



ONTARIO PSYCHOTHERAPY & COUNSELLING COLLEGE

OPCC COURSE CATALOGUE



OPC COLLEGE
43B Madison Ave, Toronto, ON

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Welcome to OPC College

OPC College is dedicated to equipping you with the knowledge, skills, and personal growth necessary to become a competent and compassionate psychotherapist. Our program is meticulously designed to ensure you gain these skills and capacities through the integration of theory and hands-on skill development, meeting the entry-to-practice competencies required by the CRPO.

Our rigorous curriculum encompasses three theoretical streams: Lifespan Development, Psychodynamic Psychotherapy, and Comparative Psychology. Alongside these, we offer two experiential learning components: Learning/Skills Labs and Supervised Clinical Practicum.

Integrated Learning Approach

At OPC College, we believe that hands-on experience is crucial in training competent psychotherapists. Our Learning Labs are a cornerstone component to our program and provide a dynamic and immersive educational environment where students gain in-depth understanding of psychodynamic psychotherapy principles, techniques, and practices. These labs integrate theoretical knowledge with practical application, fostering the development of skilled and reflective psychotherapists.

Clinical Practicum

The clinical practicum is another cornerstone of our program, offering you the opportunity to apply your knowledge and skills in real-world settings. Here, you will work with diverse client populations, gaining invaluable experience and honing your competencies as a future psychotherapist.

Mission and Vision

Our mission at OPC College is to nurture the next generation of psychotherapists through a comprehensive, immersive, and supportive educational experience. By weaving theoretical learning into practical application, we aim to develop well-rounded professionals ready to make a positive impact in the field of psychotherapy.

We are committed to your success and look forward to supporting you on your journey to becoming a skilled, compassionate, and effective psychotherapist. Welcome to OPC College, where your future in psychotherapy begins.

Overview of 5-year Program:

I. Theories in Psychotherapy:

1. **Comparative Psychotherapy Theories and Frameworks (CP):**
 - **Topics in Psychotherapy Practice Lectures and Workshops (TPP I & II)**
 - **Concentration Study (CONY5)**
2. **Human and Psychological Development Across the Lifespan (HD)**
3. **Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Theory and Practice (PP)**

II. Experiential Learning Components:

1. **Clinical Practice and Clinical Supervision (SCP)** – years 4 and 5.
2. **Skills and Practice Lab (LAB)** - run concurrently throughout the entire five years.

Course Descriptions:

Year 1:

HDY1: Overview of ages and stages of human development: In the first year of this course, students will gain an overview of human and psychological development across the lifespan. The course introduces various dimensions of development, including physical, biological, cognitive, intellectual, psychological, social, emotional, behavioral, sexual, spiritual, and moral aspects. Students will explore key theories of psychological development, examining the concepts, applications, and limitations of each theory. The course also addresses contextual, systemic, diversity, and cultural factors that influence optimal human development. Additionally, the implications of different life stages for the psychotherapeutic process will be examined.

CPY1: Introduction to the history of psychoanalytic thought and approaches: This course introduces students to several key psychological theorists and their approaches to psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. Emphasizing the history of psychoanalytic thought, students will explore fundamental theories of psychoanalysis and trace their development over time. Through this course, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the evolution and diversity of psychoanalytic theories and practices.

PPY1: Introduction to Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Model of Practice: This course provides an introduction to the psychodynamic model of practice, including its key concepts, techniques, and applications in psychotherapy. Students will also be introduced to the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO) professional practice standards. Students will also explore the impact of power and diversity as they learn the model. The course aims to equip students with a foundational understanding of psychodynamic principles and prepare them for ethical and culturally competent practice. This course aims to provide students with a solid foundation in the psychodynamic model of practice, including an understanding of CRPO's professional practice

standards and the impact of power and diversity on therapy. By integrating theoretical knowledge with practical skills and ethical considerations, students will be prepared for competent and culturally sensitive psychodynamic practice. The course also emphasizes the development of clear, effective, and professional communication skills, including written, oral, and electronic methods.

LABY1: Foundations of Clinical Listening and Self-Exploration: This foundational Learning Lab course is designed to introduce students to the essential capacities for clinical listening and self-exploration. The course focuses on personal growth and the development of social-emotional language to communicate experiences and discuss their impact. Through experiential activities, reflective exercises, and group discussions, students will enhance their ability to listen deeply, understand their own emotional experiences, and express themselves effectively in relation to others. This course emphasizes understanding and respecting diverse perspectives in clinical listening and self-exploration. Discussions and assignments will incorporate considerations of cultural, socioeconomic, and individual differences, ensuring students are prepared to engage effectively with a wide range of clients. This foundational Learning Lab course aims to equip students with essential skills in clinical listening and self-exploration. By focusing on personal growth, social-emotional language, and effective communication, students will develop the capacities needed to understand and articulate their experiences, enhancing their ability to connect with and support others in a therapeutic context.

