

CP5111 Ethical and Legal Issues in Counselling

3 credit hours. Prerequisites: None.

👤 On Campus, Saskatoon 'A' Livestream



Jan 16-17; Feb 20-21; Mar 20-21, 2026
Fri 5:30pm-8:30pm; Sat 9am-4pm
Winter 2026 – Weekend Course

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Office hours: Tuesday – Thursday

Please note: This course requires pre-reading (and potentially Class Presentation preparation) before the first weekend.

Course Goals

Course Description

This course explores the ethical and legal issues that pertain to clinical pastoral counselling including an analysis of professional ethics, training and practice standards, educational requirements, and mental health law. Consideration will be given to ethical practice in working across cultures, as well as the role of counsellor well-being as part of ethical practice.

Relationship to Horizon's Mission

This course prepares students for Spirit-empowered life and ministry by equipping them with the understanding and skills necessary to evaluate, interpret, and apply mental health law, professional ethics, and practice standards in their clinical pastoral counselling ministry.

Course Competencies and Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate competency in the **knowledge of counselling theory**, students will:

1. Develop an understanding of the moral, ethical, and legal issues pertaining to clinical pastoral counselling.
 - *Assessment:* Class Presentation; Test; Major Paper
2. Study a variety of ethical codes related to clinical pastoral counselling and learn how to interpret and apply them across counselling situations.
 - *Assessment:* Major Paper
3. Identify ethical issues related to working with specific populations (minors, sexual minorities, global workers, congregations, and across cultures).
 - *Assessment:* Class Presentation

4. Examine issues of confidentiality, client rights, informed consent, duty to warn and protect, dual relationships, and sexual misconduct, and understand the impact these have on clinical pastoral counselling practice.
 - *Assessment:* Class Presentation; Test; Major Paper

To demonstrate growth in **spiritual formation**, students will:

5. Guided by God's Spirit, identify and reflect on how their personal beliefs, values, experiences, motivations, needs, culture, and other variables impact the formation of their ethical understanding.
 - *Assessment:* Reflection Paper
6. Guided by God's Spirit, reflect on the integration of their approach to Christian ethics with the moral, ethical, and legal issues pertaining to clinical pastoral counselling.
 - *Assessment:* Major Paper

Course Work

****Required Pre-Weekend Readings or Assignments**

****See each unit for pre-weekend readings or assignments.**

****Note:** These readings will be marked as pass or fail and are required for the completion of the course.

Weekend One | January 16-17, 2026

Required Pre-Weekend Reading (due January 16 at 5:30pm). Post a note in Populi to confirm you have completed the pre-weekend reading.

Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association. "Code of Ethics" (2020). (Available on the Populi course page, under the "Files" tab.)

Corey, Gerald, Corey, Marianne, and Corey, Cindy. *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*. 11th edition. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning Inc., 2023. ISBN: 9780357622599.

<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1353301307>

*Chapter 1 (be especially familiar with "Steps in Making Ethical Decisions", pages 20 - 25), 5, 6 and 7.

Professional Association of Christian Counsellors and Psychotherapists. "Code of Ethics" (2023). (Available on the Populi course page, under the "Files" tab.)

Sanders, Randolph K. *Christian Counseling Ethics: A Handbook for Psychologists, Therapists, and Pastors*. 2nd edition. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013. ISBN: 9780830839940.

<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/902683792>

*Chapters 1-6.

Weekend Two | February 20-21, 2026

Required Pre-Weekend Reading (due February 20 at 5:30pm). Post a note in Populi to confirm you have completed the pre-weekend reading.

Corey, Gerald, Corey, Marianne, and Corey, Cindy. *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*. 11th edition. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning Inc., 2023. ISBN: 9780357622599.

<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1353301307>

*Chapters 3 and 4.

Sanders, Randolph K. *Christian Counseling Ethics: A Handbook for Psychologists, Therapists, and Pastors*. 2nd edition. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013. ISBN: 9780830839940.

<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/902683792>

*Chapter 9, 10, and 12.

Weekend Three | March 20 - 21, 2026

Required Pre-Weekend Reading (due March 20 at 5:30pm). Post a note in Populi to confirm you have completed the pre-weekend reading.

Corey, Gerald, Corey, Marianne, and Corey, Cindy. *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*. 11th edition. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning Inc., 2023. ISBN: 9780357622599.

<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1353301307>

* Chapter 2 and 8.

Sanders, Randolph K. *Christian Counseling Ethics: A Handbook for Psychologists, Therapists, and Pastors*. 2nd edition. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013. ISBN: 9780830839940.

