**FRAN\*6290: Research in Relational Family Therapy**

**Course Outline – FALL 2025**

**GRADUATE Calendar Description:** The focus of this course is on the breadth of mental health research relevant to the Relational and Psychotherapy Training Program. The course addresses issues related to evidence-based practice, therapeutic outcome, and therapeutic process. A selected review and critique of quantitative and qualitative research methods and exemplary research is included. This course is offered in a clinical section for MRFT and MP students and a non-clinical section for MA.MH students. **Department(s):** Department of Family Relations and Applied Nutrition

**Credit Weight:** 0.5 credits **Course Hours:** 3-0 (36 lecture; 0 lab/seminar)

**course Description**: The focus of this course is on the breadth of mental health research relevant to the Relational and Psychotherapy Training Program. The course will address issues related to evidence-based practice, therapeutic outcome, and therapeutic process. A selected review and critique of quantitative and qualitative research methods and exemplary research is included. This section of this course is designed for MA.MH students only. Class discussions, assignments, and class activities will take place online and students will be encouraged to consider how research can inform mental health and well-being interventions, and how students can apply course content to their current professional work. Students will also be encouraged to consider how to apply course learning to their everyday lives.

**instructional support:**

**Course Instructor:** Dr. Amanda Hooykaas (she/her)

**Email:** amanda.hooykaas@uoguelph.ca

**Office Hours:** online by appointment

**learning resources:**

**Required Resource(s):** All resources will be posted online via CourseLink.

**COURSE Learning Outcomes:**

1. Demonstrate an awareness of the current state of outcome/efficacy/evidence-based research in RFT and psychotherapy through scholarly course readings, written or oral assignments, and synchronous class discussions. (Broad knowledge of current discourse in field, professional challenges, areas of growth/development)
2. Demonstrate a broad understanding of current research methods (and associated core principles) utilized within the field of RFT, including qualitative and quantitative methods and analysis, and measurement tools that are utilized widely in research outcome studies as well as clinical assessment through scholarly course readings, written or oral assignments, and synchronous class discussions.
3. Analyze the difference between outcome and process research, and describe the associated implications for understanding therapy interventions, interactional processes, and the process of change through scholarly course readings, written or oral assignments, and synchronous class discussions.
4. Review in writing, for a professional audience, a specific (limited) area of current research in the field of RFT and psychotherapy that includes a coherent description of primary findings together with a synthesis of the current state of research including clinical applications and gaps or limitations of extant literature.
5. Utilize knowledge translation skills to present (written or orally) research findings and implications (in a specific topic area) in language and terms oriented to a lay audience.
6. Critique professional published research, assessing the quality of research studies and program evaluation literature in terms of the congruence between theoretical orientation, methodological approaches and claims related to clinical implications, as well as taking a critical perspective with respect to the consideration of various social locations and marginalized populations, and potential biases and values associated with these approaches to RFT research through written or oral assignments and synchronous class discussions.

**TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES:**

**Course Structure:** This is a collaborative, learner-centred course that actively engages all students in discussions and activities. The course requires careful reviewing of all requirements and material placed on the website including this syllabus. Make sure that you are prepared to read and to actively engage in the class. This will be a flipped classroom, meaning that rather than being taught by a “sage on the stage,” your instructor will be a “guide on the side”. The Team-Based Learning approach is a pedagogical model of a flipped classroom in which the typical lecture and homework elements of a course are reversed. You will spend approximately ½ the lecture time in groups and 40% of your final grade will be based on those experiences – this structure is intended to provide you with the opportunity to delve deeply and critically into material both as an individual and a group. *The value of a flipped class is in the repurposing of class time into a workshop where students can inquire about lecture content, test their skills in applying knowledge, and interact with one another in hands-on activities; this also means that students have a requirement to actively participate; individual inquiry and collaborative effort are necessary*.

**Expectations for Group Work:** The group-based assessment is moderately-weighted in this course. The expectations for this course are that students should be able to work effectively together to achieve results. It is essential that you ensure your groups remain cohesive and supportive if effective learning is to occur. The course instructor requires group members to contract for this at the outset of the course. These group contracts will not be graded but are a required component of the course.In the event of “free riding” (individual students not contributing to the work of the group) or other team dysfunction, or contravention of the group contract, the first course of action is to attempt to resolve these issues within the group, using the group contract as a resolution mechanism. The groups should identify and address the issue(s) early in the process, so speedy identification and resolution is key. Call a team meeting to discuss the issue(s); keep personalities out of the discussion focus on the issue(s) at hand. Look to your contract for solutions. If this is not possible, it is your responsibility to raise these issues with the Course Instructor as a group.

