

**City University of Hong Kong  
Course Syllabus**

**offered by Department of Social and Behavioural Sciences  
with effect from Semester B 2017 /18**

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**Part I Course Overview**

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| <b>Course Title:</b>                                  | Narrative-based Therapeutic Conversations: Theory and Practice                                                                       |
| <b>Course Code:</b>                                   | SS5805                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Course Duration:</b>                               | 1 Semester                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Credit Units:</b>                                  | 3                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Level:</b>                                         | P5                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Medium of Instruction:</b>                         | English, supplemented by Cantonese/Putonghua in live demonstration, skills rehearsal, and role-play exercises as situation requires. |
| <b>Medium of Assessment:</b>                          | English                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Prerequisites:</b><br>(Course Code and Title)      | Nil                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Precursors:</b><br>(Course Code and Title)         | Nil                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Equivalent Courses:</b><br>(Course Code and Title) | Nil                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Exclusive Courses:</b><br>(Course Code and Title)  | Nil                                                                                                                                  |

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

This course aims to offer an overview of the “narrative turn” in human sciences and examine the role and application of narrative (de)construction in counselling and psychotherapy, with dual foci on the theoretical work underpinning narrative-based therapeutic systems, notably Narrative Therapy, and the development of skilled performance in opening up narrative space and navigating (de)constructing and re-authoring conversations in therapeutic work in human services and other professional/occupational contexts.

### 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<br>(if applicable) | Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate) |    |    |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|
|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                              | A1                                                                                      | A2 | A3 |
| 1.  | Examine and explain how human beings lead storied lives and how narratives play a central role in giving meaning to people’s lived experience, in self and identify construction, and in creating multiple realities that people live in. | 20%                          | √                                                                                       | √  | √  |
| 2.  | Critically examine discursive formations that furnish dominant discourses to condition and constraint how people make sense of their lived experience and perceive the world they live in.                                                | 20%                          | √                                                                                       |    |    |
| 3.  | Describe and evaluate how the “narrative turn” in human sciences has re-fashioned professional worldviews and therapeutic practices, as expressed in narrative-based systems of counselling and psychotherapy.                            | 20%                          | √                                                                                       | √  | √  |
| 4.  | Demonstrate skilled performance in practicing narrative therapy, as an exemplar of narrative-based therapeutic systems, in helping people to work through trauma, losses, and personal failures in life.                                  | 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. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

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

| TLA | Brief Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | CILO No. |   |   |   | Hours/week (if applicable) |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---|---|---|----------------------------|
|     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 1        | 2 | 3 | 4 |                            |
| 1.  | <u>Lectures:</u><br>Intellectual resource will be presented in short lectures and, if feasible, with illustrations drawn from therapeutic work in counselling and psychotherapy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | √        | √ | √ |   |                            |
| 2.  | <u>Video- and live demonstration :</u><br>Media resources, notably video demonstrations of narrative-based therapeutic systems by master therapists (Michael White, David Epston, Harlene Anderson, Stephen Madigan) that students have online access via the Run Run Shaw Library of CityU, will be used in an integrated manner with short lectures and live demonstrations, the latter being staged to explore narrative-based therapeutic work with people in the local context. | √        |   | √ | √ |                            |
| 3.  | <u>Role-play and peer counselling:</u><br>Skilled performance in practicing Narrative Therapy is developed through both in-class and off-class role-plays and peer counselling. Role-plays are largely structured by the teacher. Peer counselling is organized as self-directed learning, which also contributes to student assessment.                                                                                                                                             |          |   | √ | √ |                            |
| 4.  | <u>Group presentation:</u><br>Students host workshops to                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | √        | √ |   | √ |                            |

|                                                                                                                                                              |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| explore how ideas of narrative-based therapeutic systems may be usefully applied to help people who are facing chronic difficulties or living on the fringe. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|--|

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

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

| Assessment Tasks/<br>Activities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | CILO No. |   |   |   | Weighting | Remarks |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|---|---|---|-----------|---------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 1        | 2 | 3 | 4 |           |         |
| Continuous Assessment: 100 %                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |          |   |   |   |           |         |
| <u>AT1: Group presentation</u><br>Performance of students working as a group to plan, design, and host workshops that explore how ideas of narrative-based therapeutic systems may be usefully applied to help specific client groups will be assessed along three assessment dimensions: (a) quality of learning that the audience gains; (b) the quality of intellectual work being tapped; and (c) how ideas drawn from narrative-based therapeutic systems are applied in therapeutic work with people who are going through trauma and losses, or are coping with personal failures in life. | √        | √ | √ |   | 40%       |         |
| <u>AT2: Term paper</u><br>Students write an individual paper of around 3,000 words documenting and reflecting on their experience in practicing ideas of Narrative Therapy in peer counselling, in the role of counsellor and/or client.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |          |   | √ | √ | 60%       |         |
| Examination: ___% (duration: _____, if applicable)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |          |   |   |   |           |         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |          |   |   |   | 100%      |         |

