

SS4206: WORKING WITH CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Effective Term

Semester A 2026/27

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Working with Children & Families

Subject Code

SS - Social and Behavioural Sciences

Course Number

4206

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

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Instruction

English, supplemented by Chinese (Cantonese) in live demonstration, skills rehearsal, and role-play

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This is an elective course for students who want to further pursue their knowledge in theoretical concepts and intervention models for working with children and families. Upon finishing this course, students will have examined family and children related issues in a contemporary and local perspectives. To increase their cross-cultural theoretical orientation to these perspectives, students will be introduced to how other cultures are attempting to solve similar problems in their countries. From theories to practice, students will study the children and family issues by practice models and with a reference to local context. This course aims to examine a range of family and child-related issues in Hong Kong; study relevant intervention models and approaches pertinent to social work practice in the local cultural context; enhance students' practice knowledge and skills in social work intervention with children and families; give students a firm theoretical foundation for effective practice in a variety of family and children service settings.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Identify socio-demographic trends in Hong Kong and interpret the impact on family, marriage, childhood and parenthood.	10		x	
2	Apply social sciences theories, with cultural sensitivity, to family and child-related issues on the professional agenda of social workers.	30	x	x	
3	Apply family therapy theories, with cultural sensitivity, to bring about change.	40		x	
4	Help children and adolescents through individual / group counselling and psycho-educational interventions.	20		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	Lectures	Students will engage in lectures that act as the major media to introduce theoretical concepts and popular models used for children and families.	1, 2, 3, 4	

2	Tutorials and group presentations	Students will participate in self-study to encourage team learning by assigning them to small groups for group presentations regarding different family therapy models and to adopt case demonstrations, also, perform role plays in presentations to make theoretical concepts practical to use.	3, 4	
3	Audio visual materials	Students will understand and enhance their interest in contemporary children and family issues and theoretical concepts with the support and demonstration of audio-visual materials in lectures.	1, 2, 3, 4	
4	Case demonstrations	Students will engage in the discussion of case demonstrations and stories in the lecture that stimulate their interest in further understanding contemporary children and family issues.	1, 2, 3, 4	
5	Student consultation	Students will participate in group consultations to facilitate more teacher-student and student-student interaction and discussion, more in-depth learning and understanding of knowledge.	1, 2, 3, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	AT1: Group presentation	3, 4	30	Allow AI to (1) conduct proof editing; (2) brainstorm and generate initial ideas	Yes
2	AT2: Quiz	1, 2, 3	30	-	No
3	AT3: Individual paper writing	1, 2, 3, 4	40	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)

Assessment Task

1. Group presentation

Criterion

1. Capacity to understand the theoretical concepts of a family therapy model and their relationship to application
2. Demonstration of good understand of its skills and the limitation for application

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Capacity not demonstrated

Assessment Task

2. Individual paper writing

Criterion

1. Capacity to make use of family assessment tools and application
2. Demonstration of self-reflective in learning and to strive for professional competence

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

High

Good (B+, B, B-)

Significant

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Moderate

Marginal (D)

Basic

Failure (F)

Capacity not demonstrated

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Family and marriage values and attitudes; family development and family problems.

Understanding marriage trends, types and functions; theoretical knowledge in understanding marriage: Marital life cycle and marriage problems; working with couples: premarital work, couple work and marriage enrichment.

Understanding separation and divorce; impact of divorce on couples and children; divorce counselling and mediation.

Concepts and issues in child welfare: permanency planning and continuum of care; ways in working with children: play therapy and family counselling.

Parenting: functions and issues; parenting styles and problems; ways in working with parents.

Family violence; Understanding child abuse and spousal abuse: definition and identification; working with family violence.

