

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Semester, Year	FALL, 2025
Course Title	PROFESSIONAL ETHICS
Course Code	COUN 0775 1P
Date	From September 8, 2025 to December 5, 2025 Every Wednesday
Time	From 2:15 to 5:05 PM
Delivery Format	IN-PERSON ONLY
Class information	The classes will be IN-PERSON on Wednesdays from 12:15 to 5:05 PM.
Instructor Contact Information	GRACE KUIPERS, MDiv, RP, RMFT-SM, CPT Email: gkuipers@tyndale.ca
Office Hours	By appointment only.
Course Materials	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers the participant a foundational knowledge of the field of professional ethics as it relates to the practice of Marriage and Family Therapy. This course will acquaint the participant with the content of the Code of Ethics of the AAMFT and CRPO, the process of ethical decision making, and hence, contribute to the overall ethical development of the professional. Issues pertaining to legal responsibilities and liabilities, professional ethical standards and general professional conduct in contemporary society will be considered.

Prerequisites: COUN 0602

Co-requisite: Concurrent registration in Internship (COUN 0701)

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Distinguish among morals, values, ethics, and the law and explore how they each impact professional practice;
2. Explain the issues related to ethics and the law within the practice of couple and family therapy; and
3. Evaluate one's own ethical decision-making processes and develop guidelines for enhancing one's ability to generate ethical behaviours and solutions to conflicts arising in the clinical practice.

CRPO COMPETENCIES TAUGHT IN THIS COURSE

- 1.2.c Identify circumstances where therapy is contraindicated.
- 1.4.b Recognize how the therapist's values and attitudes, both in and out of awareness, may impact diverse clients
- 1.4.d Recognize instances where the therapist's life experiences may enhance or compromise therapeutic effectiveness.
- 1.5.b Recognize how oppression, power and social injustice may affect the client and also the therapeutic process.
- 2.1.a Use clear and concise written communication
- 2.1.b Use clear and concise oral communication
- 2.1.c Use clear and concise electronic communication
- 2.2.a Show respect to others
- 2.2.b Recognize appropriate professional boundaries
- 2.2.d Identify personal and professional integrity
- 3.1.a Apply knowledge of pertinent federal and provincial legislation.
- 3.1.b Apply knowledge of CRPO legislative requirements and relevant professional standards.
- 3.1.c Identify organizational policies and practices that are inconsistent with legislation and professional standards.
- 3.1.d Apply knowledge of relevant municipal and local by-laws related to private practice.
- 3.2.a Recognize ethical issues encountered in practice.
- 3.2.b Resolve ethical dilemmas in a manner consistent with legislation and professional standards.
- 3.3 Maintain self-care and level of health necessary for responsible therapy.
- 3.4.a Undertake critical self-reflection
- 3.4.e Identify strengths as a therapist, and areas for development.
- 3.5.a Identify the need
- 3.5.b Articulate parameters of supervision or consultation.
- 3.5.c Demonstrate knowledge of when to protect client privacy and confidentiality, making disclosure only where permitted or required.
- 3.7.a Recognize requirements of CRPO practice standards to maintain client records.
- 3.9.a Recognize ethical and legal implications when preparing third-party reports.
- 3.10.a Recognize requirements and professional standards to comply with business practices relevant to professional role.

