Introduction to the Unit

Unit overview

This unit follows on from Counselling Skills and Counselling Theories and examines new developments in theory and the counselling skills associated with them. The historical development of theories will be reviewed and contextualised providing a framework for theory integration. The unit provides a strong emphasis on postmodern and system theory as well as the study of third wave, transpersonal and integrative theory and practice.

In addition to developing your theoretical knowledge, this unit also extends your range of skills. Skills in building family genograms, case conceptualisation and advanced skills in working with themes, narratives and blind spots, are introduced. Skills for working with the therapeutic relationship are outlined, including the careful use of self-disclosure, immediacy, and normalising. A focus on the skill of externalising and mindfulness will also be developed. Students will be given the opportunity to develop their skills through observation, watching videos of counselling practice and also through ongoing practice with peers in triads.

Unit objectives

On completion of this unit, students will be able to:

a) describe elements of relational and postmodern counselling modalities, and their historical development
b) explain the framework and models of self and change that inform relational and postmodern counselling modalities
c) identify and apply the skills used in relational and postmodern counselling modalities
d) identify and apply the skills used in relational and postmodern counselling modalities
e) evaluate the benefits and limits of relational and postmodern counselling modalities
f) demonstrate sensitivity to gendered power relations and cultural diversity in the counselling relationship

Textbook

The textbook for this unit is:

Recommended readings

The twelve sections of unit curriculum direct students to readings in the online classroom for this unit. These readings are selected from journals and books that provide additional information or a different perspective on topics covered in each section. They are from a range of authorities and expand the content of this unit.

**Week 1:**


**Week 2:**


**Week 3:**


**Week 4:**


**Week 5:**


Week 6:


Week 7:


Week 8:


Week 9:


Week 10:


Week 11:


Week 12:


Studying for this unit

This unit is offered via on-campus or blended delivery.

For on-campus delivery, students attend one three-hour class per week for this unit across the 12 weeks of term.

For blended delivery, students attend one two-day workshop and four synchronous (real time) learning sessions, in combination with online learning and activities.

Blended learning is a coherent design approach that integrates the strengths of face to face and online learning to address worthwhile educational goals (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008, p. viii). Fundamentally, course delivery using blended learning presents advantages in the variety of available learning activities, opportunities for student engagement and increased flexibility for students. The application of the blended learning approach allows students to engage in both synchronous and asynchronous learning, and provides flexibility in time and place of learning. Students will participate in individual and group study, undertake research and interact with their lecturers and other students.

The content of this unit has been designed to maximise the learning and the integration of the subject matter. Much of the unit material is specific to the Australian context. Students are encouraged to access additional information relevant to their local context, which will assist in applying the learning and ensuring its relevance. This may include specific legislation, government and professional association resources, and journals. It is important that students’ reading is broad.

In general students are expected to:

- read each section of the unit carefully and make notes new content, and points that are unclear, or in conflict with previous learning or experience
- complete readings of the text and other readings and resources, making notes on important insights or facts, especially those relevant to your assignments

There may be periodic suggestions or issues on which students are asked to deliberate and reflect. Sometimes these are dilemmas or difficult issues associated with the study topic which have no right or wrong answers, but are used to trigger critical thinking.
Attendance requirements

Attendance requirements ensure that students in PACFA-accredited courses meet their training requirements, and that learning outcomes are met for all units offered by the School of Counselling.

On-campus attendance requirements for counselling units (for students enrolled in this unit on campus)

Students are required to maintain at least 80% attendance for on-campus counselling units in order to pass enrolled units. This means that students cannot miss more than 2.5 classes in a term.

Blended delivery attendance requirements (for students enrolled in this unit through BD)

Students are required to maintain at least 80% attendance for the “real-time” components of blended delivery study, specifically attendance online for four synchronous sessions using BlackBoard Collaborate or zoom and a two-day on-campus workshop per unit, in order to pass enrolled units.

- 80% Attendance in Blended delivery units is calculated by a combination of synchronous sessions and the workshop sessions, i.e. 2 day workshops and 4 synchronous sessions.
- The 2 day workshops comprise of three discrete sessions: morning, afternoon and evening sessions on each day. If students miss any part of the workshops, exemption from the policy will be based on the course convenors discretion.

Learning activities

Learning activities are set in each section of the unit to give opportunities for further learning. They are designed to help students think through and practice the specific skills and general concepts presented in this unit. They do not need to be sent to the academic teacher for marking. However, valuable learning opportunities will be missed by not completing the activities.

