



# Counseling Adolescents and Their Families Wycliffe College

This description is intended to assist in the course approval process and to assist students in determining whether this course will help them achieve their educational objectives and the learning goals of their program. It is not a learning contract. The details of the description are subject to change before the course begins. The course syllabus will be available to the class at the beginning of the course.

## ***Course Identification***

---

Course Number : WYP2552HF  
Course Name: Counseling Adolescents and Their Families Wycliffe College  
Class Location: Monday – Friday (Weeklong Intensive); May 29 - June 2  
Class Day & Time:

## ***Instructor Information***

---

Instructor: Dr. Marv Penner  
E-mail: marv@allaboutyouth.ca

## ***Course Prerequisites or Requisites***

---

N/A

## ***Course Description***

---

This course will strive to equip students to understand adolescent and family issues at a deeper level and to respond in a way that truly promotes health and wholeness. Class time will be built around lectures supplemented by case study evaluations and group discussions. Students will be evaluated on the basis of reading reports, a real-life adolescent profile, statistical analysis and the deep exploration of a contemporary adolescent issue as a final summary project. Specific topics such as eating disorders, substance abuse, depression, self harm, suicide and anxiety will be discussed. Youth workers, teachers, parents, pastors and counsellors will benefit from this practical class as it explores the importance of hope in caregiving relationships.

## ***Course Methodology***

---

Lectures, Seminars

## ***Course Outcomes***

---

For ministry:

Upon completion of this course successful students should...

- Feel a growing freedom and confidence in discussing difficult topics with parents and adolescents.
- Be equipped to address biblically the issues faced by teenagers in the new millennium.

- Be prepared to deal with an adolescent in crisis e.g. suicide, pregnancy, etc.
- Be able to equip parents of teens with a deeper understanding of the world in which their children are living.
- Be articulate in the legal ramifications of various adolescent issues.
- Be comfortable assisting an adolescent in developing Biblically based evaluative skills relative to the cultural influences in his/her life - particularly with regard to the media.
- Have developed a personal approach to counseling with teenagers that reflects sensitivity to the reality of the pressures and stresses they face.
- Be able to minister much more effectively in the complex adolescent culture of this generation.
- Have a much clearer sense of the place that ministry to adolescents will have in his/her future.
- Commit to a ministry posture which includes the priority of staying abreast of trends in current popular culture.

**For scholarship:**

- Identify the major relational, emotional and behavioral issues faced by adolescents today.
- Identify and evaluate the major cultural influences in the life of an adolescent.
- Acknowledge and understand the complexity of the etiology of a number of these issues. (It is not expected that the student will be an expert in every area.)
- To be able to use primary and secondary sources in the process of developing a comprehensive ministry plan.

## ***Course Resources***

---

### **Required Course Texts**

See Assignment 2 below

### **Course Website(s)**

- Blackboard <https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/>. This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at <http://portal.utoronto.ca> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at <http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students>. Students who have trouble accessing Blackboard should ask Thomas Power for further help.
- Personal Website <http://individual.utoronto.ca/jsmith>

## ***Class Schedule***

---

### **Section One: Introductory Thoughts**

- Course Expectations and Syllabus Review
- Foundational Philosophical Presuppositions
- Welcome to a World of Hurt

## **Section Two: Being the Kind of Person Who can Help**

- Exploring Helping Styles
- What Does Healthy Helping Look Like

## **Section Three: Understanding Adolescence – A Look “Under the Hood”**

- Physiological Transitions – Everything is Changing
- Social Development – It’s a Whole New World
- Cognitive Chaos – What are they Thinking Now?
- The Adolescent Brain – New Research Makes Sense of it All!

## **Section Four: Diagnosis and Labeling**

- DSM – A Catalogue of Disorders
- Multi-axial Assessment – Make it Second Nature
- Pros and Cons of our Diagnostic/Labeling System

## **Section Five: Issues Related to Adolescent Sexuality**

- Dangerous Liaisons – It’s Not just Puppy Love
- Adolescent Pregnancy, Abortion, Single Parenthood
- Pornography – Not Just for Guys Anymore

## **Section Six: Sexual Abuse Recovery**

- Facts, Stats, Definitions
- The Invisible Damage
- The Visible Expressions
- The Unlikely Road to Healing

## **Section Seven: Non Suicidal Self Injurious Behavior**

- Understanding the etiology of SIB – Exploring the Mysterious Why
- Hope and Healing for Kids Who Cut

## **Section Eight: Eating Disorders – Dying to be Thin**

- Diagnostic Criteria and Medical Realities
- What can a Youth Worker Do?

## **Section Nine: When Families Are Broken**

- Broken, Beat-Up, Blended Families
- Ministry to Single Parents and Re-Constituted Families
- The Faith Community as Family

## **Section Ten: Suicide Intervention – When it Seems All Options are Gone**

- Why Do Kids Contemplate, Attempt and Complete Suicides
- Suicide Intervention
- Working with Survivors
- Funerals That are Tough to Do

## **Section Eleven: Counseling Issues with Teens and Families**

- Dealing with Confidentiality
- Legal Obligations
- When and How to Refer

## **Section Twelve: Final Thoughts**

- Understand Your Role - Apprenticeship to the “Wonderful Counselor”

## ***Evaluation***

---

### **Requirements**

#### **Assignment 1. A Pre-Course Case Study. 10%**

Based on your personal experience and/or interactions you may have had with young people and their families, create a case study that addresses or illustrates a specific contemporary youth issue (refer to the Class Content section to get some ideas) Paint a picture of the presenting problem (behavioural, relational, emotional) the family dynamics, the progression of the issue, the unintended outcomes of issue. If you desire, you may do this assignment autobiographically and share your own story. 4 or 5 pages should suffice. The case studies will be presented in small groups for in-class discussion - be prepared! Each presenter will be

responsible for guiding the discussion related to their case study. The papers (consisting of the case study and the discussion questions) will also be handed in for grading - please provide an extra copy for the instructor.

