



PSY 980

Couple Therapy

S1 Day 2016

Department of Psychology

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Jac Brown

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Credit points

4

Prerequisites

(Admission to MClInPsych or DClInPsych) and PSY904 and PSY961 and (PSY962 or PSY978) and (PSY965 or PSY977)

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit introduces students to basic techniques for counselling couples. Key themes are identified including love, intimacy, power and sex as common underlying dynamics to couples' presenting problems. The basic processes of engaging and holding two people as they present their divergent views of the problem, as well as exploring the differing perceptions and contexts surrounding their presenting problems are emphasised. A framework of exploring couple problems at the levels of behaviour, meaning, belief and emotion is presented. Basic in-session interventions and therapeutic tasks are elaborated. Finally, a range of special couple issues are examined such as separation and divorce, domestic violence, sexual problems and same-sex relationships.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Demonstrate skills in presenting problem exploration to develop conceptualisations that are linked to an integrative meta-framework.
2. Articulate a conceptualization of a relationship presenting problem together with appropriate intervention strategies.
3. Articulate general strategies for dealing with special problems such as domestic violence, affairs, and separation and divorce in couple therapy situations.

4. Reflect upon personal beliefs and attitudes regarding relationships and how those beliefs and attitudes may influence the therapy done with couples.

General Assessment Information

ONLINE SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

You are required to submit your conceptualisation and reflection on beliefs about relationships (Assignments 2 & 3) to the Turnitin anti-plagiarism detection software via the iLearn page for the unit. Your assignment will be automatically compared to work of your classmates, previous students from Macquarie and other universities, with material available on the Internet, both freely available and subscription-based electronic journals and book chapters

PENALTIES FOR ASSIGNMENTS

Penalties will be levied for:

1. late submission of assignments and
2. exceeding the word limit by > 10%:
 - o For late assignments, 5% will be deducted for every day late. For example, if you submit your written assignments late by 2 days, then 10% will be deducted from your final grade.
 - o 5% will also be deducted for work that is more than 10% over the word limit. For instance, the Self Assessment Schedule word limit is set at 4000 words (hence students are expected to not have an assignment longer than 4400 words).
 - o If you choose to include Tables – these need to be included as part of the word limit.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<u>Reflection on Reading</u>	40%	TBA
<u>Conceptualisation Essay</u>	60%	30/05/16

Reflection on Reading

Due: **TBA**

Weighting: **40%**

For your reading for this unit, you may choose two readings from the selection for each of the workshops. Pick any two that interest you and reflect on them. This way you may be exposed to a range of readings from the comments of other classmates. These readings will spark reflections about your own relationships and you are encouraged to reflect at the level that you feel comfortable on your own beliefs and experiences as they relate to material you have read and areas that are discussed in the workshops. Thus, your online discussion should not only relate to the readings that you have selected.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 3. Articulate general strategies for dealing with special problems such as domestic violence, affairs, and separation and divorce in couple therapy situations.
- 4. Reflect upon personal beliefs and attitudes regarding relationships and how those beliefs and attitudes may influence the therapy done with couples.

Conceptualisation Essay

Due: **30/05/16**

Weighting: **60%**

This assignment will assist you to think about and articulate a beginning understanding of how you may conceptualise presenting problems from a couple perspective. Frequently one person will present in therapy with issues that can be more fully understood in considering their personal relationships with family and partner. Choose a case that you have worked with, are currently working with in a therapeutic manner or some relationship you know well enough to comment on dynamics. The case may be an individual or couple and there may be some gaps that you will need to fill in from your imagination. This will be acceptable for this exercise. You should not simply retell your case from the way you worked with it, but use the dynamics the think freshly about the case using ideas discussed in the unit. The essay should focus on how you can begin to understand the presenting problems from the perspective of the meta-framework used in the unit. The essay should focus on conceptual tools and practice strategies and techniques that you have either already found helpful or that you think you might be able to utilise with sufficient practice in the future. It should draw on seminars, workshops, and your reading.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Demonstrate skills in presenting problem exploration to develop conceptualisations that are linked to an integrative meta-framework.
- 2. Articulate a conceptualization of a relationship presenting problem together with appropriate intervention strategies.
- 3. Articulate general strategies for dealing with special problems such as domestic violence, affairs, and separation and divorce in couple therapy situations.

