

Master of Counselling  
ACTS Seminars, Trinity Western University

**CLG 582: Statistics and Research Evaluation****Autumn 2008**

Fridays, 8:30 – 11:20 am

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**NB:** We will try to post the lecture slides on the MyCourses site before class each week

**Course Description**

This course prepares student to evaluate and critique statistics and research methods in couples and family counselling. This involves learning about the use and misuse of basic quantitative and qualitative analytical techniques in counselling-related research and program evaluation. The course also provides an introduction to ethical issues in research, and conducting critical reviews of the literature.

**Course Objectives**

Students in this course will:

1. Become familiar with current qualitative and quantitative research methods and practices in couples and family counselling.
2. Develop skills in assessing and critiquing the quality of research and program evaluation studies in couples and family counselling.
3. Apply knowledge of statistics and research methods to conducting critical reviews of the current couples and family counselling literature.
4. Be able to critically evaluate the underlying assumptions of different research approaches and ethical obligations of research from a Christian worldview perspective.

**Required Texts**

Huck, S.W. (2008). *Reading statistics and research* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.

Locke, L. F., Silverman, S.J., & Spirduso, W.W. (2004). *Reading and understanding research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Additional readings can be downloaded from the class web-site.

### **General Requirements for Assignments**

I expect readings to be completed *prior to* the class for which they are assigned- class discussions and activities presume a familiarity with the material in the assigned readings.

Papers and presentation feedback must be submitted electronically using the MyCourses web-site, unless otherwise stated. Exceeding page limits will be penalized. Files must be saved in Word 97-03 file format (i.e., .doc, not .docx). MSWord is available in the computer labs in CanIL and in the Wong Centre. Make sure you save it in the correct format.

All assignments must be double-spaced, using 12-point font (Arial, Calibri, Cambria or Times New Roman only), with 1 inch (2.5 cm) or larger margins. Note that failure to comply to these specifications will lead me to reformat the document before determining whether you have met the page limits.

If you submit papers late (without prior negotiation or documentation of illness), you will lose 5% for submitting later on the day it was due; and an additional 5% every subsequent day late (including weekends).

Unless otherwise specified, all work must be written in 5<sup>th</sup> Edition APA style for language and referencing, except that no abstracts are required, and title pages do not need to conform to APA manuscript title format. *The publication manual of the APA can be found in the library, call number: BF76.7 .P83 2001*

The following grading scheme will be used. Note that outstanding work must (a) demonstrate an insightful, deep understanding of the content, and (b) be superior, in terms of style, grammar, and APA formatting issues.

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Grade Point</b>	
A+	95 +	4.3	Outstanding work
A	85-94	4.0	Very good work
A-	80-84	3.7	Good work
B+	77-79	3.3	Acceptable work
B	73-76	3.0	Acceptable work
B-	70-72	2.7	Minimally acceptable work
C+	67-69	2.3	Unacceptable work

### **Specific Evaluation Assignments**

#### **Reflection Questions:**

To facilitate class discussion and guide students' reading, short reflection questions will be assigned for completion between classes. For each question, students will be expected to provide a written response based on their reaction and reflections on the material to be read for that week's class. A simplified marking scheme will be used.

**Length:** 2 pages each; *no reference list or title page is required.*

**Due:** Ongoing, by 8:25 am on the day assigned

**Marks:** 10% total

**Marking Scheme for Reflection Questions:**

- 0 = Did not hand it in on time (without prior arrangement or evidence of illness)
- 1 = *Inadequate response.* Failure to address the actual question and minimal demonstrated understanding of the text material
- 1.5 = *Adequate response.* Insightful, reflective response to the question combined with some understanding of the text OR some attempt to respond to the question combined with thorough understanding of the text material
- 2 = *Superior response.* Insightful, reflective response to the question AND demonstration of thorough understanding of the text material

Because the content of the reflection questions will be relevant for the class discussion on the day they are due, late submissions will automatically receive a zero, unless you provide documentation of illness, or have negotiated prior arrangements (e.g., posting it early).