### **Assignment 2. Pre-course Reading 15%**

Choose an issue that represents a behavioral, relational, emotional or spiritual challenge for young people today. It could be related to mental health, addiction, family dynamics, the media, etc. Read 300-400 pages on that specific topic. Read a minimum of four different authors and make sure at least a third of your reading is from the "secular" perspective. Submit an annotated bibliography (a couple of descriptive sentences under each of the sources you document) reading log (when and what you read) and write a 2-3 page overview of your findings and observations. Choose a topic other than the one you will choose for your research project

\*note: Students are encouraged to read broadly. It is not required that students purchase the following books.

Borgman, Dean. *Hear My Story*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2003

Clark, Chap. *Hurt 2.0*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012

Hersch, Patricia. *A Tribe Apart*. New York, Fawcett Columbine, 1998

Penner, Marv. *Help My Kids re Hurting*. Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 2007

Santrock, John W. *Adolescence*. Madison, Wisconsin: Brown and Benchmark, 2015

Taffel, Ron. *The Second Family*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2001

Van Pelt, Rich and Jim Hancock. *The Youth Worker's Guide to Helping Teenagers in Crisis*. Grand Rapids 2005

### **Assignment 3. Documenting a Changing Cultural Landscape 25%**

Anyone who works with adolescents and young adults will tell you that the world is a rapidly changing place – some would suggest that change is happening at an unprecedented rate. The purpose of this assignment is to capture a statistical portrait of youth issues as they exist today. To that end, each student will select six culturally relevant topics (Suggestions: screen time, adolescent pregnancy, alcohol use, violence and crime, bullying, eating disorders, dating/coupling, political involvement, prescription drugs, suicide, consumerism, social media, family health, church attendance, spiritual disciplines, mental health issues, gender and identity, academic performance, extra-curricular participation, video games, pornography, etc. – feel free to add topics of interest to you) and find at least 5 well-documented, current statistics related to each chosen topic. The statistics should be as current as possible (in the last year or two). Be particularly mindful of statistics that represent changes or trends over the last few years – eg – since 2010 the percentage of students who XXXX has increased by 37%.

This statistical treasure trove will be shared by all students so we should have a good collection to draw from as a group. Please document your sources carefully so information can be validated and credible.

IMPORTANT FOLLOW-UP – Once you have your collection of statistics gathered, select two of the statements and write a one page “So What?” document that addresses the implications for ministry... since X is true we must respond in the following way.

### **Assignment 4. “Digging Deeper” Research Portfolio: 40%**

THIS PROJECT IS NOT MEANT TO BE A TYPICAL TERM PAPER. Think of it more as a "package" of gathered data, written material and ministry tools related to the topic you choose. The project should reflect significant effort in an area of personal interest. Choose your topic from the wide range of issues that place adolescents at risk. Submit a one page proposal of your topic and an overview of your project intentions before Thursday of our class week. Failure to submit a proposal will result in a 5 point loss on the project grade.

Your package COULD include..... a literature review, charts, graphs, illustrations, case studies, the results of interviews or surveys you put together or find in your reading, video or audio segments, a Biblical perspective, the outline of a talk you would do to teens on the subject, an annotated bibliography of the topic, etc. I expect a fairly comprehensive look at the topic you choose and the evidence of some practically helpful material in dealing with the issue. (A typical package would include 10 pages of your own writing and 10 - 15 pages of “cut and paste” or downloaded material, relevant media, etc..) Include accurate APA references for all material.

Your package MUST include - a TWO PAGE abstract of key "tidbits." This document will be a summary collection of the "highlights" of your project - key quotes, important statistics, crucial resources, key graphs or charts, etc. Feel free to present it in a creative format if you like.

**Class Participation: 10%**

This will be based on your level of engagement in the class and your level of participation in the exercises that are assigned as part of the hands-on learning which is an integral part of the class. More specific criteria for evaluation will be provided at the beginning of our week together.

**COURSE MARK BREAKDOWN**

Assignment 1	A Purposeful Pre-Course Conversation.	10 %
Assignment 2	Pre – course Reading	15 %
Assignment 3	Documenting a Changing Cultural Landscape	25%
Assignment 4	“Adolescents at Risk” Research Portfolio:	40 %
Assignment 5	Class Participation	10 %

**Grading System**

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter
A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value

NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension)
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value

### ***Policy on Assignment Extensions***

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar’s office.

**One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.**

**Course grades.** Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

### ***Policies***

---

**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

**Plagiarism.** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges ([http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library\\_Archives/Theological\\_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm)).

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of *Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

**Writing Style.** The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), which is available at Crux Books.

**Course Evaluations.** At the end of the course students are expected to complete a course evaluation. The evaluation is done online and instructions will be contained in an e-mail message that will be sent out by the Wycliffe College registrar.

DRAFT