**Grading of Individual and Group Work:** Students must pass all assessments in the course to receive a passing grade. For example, a student earning 80% in the group assessments of the course would fail the course if they did not achieve a passing grade in the individual assessments. The default position is that all students in a group will receive the same grade for group-based work. If there is a situation where a student is not fairly contributing to the production and completion of the group assignment and does not respond to group requests to enhance their efforts, group members should contact the Course Instructor.In special cases such as this, a peer evaluation process will be instituted to enable group members to each assess a fair allocation of marks for the work completed. This assessment may result in group members receiving different grades for the same assignment. The instructor will have final say on the grade allocated in all cases. Such instances in this course are extremely rare, and the expectation is that all group members will direct their efforts toward proactively resolving internal issues related to working in teams, using their group contract as a basis for establishing expectations and resolving conflicts.

***Territorial Acknowledgement:*** *We acknowledge that the University of Guelph resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We recognize the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant to this land and offer our respect to our Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Métis neighbours as we strive to strengthen our relationships with them. Today, this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we learn and work.*

**Assessment details**

| **Assessment** | **LOs Addressed** | **Due Date\*** | **Weight** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| TCPS 2 Tutorial on Research Ethics (Individual)  Individual Readiness Assurance Process Tests (Individual)  Team Readiness Assurance Process Tests (Group)  Case Studies (Group)  Personal Reflections (Individual)  Peer Evaluation (Individual) | 2  1, 2, 3, 5  1, 2, 3, 5  1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6  1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 | September 12 at 11:59pm  September 18, October 2, October 16, October 30, November 13 at 7:45pm  September 18, October 2, October 16, October 30, November 13 at 9:00pm  September 25, October 9, October 23, November 6, November 20 at 8:00pm  September 25, October 9, October 23, November 6, November 20 at 9:00pm  November 23 at 11:59pm | 0%  30%  20%  20%  25%  5% |
|  |  | **Total:** | 100% |

**ASSESSMENT DESCRIPTIONS:**

**TCPS 2 Tutorial on Research (0%) (but mandatory to complete this course):** All students must complete the TCPS 2 Tutorial Course on Research Ethics (CORE) online. A link is provided on D2L. It should take approximately 3 hours to complete. Upon completion, you will be issued a certificate. You must submit an electronic version of your certificate. The tutorial itself can be helpful in learning about the research ethics process and may offer you some insight into the research process.

**Individual Readiness Assurance Process Tests (Individual) (30%):** During the first class meeting of each module, an event known as the Readiness Assurance Process is completed. First, students complete an individual multiple-choice test (typically 20 questions for a 2-week module) on the lecture, readings, and other material provided. This is intended to assess your comprehension and reward those students who are prepared for class.

**Team Readiness Assurance Process Tests (Group) (20%):** Following the individual test, the same test is retaken within your teams. This team test uses a special test card known as an IF-AT (Immediate Feedback Assessment Technique); this card is a scratch and win type testing card. Your team will discuss a question, decide on an answer, and scratch off the coating over your choice to see if it is correct. If the answer is not correct, you will return to the question and discussion. You cannot leave each question until you as a group know the correct answer. This component is intended to assess your ability as a group to synthesize material, debate questionable answers, and collaboratively decide upon the best answers. *Following the team test, you, as a team, are invited to appeal any answers you got incorrect, due to ambiguity in question or ambiguity in readings or lectures. At the end of Readiness Assurance Process, the Instructor can provide small clarifications on troublesome topics. Once this process is complete, the Instructor has some assurance that students have acquired the background knowledge necessary to move on to problem solving.*

**Case Studies (Group) (20%):** These case study assignments ask you as a team to debate or discuss a case study or topic relevant to the module in which it is assigned. To demonstrate your preparation to the case study, you will be required to submit individual work at 6:00pm on the day of the case study (prior to the collaborative case study work). You need to follow instructions carefully and post the results of your group work on the discussion board (specific requirements to vary by Case Study). Should you not submit your individual work by 6:00pm on the case study day, you will automatically receive a zero on the collaborative case study.

**Personal Reflections (individual) (25%):** At the end of each module you will be given a prompt and required to address the topic as thoroughly as you can, providing evidence from lectures, group work, readings, and your own experiences. You will be asked to both synthesize material and provide your own evaluation and opinions – your opinion is never wrong but should be justified so others might understand it. You will also be asked to provide three questions about the module you don’t yet know the answer to – these will guide further discussions. This component will be thirty minutes in length and will require you to individually respond to the prompt online at 8:00pm. This component is intended to provide you with the opportunity to share your thoughts, highlight areas you are uncertain about, and focus on synthesis of materials. It will be available via “Quizzes” on CourseLink.

