

DISTANCE LEARNING

POSTGRADUATE



WELLINGTON

Postgraduate Certificate in Health Sciences endorsed in Family and Systems Therapy

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Family and systems therapy addresses problems from a whānau perspective, rather than siting problems within an individual. It examines the layers of complexity present within families and the systems they live within and collaborates with these people to find new meaning and hope.

This two paper certificate will increase the therapeutic ability of social service professionals who wish to make a difference to the well-being of families in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Completion of the program will also go towards meeting goals set out in the Werry Centre competency framework for the Child and Youth Mental Health workforce, Real Skills Plus, 2009. The ability to work systemically with families is one of the competencies expected of this workforce.

The evidence base for family and systemic therapies is now large and covers most of the main diagnostic categories found in the area of child and adolescent mental health. In fact, a family-centred approach has been found to be more effective than an individually-based approach for the needs of children and adolescents in most situations. The certificate is being offered by the Department of Psychological Medicine, University of Otago, Wellington.

Both papers can be taken as “stand alone” papers contributing to other qualifications.

Entry Requirements

Applicants need to have an appropriate health, counselling or education qualification (extensive experience will be considered) and need to be working in (or have access to) a context within which the fieldwork component of the course can be completed.

Assessment for the course will be a combination of written assignment, case studies and the demonstration of skills via live or videotaped work.

During the academic year, it is compulsory for participants to attend all teaching blocks.



Selection of students for the courses will be on the basis of the above criteria, references regarding their work and may include an interview process.

The programme will be taught by the course convenor and other senior Family Therapists representing a variety of models and allowing students access to the network of Family Therapists in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The programme emphasises an evidence base for family therapy and students are expected to use research to inform their work.

PSME436 Principles of Family and Systems Theory

This paper will be taught in the first semester and is primarily a theoretical paper exploring the major models of Family Therapy theory and practice from an integrative perspective through analysis and critique. It includes some skill-based sessions and an expectation of some field-work (eight hours).

Learning Outcomes

Systems Theory

A thorough understanding of the theory of systems such that the student can perceive systems in action, can identify circular feed back, discriminate this from linear thinking and discuss the implications of these factors for individuals, families and organisations.

Schools of Family Therapy and Evidence Base

Students will have a comprehensive grounding in main schools of Family Theory through reading and discussion of key literature and evidence. Further, they will be able to contrast the approaches and perceive examples of these in clinical work that they witness.

Application of Systems Theory to families

An ability to discuss the functioning of a family system using a variety of assessment strategies. Knowledge of one particular model of family assessment in-depth, including its strengths and limitations.

Competence with at least one systemic intervention and practical knowledge of at least two others.

Ability to discuss theoretical background of these interventions and to assess the appropriateness of their use.

Programme - Actual dates to be confirmed

Workshop Block One **March (3 days)**

Workshop Block Two **May (3 days)**

Final Case Study Examination **To be confirmed at Block One**

Closing date for Applications is end of November each year.

PSME437 Applied Systems Theory

This paper will be taught in the second semester and is a practice and skills-oriented paper, focusing upon the development of conceptual, assessment and interventive skills with families and other systems. As such, it requires a considerable amount of supervised fieldwork (40 hours).

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this paper students should have:

- A basic knowledge of systems theory with regard to families and organisations deriving from clinical and theoretical learning.
- Competence to intervene in families and organisations using a range of skills and techniques.
- Knowledge of the appropriateness of the intervention according to theory and the system being examined.
- The ability to reflect on their own learning and position as a therapist/intervener.

Programme - Actual dates to be confirmed

Workshop Block One **July (3 days)**

Workshop Block Two **September (3 days)**

Workshop Block Three **November (2 days)**

Final Exam

Closing date for Applications is mid June each year.

Course Fees

University course fees apply: (to be confirmed)

Please note: *prospective students living in New Zealand without residency or citizenship status may need to pay International fees to attend this course.*

How to Apply:

Student numbers for these papers will be limited to 15.

Registering for the course is in two stages:

- 1) Commence phase one of the University enrolment process go to otago.ac.nz and Apply Online.
- 2) Application for Acceptance (AFA) form will be sent to University registered applicants.
- 3) University registered applicants will be contacted to arrange a phone interview. As there is a clinical component to this course, this step is crucial to ensure your application is considered.

Application closing date for PSME436 is end of November each year. (Applications submitted after this date will be considered only if places available).

Application closing date for PSME437 is mid June each year.

Further details can be obtained from:

Course lecturer:

Julie Burgess-Manning

Clinical Lecturer

Department of Psychological Medicine

University of Otago, Wellington

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For application queries:

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