

FRHD*3400 Communication and Counselling Skills

COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2026

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. Acknowledging them reminds us of our important connection to this land where we learn and work.

1. CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

This course is an examination and analysis of the theories and methods of communication as applied within the processes of family counseling and consultation.

Credit Weight: 0.5 credits

Course Hours: 3-0 (24 lecture; 8 lab/seminar)

Pre-Requisite(s): 4.00 credits including one of ANTH*1150, FRHD*1010, FRHD*1020, FRHD*1100, PSYC*1000, SOC*1100)

Co-Requisites(s):

Restriction(s): This is a Priority Access Course. Enrolment may be restricted to particular programs or specializations or semester levels during certain periods. Please see departmental website for more information.

2. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The focus of this course is the enhancement and development of communication and counselling skills. The course explores a number of theoretical frameworks related to interviewing individuals within the context of family and interpersonal relationships. Students will engage in the demonstration of the skills presented as well as a process of self-reflection related to the course material.

3. TIMETABLE

Lecture:

Location:

Seminars/Labs:

Final Exam:

4. INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

Course Instructor: Olga Smoliak, PhD, C. Psych, RMFT (she/her), Professor, Family Relations and Applied Nutrition Department, University of Guelph

Email: osmoliak@uoguelph.ca

Telephone: 519-824-4120 ext. 56336

Office: MACS 228

Office Hours: By appointment

Teaching Assistants:

Betul Asdemir – facilitates seminars 102 and 104 (basdemir@uoguelph.ca)

Abirami Kankatharan – facilitates seminars 101, 103, 105 (akankath@uoguelph.ca)

Ingrid Dusper – facilitates seminars 106 (idusper@uoguelph.ca)

5. LEARNING RESOURCES

Required Resource(s):

Textbook

Ivey, A. E., Ivey, M. B., & Zalaquett, C. (2024). *Essentials of intentional counselling and psychotherapy in a multicultural world* (4th ed.). Cengage.

The bookstore has a hard copy (\$172.95) and a digital copy (\$79.95). The library has a hard copy on reserve (to be read at the library). Students are encouraged to use the most recent version (2024) – exam questions will be based on this version.

6. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and classify interviewing and counselling skills;
2. Demonstrate basic competence in and knowledge of interviewing and counselling skills;
3. Describe a range of theoretical approaches and draw upon these when observing or interviewing individuals, family members, or other social supports;
4. Apply theoretical ideas and concepts to real-world scenarios and everyday life;
5. Describe the potential impacts of race, class, gender, ability, ethnicity, and other facets of socio-cultural diversity on the lives of people as well as on the development of the client-professional relationship;
6. Demonstrate self-reflection and self-awareness in written work.

7. TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Date	Topics	Readings	Assignment Due Date Lab Schedule
Week 1	Course overview Introduction to counselling and communication skills	Textbook Ch. 1	<i>No skill labs this week</i>

Week 2	Counsellor's use of self and ethics in counselling Cultural humility and anti-oppression	Ch. 2	Skill Lab #1
Week 3	Basic listening skills Person-centred therapy	Ch. 3	Skill Lab #2
Week 4	Questions Solution-focused brief therapy	Ch. 4	Skill Lab #3
Week 5	Encouraging, paraphrasing, and summarizing Narrative therapy	Ch. 5	Skill Lab #4 Helping Interview Part 1
Week 6	Working with emotions and empathic reflections Emotion-focused therapy	Ch. 6	Skill Lab #5
NO CLASS (Winter Break)			
Week 7	Midterm Motivational interviewing		<i>No skill labs this week</i> Midterm
Week 8	Structuring the session Family therapy and circular questions	Chs. 7-8	Skill Lab #6
Week 9	Empathic confrontation and challenging Cognitive-behavioural therapy	Ch. 9	Skill Lab #7 Helping Interview Part 2
Week 10	Reflection of meaning, interpretation, and reframing Psychodynamic therapy	Ch. 10	Skill Lab #8
Week 11	Crisis counselling and risk assessment Feminist therapy	Ch. 13	<i>No skill labs this week</i> Participation Self-Assessment
Week 12	Assessment and diagnosis in counselling Wrap up		<i>No skill labs this week</i> Final Exam

Note: This is a tentative schedule; however, due to various unknown factors there may be changes. Any changes will be announced during class and an announcement will be posted on the CourseLink site.

8. ASSESSMENT DETAILS

Assessment (see CourseLink for details)	LOs Addressed	Due	% of Final Grade
Helping Interview Part 1 Group assignment. Transcription and analysis of a recorded interview.	2, 3, 4, 5, 6		20%
Midterm Exam Multiple-choice questions on Ivey et al. (2024) chs. 1-5 and lectures.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		25%
Helping Interview Part 2 Individual assignment. Reflection and discussion of alternative statements and their possible influence on interview.	2, 3, 4, 5, 6		20%
Participation The grade is determined by students' attendance and quality of participation in lectures and 8 skills labs. Students submit Participation Self-Assessment, which will inform the grade.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		10%
Final Exam Multiple-choice questions based on Ivey et al. (2024) chs. 7-10 & 13 and lectures.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5		25%

9. COURSE STATEMENTS

Course Website:

There is a course website at <http://courselink.uoguelph.ca>. All components of this course will be housed on the CourseLink site including this course outline, assignments, and links to further resources. Your assignments will be submitted through the Dropbox function. Marks and feedback will also be released on the site. Please familiarize yourself with this website as soon as possible and visit it regularly throughout the semester.

Late Assignments:

Late assignments will be accepted up to 5 days following the due date and will receive a penalty of 10% per day EXCEPT under documented grounds for compassionate consideration. Assignments submitted more than one week late without documented grounds will receive a grade of zero. If you are going to hand an assignment in late, you must contact your course instructor to inform them when you will be submitting your assignment.

Receipt of Grades:

After you receive a grade on CourseLink, please review your feedback. Any inquiry or dispute over the grade must be made within two weeks from the date they are posted. If you fail to protest any grade during this time limit, changes to the grade will not be considered. [Grades will be based on the Grading Procedures outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar.](#)

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.

10. UNIVERSITY 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 Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [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](#) are available in the Undergraduate 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

Academic misconduct:

The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is outlined in the Undergraduate 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 as long as 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](#) 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.

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 this link: <https://news.uoguelph.ca/covid-19/safety-practices/>. Please note, that these guidelines may be updated as required in response to evolving University, Public Health or government directives.