**Peer Evaluation (Individual) (5%):** The peer evaluation must be carried out via the **PEAR**tool, as it is linked with CourseLink. To participate in the review, you will log into [PEAR](https://peartool.opened.uoguelph.ca/) via the Tools dropdown menu in the navbar. **PEAR**is a tool that can accept student submissions for review and then collect and organize feedback (including text-based comments and/or marks). Marks and any text-based feedback will be released to students once all the reviews are complete and reviewed by the instructor. In the Review phase, you will be assigned to evaluate your peers' contributions for this assignment. Your task as a peer evaluator will be to provide feedback for each prompt of the evaluation and provide text-based comments. Note the due date in the **Schedule.**If you are unfamiliar with how to use PEAR, please watch this [tutorial video.](https://peartool.opened.uoguelph.ca/)

**TENTATIVE DELIVERY SCHEDULE\***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| *Week* |  | *Topic* |
| *1* | *Lecture (September 4)* | ***Introductions and Expectations***  *Initial Group Meeting (complete contract)* |
| *2* | *Lecture (September 11)* | ***Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice in Mental Health and Well-Being***  ***How to find and critique evidence-based research articles;*** *Guest Speaker: Library Services*  ***Ethical considerations related to research***  *Do TCPS 2 Research Tutorial if not previously completed* |
| *3* | *Lecture (September 18)* | ***Module 1: Cultural Considerations in RFT Research; Indigenous Research Methods***  *Individual and Group Assessment* |
| *4* | *Lecture (September 25)* | *Case Study*  *Personal Reflection* |
| *5* | *Lecture (October 2)* | ***Module 2: Quantitative Research***  *Individual and Group Assessment* |
| *6* | *Lecture (October 9)* | *Case Study*  *Personal Reflection* |
| *7* | *Lecture (October 16)* | ***Module 3: Qualitative Research***  *Individual and Group Assessment* |
| *8* | *Lecture (October 23)* | *Case Study*  *Personal Reflection* |
| *9* | *Lecture (October 30)* | ***Module 4: Process versus Outcome Research***  *Individual and Group Assessment* |
| *10* | *Lecture (November 6)* | *Case Study*  *Personal Reflection* |
| *11* | *Lecture (November 13)* | ***Module 5: Connecting the Dots***  *Individual and Group Assessment* |
| *12* | *Lecture (November 20)* | *Case Study*  *Personal Reflection* |

***Note:*** *This is a tentative schedule; any changes will be announced in class/an announcement will be posted on CourseLink.*

**COURSE STATEMENTS:**

**Acceptable Use:** The University of Guelph has an [Acceptable Use Policy](http://www.uoguelph.ca/cio/content/aup-acceptable-use-policy), which you are expected to adhere to.

**Communicating with Your Instructor:** During the course, your instructor will interact with you on various course matters during synchronous classes and on the course website. While most discussions will likely/hopefully occur during the class period, CourseLink will also be used to communicate in the following ways:

* **Announcements:** The instructor will use **Announcements** on the Course Home page to provide you with course reminders and updates. Please check this section frequently for course updates from your instructor.
* **Ask Your Instructor Discussion:** Use this discussion forum to ask questions of your instructor about content or course-related issues with which you are unfamiliar. If you encounter difficulties, the instructor is here to help you. Please post general course-related questions to the discussion forum (rather than sending by email) so that all students have an opportunity to review the response. To access this discussion forum, select **Discussions** from the **Tools** dropdown menu.
* **Email:** If you have a conflict that prevents you from completing course requirements, or have a question concerning a personal matter, you can send your instructor a private message by email. The instructor will respond to your email within 48 to 72 hours.
* **Online Meetings:** If you have a complex question you would like to discuss with your instructor, you may book an online meeting.Meetings depend on the availability of you and the instructor and are booked on a first come first served basis.

**Submission of Assignments to Dropbox:** All written assignments for this course should be submitted electronically via the online **Dropbox** tool as a Word file or a PDF. When submitting your assignments using the **Dropbox** tool, do not leave the page until your assignment has successfully uploaded. To verify that your submission was complete, you can view the submission history immediately after the upload to see which files uploaded successfully. The system will also email you a receipt. Save this email receipt as proof of submission.Be sure to keep a back-up copy of all assignments if they are lost in transition. To avoid any last-minute computer problems, your instructor strongly recommend you save your assignments to a cloud-based file storage (e.g., Google Docs), or send to your email account, so that should something happen to your computer, the assignment could still be submitted on time or re-submitted.It is your responsibility to submit your assignments on time as specified on the Schedule. Please review the following expectations carefully prior to submission and ensure your assignments meet them.

