## Subject Description Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Code</th>
<th>APSS 5040</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject Title</td>
<td>Foundational Competencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credit Value</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Level</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-requisite/Co-requisite/Exclusion</td>
<td>Nil</td>
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### Assessment Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Continuous Assessment</th>
<th>Individual Assessment</th>
<th>Group Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
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- **1. Skills assessment**: 30%
- **2. Practicum performance**: 35%
- **3. Portfolio and Seminar presentation**: 35%

### Objectives

Psychological practice in different settings requires professional competencies that address the needs and benefits of the individuals and organizations being served, as well as the community as a whole. A model of Fitness-to-Practice is adopted to prepare students in the profession of psychology. It relies on effective training and supervision to ensure that student performance is competence-based. The subject Foundational Competencies intends to:

1. Provide a sound foundation of the core competencies that are crucial in the psychological profession.
2. Provide supervision in competence assessment processes to ensure that students have attained the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes.
3. Help students to develop positive habits, as well as practical wisdom through the use of case studies in chosen settings.

### Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:

a. Demonstrate knowledge and competence in most content areas, quality standards, and good practices in the fields of psychological services in education, health care, and community settings
b. Follow and advocate the code of ethics and core values in the psychological profession
| Subject Synopsis/Indicative Syllabus | 1. Interviewing and motivational interviewing  
The formats and practical skills required in conducting an interview as an informational, research and clinical tool are reviewed.  
| 2. Individual and group counseling techniques  
Micro-counseling techniques such as attending skills, paraphrasing, questioning, summarization, etc. are explored. Experiential in nature, such as in mock counseling interviews, with students practicing and evaluating counseling styles and abilities.  
| 3. Ethical code of practice  
Seminar(s) to introduce students to ethical standards in professional practice and to ethical guidelines protecting research participants.  
| 4. Assessment of cognitive development  
Students will examine the theoretical background, rationale and validity of major tests of intellectual ability in use today. Emphasis is given to the professional and ethical responsibilities associated with the assessment process.  
| 5. Use of Tests  
Hands-on experience with assessment techniques may include ability tests, personality and attitude assessments. There is no clinical experience. It could be a supervised experience during a career counseling session.  
| 6. Case study in educational settings  
Understanding the nature and general features of ADHD /Asperger's Syndrome. Viewing it as impaired executive functions, students will examine ways to enhance accommodations that help children with ADHD and their learning in mainstream school settings.  
| 7. Case study in health care settings  
Surveying empirical data and theoretical formulations relating to the psychosocial features of aging. Students will examine the interactional effects of individual, familial, social and cultural variables of successful adaptation of the aged population. Preliminary attempts to designing, conducting and evaluating programs for them will be taken.  
| 8. Case study in community and social service settings  
Development of broader perspectives on individual and community functioning and well-being. Students will explore the interdependence of individuals and their communities with focus on programs and effort made on the prevention of inter-generational poverty.  
| c. Address needs and benefits of individuals, organizations being served, and community at large  
d. Adopt reflective practices to handle feelings and behaviours of others  
e. Apply appropriate strategies, procedures and foundational competencies in basic psychological interventions.  
f. Evaluate and reflect on strengths and weaknesses in relation to own attitudes and practices.  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching/ Learning Methodology</th>
<th>Workshop</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Most contact hours will be allocated to observations and supervised practices in the delivery of practical skills related to core competencies of applied psychology. Learning sessions such as video workshops, mock interviews and groups will be conducted.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Seminar / Tutorial</th>
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<tr>
<td>Seminars and/or tutorials will be arranged. They will render opportunities for students to deliberate and exchange information on contemporary issues related to core competencies and procedures in applied psychological investigations. Senior practitioners will be invited to share experiences of working in different settings to enhance students’ understanding of how the ethical standards, knowledge and skills may be used to function effectively as professional practitioners.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Practice based attachment</th>
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<td>Students will choose amongst several ongoing research projects and will be given the opportunity to learn, apply and evaluate core competencies in real settings with trained professional psychologists. Tasks and roles may vary based on the particular needs and nature of the chosen project and will ensure that students have diversified practical experiences.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Role-play performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will be evaluated in group role play settings on performance-based skills. Standardized tools such as checklists and scales will be selected or developed as much as possible to enhance uniformity. This will allow to assess generic competencies that each students should acquire regardless of the chosen area of application.</td>
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<tr>
<th>2. Practice based evaluation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students will be evaluated by their respective supervisors in a broad range of areas including, ability to collaborate in teams, planning and time management, managing work stress, ability to reflect on work practice, presentation skills, consultation skills, research skills, report writing skills, etc…</td>
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<tr>
<th>3. Portfolio</th>
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<tr>
<td>It is a collection of evidence chosen by students to reflect their own learning and development earned during the course of studies. It demonstrates students’ knowledge, skills, attitudes and achievements. The process of preparing portfolios will assist students to maintain and improve their practice by identifying strengths and areas that may need to be further developed.</td>
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<tr>
<th>4. Seminar presentation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students will present in a group setting their respective experiences in the practicum environments towards the end of the year. This will provide an opportunity for them to step back and assess their progress over the course of</td>
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their studies.