Delivery and Resources

Readings for online discussion will be provided through the reserve library accessed through the online unit guide

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

New Assessment Policy in effect from Session 2 2016 http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html. For more information visit http://students.mq.edu.au/events/2016/07/19/new_assessment_policy_in_place_from_session_2/

Assessment Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy prior to Session 2 2016 <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

PG - Capable of Professional and Personal Judgment and Initiative

Our postgraduates will demonstrate a high standard of discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgment. They will have the ability to make informed choices and decisions that reflect both the nature of their professional work and their personal perspectives.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Demonstrate skills in presenting problem exploration to develop conceptualisations that are linked to an integrative meta-framework.
- 2. Articulate a conceptualization of a relationship presenting problem together with appropriate intervention strategies.
- 3. Articulate general strategies for dealing with special problems such as domestic violence, affairs, and separation and divorce in couple therapy situations.
- 4. Reflect upon personal beliefs and attitudes regarding relationships and how those beliefs and attitudes may influence the therapy done with couples.

Assessment tasks

- Reflection on Reading
- Conceptualisation Essay

PG - Discipline Knowledge and Skills

Our postgraduates will be able to demonstrate a significantly enhanced depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content knowledge in their chosen fields.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Demonstrate skills in presenting problem exploration to develop conceptualisations that are linked to an integrative meta-framework.
- 2. Articulate a conceptualization of a relationship presenting problem together with appropriate intervention strategies.
- 3. Articulate general strategies for dealing with special problems such as domestic violence, affairs, and separation and divorce in couple therapy situations.

Assessment tasks

- Reflection on Reading
- Conceptualisation Essay

PG - Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

Our postgraduates will be capable of utilising and reflecting on prior knowledge and experience, of applying higher level critical thinking skills, and of integrating and synthesising learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments. A characteristic of this form of thinking is the generation of new, professionally oriented knowledge through personal or group-based critique of practice and theory.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Demonstrate skills in presenting problem exploration to develop conceptualisations that are linked to an integrative meta-framework.
- 2. Articulate a conceptualization of a relationship presenting problem together with appropriate intervention strategies.
- 3. Articulate general strategies for dealing with special problems such as domestic violence, affairs, and separation and divorce in couple therapy situations.
- 4. Reflect upon personal beliefs and attitudes regarding relationships and how those beliefs and attitudes may influence the therapy done with couples.

Assessment tasks

- Reflection on Reading
- Conceptualisation Essay

PG - Research and Problem Solving Capability

Our postgraduates will be capable of systematic enquiry; able to use research skills to create new knowledge that can be applied to real world issues, or contribute to a field of study or practice to enhance society. They will be capable of creative questioning, problem finding and problem solving.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Demonstrate skills in presenting problem exploration to develop conceptualisations that are linked to an integrative meta-framework.
- 2. Articulate a conceptualization of a relationship presenting problem together with appropriate intervention strategies.
- 4. Reflect upon personal beliefs and attitudes regarding relationships and how those beliefs and attitudes may influence the therapy done with couples.

Assessment tasks

- Reflection on Reading
- Conceptualisation Essay

PG - Effective Communication

Our postgraduates will be able to communicate effectively and convey their views to different social, cultural, and professional audiences. They will be able to use a variety of technologically supported media to communicate with empathy using a range of written, spoken or visual formats.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Demonstrate skills in presenting problem exploration to develop conceptualisations that are linked to an integrative meta-framework.
- 2. Articulate a conceptualization of a relationship presenting problem together with appropriate intervention strategies.
- 3. Articulate general strategies for dealing with special problems such as domestic violence, affairs, and separation and divorce in couple therapy situations.
- 4. Reflect upon personal beliefs and attitudes regarding relationships and how those beliefs and attitudes may influence the therapy done with couples.

Assessment tasks

- Reflection on Reading
- Conceptualisation Essay

PG - Engaged and Responsible, Active and Ethical Citizens

Our postgraduates will be ethically aware and capable of confident transformative action in relation to their professional responsibilities and the wider community. They will have a sense of connectedness with others and country and have a sense of mutual obligation. They will be able to appreciate the impact of their professional roles for social justice and inclusion related to

national and global issues

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- 1. Demonstrate skills in presenting problem exploration to develop conceptualisations that are linked to an integrative meta-framework.
- 2. Articulate a conceptualization of a relationship presenting problem together with appropriate intervention strategies.
- 3. Articulate general strategies for dealing with special problems such as domestic violence, affairs, and separation and divorce in couple therapy situations.

Assessment task

- Conceptualisation Essay