



**SYDNEY**  
**College of Divinity**  
An Australian University College



**PBC**

**Perth Bible College**

**C7254 Relationship Counselling**

**Trimester Two, 2024**

**Teaching Staff:**

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Consultation times: email for appointment

# C7254 Relationship Counselling

## Trimester Two 2024

**Credit value:** 9 credit points  
**Mode of study:** Intensives on PBC campus and online via Zoom  
**Pre-requisite units:** Nil  
**Co-requisite units:** Nil  
**Units excluded:** Nil

Scheduled times and Venues: Online by appointment

### Teaching Staff:

**Name:** Mrs Janice Marsh  
**Position & Qualifications:** Adjunct Lecturer, M.Coun  
**Phone:** (08) 9243 2000  
**Email:** [jmarsh@pbc.wa.edu.au](mailto:jmarsh@pbc.wa.edu.au)  
**Consultation times:** By appointment

Learning Management System: PBC Online (Moodle)

**Workload:**  
**Total Workload for unit:** 143 hours  
**Allocation of Workload:** 32 hours at lectures and 111 hours engaged with other learning activities, assessable & non-assessable tasks.

### Background and Context

This is an online unit where the student engages with the content via recorded lectures and readings. The lecturer will meet with the student online for tutorials and the presentation.

### Curriculum Objectives

This Unit Relationship Counselling aims to introduce students to the issues and approaches relevant to couples counselling. The student will examine a range of theoretical perspectives and learn specific skills and intervention techniques. Contemporary relationship issues that commonly present will be a particular focus.

## Contribution to Graduate Attributes

This unit contributes to the attainment of the Course Outcomes in alignment with the distinctives of the Specific Discipline Outcomes, as follows:

<b>Specific Discipline Outcomes</b>	<i>recognize the key features of traditional and contemporary forms of ministry practice</i>	<i>articulate a biblically and theologically based expression of significant principles of christian life and ministry</i>	<i>develop performative skills relevant to specified church ministry practices</i>	<i>develop strategies for competent practice and leadership in church-based and/or para-church service</i>
<b>Course Outcomes</b>				
<i>develop a broad and coherent body of biblical and theological knowledge</i>	✓			
<i>develop skills to review, analyse and act on information in the exercise of critical thinking and judgement</i>				✓
<i>communicate a clear, coherent and independent exposition of knowledge and ideas</i>		✓	✓	
<i>exercise initiative and judgement in planning, problem solving and decision making in ministry practice and/or scholarship</i>			✓	✓

## Contribution to Award

The unit forms part of the SCD awards at AQF Level 7.

The unit serves as an advanced elective unit and may form part of a specialisation in the Discipline of Pastoral Counselling.

The unit contributes to the award by:

- developing a broad and coherent body of knowledge concerning the principles and practices of pastoral counselling
- developing skills in the review, analysis, and performance of ethical pastoral counselling

- exercising initiative and judgment in the approach to the practice of pastoral counselling

## Learning Outcomes

At the end of this course unit, students should be able to:

1. Evaluate relationship assessments to determine a range of presenting issues and plan for treatment.
2. Develop foundational knowledge of contemporary presenting issues and their impact on relational dynamics.
3. Critically analyse theoretical models specific to pre-marital and couples counselling, including Christian perspectives with sound theological reflection.
4. Integrate key ethical principles into relationship counselling practice.
5. Apply a range of counselling skills, techniques and interventions when working with couples.

## Content and Learning Activities

- 1) This unit will apply a broad understanding of couples counselling.
- 2) It will explore and evaluate approaches towards assessment, case conceptualisation and treatment, focussing on contemporary relationship issues that are typically presented.
- 3) A number of theoretical perspectives will be introduced and various skills, techniques interventions will be explored; linking theory to practice.
- 4) There will also be an emphasis on the ethical issues specific to couples counselling, integration of culturally sensitive practice, and consideration of relevant Christian perspectives.