<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/902683792>

*Chapter 14, 15, and 18.

Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*. Updated edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2017. ISBN: 9780310348498.

<https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/986228059>

**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.

Recommended Resources

The following is a list of recommended readings. Other books and articles may be recommended throughout the course.

Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association. "Standards of Practice: Sixth Edition" (2021).

Guide to the Mental Health Services Act. Government of Saskatchewan, 2015 (or similar document based on your province of residence).

Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future. Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015.

The Mental Health Services Regulations. Government of Saskatchewan, 1986 (or similar document based on your province of residence).

Course Assignments and Activities

1. *Class Presentation* (30%).

Prepare a **30-minute PowerPoint presentation** to be delivered to the class based on one of the topics from chapters 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15 or 18 of the *Christian Counseling Ethics* text. Students will work and present individually or in pairs/groups, depending on class size. Email the professor stating your top 3 choices for the topic you would like to present on. Since there will only be one presentation per topic, the professor will coordinate which individual, pair, or group will present on which topic (first come; first served approach).

Depending on your assigned class presentation date, submit your PowerPoint presentation, notes, and case scenario to the professor by **Monday, January 5, Monday, February 9, or Monday, March 9 (10% of your overall mark)**. The professor will review your presentation and provide feedback prior to the class. Note: If you are assigned to work in a pair or group, you will receive one week's notice to prepare before class.

Include the following in your presentation:

- a) A brief introduction to the topic including a clear definition and understanding of the issue
- b) Population affected and impact on population of ethical breaches (summarize the harm)
- c) Reference **two counselling ethics codes** that address this topic and summarize how they do so (at least one of the codes should be Canadian)
- d) Note any provincial and/or federal laws that apply to this topic or working with this population (if there are no legal references to the topic, note the implications for clinical pastoral counsellors given the lack of legal references)
- e) Name three implications for clinical pastoral counselling practice based on this topic
- f) Name the main Christian principle(s) that intersect with this topic and consider Scriptures related to this topic
- g) At the end of your presentation, provide your classmates with a case scenario involving an ethical dilemma focused on your specific presentation topic. Students will work in small groups to resolve the dilemma by applying the eight steps in ethical decision-making as outlined in *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*, Chapter 1 ("Steps in Making Ethical Decisions", pages 20 – 25)

- h) Utilize a minimum of 10 sources in preparing your presentation, including *Christian Counseling Ethics* and *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*. Be sure to cite all sources used in your presentation including ethical codes and provincial or federal laws.
- Related learning outcomes: #1, 3, and 4.
 - **Assignment length:** 30-minute class presentation, plus case scenario involving an ethical dilemma for classmates to work through in small groups.
 - **Due date:** January 5, February 9, or March 9, 2026 (PowerPoint presentation content review – 20%)
 - **Due date:** January 16, February 20, March 20, 2026 (Class presentation – 10%)

2. Major Paper (30%).

Write a major paper using chapter 1 and 2 from *Christian Counseling Ethics: A Handbook for Psychologists, Therapists, and Pastors* and chapter 3 and 5 from *Issues in the Helping Professions* as basic references.

- a) Summarize the main approaches to a relationship between Christian ethics and professional counselling ethics
- b) Outline three strengths and three challenges involved with integrating Christian ethics and professional counselling ethics
- c) Explain your position on the relationship between Christian ethics and professional counselling ethics.
- d) Identify a professional ethics code that best aligns with your position from 2c (above)
- e) Apply the steps outlined by this professional ethics code as you work to resolve one of the case scenarios listed in Populi.
- f) Your paper should include a minimum of 7 references, with at least 5 primary¹ references.
 - Related learning outcomes: #1, 2, 4, and 6.
 - **Assignment length:** 6 - 8 pages.
 - **Due date:** Monday, March 2, 2026.

3. Reflection Paper (20%).

Drawing from *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* and chapter 2 from *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*, write a reflection paper that explores the following:

- a) Consider the top 10 symptoms of emotionally unhealthy spirituality – which two symptoms are you most vulnerable to? Discuss.
- b) Review the Beaver System Model outlined in the book. Which one of the five levels best describes your family of origin?
- c) Based on your answer in 3b), identify three specific countertransference issues you might experience because of your unique family of origin.
- d) How will you ensure that your “doing for God” does not exceed your “being with God” throughout your practice as a clinical pastoral counsellor? Discuss specifically:
 - i. healthy boundaries and limits for yourself personally and professionally.

¹ Here, “primary” refers to academic books or journal articles you search for yourself, not ideas or studies you read about in the two course textbooks.

