

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Social and Behavioural Sciences  
with effect from Semester A 2024/25**

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**Part I Course Overview**

<b>Course Title:</b>	Working with Families in Transition
<b>Course Code:</b>	SS5214
<b>Course Duration:</b>	One Semester
<b>Credit Units:</b>	3
<b>Level:</b>	P5
<b>Medium of Instruction:</b>	English, supplemented by Cantonese / Putonghua in guest lectures and in-class activities as situation requires.
<b>Medium of Assessment:</b>	English
<b>Prerequisites:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
<b>Precursors:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
<b>Equivalent Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil
<b>Exclusive Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	Nil

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

This course aims to examine the theory and practice of advanced family practice, with an emphasis on models of family development and major approaches to intervention with contemporary diverse families. Students will learn to think systemically about families across multiple ecological systems, and identify the crucial epistemological issues in both theoretical and applied areas of family in Chinese culture. The ability to assess family issues and problems is stressed to help the students develop effective preventive and intervention plans. The course blends didactic and experiential learning for the purpose of providing the students with the opportunity to develop skills and connect them to the appropriate knowledge base.

### 2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Identify conceptions of family, major family-based intervention approaches in analyzing family in needs, making effective assessment and devising effective intervention.	30%	√	√	√
2.	Apply relevant concepts and skills for working with families suffering from diverse presenting problems.	30%	√	√	√
3.	Recognize self-qualities and impacts from one's family system.	40%	√	√	
		100%			

*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 self-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.*

### 3. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

(LTAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

LTA	Brief Description	CILO No.			Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	
LTA1: Recommended Readings	Textbooks and recommended readings per week before each lecture, and online Blackboard learn to provide comments, clarifications, responses, debates, discussions, reviews of teaching and readings.	√	√	√	
LTA2: Lectures	Lectures about contemporary theories, knowledge and skills about working with families in transitions.	√	√	√	
LTA3: Case Discussion	Offer hypothetical scenarios and indigenous family cases in Chinese society through selected Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) television programmes. Draw family genogram on family structure and systems on each particular case.	√	√	√	
LTA4: Guest Lectures:	Current experienced practitioners will be invited to share practice wisdom in working with Chinese families. Ex-clients will attend the class to share their subjective experiences in facing family issues and helping seeking process.	√	√	√	
LTA5: Role Play and Exercises	Practice and apply family-based intervention through experiential role-playing and instructor's live demonstration. Students can collect lecturer and peers' feedbacks and comments on their skill practice.	√	√	√	
LTA6: Tutorials and Student Presentation	Small class tutorials, student presentations and discussion to consolidate knowledge and develop applicability of family therapies and models as well as family counselling practice.	√	√	√	
LTA7: Self-Reflective Exercises	Weekly optional out-of-classroom reflective exercises and behavioural assignments in daily life practice.	√		√	
LTA8: 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.	√	√	√	

#### 4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.			Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3		
Continuous Assessment: 100%					
<u>AT1: Group Presentation</u>  4 to 6 persons as a group to demonstrate a piece of work with a particular family, including: (a) Presentation of family background in 15 minutes, with analysis of the problem and planning of intervention of the targeted issue or problem; (b) Role-play of a family interview session in 15 minutes or presentation of a video with role-play of family interview. The whole class will be involved in exchange and discussions afterwards, with the guided questions provided by the group, and supplement by instructor. Reflection, feedbacks and comments to classmates will be included.	√	√		20%	
<u>AT2: Individual Reflective Paper</u>  Individual reflective paper (1,500 words): Students are required to analyze and discuss the piece of work with a particular family in AT1 and the level of competence in applying selected theories and models in the family. Students should make justifications for the analysis and discussion through presenting relevant and significant dialogues in the counselling process.	√	√	√	30%	
<u>AT3: Term Paper</u>  A term essay with 3,500 words focuses on a specific issue or a problem of Hong Kong families, such as cross-generation poverty, child abuse, family violence, family with a member suffering from chronic illness. Adopt related theory(s) and model(s) to analyze the issue or problem; and select closely relevant theoretical formulations to design an intervention plan that can help to prevent the onset of the problem, or to reduce the negative consequences.  Adopt related theories and models to analyze the particular needs of the targeted family.	√	√	√	50%	
Examination: 0% (duration: hours, if applicable)				100%	

