



PSY 904

Counselling and Cultural Perspectives

S1 Day 2017

Department of Psychology

Contents

<u>General Information</u>	2
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	2
<u>Assessment Tasks</u>	3
<u>Delivery and Resources</u>	5
<u>Policies and Procedures</u>	5
<u>Graduate Capabilities</u>	7

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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 or MOrGPsych or DOrGPsych

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

This unit focuses on the skills involved in facilitating a good client-therapist relationship as a basis for psychological therapy. It involves a review of the micro skills of reflecting back content, feelings, and process within a non-directive context while exploring clients presenting problems through neutral questioning and comments. Professional skills of critical reflection are also emphasised as an important avenue of exploration for psychologists' personal and professional development. The issue of the cultural context of clients and how that might relate to their present problems is also given special attention.

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. Students will identify and refine skills to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
2. Students will develop a self-awareness of and an ability to use this awareness to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
3. Students will reflect on theoretical constructs and their own personal performance to improve their effectiveness as therapists.
4. Students will identify barriers and ways to improve their therapeutic effectiveness with clients from other cultures.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>1. Reflection on Content</u>	20%	No	Various weeks
<u>Self Assessment Schedule</u>	60%	No	19/05/17
<u>Demonstration of Skills</u>	20%	No	Before second Workshop

1. Reflection on Content

Due: **Various weeks**

Weighting: **20%**

You should try to dip into all of the readings listed. However, you may not be able to adequately read and comment on everything! So some key readings (which are starred *) Key readings from the textbook and other sources will form the basis for the unit discussion board where you will be encouraged to comment. Discussion should relate not only to readings, but may also relate to the thoughtful comments of other class participants. They should add to the overall conversation on the discussion board. Of the 8 readings selected, usually only part of the reading will be used for the online discussion. For example, do you assume that you must comment upon an entire chapter of the text, but check to see which pages are suggested for comment. You should try to dip into all of the readings listed. However, you may not be able to adequately read and comment on everything! So some key readings (which are starred *) Key readings from the textbook and other sources will form the basis for the unit discussion board where you will be encouraged to comment. Discussion should relate not only to readings, but may also relate to the thoughtful comments of other class participants. They should add to the overall conversation on the discussion board. Of the 8 readings selected, usually only part of the reading will be used for the online discussion. For example, do you assume that you must comment upon an entire chapter of the text, but check to see which pages are suggested for comment.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Students will identify and refine skills to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 2. Students will develop a self-awareness of and an ability to use this awareness to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 3. Students will reflect on theoretical constructs and their own personal performance to improve their effectiveness as therapists.

Self Assessment Schedule

Due: **19/05/17**

Weighting: **60%**

For this major project, you will focus on key learning objectives and conduct an experiment upon yourself in terms of measuring change in your therapeutic skills using a self assessment schedule. Your self assessment schedule is a personal report of your self evaluation of how well you met the learning objectives you set for yourself which were documented in your learning journal. During the unit, you will need to do two things:

1. Select key counselling skills being taught and focus on developing these specific skills, including some assessment of your level of development.
2. Engage in a path of self reflection that will help you identify areas of your own personality or life experience that may impact on the therapeutic alliance in your work with clients. You will need to identify some issue that may require further intervention through awareness or development and include some plan for dealing with this issue. Your assessment schedule should document your path of learning of counselling skills and contain critical reflection in relation to the therapeutic alliance. It should also include the learning objectives and track the changes in these objectives over the course of the unit. You will need to think of ways of demonstrating achievement of the objectives that you set, so therefore it will be important to have criteria upon which to assess your development. In assessing your progress towards your learning objectives, you should note areas of strength and weakness as well as ways that you may address the learning deficiencies. Apart from your reading, thinking, participation and observing, you should collect evidence for achieving your learning objectives through discussion and role play with your learning partner, through role plays during unit workshops, and through any other activities that you may design to help you reach your learning objectives. Obtain whatever feedback you are able to do through fellow classmates or friends and family and incorporate this as part of your assessment. As a student in this unit (and all units) you have the dual role of being a student AND being a psychologist-in-training. Thus, for the first time in your university training, you must move beyond the student role to the psychologist role, which has ethical implications. With your assignments, you are required to practice under the ethical guidelines of a psychologist in terms of integrity and honesty.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Students will identify and refine skills to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 2. Students will develop a self-awareness of and an ability to use this awareness to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 3. Students will reflect on theoretical constructs and their own personal performance to improve their effectiveness as therapists.
- 4. Students will identify barriers and ways to improve their therapeutic effectiveness with clients from other cultures.