- 3.10.b Explain limitations of service availability.
- 4.1.a Describe therapist's education, qualifications and role.
- 4.1.b Differentiate the role of the therapist in relation to other health professionals.
- 4.1.c Explain the responsibilities of the client and the therapist in a therapeutic relationship.
- 4.1.d Explain the advantages and disadvantages of participating in psychotherapy.
- 4.1.e Explain client rights to privacy and confidentiality, and the limitations imposed upon them by law.
- 4.1.f Explain relevant rules and policies.
- 4.1.h Explain and obtain informed consent in accordance with legal requirements
- 4.2.g Foster client autonomy.
- 4.2.h Recognize appropriate therapeutic boundaries.
- 4.2.j Recognize how to take all reasonable measures to safeguard physical and emotional safety of client during clinical work.
- 4.2.k Employ effective skills in observation of self, the client and the therapeutic process.
- 4.3 Ensure safe and effective use of self in the therapeutic relationship
- 4.4.a Assess for specific risks as indicated.
- 4.4. b Identify when and how to develop safety plans with clients at risk.
- 4.4.c Recognize when to refer to specific professional services where appropriate.
- 4.4.d Recognize when to report to authorities as required by law.
- 4.5.a Recognize how to communicate in a manner appropriate to client's developmental level and socio-cultural identity
- 4.5.b Identify and respond appropriately to client's strengths, vulnerabilities, resilience and resources.
- 4.5.d Respond professional to expressions of inappropriate attachment from the client.
- 4.5.g Formulate an assessment.
- 4.5.i Formulate a direction for treatment or therapy.
- 4.5.q Recognize the significance of both action and inaction.
- 4.5.r Identify contextual influences.
- 4.5.t Recognize when to discontinue or conclude therapy.
- 4.6.b Identify when and how to refer clients appropriately
- 4.7.a Recognize how to prepare client in a timely manner for ending a course of therapy.
- 4.7.b Identify follow-up options, support systems and resources.
- 5.2 Use research findings to inform clinical practice.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. (2015). [*Code of ethics*](#). Washington, DC: AAMFT.

Beamish, S., Melanson, M., & Oladimeji, M. (1998). *Client rights in psychotherapy & counselling: A handbook of client rights and therapist responsibility*. Toronto, ON: Client Rights Project. (This text will be available on the class portal in a PDF format.)

College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario. (2011). [Code of ethics](#). Toronto, ON: CRPO.

College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario. (2024). [Professional Practice Standards](#). Toronto, ON: CRPO.

Murphy, M.J. & Hecker, L. (2017). *Ethical and professional issues in the practice of couple and family therapy* (2nd Edition). New York: Routledge. (ISBN 978-1-138-64526-4 pbk)

Sanders, R.K. (2013). *Christian counseling ethics: A handbook for therapists, pastors & counselors* (2nd Edition). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press. (ISBN 978-0-8308-3994-0 pbk)) (Select chapters as per weekly topics outlined in the syllabus.)

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Other readings will be assigned and posted on the class portal.

Tyndale recommends [STEPBible](#) – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. In-Person Class Participation: 10 % of final grade

Regular attendance and punctuality for all classes, reading the materials before class, and participation in the group discussions are expected. If you have three or more unexcused absences, you may fail the course. (See the Attendance Policy for details.)

Note: This item is related to Outcomes 1, 2 and 3.

Educational research reveals that maximum benefits in online instructional formats result when students take personal responsibilities to complete readings, engage actively (e.g. forums), and consciously contribute to a virtual learning community through a spirit of collaboration, openness and encouragement. “Attendance” in this course is demonstrated by regular log-ins and up-to-date participation in class discussions and small group discussions.

Student participation will be graded on a scale of 1 to 4: 1 (or D): present, not disruptive; responds when called on but does not offer much; infrequent involvement; 2 (or C): adequate

preparation, but no evidence of interpretation of analysis; offers straightforward information; contributes moderately when called upon; 3 (or B): good preparation, offers interpretation and analysis, contributes well to discussion in on-going fashion; 4 (or A): excellent preparation, offers analysis, synthesis and evaluation of material; contributes significantly to ongoing discussion.

2. Group Presentation of Case & Paper: (40% of final grade)

Presentation Due Date: October 29 emailed to instructor prior to start of class

Peer Feedback from Due Date: Uploaded to course portal by end of day Oct 29

Paper Due Date: Nov. 12

Purpose: To apply ethical decision-making framework to ethical dilemma.

Note: This item is related to Outcomes 1, 2 and 3.

Assignment (3 parts):

2.1 In groups of 3-6 people (depending on the size of the class) students will develop a case from a select list of ethical issues or may choose their own ethical dilemma with the instructor's approval. The group will then use an ethical decision-making framework to present the case to the class with a clear direction for professional practice that is based on an integration of ethical/legal and biblical perspectives. Adequate support from credible sources should be included in the presentation. Presentation will be 15 minutes and allow for 10 – 15 minutes of class discussion.

The group will provide the instructor with a summary of the case/copy of the presentation on the date noted above.

