

# SS5209: SOCIAL WORK THEORIES AND PRACTICE I: WORKING WITH INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

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## Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

## Part I Course Overview

### Course Title

Social Work Theories and Practice I: Working with Individuals and Families

### Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

### Course Number

5209

### Academic Unit

Social and Behavioural Sciences (SS)

### College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

### Course Duration

One Semester

### Credit Units

3

### Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

### Medium of Instruction

Other Languages

### Other Languages for Medium of Instruction

English, supplemented by Cantonese/Putonghua in live demonstration, skills rehearsal, and role-play exercises as situation requires.

### Medium of Assessment

English

### Prerequisites

Nil

### Precursors

Nil

### Equivalent Courses

Nil

**Exclusive Courses**

Nil

**Part II Course Details****Abstract**

This course aims to:

- a. introduce to students the main theoretical orientation of looking at people's needs and problems in a person-in-environment perspective.
- b. equip students with theories and models in assessing and intervening problems of individual and families from social work perspectives, and integrating social work theories, skills, and values in practice in the local context.

**Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)**

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Apply the systems theory in analysing and assessing the needs and problems of individuals and families.	20	x	x	
2	Identify and apply relevant social work theories and models in assessing and intervening with target systems at individual and family levels.	40	x	x	
3	Integrate relevant social work theories and models, skills, and values in working with target systems at individual and family levels.	40	x	x	x

**A1: Attitude**

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

**A2: Ability**

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

**A3: Accomplishments**

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

**Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)**

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	LTA1: Lectures	Lectures cover the major topics of the course with explanation, clarification and discussion	1, 2, 3

2	LTA2: Tutorials	Tutorials are designed to facilitate students to discuss in smaller groups and in a personal participatory way about social work values, theories and models. Students will also learn and practise their skills in working with individuals and families in the tutorials.	1, 2, 3	
3	LTA3: Role play and demonstration	Role play and demonstration will be conducted for students to learn from the lecturer's demonstration and practise their skills and assessment in social work intervention models. Debriefing and discussion will be made to bring forth the theoretical concepts.	1, 2, 3	
4	LTA4: Student presentation	Student presentation is organized to consolidate students' learning and application of social work values, theories, models, and skills in practice with individual clients and families.	1, 2, 3	
5	LTA5: Student consultation	Scheduled student group consultation is arranged to facilitate more teacher-student and student-student interaction and discussion, more in-depth learning and understanding of knowledge.	1, 2, 3	

### Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	<p>AT1: Student Presentation</p> <p>Students will choose a case and make a presentation. Students are expected to apply social work values and principles, make clear and accurate case analysis with relevant theoretical frameworks, formulate precise treatment goals and demonstrate appropriate skills in assessment and intervention. Videotaping of skills demonstration is encouraged in student presentation.</p>	1, 2, 3	20	<p>Allow AI to (1) conduct proof editing; (2) brainstorm and generate initial ideas</p>	Yes

2	<p>AT2: Term Paper</p> <p>Students will be required to write a term paper with about 3,500 words. Students can search and target for a specific case reported in newspaper in the current year. Basing on evidence-based literature review, applying social work values, and principles, and adopting appropriate social work theories and models, students are expected to have in-depth case analysis, formulate an appropriate treatment plan and develop effective intervention methods.</p>	1, 2, 3	40	"-"	No
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**Continuous Assessment (%)**

60

**Examination (%)**

40

**Examination Duration (Hours)**

3

**Additional Information for ATs****Closed Book Examination**

Students will be required to answer one long question on a case analysis and assessment and 3-4 short questions on the social work values, theories and models. Under very special circumstance that a normal examination could not be organized, it will be replaced by an online examination or some other assessments such as writing of reflection papers. Use of GenAI tools is not allowed.

**Assessment Rubrics (AR)****Assessment Task**

1. Student Presentation (20%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

**Criterion**

Competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

**Excellent**

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for the competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

**Good**

(B+, B, B-) Good evidence for the competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

**Fair**

(C+, C, C-) Fair evidence for the competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

**Marginal**

(D) Limited evidence for the competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

**Failure**

(F) Insufficient evidence for the competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

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**Assessment Task**

2. Term Paper (40%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

**Criterion**

Capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

**Excellent**

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for the capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

**Good**

(B+, B, B-) Good evidence for the capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

**Fair**

(C+, C, C-) Fair evidence for the capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

**Marginal**

(D) Limited evidence for the capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

**Failure**

(F) Insufficient evidence for the capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

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### **Assessment Task**

3. Closed Book Examination (40%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

#### **Criterion**

Ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

#### **Excellent**

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for the ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

#### **Good**

(B+, B, B-) Good evidence for the ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

#### **Fair**

(C+, C, C-) Fair evidence for the ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

#### **Marginal**

(D) Limited evidence for the ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

#### **Failure**

(F) Insufficient evidence for the ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

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### **Assessment Task**

1. Student Presentation (20%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

#### **Criterion**

Competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

#### **Excellent**

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for the competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

#### **Good**

(B+, B) Good evidence for the competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

#### **Marginal**

(B-, C+, C) Fair to limited evidence for the competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

#### **Failure**

(F) Insufficient evidence for the competence to examine critically and apply innovatively the theories and concepts for case assessment, treatment goal formulation, and design of intervention strategies through presentation, role play and demonstration.