The assessments have three main objectives: to optimize the capacities of the students by motivating and directing them for future learning, to identify ‘unfitness to practice’, and to provide a basis for selecting students for more advanced studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific assessment methods/tasks</th>
<th>% weighting</th>
<th>Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Performance-based skills assessment</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Practicum performance</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Portfolio &amp; presentation</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>☑ ☑ ☑ ☑ ☑</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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- The grade is calculated according to the percentage assigned;
- The completion and submission of all component assignments are required for passing the subject; and
- Students must receive an overall pass grade when all components are combined in order to pass the subject.

### Student Study Effort Required

**Class contact:**

- Workshop: 28 Hrs.
- Seminar / Tutorial: 14 Hrs.
- Practice based attachment: 60 Hrs.

**Other student study effort:**

- Pre-reading for seminar, tutorial, practicum and workshop: 20 Hrs.
- Preparation and familiarization with practical procedures prior to supervised practices; preparation for individual portfolio: 45 Hrs.
- Preparation and delivery of end of year presentation 40 Hrs.

Total student study effort 207 Hrs.

### Reading List and References

**Textbook**


**Related readings**


Sperry, L. (2010). *Core Competencies in Counseling and Psychotherapy: Becoming*
a Highly Competent and Effective Therapist. UK: Routledge


Selected psychological tests will be introduced in this and other subjects as and when relevant to the acquisition of related competencies. Code of practice and the required training / background standards as well as other copyright issues will be observed strictly.

**Verbal fluency**

**Paced Auditory Serial Addition Task**

**Trail Making Test**

**Grooved Pegboard**

**Rey-Osterrieth Complex Figure Test**

**Patient's Assessment of Own Functioning Inventory**

**The Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment (ASEBA)**
Depression Anxiety Stress Scales (DASS)
Sydney: Psychology Foundation.


香港小學生讀寫困難行為量表(第二版) [2010]
The Hong Kong Behaviour Checklist of Specific Learning Difficulties in Reading and Writing for Primary School Students (Second Edition) Manual (BCL-P(II))

香港初中學生讀寫困難行為量表 [2009]
The Hong Kong Behaviour Checklist of Specific Learning Difficulties in Reading and Writing for Junior Secondary School Students (BCL-JS)

香港學前兒童學習行為量表(家長版) [2006]
The Hong Kong Learning Behaviour Checklist for Preschool Children (Parent Version)

Community assessment


Social Climate Scales/ Group environment scale (R. Moos)
The Group Environment Scale (GES) are a set of environmental assessment procedures designed to be used by qualified clinicians, consultants, program evaluators, and researchers.
It assesses ten dimensions of the social climate of psychotherapy and mutual support groups, task-oriented groups such as health care staff teams, and social-recreational groups.


Basically it is not a measurement, but Goodman et al. identified 10 useful dimensions of community capacity (including citizen participation, leadership, skills, resources, social and inter-organizational networks, sense of community, understanding of community history, community power, community values, critical reflection) as a foundation for later tools development.