* Your assignments must be typewritten, double spaced, and no less than 12-point font and 1” margins all around.
* Please ensure your all student names are clearly indicated on assignments.
* Please ensure the group name and number are clearly indicated on group assignments.
* Please insert page numbers on all assignments submitted.
* Word limitations must be respected—anything in excess will not be read or graded.
* Please ensure that in-text citations, document formatting, and your reference list follow accepted standards (for this course, we will use APA). Submitting assignments without proper referencing will be considered plagiarism.

Be sure to check the technical requirements and make sure you have the proper computer, that you have a supported browser, and that you have reliable Internet access. Remember that **technical difficulty is not an excuse not to turn in your assignment on time.** Don’t wait until the last minute as you may get behind in your work.If, for some reason, you have a technical difficulty when submitting your assignment electronically, please contact your instructor or [CourseLink Support](https://support.opened.uoguelph.ca/contact).

**Late Policy:** If you choose to submit your individual assignments to the **Dropbox** tool late, the full allocated mark will be reduced by 10% per day after the deadline for the submission of the assignment for up to five days (50% penalty). Should a situation arise that precludes completing and submitting your assignments by the specified due dates, please notify the instructor of the issue.Extensions will be considered for medical reasons or other extenuating circumstances. If you require an extension, discuss this with the instructor as soon as possible and well before the due date. Barring exceptional circumstances, extensions will not be granted once the due date has passed. These rules are not designed to be arbitrary, nor are they inflexible. They are designed to keep you organized, to ensure that all students have the same amount of time to work on assignments, and to help to return marked materials to you in the shortest possible time.

**Obtaining Grades and Feedback:** Unofficial assessment marks will be available in the **Grades** tool of the course website.Your instructor will have grades posted online within 2 weeks of the submission deadline if the assignment was submitted on time. Once your assignments are marked you can view your grades on the course website by selecting **Grades** from the **Tools** dropdown menu on the navbar. Your course will remain open to you for one year following the end of your program.Final grades will be available at the end of the semester. Students can access their final grade by logging into [WebAdvisor](https://webadvisor.uoguelph.ca/WebAdvisor/WebAdvisor?TYPE=M&PID=CORE-WBMAIN&TOKENIDX=2526105680) (using your U of G central ID).

**Turnitin Software:** In this course, your instructor will be using Turnitin, integrated with the CourseLink Dropbox tool, to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph. All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. A major benefit of using Turnitin is that students will be able to educate and empower themselves in preventing academic misconduct. In this course, you may screen your own assignments through Turnitin as many times as you wish before the due date. You will be able to see and print reports that show you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials in your assignment.

**Mental health:** If you need support, please visit https://wellness.uoguelph.ca for information about resources and supports available in our community.

**UNIVERSITY STANDARD STATEMENTS**

**E-mail communication:** As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

**When you cannot meet a course requirement:** When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Graduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Consideration](https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/grounds-academic-consideration/).

**Drop date:** Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the last day of classes; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of classes in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for [Dropping Courses](https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/registration/registration-changes/) are available in the Graduate Calendar.

**Copies of out-of-class assignments:** Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

**Accessibility:** The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required, however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 14 days in advance, and no later than November 1 (fall), March 1 (winter) or July 1 (summer). Similarly, new or changed accommodations for online quizzes, tests and exams must be approved at least a week ahead of time.More information: [www.uoguelph.ca/sas](http://www.uoguelph.ca/sas)

**Academic misconduct:** The [Academic Misconduct Policy](https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/general-regulations/academic-misconduct/) is outlined in the Graduate Calendar.The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and **it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct** and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

Instructors **shall not** determine if academic misconduct has occurred. This is up to the Associate Dean Academic’s office. Instructors shall not assign a grade of zero even if they believe that the student has committed some form of academic misconduct (e.g., copied material from a website like CourseHero) on an assignment or exam. Instructors **can** determine if a student has poorly paraphrased and/or improperly cited material and can provide a grade accordingly if this is clearly identified as part of the assessment criteria via a rubric or other assessment tools. For more information about Academic Integrity resources and how to prevent Academic Misconduct see: <https://csahs.uoguelph.ca/faculty-research/hub-teaching-learning-excellence/academic-integrity>

**Recording of materials:** Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

**Resources:** The [Academic Calendars](https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars) are the source of information about the University of Guelph’s procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

**Disclaimer:** Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings, changes in classroom protocols, and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. This includes on-campus scheduling during the semester, mid-terms and final examination schedules. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19 website (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>) and circulated by email.

**Illness:** Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

**COVID-19 Safety Protocols:** For information on current safety protocols, follow these links:

* <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/how-u-of-g-is-preparing-for-your-safe-return/>
* <https://news.uoguelph.ca/return-to-campuses/spaces/#ClassroomSpaces>

Please note, that these guidelines may be updated as required in response to evolving University, Public Health, or government directives.