Family-of-Origin (30%)

Purpose

This assignment helps students become aware of their family dynamics, how cultural and family expectations, rules, and patterns of behaviour and interaction impact who they are today, and how these patterns continue to affect their current family. Students will understand and recognize how these patterns, rules, communication, and family processing affect their clients.

Instructions:

Write a paper about the family dynamics of your family-of-origin using the concepts from family systems theory. Draw a genogram of four generations with their relationship, communication, expectations, conflicts, and interaction patterns using the concepts of family therapy theories. Reflect on how these patterns of behaviours and interactions affect who you are today.

- Related learning outcome(s): # 1, 2, and 4
- **Assignment length:** 7 pages.
- **Due date:** December 1, 2025.

5. Integration Paper (45%)

Purpose:

After attending this course, which covers various models, interventions, and techniques, students will familiarize themselves with a model or theory that they feel comfortable with. Using this model as a guide, they can practice and apply it to their clients. This assignment motivates them to research and explore deeper learning and understanding of marriage and family therapy and to become competent counsellors.

Instructions:

This paper requires you to draw relevant materials and learnings from your reading, lectures, research, class discussions, and use the case scenario that you have presented in class for this project. At least 20 citations or resources must be used. Select a model of marriage and family therapy of your choice. Use this model as a guide for therapy for the family from your class presentation. Present an overview of this model and how you would use this model to counsel this couple or family. Describe the case, the genogram with family interactions and dynamics, the presenting problem, assessment, intervention, clinical observation, homework, and the desired outcome you want to see. Critique the model's helpfulness and its limitations, and what you hope to see in future research. A bibliography is required.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
- **Assignment length:** 10 pages.
- **Due date:** December 8, 2025.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Readings	17 hrs	N/A	Assignment Weighting
Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A	
1. Case Study Presentation	5 hrs	October 18; Mod Week	15%
2. Resource List	3 hrs	October 24	10%
3. Reflection Paper on Family-of-Origin	25 hrs	December 1	30%
4. Integration Paper	40 hrs	December 8	45%
Total =		120 hrs	

All assignments are due at 11:59 pm **SK time** unless otherwise indicated.

Course Outline in Class & Reading Schedule

Day 1: October 20, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and syllabus • Fundamental concepts of counselling • Benefits and challenges of marriage and family therapy • Therapeutic alliance and processing • Nicholas & Davis, Chapters 2-3
Day 2: October 21, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The classic family systems and theories • Fundamental concepts and family processes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Therapeutic processing and basic techniques • Nicholas & Davis, Chapters 4-6
Day 3: October 22, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postmodern approaches to family therapy • Narrative, solution-focused therapy • Nicholas & Davis, Chapters 11-12
Day 4: October 23, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Couple therapy/attachment theory • Family issues: affairs, addictions, abuse, and violence • Nicholas & Davis, Chapter 7
Day 5: October 24, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family therapy with children • Self-care, referral, supervision, and consultation

- Assignments will not be accepted after December 15, 2025.

Academic Policies

General Assignment Guidelines

Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines. The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded. Assignments should be submitted via Populi under *Submissions* (not *Comments*). The resource at this [link](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi.

Late Assignments and Extensions

Please contact the professor well in advance if you would like to request an adjustment to any of your due dates. No extensions will be granted beyond the end of the course unless approval is granted by Horizon's Assistant Academic Dean.

A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 days late, penalty of 20%. After six days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0.

Grading

Grade	Percentage	GPA	Descriptor
A+	97-100%	4	Exceptional
A	93-96%	4	Excellent
A-	90-92%	3.7	Excellent
B+	87-89%	3.3	Good
B	83-86%	3.0	Good
B-	80-82%	2.7	Good
C+	77-79%	2.3	Satisfactory
C	73-76%	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	70-72%	1.7	Satisfactory
D+	67-69%	1.3	Minimal Pass
D	63-66%	1.0	Minimal Pass
D-	60-62%	0.7	Minimal Pass
F	<60%	0	Failure

Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the [Student Handbook](#).

Horizon has a subscription to software that ensures the originality of academic writing, verifies the proper citation of all sources, and detects AI-generated content. When you submit an assignment, you will automatically receive a summary on Populi that includes your submitted files along with an originality score (a high originality score is positive).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

In keeping with the Academic Integrity policy above, students must disclose on the title page of all assignments whether or not they have used AI and how they have used it. If the assignment has no title page, the student must disclose this to the instructor by some other means, such as in a comment on Populi. Students are expected to follow the policy for acceptable use of AI that is published in the [Student Handbook](#).

Accessible Learning Services Information

Horizon is committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institution, programs, and courses. The application for Academic Accommodations begins with a student disclosing a medical diagnosis or professionally documented learning disability during the application process. Enrolled students may contact Horizon's Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at rbekkattla@horizon.edu. All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the [Student Handbook](#).

Class Attendance (On Campus or Livestreaming)

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for, either on campus or through livestreaming with their camera on. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss the equivalent of six hours of class (e.g., one day of a module course or two three-hours classes) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

Livestreaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of full engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise, and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon encourages the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.
- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, whiteboard illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievances about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the Horizon College and Seminary grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

Bibliography

A bibliography will be provided on Populi once the course begins.