In studying this unit, students will need to maintain a learning journal for completing the activities. To structure the learning journal, set aside space for:

- completing a glossary of new terminology and concepts introduced in this unit
- notes on unit content and readings
- answers to learning activities
- draft assessments.

Students can also keep a record of their activities electronically.
Self-assessment

There are self-assessment questions at the end of each section to test students’ understanding of the section’s content. Try to recall the answers to these questions unaided. Write down answers from memory before going back to review the relevant material in the section. Some of the questions require more than simple recall. Some will require synthesising separate issues or different pieces of information. Real learning is not just remembering the reading. It involves owning this knowledge by:

- reflecting
- questioning
- relating theory to personal experience
- integrating a number of readings on a particular topic or concept
- re-stating readings in your own words.

Assignments

The assignments are aligned with the unit learning objectives and develop the concepts and skills of the unit.
Contents

Section 1: Introduction to Counselling Skills and Models

Section 2: Gestalt Theory

Section 3: Gestalt Theory & Process Experiential Theory and Practice

Section 4: System Theories

Section 5: Bowen’s Multigenerational Family Systems Theory

Section 6: Structural and Strategic Systems Theories – Systemic Skills & Practice (Workshop Weekend)

Section 7: Postmodern Theories – Meaning in Context (Workshop Topic)

Section 8: Postmodern Theories – Solution-Focused Theory and Practice (Workshop Topic)

Section 9: Postmodern Theories – Narrative Theory and Practice (Workshop Topic)

Section 10: Third Wave Theories and Practice - DBT

Section 11: Transpersonal Theories

Section 12: Psychotherapy Integration: Putting it all Together
Assignment summary

Please ensure you keep copies of all assignments submitted for this unit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment type</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Word count</th>
<th>Date due</th>
<th>Alignment with learning outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment 1:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Academic Essay</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>2000 words</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>a) Describe elements of relational and postmodern counselling modalities, and their historical development. &lt;br&gt;b) Explain the framework and models of self and change that inform relational and postmodern counselling modalities. &lt;br&gt;c) Identify and apply the skills used in relational and postmodern counselling modalities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assignment 2:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Practice Session (audio-visual recording)&lt;br&gt;Critical Evaluation</td>
<td>50% total 25% each</td>
<td>Practice Session: 30 minutes  Critical Evaluation: 2500 words</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
<td>d) Identify and apply the skills used in relational and postmodern counselling modalities. &lt;br&gt;e) Evaluate the benefits and limits of relational and postmodern counselling modalities. &lt;br&gt;f) Demonstrate sensitivity to gendered power relations and cultural diversity in the counselling relationship.</td>
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Assignment 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Essay</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>2000 words</td>
<td>Week 8</td>
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</table>

Your task in this assignment is to write an essay explaining the theoretical framework of one postmodern counselling modality. Your discussion should include a brief examination of the overarching philosophical framework within which the model is situated, including the view of self that informs the model, the view of mental health and illness, the conceptualisation of the therapeutic relationship (including roles/position of therapist and client). You should also provide an explanation of key techniques. In addition to outlining the framework of the counselling modality, you should also critique the model’s strengths and limitations.

Your work should make reference to key authors of the approach and any other supporting literature. It is important in an academic essay to provide a balance between description and critique (i.e., analysis and synthesis). A clear outline of the approach followed by a deeper examination of it strengths and limitations will help to provide a comprehensive understanding of the approach within the limits of the word length allowed.
## Marking Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Not Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Clear overview of the postmodern counselling modality and situating it within a philosophical context</td>
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<td>2. Examination of key features of the counselling modality</td>
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<td>3. Critique of the model's strengths and limitations</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Explanation of the model's key techniques</td>
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### Structure, Presentation and Referencing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure, Presentation and Referencing</th>
<th>Not Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Appropriate introduction is provided that clearly articulates the topic</td>
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<td>6. Main ideas clearly and logically presented</td>
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<td>7. Appropriate conclusion is provided that summarises the major points of the assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Relevant academic literature applied accurately to support the thesis of the essay</td>
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Subtotal: /88

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<tr>
<th>9. Academic writing style is used, including correct spelling, grammar and punctuation</th>
<th>Not Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10. Presentation guidelines followed as specified in the Academic Skills Guide and third person writing style is used

No

Yes

Subtotal: /12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11. Word count is within + or - 10% of requirement</th>
<th>Not Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

12. In-text referencing and reference list follows APA referencing style (6th ed.) as set out in the Academic Skills Guide (minimum four references)

Subtotal: /12

Total mark: /100

Weighted scale: /50

Grade:

Comments:
Assignment 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Type</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
<th>Word Count</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice Session</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>Week 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Evaluation</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>2500 words</td>
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**Purpose:**

Students are to take the role of counsellor in the practice session to demonstrate the application of counselling skills with a real but non-traumatic issue presented by the client. The reflective essay provides students with an opportunity to reflect on their practice by reviewing and evaluating the practice session.