Introduction to family therapy—different models of family therapy; structural family therapy and brief solution-focused therapy.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Brotherton, G., Davies, H., & McGillivray, G. (2010). Working with children, young people and families. Sage Publications.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Beckett, C. (2003). Child protection: An introduction. London: Sage.
2	Briesmeister, J. M., & Schaefer, C. E. (1998). Introduction. Handbook of parent training: Parents as co-therapists for children's behaviour problems. New York: John Wiley & Sons.
3	Campbell, D., & Palm, G. F. (2004). Group parent education: Promoting parent learning and support. London: Sage.
4	Cherlin, A. J. (2005). Public and private families: An introduction (4th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.
5	Cherlin, A. J. (2005). Public and private families: A reader (4th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.
6	Goldenburg, I., & Goldenberg, H. (2004). Family therapy: An overview (6th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
7	Goldenberg, H., & Goldenberg, I. (2002). Counseling today's families (4th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.
8	Harway, M. (Ed.). (2005). Handbook of couple therapy. NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
9	Holland, S. (2004). Child and family assessment in social work practice. London: Sage.
10	Landreth, G. L. (1991). Play therapy: The art of the relationship. New York: Routledge. Chinese translation (1994) by Laureate Book.
11	Minuchin, S., Nichols, M. P., & Lee, W. Y. (2007). Assessing families and couples: From symptom to system. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
12	Silva, E. B., & Smart, C. (Eds.). (1999). The new family. London: Sage.
13	Yeung, C. (March, 1999). Concern for the plight of battered women and implications for service direction. Proceedings of the workshop on "A world free of violence against women". Equal Opportunities Commission. (In English and Chinese)
14	Young, K. (1995). Understanding marriage: A Hong Kong case study. Hong Kong: HK University Press.
15	Young, K. et al. (1995). Study on marriages affected by extramarital affairs. Hong Kong: Caritas Hong Kong and University of Hong Kong.
16	Young, K. P. H., & Fok, A. Y. L. (Ed.). (2005). Marriage, divorce and remarriage: Professional Practice in the Hong Kong Cultural Context. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press.
17	何會成，朱志強 (1999)。尋解導向治療：於社會工作的應用。八方文化。
18	馬麗莊 (1998)。家庭治療在西方和香港的發展 – 回顧與前瞻。香港心理衛生會會刊, 27, 33-56。

19	Becvar, D. S., & Becvar, R. J. (2009). Family Therapy: A Systemic Integration (7th ed.). Pearson
20	Hepworth, D.H., Rooney, R.H., Rooney, G.D., Strom-Gottfried (2013). Direct social work practice: Theory and skills (9th Ed.). Cengage Learning
21	Kottler, J. A. (2002). Theories in counseling and therapy: An experiential approach. Allyn and Bacon.
22	Lambert D' raven I. & Pasha-Zaidi N. (2016). Using the PERMA model in the United Arab Emirates, Social Indicators Research, 125, 905-933.
23	Minuchin, S. (2012). Families and family therapy. Routledge
24	Nicholas, M. P., Schwartz, R. C. (2013). Family therapy: Concepts and methods (9th ed.). Pearson
25	Niemix, R.M. (2017). Character strengths interventions: A field guide for practitioners. Hogrefe Publishing
26	Park, N., Peterson, C., & Selgiman, M.E.P. (2004). Strengths of character and well-being, Journal Social and Clinical Psychology, 23 (5), 603-619.
27	Rhind, N. (ed), (1994). Empowering Families: A collection of concepts and methods. HK Family Welfare Society.
28	Satir, V., Benmen, J., Gerber, J., & Gormori, M. (1991). The Satir Model: Family Therapy and Beyond. Palo Alto, California: Science and Behavior Books Inc.
29	Waters, L (2017). The strength switch: How the new science of strength-based parenting can help your child and your teen to flourish. Avery.
30	Halford, W.K. (2010). Marriage and relationship education: What works and how to provide it. Guilford Press.
31	Hammer, T.J. & Turner, P.H. (2012). Parenting in contemporary society (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
32	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。
33	黃富強主編。(2005)。走出抑鬱的深谷：「認知治療」自學/輔助手冊。香港：天健出版社。
34	黃富強、孫玉傑著。(2003)。情緒管理與精神健康：認知治療小組介入手法與技巧。香港：香港大學出版社