Session	Lecture Content	Readings
1	Competency and Theory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why theory matters</li> <li>• Origins and fundamental concepts</li> </ul> Philosophical Foundations and Definitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cybernetics</li> <li>• Social Construction</li> <li>• Functioning and dysfunctional families</li> </ul>	Nichols Chs. 1-3
2	Intergenerational Family Therapy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bowen Family Therapy</li> <li>• Differentiation</li> </ul> Systematic and Strategic Theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MRI Therapy</li> <li>• Milan Therapy</li> </ul>	Nichols Ch. 4  Nichols Ch. 5

3	Structural Family Therapy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecosystemic ESFT</li> <li>• Functional FFT</li> </ul> Experiential and Psychoanalytic Family Therapies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Satir Growth Model</li> <li>• EFT for couples</li> <li>• Promoting insight and conscious awareness</li> </ul>	Nichols Ch. 6  Nichols Chs. 7 & 8
4	Behavioural and cognitive-behavioural <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrative Behavioural</li> <li>• Gottman Method</li> </ul> Case Conceptualisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment and goals</li> </ul>	Nichols Ch. 9 Gottman & Silver  Nichols (throughout)
5	Solution-Focused Brief Therapy  Case Conceptualisation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treatment planning and evaluation</li> </ul>	Nichols Ch. 10
6	Narrative Therapies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflective teams</li> <li>• Treatment and Relationship</li> </ul> Integration and Eclecticism	Nichols Ch. 11  Nichols Ch. 12

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## Learning Resources

### Essential Texts

Gottman, J., & Silver, N. (2015). *The seven principles for making marriage work*. London. Seven Dials.

Nichols, M.P. (2014). *Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods*. (10<sup>th</sup> edition). Pearson.

### Recommended Texts

Balswick, J. O. & Balswick, J.K. (2014). *The family: A Christian perspective on the contemporary home*. (4<sup>th</sup> edition). Baker Academic.

Clinton, T., & Trent, J. (2009). *A quick reference guide to Marriage & Family Counseling*. Baker Books. eBook available.

Gottman, J., and Schwartz Gottman, J. (2018). *The Science of Couples and Family Therapy. Behind the Scenes at the Love Lab*. W. W. Norton and company. eBook available.

Johnson, S. (2020). *The Practice of Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy*. Third Edition. Routledge. eBook available.

Chapman, G. (2018). *Loving your spouse when you feel like walking away*. Moody Publishers. eBook available.

Clinton, T., & Laaser, M. (2010). *\*A quick reference guide to Sexuality & Relationship Counselling*. Baker Books.

Connie, E. (2012). *Solution Building in Couples Therapy*. Springer Publishing Company.

Dallos, R. (2006). *Attachment Narrative Therapy*. Open University Press.

Harley, W. (2011). *His needs, Her needs. How to have an affair proof marriage*. F H Revell.

Nichols, M.P. (2014). *Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods*. (10<sup>th</sup> edition). Pearson.

Ripley, J., & Worthington, E. (2014). *Couple Therapy A New Hope Focused Approach*. InterVarsity Press.

Schnarch, D. (2009). *Passionate Marriage: Keeping Love and Intimacy Alive in Committed Relationships*. W. W. Norton and company.

Yarhouse, M. A., & Sells, J. N. (2017). *Family therapies: A comprehensive Christian appraisal*. (2nd edition). IVP Academic.

#### Online Resources

[PBC Online Library](#)

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## Assessment

All students must complete all assessment requirements as set, and conform with SCD Policy requirements.

Assessment tasks are designed both to help students attain the unit outcomes and to enable teachers to assess student attainment. In this unit, the assessment of student achievement with respect to the Unit Outcomes will be based on:

#### Assessment Schedule

Type of Assessment Task	Value (%)	Date due	Unit Learning Outcome(s) assessed
Case Study Presentation	30%	8	3 & 5
Role Play and Reflection	30%	13	4 & 5
Critical Review Essay	40%	12	1, 2 & 3

Detailed information on assessment tasks and assessment standards

- 1. CASE STUDY PRESENTATION    Value: 30%    Word Length: 1500    Due: Week 8**

### **Description:**

Watch the movie *My Big Fat Greek Wedding* (2002). Imagine that the main female character, Toula, and her parents, Costas and Maria, come for family therapy due to conflict over Toula's relationship with Ian. Using one of the family therapy models discussed in class, present an outline of your plan for the first four sessions with the family.