**Paradigm Critique Paper:**

Select paradigm for conducting psychological research and critique its stance on the following issues, from a Christian worldview perspective: (a) the nature / existence of the social world (ontology); (b) the way knowledge is accumulated / created / uncovered (epistemology); and (c) the appropriate role of the researcher in the research process. Be sure to specify what doctrines or theological perspectives you are using as your 'Christian worldview,' since multiple perspectives exist within Christianity. If you do not adhere to a Christian worldview, explain your own world-view perspective, and conduct the paradigm critique from that perspective.

**Length:** 10 pages maximum + references

**Due:** September 25, at 5 pm

**Marks:** 20 %

**Article Critiques:**

Read and, using the skills learned in this class, critically evaluate the 2 assigned research articles in detail, including the introduction, method/design, results, and discussion.

**Max. Length:** 12 pages maximum + references

**Due:** October 30, November 27, at 5 pm

**Marks:** 40% total (20% per assignment)

**Literature Review Group Assignment Part 1 (Presentation):**

In groups of 3 or 4, select one of the treatment approaches from the assigned list and conduct a thorough search of the existing empirical literature on that topic. Then, using the skills learned in this course, present an integrative summary of that literature to the class, including (a) outlining the aspects of the treatment have/have not been studied, (b) critiquing the studies that have been conducted, and (c) evaluating the usefulness of the research for counselling practitioners: Has it received sufficient empirical support for you to feel comfortable integrating it into your counselling practice?

**Max. Length:** 1 hour per group, plus a 15 minute Q&A session  
**Due:** November 14 – December 5 (to be decided in class)  
**Marks:** 25 %

**Literature Review Group Assignment Part 2 (Hand-out):**

Presentation groups must submit ‘hand-outs’ (in electronic format) to accompany their presentation. These will be posted for classmates to download. These handouts will consist of (a) an annotated bibliography, describing the best 6 resources related to their topic, and (b) a reference list of the sources used in Part 1. Note that it is expected that the work for both parts of the group assignment will overlap substantially.

**Max. Length:** 4 pages (annotated bibliography) + presentation reference list  
**Due:** 5 pm on the day prior to your presentation  
**Marks:** 10 %

**Miscellaneous Advice & Policy**

**Class format:** Classes will involve a mixture of lecture, discussion and participation activities. Moreover, there is a lot of material to be covered in the course, so the pace of learning will be quite rapid. As a result, it is important for students to attend all classes. Although no attendance will be taken, students who miss classes may struggle to catch up.

**Weather Policy:** In the event of deteriorating weather conditions overnight or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), MAX (850 AM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM) by 6:30 a.m., and an announcement will be placed on the University’s switchboard (604-888-7511) and website (<http://www.twu.ca/conditions/>).

**Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU:** As Christian scholars pursuing higher education, academic integrity is a core value of the entire TWU community. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship at TWU. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. TWU has a strict policy on plagiarism (see academic calendar 2008-09, pp. 37-38). Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource describing plagiarism and how to avoid it has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or used as flash (self running) tutorials of varying lengths from:

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/plagiarism.ppt>  
<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial)  
[http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism\\_Short.swf](http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism_Short.swf) (8 minute flash tutorial)

**Students with a Disability:** We encourage students with a disability who require assistance to contact the Equity of Access Office to discuss their specific needs. After doing so, and within the first few weeks of the semester, please meet with us to agree upon what accommodations are required and appropriate in this class. For more information, see: <http://www.twu.ca/life/wellness/learningresources/equity-of-access/>

