

COU381

# Developmental and Family Counselling

School: School of Law and Society

2026 | Trimester 2

 UniSC Sunshine Coast  
UniSC Moreton Bay

 BLENDED  
LEARNING

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

Please go to [unisc.edu.au](http://unisc.edu.au) for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.

## 1. What is this course about?

### 1.1. Description

You will learn the complexities of working with family groups, exploring family processes and structures, and examine potential issues arising in families including Domestic Violence. You will discover the applicability of a variety of family counselling models through the various stages of the counselling process. Special populations such as children and adolescents will be addressed.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
<b>BLENDED LEARNING</b>			
<b>Learning materials</b> – One hour-long engagement including formative quizzes, podcasts/webinars, screen casts, interviews, simulations, videos and recorded discussions.	1hr	Week 1	12 times
<b>Tutorial/Workshop 1</b> – On campus tutorial- 2 hours to encourage the application of skills and knowledge introduced in the online learning materials for the week, via class activities.	2hrs	Week 1	10 times
<b>Information session</b> – Online Learning activity facilitated by the tutor	1hr	Refer to Format	Once Only

### 1.3. Course Topics

Introduction to Family & Relationship Counselling
Understanding Family Systems
Domestic & Family Violence: Definitions and Dynamics
Trauma-Informed Practice in Family Counselling
Ethical Practice and Self-Awareness
Cultural and Structural Considerations
Working with Children and Adolescents in DV Contexts
Applying Models in DV Contexts
Counselling Skills for DV and Family Conflict
Case Simulation and Debrief
Integration and Reflection

### 1.4. Mature Content

Adult themes

## 2. What level is this course?

300 Level (Graduate)

Demonstrating coherence and breadth or depth of knowledge and skills. Independent application of knowledge and skills in unfamiliar contexts. Meeting professional requirements and AQF descriptors for the degree. May require pre-requisites where discipline specific introductory or developing knowledge or skills is necessary. Normally undertaken in the third or fourth full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

## 3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

## 4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
1 Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the history, models, and principles of family and relationship counselling, including frameworks for responding to domestic and family violence.	Knowledgeable
2 Critically reflect on your own family of origin, relational dynamics, and experiences, and apply this self-awareness to ethically support clients affected by complex family issues, including domestic violence.	Empowered Ethical
3 Apply theoretical models such as Bowen, structural, and strategic family therapy to simulated case scenarios, integrating trauma-informed and safety-focused approaches relevant to domestic violence contexts	Knowledgeable Empowered
4 Demonstrate awareness of personal values and belief systems regarding families, relationships, and violence, and evaluate their impact on ethical and culturally responsive counselling practice.	Empowered Ethical
5 Critically examine the diversity of family structures and experiences—including multicultural, gendered, and intergenerational perspectives—and assess the implications for supporting wellbeing in families affected by violence and relational distress.	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Empowered
6 Demonstrate scholarly capacity in written submissions through clear expression, integration of current academic literature on family and DV counselling, and adherence to APA style.	Knowledgeable Engaged

## 5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of "pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites".

### 5.1. Pre-requisites

(COU180 or SCS180 or SCS280), (COU265 or SCS265) and COU200

### 5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.3. Anti-requisites

SCS281 and COU281

### 5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

### 5.5. Microcredential Information

Not applicable

## 6. How am I going to be assessed?

### 6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

### 6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

### 6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Activity Participation	Individual	10%	Course duration	Throughout teaching period (refer to Format)	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	2	Essay	Individual	30%	2000 words	Week 5	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	3	Journal	Individual	25%	3–5 entries (500–800 words each), submitted as a compiled document	Week 8	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check
All	4	Practical / Laboratory Skills, and Written Piece	Individual	35%	20-minute simulation + 1,000-word analysis based on simulated counselling scenario	Week 12	Online Assignment Submission with plagiarism check

### All - Assessment Task 1: Participation

<b>GOAL:</b>	Students will actively participate for a minimum of 80% of their on-campus tutorials. Failure to meet the minimum participation requirements will result in a failed grade for this task.	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Activity Participation	
<b>AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:</b>		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	Tutor to assess and record participation in the LMS each week	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Demonstrate professional dispositions through tutorial participation 4
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Collaboration	

### All - Assessment Task 2: Critical Essay

<b>GOAL:</b>	Students write a critical essay exploring how traditional family therapy models (e.g., Bowen, structural, strategic) are adapted for domestic violence contexts. They must integrate trauma-informed principles, cultural considerations, and current literature.	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Essay	
<b>AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:</b>		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	Students work independently on this written assignment, preparing it within cadmus, and submit online via plagiarism checkers. Students are to comply strictly with accepted APA 7th ed formatting and referencing conventions. A minimum of 20 current journal articles are to be referred to, and integrated thoughtfully, to support central argument/theme.	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1	Understanding of family therapy and DV frameworks 1 6
	2	Application of theory to practice 3 5
	3	Use of literature and APA referencing 6
	4	Clarity and structure 6
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication	

### All - Assessment Task 3: Self and Values Journal

<b>GOAL:</b>	Students reflect on their family of origin, personal values, and belief systems regarding relationships and violence. They explore how these influence their ethical stance and counselling practice, especially in DV contexts	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Journal	
<b>AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:</b>		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	Students work independently on this written assignment, preparing it within cadmus, and submit online via plagiarism checkers. Students are to comply strictly with accepted APA 7th ed formatting and referencing conventions. A minimum of 6-8 current journal articles are to be referred to, and integrated thoughtfully, to support central argument/theme.	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1 Depth of self-reflection	2
	2 Connection to counselling practice	4
	3 Ethical awareness	2
	4 Clarity and expression	6
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication	

### All - Assessment Task 4: DV-Informed Case Simulation and Analysis

<b>GOAL:</b>	Students engage with a simulated counselling scenario involving family conflict and DV. They apply relevant models, demonstrate safety planning, and reflect on cultural and ethical considerations. Includes a brief written analysis in critical reflection formatting (e.g., Kolb)	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Practical / Laboratory Skills, and Written Piece	
<b>AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT:</b>		
<b>FORMAT:</b>	The 20 minute simulation recording is submitted online in LMS as a media file. The 1000 word simulation critical analysis is also submitted online via plagiarism checkers.	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1 Application of models in DV context	1 3 5
	2 Client safety and ethical considerations	3
	3 Communication and counselling skills (simulation)	6
	4 Written analysis	6
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Collaboration, Information literacy	

## 7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

## 8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

## 8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

You need regular access to the resource(s) below. Many texts are available as ebooks through the [Library](#) at no additional cost.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Required	Irene Goldenberg,Mark Stanton,Herbert Goldenberg	2016	Family Therapy: An Overview	9th	Cengage Learning

## 8.2. Specific requirements

Nil

## 9. How are risks managed in this course?

Health and safety risks for this course have been assessed as low. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

## 10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

### 10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

### 10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

#### **Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment**

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

### 10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

- (a) One day: deduct 5%;
- (b) Two days: deduct 10%;
- (c) Three days: deduct 20%;
- (d) Four days: deduct 40%;
- (e) Five days: deduct 60%;
- (f) Six days: deduct 80%;
- (g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

- Less than 15 minutes: No penalty
- From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty
- More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

#### 10.4. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

#### 10.5. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

#### 10.6. General Enquiries

For course-specific questions, contact your teaching staff or Course Coordinator.

For other enquiries or to access support, please contact Student Central:

- [UniSC Student Central](#)
- [UniSC Adelaide Student Central](#)