Demonstration of Skills

Due: **Before second Workshop**

Weighting: **20%**

For this assessment you will review the basic counselling skills and demonstrate these skills in a

15 minute role play situation. Following a review of these skills and practice with your learning partner, the two of you will book a time at the Psychology Clinic to demonstrate these skills to two members of staff who will be observing your sessions. At the beginning of the session, both you and your learning partner will draw a brief role play scenario and take turns role- playing the client for your partner to demonstrate these skills. Each of you will have 15 minutes in order to demonstrate these skills. The following skills will be assessed: engagement of your client, reflecting back content, reflecting the underlying feeling, asking questions to explore the presenting problem in a neutral way, exploring the problem rather than solving it, using process comments to demonstrate immediacy and authentic communication with your client.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- 1. Students will identify and refine skills to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 4. Students will identify barriers and ways to improve their therapeutic effectiveness with clients from other cultures.

Delivery and Resources

This unit will focus on the Bennett-Levy (2006) model of building therapeutic competence, highlighting the declarative, procedural, and reflective systems. The declarative system highlights the theoretical knowledge that is necessary for becoming a good therapist. Most of this information is in your textbook and will be managed through online discussions. However there are some specific aspects of theoretical knowledge that will be enhanced through workshops in specific counselling techniques, suicide prevention, and Aboriginal awareness. The procedural system encompasses establishing and maintaining empathy in the interpersonal context, presence or mindfulness as a therapist, and finally an exploration of aspects of the personal sense of self and how that impacts on an ability to be a therapist to maintain the therapeutic relationship. This will be the main focus of the workshops as we focus on building specific skills in enhancing empathy, asking meaningful questions, managing your own anxiety while counselling, and becoming more aware of your own personal background that may interact on your ability to be a good therapist. The final system is the reflective system that will focus on the skills of reflecting objectively upon your personal performance as a therapist. This will be highlighted in your assessment tasks that require identifying your own weaknesses and articulating areas for improvement, remediating those weaknesses, and assessing your own ability to make the changes necessary to become expert therapists. Overall, the unit will highlight the importance of the therapeutic alliance and emphasise core counselling skills to optimise the therapeutic relationship. General questioning strategies for conceptualising client problems with an emphasis on the context of the presenting problem, with directions for intervention will also be emphasised.

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

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.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 (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

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

- 2. Students will develop a self-awareness of and an ability to use this awareness to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 3. Students will reflect on theoretical constructs and their own personal performance to improve their effectiveness as therapists.
- 4. Students will identify barriers and ways to improve their therapeutic effectiveness with clients from other cultures.

Assessment tasks

- 1. Reflection on Content
- Self Assessment Schedule

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. Students will identify and refine skills to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 3. Students will reflect on theoretical constructs and their own personal performance to improve their effectiveness as therapists.

Assessment tasks

- 1. Reflection on Content
- Self Assessment Schedule
- Demonstration of Skills

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. Students will identify and refine skills to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 2. Students will develop a self-awareness of and an ability to use this awareness to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 3. Students will reflect on theoretical constructs and their own personal performance to improve their effectiveness as therapists.
- 4. Students will identify barriers and ways to improve their therapeutic effectiveness with clients from other cultures.

Assessment task

- 1. Reflection on Content

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 outcome

- 1. Students will identify and refine skills to enhance the therapeutic relationship.

Assessment tasks

- Self Assessment Schedule
- Demonstration of Skills

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. Students will identify and refine skills to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 2. Students will develop a self-awareness of and an ability to use this awareness to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 3. Students will reflect on theoretical constructs and their own personal performance to improve their effectiveness as therapists.
- 4. Students will identify barriers and ways to improve their therapeutic effectiveness with clients from other cultures.

Assessment tasks

- 1. Reflection on Content
- Self Assessment Schedule
- Demonstration of Skills

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

- 2. Students will develop a self-awareness of and an ability to use this awareness to enhance the therapeutic relationship.
- 4. Students will identify barriers and ways to improve their therapeutic effectiveness with clients from other cultures.

Assessment task

- Self Assessment Schedule