**Tentative Class Schedule**

Date	Topic	Readings
Sept. 5	Course introduction; Why does a counsellor need to know about statistics and research?; The nature of research reports; Finding relevant literature.	L1, 2
Sept. 12	Approaches to counselling research; Research frameworks and foundations; Christian critiques of research approaches	L3, 6; A1, 2
Sept. 19	Selecting, reading, and organizing research reports; critically reviewing quantitative articles	L4, 5, 7
Sept. 26	<b><i>Paradigm critique due at 5 pm, Sept 25</i></b> Quantitative 1: Review of undergraduate statistical concepts	H2, 5, 7, 8
Oct. 3	Quantitative 2: Examining relationships	H3, 9, 16
Oct. 10	Quantitative 3: Finding differences	H 11, 12
Oct. 17	Quantitative 4: Finding differences (cont)	H13, 14
Oct. 24	Qualitative approaches to counselling research	L8; A3, 4
Oct. 31	<b><i>Article critique 1 due at 5 pm, Oct 30</i></b> Meet in presentation groups	<b>No Class</b>
Nov. 7	Qualitative approaches (cont.); Program evaluation; The evidence-based practice debate; research ethics	A5, 6
Nov. 14	<b><i>In-class presentations</i></b>	Hand-outs
Nov 21	<b><i>In-class presentations</i></b>	Hand-outs
Nov 28	<b><i>Article critique 2 due at 5 pm, November 27</i></b> <b><i>In-class presentations</i></b>	Hand-outs
Dec 5	<b><i>In-class presentations (if needed)</i></b>	Hand-outs

L = Locke et al. text chapters; H = Huck chapters; A = additional readings list

### Additional Required Readings

- A1 DiClemente, C. C. & Delany, H. D. (2005). Implications of Judeo-Christian views of human nature, motivation, and change for the science and practice of psychology. In W. R. Miller & H. D. Delany (Eds.). *Judeo-Christian perspectives on psychology: Human nature, motivation and change*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- A2 Wacome, D. H. (2003). Ways of knowing in psychological science. In S. W. VanderStoep (Ed.). *Science and the soul: Christian faith and psychological research* (pp. 25-52). Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- A3 **[chapter 4 from]** Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five traditions* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- A4 Morrow, S. L. (2005). Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research in counseling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 50*, 250-260.
- A5 **[chapter 2 from]** Mertens, D.M. (2005). *Research and evaluation in education and psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative, qualitative, and mixed designs* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- A6 Tjeltveit, A. C. (2003). Christian ethics and psychological research. In S. W. VanderStoep (Ed.). *Science and the soul: Christian faith and psychological research* (pp. 73-94). Lanham, MD: University Press of America

### Resources Related to Psychological Research and Christian Worldview Integration

You may find these useful for the paradigm critique paper:

1. Delanty, G., & Strydom, P. (2003). Introduction: What is the philosophy of social science? In G. Delanty & P. Strydom (Eds.), *Philosophies of social sciences: The classic and contemporary readings* (pp. 1-12). Philadelphia: Open University Press.
2. Golishani, M. (2005). Some important questions concerning the relationship between science and religion. *Islam and Science, 1*, 63-78.
3. Guba, E.A., & Lincoln, Y.S. (2005). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions, and emerging influences. In K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed) (pp. 191-215). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
4. Hathaway, W. L. (2004). Expanding horizons for Christians in psychology. *Journal of Psychology and Theology, 32*, 210-220.
5. McGrath, J. E. & Johnson, B. A. (2003). Methodology makes meaning: How both qualitative and quantitative paradigms shape evidence and interpretation. In P. M. Camic, J. E. Rhodes, & L. Yardley (Eds.), *Qualitative research in psychology: Expanding perspectives in methodology and design* (pp. 31-48). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

6. McNiff, J. & Whitehead, J. (2006). The underlying assumptions of action research. In J. McNiff & J. Whitehead. *All you need to know about action research*. London: Sage.
7. Ponterotto, J. G. (2005). Qualitative research in counseling psychology: A primer on research paradigms and philosophy of science. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 52*, 126–136.
8. Richardson, F. (2006) Psychology and religion: Hermeneutic reflections. *Journal of Psychology and Theology, 34*, 232-245.
9. Slife, B. D., & Melling, B. S. (2006). Psychological method and the activity of God: Clarifications and distinctions. *Journal of Psychology and Theology, 34*, 280-284.
10. Slife, B. D., & Whoolery, M. (2006). Are psychology's main methods biased against the worldview of many religious people? *Journal of Psychology and Theology, 34*, 217-231.
11. Watson, P. J. (2004). After postmodernism: Perspectivism, a Christian Epistemology of love, and the ideological surround. *Journal of Psychology and Theology, 32*, 248-261.