



# Psychology (PSYC) 406

## Introduction to Theories of Counselling and Psychotherapy (Revision 5)

**Status:** Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#) for the current revision ❌

**Delivery mode:** [Individualized study online](#). Delivered via Brightspace.

**Credits:** 3

**Areas of study:** Arts or Social Science

**Prerequisites:** [PSYC 290](#) and [PSYC 388](#) are recommended.

**Precluded:** None

**Challenge:**

PSYC 406 has a challenge for credit option.

**Faculty:****Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences** [↗](#)

## Overview

This course examines the basic tenets and therapeutic processes that characterize various theoretical approaches to counselling/psychotherapy. The models are clustered according to the four major forces in psychology: Psychodynamic (Psychoanalytic, Adlerian); Behavioural and Cognitive-Behavioural (Behavioural, Cognitive-Behavioural, Reality); Humanistic (Existential, Person-Centred, Gestalt); and Contextual/Systemic (Feminist, Family Systems, Multicultural). Emphasis is placed on critical analysis of the various approaches as well as self-reflection in relation to values, beliefs, assumptions about human nature, and worldview.

## Outline

### Section I: Basic Issues in Counselling Practice

- Unit 1: Introduction and Overview
- Unit 2: The Counsellor: Person and Professional

### Section II: First Force: Psychodynamic Theories and Techniques

- Unit 3: Psychoanalytic Theory
- Unit 4: Adlerian Theory

### **Section III: Second Force: Behavioural and Cognitive-Behavioural Theories and Techniques**

- Unit 5: Behavioural Theory
- Unit 6: Cognitive-Behavioural Theory
- Unit 7: Control Theory/Reality Therapy

### **Section IV: Third Force: Humanistic Theories and Techniques**

- Unit 8: Existential Theory
- Unit 9: Person-centred Theory
- Unit 10: Gestalt Theory

### **Section V: Fourth Force: Contextual and Systemic Theories and Techniques**

- Unit 11: Feminist Theory
- Unit 12: Family Systems Theory
- Unit 13: Multicultural Theory

### **Section VI: Integration and Application**

- Unit 14: An Integrative Perspective

## **Evaluation**

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for PSYC 406, you must satisfactorily complete the midterm assessment and final exam, submit all the course assignments, and participate in the social networking activity. You must achieve a grade of 50 percent or better on the final exam and a course composite grade of 50 percent or better. The passing grade for the course is **D (50 percent)** [📄](#). The weighting of the composite grade is as follows:

Activity	Weight
Mid-term Assessment	25%
Case Study	25%
Social Networking Activity	5%
Personal Reflection Paper	15%
Final Exam	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

The **final examination** for this course must be requested in advance and written under the supervision of an AU-approved exam invigilator. Invigilators include either ProctorU or an approved in-person invigilation centre that can accommodate online exams. Students are responsible for payment of any invigilation fees. Information on exam request deadlines, invigilators, and other exam-related questions, can be found at the **Exams and grades** [↗](#) section of the Calendar.

# Materials

## Digital course materials

Links to the following course materials will be made available in the course:

Corey, G. (2016). *Case approach to counseling and psychotherapy* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Cengage Learning.

Corey, G. (2005). *Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy* (7th ed.). Cengage Learning, Inc.

Corey, G. (2005). *Student manual for theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy* (7th ed.). Cengage Learning, Inc.

Other Materials

All other materials can be accessed online via the course website.

## Challenge for credit

### Overview

The challenge for credit process allows you to demonstrate that you have acquired a command of the general subject matter, knowledge, intellectual and/or other skills that would normally be found in a university-level course.

Full information about **challenge for credit** [↗](#) can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

### Evaluation

To **receive credit** [↗](#) for the PSYC 406 challenge registration, you must achieve a grade of at least D (50 percent) on the final exam and a composite grade of **D (50 percent)** [📄](#).

Activity	Weight
Case study Paper	30%
Exam	70%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

[📄](#) **Challenge for credit course registration form**

## Important links

- › [Academic advising](#) [↗](#)
- › [Program planning](#) [↗](#)
- › [Request assistance](#) [↗](#)
- › [Support services at AU](#) [↗](#)

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery modes may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

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*Updated June 9, 2026*

View **previous revision** 

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