**Process:**

During the on-campus workshop, ask a partner from your triad practice group to be the client in the practice session. The practice session is to be recorded using audio-visual equipment (sound and visual image). Audio-visual equipment is set up in the on-campus counselling rooms, which must be booked. You can also record your practice session on Skype or with your own equipment.

In the practice session, worth 25%, you are expected to demonstrate basic counselling micro skills, including reflective listening and empathy, to assist the client to explain and explore the presenting issue. You should also select an advanced counselling skill taught in this unit, such as working with blind spots, counsellor immediacy, normalisation or externalisation and demonstrate the appropriate application of this skill. You will receive feedback on:

- nonverbal communication
- reflective listening skills
- use of open-ended and closed questions
- empathy
- initial assessment of the client’s presenting issue
- application of a selected advanced counselling skill
- opening and closing of session

**Reflective Essay**

The reflective essay, worth 25%, is to be written formally for the academic context. In writing the essay, your task is to examine your practice in the light of counselling micro-skills theory and practice and also in reference to the theory underpinning the advanced skill selected. Your examination should include:

- introduction
- summary of the session
- identification of the key micro skills you used, as well as an advanced counselling skill and definitions of the skills supported by unit readings
- descriptions of how you demonstrated each skill, using verbatim examples
• evaluation of the effectiveness of these skills, by observing the client’s responses to your interventions
• verbatim examples of the interactions (what you and the client said)
• reference to relevant literature, linking your ideas to theory discussed in the unit
• a reflection on your learning from this assessment and goals for improving your effectiveness in the future
• a conclusion
## Marking Criteria: Practice Session

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Not Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Audio-visual recording of good quality provided</td>
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<td>2. Appropriate micro skills used to allow the client to tell their story</td>
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<td>3. Respect for client demonstrated</td>
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<td>4. Accurate empathy demonstrated</td>
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<td>5. Appropriate application of advanced counselling skill</td>
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<td>6. Appropriate use of nonverbal communication</td>
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<td>7. Assessment skills used to identify and understand client’s presenting issue</td>
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<td>8. Session opened and closed appropriately</td>
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**Total mark:** /100  
**Weighted scale:** /25  
**Grade:**

**Comments:**
## Marking Criteria: Reflective Essay

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<th>Not Satisfactory</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Content

1. Summary of the session provided

2. Counselling skills identified and defined accurately, including a selected advanced counselling skill

3. Descriptions provided of how you demonstrated each skill, with verbatim examples from the session

4. Evaluation of the effectiveness of these skills by observing how the client responded to your interventions

5. Evaluation supported by relevant literature and theory

6. Evidence of self-awareness and ability to self-reflect and goals for future development provided

### Structure, Presentation and Referencing

7. Appropriate introduction is provided that clearly articulates the topic

8. Main ideas clearly and logically presented

9. Appropriate conclusion is provided that summarises the major points of the assignment

10. Relevant academic literature applied accurately to support the thesis of the essay

11. Academic writing style is used, including correct spelling, grammar and punctuation

12. Presentation guidelines followed as specified in the Academic Skills Guide and first and third person writing style is used  
   No | Yes

13. Word count is within + or - 10% of requirement  
   No | Yes


| Total mark: | /100  
| Weighted scale: | /25  
| Grade: |  

### Comments:
Assignment support and information

Important and valuable information about completing your assignments can be found in the following places:

• The ‘Student Services > Learning Support’ section of the ACAP website (Go to Current Students tab):
  http://learningsupport.acap.edu.au

• The ‘Higher Education Assessment’ section of the ACAP website (Go to Current Students > managing my course > assessment information > higher education assessment): http://www.acap.edu.au/current-students/managing-my-course/assessment-information/higher-education-assessment/

This includes information on requesting extensions.

All assignments are to be submitted online through the online classroom for this unit.

How to apply for an extension:

Extensions may be granted to students who have unforeseen circumstances. The policy and process for student extensions can be found here:


Students can request a one week extension from their academic teacher in the case of unforeseen circumstances. Longer extensions may be requested via AccessAbility or the program delivery team in your state.