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

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

| Assessment Task       | Criterion                                                                                                                                            | Excellent<br>(A+, A, A-) | Good<br>(B+, B, B-) | Fair<br>(C+, C, C-) | Marginal<br>(D) | Failure<br>(F)                    |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Group presentation | 1.1 Ability to show good understanding and thoughtful ideas of a chosen topic/issue/target;                                                          | High                     | Significant         | Moderate            | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|                       | 1.2 Ability to apply knowledge and skills in understanding the situations and challenges of the chosen target, and supported with relevant evidence; | High                     | Significant         | Moderate            | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|                       | 1.3 Ability to cite appropriate reference/resources, and make proper reference style;                                                                | High                     | Significant         | Moderate            | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|                       | 1.4 Ability to show good responsibility in taking one's share of group tasks;                                                                        | High                     | Significant         | Moderate            | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|                       | 1.5 Ability to use interesting and relevant materials/tools to attract classmates' interests and attention                                           | High                     | Significant         | Moderate            | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
| 2. Term paper         | 2.1 Ability to make sensible and appropriate reflection on one's professional or personal stance/value;                                              | High                     | Significant         | Moderate            | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|                       | 2.2 Ability to demonstrate self-reflective in learning and to strive for professional competence                                                     | High                     | Significant         | Moderate            | Basic           | Not even reaching marginal levels |
|                       |                                                                                                                                                      |                          |                     |                     |                 |                                   |
|                       |                                                                                                                                                      |                          |                     |                     |                 |                                   |

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

#### 1. Keyword Syllabus

Time, narrative, and memory; the narrative quality of human experience; discursive formation and the social construction of human experience; life as a text – re-reading and re-writing life; narratives for self-construction; language use as a reality-creating activity; talk as possibilities; narrative construction of life in therapeutic conversations – narrative questioning, re-membering conversation, re-authoring conversation, and de-constructing conversation; storied therapy – re-authoring lived experiences of trauma, losses, and personal failure; narrative practice in group and community work.

#### 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.)*

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| 1. | White, M. (2007). Maps of narrative practice. New York: W.W. Norton. |
| 2. | McLeod, J. (1997). Narrative and psychotherapy. London: Sage.        |

##### 2.2 Additional Readings

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

##### Recommended texts:

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| 1. | Anderson, H. (1997). Conversation, language, and possibilities: A postmodern approach to therapy. New York: Basic Books.                                                                                           |
| 2. | Angus, L. E., & McLeod, J. (Eds.). (2004). The handbook of narrative and psychotherapy: Practice, theory, and research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.                                                                   |
| 3. | Ben-Ari, A. T. (1995). It's the telling that makes the difference. In R. Josselson, & A. Lieblich (Eds.), Interpreting experience (The Narrative Study of Lives, Volume 3) (pp. 153-172). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. |
| 4. | Bochner, A. P., & Ellis, C. (Eds.). (2002). Ethnographically speaking: Autoethnography, literature, and aesthetics. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press. (GN 307.7 E84 2002 HKUST Library)                            |
| 5. | Brown, C., & Augusta-Scott, T. (Eds.). (2007). Narrative therapy: Making meaning, making lives. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.                                                                                           |
| 6. | Close, H. T. (1998). Metaphor in psychotherapy: Clinical applications of stories and allegories. San Luis Obispo, CA: Impact Publishers.                                                                           |
| 7. | Eakin, P. J. (2008). Living autobiographically: How we create identity in narrative. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.                                                                                       |
| 8. | Eakin, P. J. (1999). How our lives become stories: Making selves. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.                                                                                                          |
| 9. | Etherington, K. (2000). Narrative approaches to working with adult male survivors of sexual abuse: The clients', the counsellor's, and the researcher's stories. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.              |