**Specific Requirements:** This case study must be presented in PowerPoint format.

**Slide One:** Introduce the presenting problem (three sentences maximum) and provide a very brief summary (one sentence each) of each family member attending the session.

**Slide Two:** Outline the plan for Session One, indicating which family therapy you are using.

**Slide Three:** Explain why you have chosen this approach and what you hope to achieve.

**Slide Four:** Outline the plan for Session Two, indicating which family therapy you are using.

**Slide Five:** Explain why you have chosen this approach and what you hope to achieve.

**Slide Six:** Outline the plan for Session Three, indicating which family therapy you are using.

**Slide Seven:** Explain the advantages of this aspect of the modality you have chosen.

**Slide Eight:** Outline the plan for Session Four, indicating which family therapy you are using.

**Slide Nine:** Explain the advantages of this aspect of the modality you have chosen.

**Slide Ten:** Provide a summary of the knowledge and skills you have given the family.

### **Assessment Rubrics: Key Components:**

#### **Critical Reasoning**

The key aspect of this assessment is the critical reasoning for your choice of modality. Can you clearly articulate why you have chosen a particular modality? Can you describe the relevance to this particular family and to this particular situation?

#### **Logical Progression**

It is important to clearly map out the pathway for the family sessions. What is the focus of the first session? What should come next? What is the most important element of the situation that needs to be addressed?

#### **Presentation**

Correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation to be used. Evidence of reading and applying relevant family therapies is clear. Graphics to complement the presentation content, and not distract. Ten slides only to be used.

## **2. ROLE PLAY VIDEO AND REFLECTION    Value: 30 %    Word Length: 1000 Due: Week 13**

### **Description:**

Part 1. Role play video. From the perspective of either Strategic or Structural family therapy, as a counsellor, conduct and record a 15-minute role play with a family dyad using one of the following scenarios:

- a. A conflict situation between an older teen and one parent.
- b. A family member who has some symptoms of mental health but is refusing treatment.
- c. A couple who are drifting apart and are keen to reconnect.

Part 2. Write a 1000-word reflection on the role play. In the reflection, address these elements:

- a. How effectively did you feel you implemented the skills and interventions from the chosen model of family therapy?
- b. Critique this model of family therapy, including both strengths and weaknesses.
- c. How did your personal faith beliefs help or hinder your ability to work with the presenting issue by using the chosen model of family therapy?

**Specific Requirements:** For the reflection essay do ensure you include:

- An introduction paragraph that clearly states what you be reflecting on.
- Topic sentences in each body paragraph that clearly states what the paragraph will be addressing.
- Three headings throughout the essay to show which element you are writing about.
- A clear thread of critical evaluation, giving reasons for your observations and opinions.
- A conclusion paragraph that clearly states what you have written about and the importance of your reflection.

### **Assessment Rubrics:**

**Role Play:** Does the role play clearly show the family therapy you have chosen? Are the specific elements of the model clearly explained and utilised in the role play?

### **Critical Reasoning**

The key aspect of this assessment is the critical reasoning for your choice of modality. Can you clearly articulate why you have chosen a particular modality? Can you describe the relevance to this particular situation?

### **Logical Presentation**

It is important to plan your written reflection. There should be a clearly stated objective in the introduction paragraph. Each body paragraph should contain one key point. The conclusion should summarise your reflection and point to the practical implications of your reflections. Correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation to be used. APA 7<sup>th</sup> Edition formatting to be followed.

## **3. CRITICAL REVIEW ESSAY    Value: 40 %    Word Length: 2500    Due: Week 12**

### **Description:**

Critique two Family Therapies from a Christian perspective and discuss two common marriage or family problem areas and suggest appropriate biblical methods of counselling intervention.