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### **Assessment Task**

2. Term Paper (40%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

### **Criterion**

Capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

### **Excellent**

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for the capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

### **Good**

(B+, B) Good evidence for the capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

### **Marginal**

(B-, C+, C) Fair to limited evidence for the capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

### **Failure**

(F) Insufficient evidence for the capability to understand and examine critically, apply innovatively the knowledge and theories in case assessment and intervention, and discuss critically the application of the theories in local context.

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### **Assessment Task**

3. Closed Book Examination (40%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

### **Criterion**

Ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

### **Excellent**

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence for the ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

### **Good**

(B+, B) Good evidence for the ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

### **Marginal**

(B-, C+, C) Fair to limited evidence for the ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

### **Failure**

(F) Insufficient evidence for the ability to understand and describe the knowledge and concepts, and to apply them to cases

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## **Part III Other Information**

### **Keyword Syllabus**

#### 1.1 Social work process

Intake and engagement, data collection and assessment (systems theory), planning and contracting, intervention and monitoring, evaluation and termination

#### 1.2 Working with individuals

Person-centred therapy: self, process of therapy, congruence, unconditional positive regard, empathy, therapeutic techniques

Cognitive-behavioral therapy: relation among emotion, cognition and behaviour, cognitive distortions, cognitive intervention strategies, creating new perspectives, behavioural intervention

### 1.3 Working with families

Structural family therapy: boundary and subsystems, coalition and alliance, family life cycle, intervention techniques

Systemic family therapy: differentiation of self, triangulation, emotional cutoff, nuclear emotional processes, family projection process, multi-generational transmission, socio-emotional process, intervention skills

Satir family therapy: inappropriate roles, dysfunctional rules, unrealistic expectations, communication stances, iceberg metaphor, self-esteem maintenance kit, mandala, temperature reading, parts party

### 1.4 Skills practice

Intake skills, reflection of content, reflection of feeling, clarification, summarizing, confrontation, self-disclosure, reframing, interpretation.

## Reading List

### Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Corey, G. (2013). Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy. Belmont, Calif.: Cengage Learning.
2	Hepworth D.H. (2013). Direct social work practice: Theory and skills. Australia: Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning.
3	Nichols, M.P. (2013). Family therapy: Concepts and methods. Boston: Pearson.

### Additional Readings

Title	
1	Banmen, J. (2006). Applications of the Satir growth model. WA.: the Virginia Satir Network.
2	Caritas Family Service. (2001). Unveiling Family Strengths: Multifarious Counselling Practices. Hong Kong: Caritas-Family Services.
3	Cullari, S. (2001). Counseling and psychotherapy: A practical guidebook for students, trainees, and new professionals. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
4	Freeman, A. (2004). Clinical applications of cognitive therapy. New York: Plenum Publishers.
5	Goldenberg, H. (2013). Family therapy: An overview. Belmont, CA.: Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning.
6	Johnson, L.C. & Yanca, S. (2004) Social Work Practice: A Generalist Approach (8th ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
7	Leahy, R. L. (2003). Cognitive therapy techniques: A practitioner' s guide. New York: Guilford Press.
8	Loeschen, S. (2002). The Satir process: Practical skills for therapists. Calif.: Halcyon Pub. Design.
9	Murdock, N. L. (2013).Theories of counseling and psychotherapy: A case approach. Boston: Pearson.
10	Nelson-Jones, R. (2011).Theory and practice of counseling and therapyLondon: SAGE.
11	Nelson-Jones, R. (2012). Basic counseling skills: A helper' s manual. London: SAGE.
12	Purton, C. (2004). Person-centred therapy: The focusing-oriented approach. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
13	Spray, C. (2012). Social work practice with children and families. London: SAGE.
14	Walsh, J. (2010). Theories for direct social work practice. CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
15	霍玉蓮著(2004) 。婚姻與家庭治療: 理論與實務藍圖。香港: 突破出版社。
16	高劉宝慈等。(2007) 。個案工作: 理論及案例。香港社會工作人員協會出版。
17	高劉宝慈、朱亮基編。(1997) 。個人工作與家庭治療: 理論及案例。香港: 中文大學出版社。