Please send to your instructor: gkuipers@tyndale.ca

2.2 Students will rate the contribution of each group member to the case development and presentation using a Peer Feedback Form. The details of the feedback form will be provided in the first class and peer feedback will be part of the overall grade for the presentation.

2.3 Each student will write a 6-8 page (double-spaced, 12 point font) individual research paper on the group case presentation. This will include the case summary, ethical dilemma(s) and recommended course of action based on the presentation, class discussion and individual research and biblical reflection. The document must include references and bibliography (not included in the number of pages).

All written submissions must adhere to APA standards. All papers should reflect graduate-level competency regarding matters of grammar, punctuation, etc.

3. Reflective Journal (20% of grade) Due Date: Nov. 26

Purpose: The paper is to critique your knowledge, experience, values, beliefs/faith and attitudes towards professional ethics in the practice of psychotherapy.

Note: This assignment is related to Outcomes 1, 2 and 3.

Assignment: You are to write a brief reflection on how the content of the course (e.g. readings, lectures, small group exercises, videos, presentations, etc.) has or may impact your practice of psychotherapy and how this might be experienced by our clients and/or potential clients. You are encouraged to think about your blind spots, how you will practice safe and effective use of self, your therapist identity (so far) and how you hope to integrate your faith into your ethical practice. Time will be given during class to examine any internal tensions you may be experiencing as we go through the course content. The paper should be 5-6 pages, double spaced in 12 point font.

4. Final Examination: Week of Dec 9 (30% of final grade.)

A final examination will be comprised of multiple-choice, short- and long-answer questions based on all material covered in the course, with an emphasis on critical decision-making. Date: as scheduled by the Registrar's Office during exam week following the last week of class.

Purpose: To evaluate your comprehension of the course content.

Note: This assignment is related to Outcomes 1, 2 and 3.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Assignment	Due	%
1. Class Participation		10 %
2. Case Presentation & Paper	Oct 29 Nov 12	40 %
3. Reflective Journal	Nov 26	20 %
4. Final Exam	TBD	30 %
Total Grade		100 %

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Pre-reading is expected prior to start of class. Late registrants are responsible for the consequences of partial preparation.

Week 1: Sept. 10 – FOUNDATIONS (Murphy: 1, 3; Sanders: 1, 2, 3, 4; AAMFT User Guide and Code of Ethics; CRPO Code of Ethics; CRPO Professional Practice Standards 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4)

- Introduction to Professional Ethics
- Power Differential
- Core Competencies/Qualifications
- Resources for Decision Making

Week 2: Sept. 17 – FOUNDATIONS (Sanders: 21; Murphy: 2, 16; AAMFT User Guide and Code of Ethics 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 CRPO Code of Ethics; CRPO Professional Practice Standards 2.1, 4.1, 4.2)

- Approaches to Ethics
- Basic Moral Principles to Guide Decision Making
- Expectations in Supervision for Supervisors and Supervisees
- Steps in Making Ethical Decisions

Week 3: Sept. 24 – PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT (Sanders: 5, 6; Murphy: 7; CRPO Professional Practice Standards 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 6.1; AAMFT User Guide and Code of Ethics 1.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.10, 3.11, 3.12, 8.1, 8.2, 8.5)

- Managing Boundaries and Multiple Relationships
- Boundary Crossings Versus Boundary Violations
- Conflicts of Interest
- Managing Dual/Multiple Relationships
- Influence and Abuse
- Mandatory Reporting

Week 4: Oct. 1 – CLIENT THERAPIST RELATIONSHIP (Beamish; CRPO Professional Practice Standards 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7)

- Client's Right to Informed Consent
- Content of Informed Consent
- Capacity Issues
- The Therapeutic Contract

Week 5: Oct. 8 – CLIENT THERAPIST RELATIONSHIP (Murphy: 10, 11; Sanders 8; CRPO Professional Practice Standards 3.1)

- Confidentiality and Exceptions to Confidentiality
- Working with Minors
- Risk Assessment
- Reporting Obligations

Week 6: Oct 15 – CLIENT THERAPIST RELATIONSHIP (Sanders: 7; Murphy: 5, 6, 10; AAMFT User Guide and Code of Ethics 2.2, 2.3)

- Ethical Issues in Couple and Family Therapy
- Who is the “client”?
- Risk Assessment