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| 10. | Ferrara, K. W. (1994). <i>Therapeutic ways with words</i> . New York: Oxford University Press.                                                                                                                                      |
| 11. | Foote, C. E., & Frank, A. W. (1999). Foucault and therapy: The disciplining of grief. In A. S. Chambon, A. Irving, & L. Epstein (Eds.), <i>Reading Foucault for social work</i> (pp. 157-188). New York: Columbia University Press. |
| 12. | Freeman, M. P. (1993). <i>Rewriting the self: History, memory, narrative</i> . London: Routledge.                                                                                                                                   |
| 13. | Friedman, S. (Ed.). (1993). <i>The new language of change: Constructive collaboration in psychotherapy</i> . New York: The Guilford Press.                                                                                          |
| 14. | Gabriele, C. (2010). <i>Constructive psychotherapy: A narrative hermeneutic approach</i> . London: Routledge. (CUHK library)                                                                                                        |
| 15. | Gaita, R. (1991). Language and conversation. In A. P. Griffiths (Ed.), <i>Wittgenstein centenary essays</i> . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.                                                                                |
| 16. | Grace, G. W. (1987). <i>The linguistic construction of reality</i> . London: Croom Helms.                                                                                                                                           |
| 17. | Hermans, H. J. M., & Hermans-Jansen, E. (1995). <i>Self-narratives: The construction of meaning in psychotherapy</i> . New York: The Guilford Press.                                                                                |
| 18. | Hinchman, L. P., & Hinchman, S. K. (Eds.). (1997). <i>Memory, identity, community: The idea of narrative in the human sciences</i> . Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press.                                              |
| 19. | Holstein, J. A., & Gubrium, J. F. (2000). <i>The self we live by: Narrative identity in a postmodern world</i> . New York: Oxford University Press.                                                                                 |
| 20. | Lieblich, A., McAdams, D. P., & Josselson, R. (Eds.). (2004). <i>Healing plots: The narrative basis of psychotherapy</i> . Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.                                                    |
| 21. | Madigan, S., & Law, I. (Eds.). (1998). <i>Praxis: Situating discourse, feminism and politics in narrative therapies</i> . Vancouver, B.C.: The Cardigan Press.                                                                      |
| 22. | Parry, A., & Doan, R. E. (1994). <i>Story re-visions: Narrative therapy in the postmodern world</i> . New York: The Guilford Press.                                                                                                 |
| 23. | Raskin, J. D., & Bridges, S. K. (Eds.). (2008). <i>Studies in meaning 3: Constructive psychotherapy in the real world</i> . New York: Pace University Press.                                                                        |
| 24. | Ricoeur, P. (1984). <i>Time and narrative</i> (Volumes 1, 2, 3). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.                                                                                                                          |
| 25. | Riikonen, E., & Smith, G. M. (1997). <i>Re-imagining therapy: Living conversations and relational knowing</i> . London: Sage.                                                                                                       |
| 26. | Schechtman, M. (1996). <i>The constitution of selves</i> . Ithaca: Cornell University Press.                                                                                                                                        |
| 27. | Strong, T., & Nielsen, K. (2008). Constructive conversations: Revisiting selected developments with clients and counsellors. <i>Counselling and Psychotherapy Research</i> , 8(4), 253-260.                                         |
| 28. | Strong, T., & Paré, D. (2004). <i>Furthering talk: Advances in the discursive therapies</i> . New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.                                                                                                     |
| 29. | Wachtel, P. L. (1993). <i>Therapeutic communication: Principles and effective practice</i> . New York: Guilford Press.                                                                                                              |
| 30. | White, M. (Edited by David Denborough) (2011). <i>Narrative practice: continuing the conversation</i> . New York: W.W. Norton & Co.                                                                                                 |
| 31. | White, M. (1995). <i>Re-authoring lives: Interviews &amp; essays</i> . Adelaide, South Australia: Dulwich Center Publications.                                                                                                      |

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| 32. | White, M., & Morgan, A. (2006). Narrative therapy with children and their families. Adelaide, South Australia: Dulwich Center Publications. |
| 33. | White, M., & Epston, D. (1990). Narrative means to therapeutic ends. New York: W.W. Norton.                                                 |
| 34  | Zimmerman, J. L., & Dickerson, V. C. (1996). If problems talked: Narrative therapy in action. New York: The Guilford Press.                 |

**Media resources**

Narrative therapy with Dr. Steve Madigan, Family Therapy with the Experts series. nps(vc) RC 488.5.N36 1998

"The Best of Friends" - An Interview with Michael White, Learning Opportunities through Master's Work Video Productions series. nps(vc) RC488.5.B49 1994

Social constructionist ideas about psychotherapy: An interview with Harlene Anderson. Master's Work Video Production [www.masterswork.com](http://www.masterswork.com)