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Group Presentation (20%)	Ability to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Outstanding ability to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	High ability to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Moderate ability to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Basic ability to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Fail to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches
2. Individual Reflective Paper (30%)	Ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Outstanding ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	High ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Moderate ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Basic ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Fail to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches
3. Term Paper (50%)	Ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Outstanding ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	High ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Moderate ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Basic ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Fail to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
1. Group Presentation (20%)	Ability to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Outstanding ability to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	High ability to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Moderate to basic ability to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Fail to communicate critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches
2. Individual Reflective Paper (30%)	Ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Outstanding ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	High ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Moderate to basic ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Fail to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches
3. Term Paper (50%)	Ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Outstanding ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	High ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Moderate to basic ability to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches	Fail to explain in presenting critical ideas and arguments about family issues discussed, and to advance knowledge of relevant family theories and family-based intervention approaches

### Part III Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

#### 1. Keyword Syllabus

(An indication of the key topics of the course.)

##### 1.1 Basic concepts in family

Family role, family functioning, family systems and subsystems, family relationships, transactions, symptoms, boundaries, power, stress, loyalty, alliances, coalition, family dynamics, and communicative roles.

##### 1.2 Intervention and models for family

Application of structural approach, communication approach in special issues for families, marital counselling, mediation for conflict and separation, psycho-educational approach, issues in working with Chinese families, program evaluation.

##### 1.3 Clinical skills in working with families

Presenting and underlying problems, theoretical formulation, risk assessment, evidence-based outcome, micro skills for interviewing families, couples and children; values and ethics.

##### 1.4 Issues in family

Parenting, divorce and extra-marital affairs, child abuse and domestic violence, family with member suffering with disability and medical conditions.

#### 2. Reading List

##### 2.1 Compulsory Readings

(Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Janzen, C., Harris, O., Jordan, C., and Franklin, C. (2006). <i>Family treatment: Evidence-based practice with populations at risk (4th ed.)</i> . Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
2.	Lightburn, A. & Sessions, P. (eds.) (2006). <i>Handbook of community-based clinical practice</i> . Oxford University Press.

##### 2.2 Additional Readings

(Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

##### Understanding families

1.	Berns, R.M. (2013). <i>Child, family, school, community: Socializing and support (9th ed.)</i> . Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
2.	Family Council, Hong Kong SAR Government. Available online <a href="http://www.familycouncil.gov.hk/tc_chi/research/research_value.htm">http://www.familycouncil.gov.hk/tc_chi/research/research_value.htm</a> .
3.	Fine, M.A., Fincham, F.D. (2013). <i>Handbook of family theories: A content-based approach</i> . Routledge.
4.	Karraker, M.W., & Grochowski, J.R. (2012). <i>Families with futures: Family studies into the 21st century (2nd ed.)</i> . Routledge.
5.	McKie, L. & Callan, S. (2012). <i>Understanding families: A global introduction</i> . Sage.
6.	Peterson, G.W., & Bush, K.R. (eds.), (2013). <i>Handbook of marriage and the family</i> . Springer.
7.	Price, J.S., Price, C.A., McKenry, P.C. (Eds.) (2010). <i>Families and change: Coping with stressful events and transitions (4th ed.)</i> . Sage.
8.	Williams, B.K., Sawyer, S.C., & Wahlstrom, C.M. (2013). <i>Marriages, families, intimate relationships: A practical introduction (3rd ed.)</i> . Pearson.

### Family-assessment

1.	McGoldrick, M., Carter, B., & Preto, N.G. (2014). <i>The expanded family life cycle: Individual, family, social perspectives (4th ed.)</i> . Pearson.
2.	McGoldrick, M., Gerson, R., & Shellenberger, S. (1999). <i>Genograms: Assessment and intervention</i> . W.W. Norton

### Family therapy and couple therapy

1.	Goldenberg, H. & Goldenberg, I. (2013). <i>Family therapy: An overview (8th ed.)</i> . Cengage Learning.
2.	Johnson, S.M. (2004). <i>The Practice of emotionally focused couple therapy: Creating couple Therapy (2nd ed.)</i> . Brunner-Routledge.
3.	Patterson, J., Williams, L., Edwards, T.M., Chamow, L. & Grauf-Grounds, C. (2009). <i>Essential Skills in Family Therapy: From the First Interview to Termination (2nd ed.)</i> . Guildford Press.
4.	Minuchin, S., & Fishman, H.C. (1981). <i>Family Therapy Techniques</i> . Harvard University Press.
5.	Nichols, M. (2013). <i>Family Therapy: Concepts and Methods (10th Ed.)</i> . Pearson.
6.	Scheinkman, M. (2008). The Multi-level Approach: A Road Map for Couples Therapy. <i>Family Process</i> , 47, 197-213.