OCT. 21 – 24: READING DAYS; NO CLASSES

Week 7: Oct 29 – STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

Week 8: Nov. 5 – PERSON OF THE THERAPIST (Sanders: 9, 10, 11, 12; Murphy: 8, 9; CRPO Professional Practice Standards: Section 3.7; AAMFT Code of Ethics 1.1, 3.11)

- Therapist Values & How they Influence Therapeutic Relationship
- Person of the Therapist Ethical Issues
 - Spirituality and Religion in Therapy
 - Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity
 - Abortion
 - MAiD

Week 9: Nov. 12 SAFE AND EFFECTIVE USE OF SELF ((Sanders: 18; Murphy: 5); CRPO Professional Practice Standards: Section 3.3, 3.4, 3.7; AAMFT Code of Ethics 3.3)

- Professional Identity
- Therapist Competency
- Secondary Traumatization/Compassion Fatigue
- Transference and Countertransference

Week 10: Nov. 19 – CLINICAL COMPETENCE (Sanders: 12; CRPO Professional Practice Standards: Section 2.1)

- Professional Competence and Training
- Suicide and Risk Management
- CRPO Competencies

Week 11: Nov. 26 – PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE (CRPO Professional Practice Standards: Sections 5, 6; Murphy: 12)

- Record Keeping
- Client Intake/First Session Considerations
- General Requirements for Content of Client Records
- Business Practices

Week 12: Dec. 3 – E-THERAPY & INPERSON THERAPY CONSIDERATIONS (CRPO Professional Practice Standards: 3.4; Murphy: 14)

- Ethical Considerations/Guidelines for On-line Therapy

- Security Practices Checklist
- Practicing Out of Province
- Acquiring the Appropriate Competencies

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bibliography/References Included in Presentations.

VI. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL COURSES

A. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must contact the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to register and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR LIVESTREAM INTERACTION (SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE COURSE ONLY)

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

**exceptions with permission from professor*

C. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to “Guidelines for Interactions” on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

D. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Grading Rubric

Please consult the rubric provided for each assignment on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details.

For proper citation style, consult [Citation Guides](#) for different styles. Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Turnitin Text-Matching Software

Tyndale has a subscription to Turnitin, a text-matching software that ensures the originality of academic writing and verifies the proper citation of all sources. The instructor for this course will use Turnitin for assignments submitted through your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca. Upon submission, you will receive a summary that includes your submitted files along with a similarity report generated by Turnitin. Please be aware that Turnitin can also detect AI-generated content from tools like Grammarly, so students should be mindful of when using such software. It's advisable to confirm with your instructor before using any AI tools into your assignments. Below are some useful resources:

- [Student](#) Guides for Turnitin via classes.tyndale.ca course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean's Office (seminaryoffice@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

Late Papers and Extensions Policy

All papers and course assignments must be submitted by the due dates indicated in the course syllabus. Unless the instructor already has a policy on grading late papers in the course syllabus, grades for papers submitted late without an approved extension will be lowered at the rate of two-thirds of a grade per week or part thereof (e.g., from “A+” to “A-,” from “B” to “C+”). Please note that some programs, such as cohort-based or intensive courses, may follow a different policy due to the nature of the program.

Faculty may not grant an extension beyond the last day of exams for the semester. Requests for extensions beyond this date must be addressed in writing to the Registrar by filling out the [Extension Request Form](#). The application will be considered only in cases such as a death in the family, medical emergency, hospitalization of oneself or immediate family member or prolonged illness requiring treatment by a physician. Factors such as assignments for other courses, holidays, and technology-related difficulties are insufficient grounds for requesting an extension.

A temporary grade of incomplete (“I”) may be granted by the Registrar. Once an extension is granted, it is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor and make satisfactory arrangements to complete the outstanding work. A grade of “F” will be recorded for students who do not complete the outstanding work by the deadline.

E. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential, and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

F. LIBRARY RESOURCES

[Tyndale Library](#) supports courses with [e-journals, e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).

G. GRADING SYSTEM & SCALE

For each course's grading rubric, please refer to your course syllabus or classes.tyndale.ca. For general grading guidelines, refer to Seminary [Grading System & Scale](#).