### **Specific Requirements:**

Introduction: Clearly state the two models and two issues you will be writing about. What are you hoping to show or prove throughout your paper?

Paragraph 2 & 3: 1<sup>st</sup> Family Therapy. Briefly describe the Therapy. Outline the aspects that align with a Christian worldview, and the aspects that do not. Discuss the implication of this review.

Paragraph 4 & 5: 2<sup>nd</sup> Family Therapy. Briefly describe the Therapy. Outline the aspects that align with a Christian worldview, and the aspects that do not. Discuss the implication of this review.

Paragraph 6 & 7: 1<sup>st</sup> Problem. Briefly describe the cause and symptoms of the chosen problem. Discuss the Biblical perspective of the problem, the cause, the symptoms, the treatment, and the solution.

Paragraph 8 & 9: 2<sup>nd</sup> Problem. Briefly describe the cause and symptoms of the chosen problem. Discuss the Biblical perspective of the problem, the cause, the symptoms, the treatment, and the solution.

Conclusion: Clearly summarise the main points and explain the importance of what you have reviewed.



## **Assessment Rubrics:**

### **Critical Reasoning**

The key aspect of this assessment is the critical reflection for your choice of modality and presenting issue. Can you clearly articulate where the modality lines up with Scripture and where it falls short? Can you explain the Biblical perspective of the presenting issue and the reason for the suggested potential treatments?

### **Logical Progression**

It is important to plan your written reflection. There should be a clearly stated objective in the introduction paragraph. Each body paragraph should contain one key point. The conclusion should summarise your reflection and point to the practical implications of your reflections.

### **Presentation**

Correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation to be used. Evidence of reading and applying relevant family therapies is clear. An understanding of Scriptural themes and specific verses should be shown. The correct APA formatting to be followed.

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## **Course Unit Revision**

Updated on 2024-02-08

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## **Extension Policy**

Students must submit all assignments by the due dates set by the lecturer and published in the course unit profiles.

### **Late Penalty**

Late assignments without an approved extension will attract an automatic penalty deduction of 5% of the marks available for the item of assessment for every day (including weekends and holidays), or part thereof, beyond the date and time of submission (or any extension granted).

Assignments submitted without an approved extension beyond 10 days after the due date will receive a zero mark and NOT be annotated by the lecturer.

### **Example:**

Student submits an assignment worth 50 marks 4 days late.

Total mark available=50

Penalty: 4 days late = 5% of 50x4 = 10 mark penalty

The student's original mark is 40.

Final mark =40-10=30

### **Grounds for Extension**

An extension of an assignment's due date may be granted on the following grounds: medical illness (certified by Medical Certificate); extreme hardship; and compassionate grounds.

In such cases an extension of up to 28 days may be granted without penalty but only if requested before the assignment due date. The student should submit an "Application for

Extension” including supporting documentation to the Member Institution for authorising and signing by the Lecturer / Registrar /Academic Secretary prior to the due date. The student will then be informed of the result of the request.

In extreme cases, extensions beyond 28 days may be granted. Such extensions must be applied for in writing, including supporting documentation, to the Teaching Body setting out the extreme circumstances. The Teaching Body’s appropriate committee will consider such an unusual extension and notify the student of the outcome in writing.

If the unit assessment includes an examination and an extension is granted arrangements will be made for an alternative examination to be given to the student within the extension period.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is the representation of another’s works or ideas as one’s own; it includes the unacknowledged word for word use or paraphrasing of another person’s work, and the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person’s ideas. For more information on plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct refer to the SCD Handbook.

SCD Academic Board has mandated that Studiosity is the only online study assistance permitted within the SCD. Studiosity is supplied free of charge to SCD students, and it can be accessed through [INSERT ACCESS, e.g. the MI Learning Management System.]

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## **Intellectual Property**

The Course Unit Outline from which this Course Unit Booklet is derived is the property of the Sydney College of Divinity. The particular interpretation, amplification, and extension of the Course Unit Outline that expresses the theological values of the Member Institution and meets the needs of its stakeholder are the property of the Member Institution.