- ii. your personal action plan for effective soul-care, ongoing spiritual growth, and professional development (be specific).
- e) What other insights from Scazzero’s book impacted you? Write about your reflections.
 - Related learning outcomes: # 5.
 - **Assignment length:** 4-5 pages.
 - **Due date:** Monday, March 30, 2026.

4. Test (20%).

Students will complete a test based on content from the assigned readings, student presentations, and class lectures. The test will be administered through Populi and can be completed any time after the conclusion of the course, by the due date specified. Instructions for taking the test will be provided to students during the course.

- Related learning outcomes: #1 and 4.
- **Due date:** On or before April 13, 2026.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Classroom time	27 hrs	N/A	Assignment Weighting
Reading Guide	30 hrs	January 16, February 20, March 20	Pass/Fail
1. Class Presentation	15 hrs	January 16, February 20, March 20	30%
2. Major Paper	25 hrs	March 2	30%
3. Reflection Paper	15 hrs	March 30	20%
4. Test	7 hrs	On or before April 13	20%
	124 hrs		

Course Outline

*Notes:

- The outline below is a general guide – changes may be made as necessary throughout the course.
- There will be small group work throughout the course based on lectures, presentations, and case studies given by the professor.
- **Assignments will not be accepted after Friday, April 17, 2026.**

Friday, January 16, 2026

1. Introduction and Review of Syllabus
2. Embracing Our Ethical Mandate (Chapter 1 – Sanders; Chapter 1 - Corey, Corey, and Corey)
3. Essential Elements for Ethical Counsel (Chapter 4 – Sanders; Chapter 5 - Corey, Corey, and Corey)

Saturday, January 17, 2026

1. Relevant Codes, Acts, and Laws
2. Counselling and Christian Ethics (Chapter 2 – Sanders)
3. Qualifications of the Christian Mental Health Professional (Chapter 3 – Sanders)

4. Class Presentation – Sexual Misconduct and the Abuse of Power
5. Class Presentation – Non-Sexual Multiple Relationships
6. Reflection and Processing

Friday, February 20, 2026

1. Addressing Spiritual and Value Issues in Therapy (Chapter 9 – Sanders; Chapter 3 and 4 - Corey)
2. Small Group Work
3. Reflection and Processing

Saturday, February 21, 2026

1. Class Presentation – Ethical Concerns in Culturally Sensitive Practice
2. Small Group Work
3. Class Presentation – The Sexual Minority Client
4. Small Group Work
5. Reflection and Processing

Friday, March 20, 2026

1. Class Presentation – Pastors Who Counsel
2. Small Group Work
3. Reflection and Processing

Saturday, March 21, 2026

1. The Counsellor as a Person and a Professional (Chapter 2 – Corey)
2. Professional Competence and Training (Chapter 8 - Corey)
3. Class Presentation – Ethics in Member Care
4. Class Presentation – Lay Counsellor Training
5. Small Group Work
6. Reflection and Processing

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, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance 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

Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association. "Code of Ethics" (2020).

Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association. "Standards of Practice: Sixth Edition" (2021).

Canadian Human Rights Act, 1985.

Collins, Sandra and Nancy Arthur. "Culture-infused counselling: A model for developing multicultural competence." *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 23, no. 2, (2010): 217-233.

Corey, Gerald, Corey, Marianne, and Corey, Cindy. *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions*. 11th edition. Boston, MA: Cengage Learning Inc., 2023. ISBN: 9780357622599.

Eliason, Grafton, Mark Lepore, and Douglas Holmes. "Ethics in pastoral care and counseling: a contemporary review of updated standards in the field." *The Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling* 67, no. 2 (2013).

Guide to the Mental Health Services Act. Government of Saskatchewan, 2015.

Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future. Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015.

Luepker, Ellen. *Record Keeping in Psychotherapy and Counseling*. New York: Routledge, 2012. ISBN: 9780415892612.

McDugal, Sarah, Jennifer Schwirzer, and Nicole Parker. *Safe Churches: Responding to Abuse in the Faith Community*. College Station, TX: Abide Counseling Press, 2019. ISBN: 9781733483414.

Plante, Thomas. "Integrating spirituality and psychotherapy: ethical issues to consider". *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 63, no. 9. (2007): 891 – 902.

Professional Association of Christian Counsellors and Psychotherapists. "Code of Ethics" (2018).

Sanders, Randolph K. *Christian Counseling Ethics: A Handbook for Psychologists, Therapists, and Pastors*. 2nd edition. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2013. ISBN: 9780830839940.

Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*. Updated edition. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017. ISBN: 9780310348498.