### Family-based practice in social work profession

1.	Collins, D., Jordan, C., & Coleman, H. (2013). <i>An introduction to family social work (4th ed.)</i> . Brooks/Cole.
2.	Congress, E. P., & González, M. J. (2013). <i>Multicultural perspectives in social work practice with families (3rd ed.)</i> . Springer.
3.	Corcoran, J. (2000). <i>Evidence-based social work practice with families</i> . Springer.
4.	Maluccio, A. N., Pine, B.A., & Tracy, E.M. (2002). <i>Social work practice with families and children</i> . Columbia University Press.
5.	O'Loughlin, M., & O'Loughlin, S. (2012). <i>Social work with children and families (3rd ed.)</i> . Sage.
6.	Unwin, P. & Hogg, R. (2012). <i>Effective social work with children and families</i> . Sage.

### Parenting, child and adolescent well-being in family context

1.	Asmussen, K. (2011). <i>The evidence-based parenting practitioner's handbook</i> . Routledge.
2.	Bornstein, M.H. (ed.) (2002). <i>Handbook of parenting (2nd ed.) volume 1 to 5</i> . Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
3.	Chua, A. (2011). <i>Battle hymn of the tiger mother</i> . Penguin Press.
4.	Lau, S. (1996). <i>Growing up the Chinese way: Chinese child and adolescent development</i> . The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press.



### Child abuse and domestic violence

1.	Barnett, O.W., Miller, Perrin, C.L., & Perrin, R.D. (2011). <i>Family violence across the lifespan (3rd ed.)</i> . Sage.
2.	Chan, K.L. (ed.) (2012). <i>Preventing family violence: A multidisciplinary approach</i> . Hong Kong University Press.
3.	Miller-Perrin, C.L. & Perrin, R.D. (2013). <i>Child maltreatment: An introduction (3rd ed.)</i> . Sage.

### Family facing disability, chronic conditions, poverty and death

1.	Barnes, J., Katz, I., Korbin, J.E., & O'Brien, M. (2006). <i>Children and families in communities: Theory, research, policy and practice</i> . John Wiley & Sons.
2.	Burr, W.R., Marks, L.D., & Day, R.D. (2012). <i>Sacred matters: Religion and spirituality in families</i> . Routledge.
3.	Kuipers, L., Leff, J., & Lam, D. (1992). <i>Family work for Schizophrenia: A practical guide</i> . Gaskell.
4.	Maholmes, V., & King, R.B. (eds.) (2012). <i>The Oxford handbook of poverty and child development</i> . Oxford University Press.
5.	Walsh, F. (ed.) (2012). <i>Normal family process: growing diversity and complexity (4th ed.)</i> . Guilford Press.

### Family policy and child welfare

1.	Butterfield, A.K., Rocha, C.J., & Butterfield, W.H. (2010). <i>The dynamics of family policy: Analysis and advocacy</i> . Lyceum
2.	Crosson-Tower, C. (2013). <i>Exploring child welfare: A practical perspective (6th ed.)</i> . Pearson.
3.	Jensen, J.M., & Fraser, M.W. (2011). <i>Social policy for children and families: A risk and resilience perspective (2nd ed.)</i> . Sage.
4.	McCauley, C., Pecora, P.J., & Rose, W.E. (Eds.) (2006). <i>Enhancing the Well Being of Children and Families through Effective Interventions-International Evidence for Practice</i> . Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
5.	Pecora, P.J., Whittaker, J.K., Maluccio, A.N.; Barth, R.P., & DePanfilis, D. (2009). <i>The child welfare challenge. (3rd ed.)</i> . Aldine-Transaction Books.

### Chinese references

1.	三浦展 (2007) <i>階級是會遺傳的</i> 。三采文化。
2.	呂大樂 (2013) <i>家長焦慮症</i> 。天窗出版。
3.	香港青年協會 (2011) <i>香港青年趨勢分析 2011</i> 。香港青年協會。
4.	黃麗彰 (2009) <i>破鏡重圓：華人夫婦饒恕與復和的歷程</i> 。匯美書社。