TPPI: Topics in Psychotherapy Practice – Workshops: The purpose of this course is to stay current with topics and modalities of relevance to the practice and profession of psychotherapy and counselling. 2 Workshops from the list below will be presented each year on a 3-year rotating basis. These workshops will cover:

- **Professional Ethics and Standards I & II:** These courses explore the role of professional ethics, standards, and ethical decision-making processes in clinical practice. Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of ethical principles and how to apply them in various clinical scenarios.
- **Basic Pharmacology for Psychotherapists:** This course delves into the pillars of treatment for mental disorders, with a special emphasis on psychopharmacology. Students will learn about the major classes of psychotropic medications and their applications in clinical practice.
- **Assessment and Understanding Diagnostic Categories (DSM-5 & PDM):** This course introduces students to the processes and techniques involved in psychotherapeutic assessment and case conceptualization. It covers key diagnostic categories as outlined in the DSM-5 and PDM, equipping students with the skills needed for accurate assessment and treatment planning.
- **Diversity and Cultural Competence:** This course prepares students to engage with cultural considerations in psychotherapy, developing cultural sensitivity and competence regarding diverse psychosocial contexts. It addresses issues of power, stigma, marginalization, and social injustice, fostering an inclusive approach to therapy.
- **Professional Literature and Applied Research:** This course prepares students to critically read and appraise professional literature and utilize applied research to inform clinical

practice. Emphasis is placed on developing research literacy and integrating evidence-based findings into therapeutic work.

TPPII: Topics in Psychotherapy Practice II – Lectures (2x a year): This course requires students to attend two half-day (4-hour) Lectures per year on various topics relevant to the practice of psychotherapy. Topics cover a range of modalities practiced in Ontario, such as EMDR, CBT, and Eco-psychotherapy, as well as other important areas like cultural safety when working with Indigenous clients, gender and sexual fluidity in the clinical space, the use of humor in therapy, psychotherapy for acquired brain injury, working clinically and safely with trauma, and conducting therapy safely online. OPC engages professionals both within the program and from the community, leveraging their expertise to present and facilitate collaborative learning in these workshops. Topics are announced each year.

APA Seminar: APA Style and Psychotherapy Essay Writing Seminar: This seminar provides a comprehensive exploration of APA style, focusing on its application in writing psychotherapy essays. Students will learn the essential elements of APA formatting, citation, and referencing, as well as the structure and components of high-quality academic writing in the field of psychotherapy. The workshop will cover techniques for effectively organizing and presenting arguments, integrating evidence, and maintaining academic integrity. Participants will engage in practical exercises to develop their skills in writing clear, concise, and well-structured essays, preparing them for academic success and professional communication in psychotherapy.

Year 2:

HDY2: Infant and child development: Theories, diversity and implications for psychodynamic psychotherapy: This course offers an in-depth exploration of infant and child development, focusing on the neurobehavioral and social-emotional theories of infant and child development. Students will examine how early developmental processes influence later psychodynamic psychotherapy practices with adults. The course will address diversity concerns and the implications of these developmental theories for understanding adult clients in a psychotherapeutic context. The course emphasizes understanding and respecting diverse perspectives in infant and child development. Discussions and assignments will incorporate considerations of cultural, socioeconomic, and family diversity, ensuring that students are prepared to work effectively with a wide range of populations. This course aims to provide students with a robust understanding of infant and child development. By integrating theoretical knowledge with practical application and focusing on diversity, students will be equipped to apply developmental insights to psychodynamic psychotherapy with adults, enhancing their therapeutic practice and client outcomes.

CPY2: Integrative approaches to psychotherapy: Person-Centered, Gestalt, Relational, and Intersubjective Psychotherapy: This course provides an in-depth exploration of person-centered, gestalt, relational, and intersubjective psychotherapy approaches, integrating the exploration of

diversity, power, and relational cultural theory within the clinical context. Students will also examine the role and development of the therapist, and ethical considerations in psychotherapy practice. This course aims to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of person-centered, gestalt, relational, and intersubjective psychotherapy, with a strong focus on diversity, power, and relational cultural theory. By integrating theoretical knowledge with practical application and ethical considerations, students will be well-equipped to provide effective and compassionate psychotherapy to diverse client populations.

PPY2: Foundations of the Dynamic Unconscious: Clinical Implications and Professional

Practice: This course provides a comprehensive exploration of the foundational concepts of the dynamic unconscious, focusing on dream interpretation and mechanisms of unconscious life. Leveraging Winnicott's theories of child development and adult psychotherapy, students will investigate the clinical implications of these ideas and how they connect to the dynamic unconscious. The course also addresses diversity considerations and introduces essential skills for clinical assessment, including evaluating ego function, building rapport, and establishing the early stages of the clinical relationship within the context of the dynamic unconscious as it influences these initial clinical encounters. This course emphasizes understanding and respecting diverse perspectives in unconscious processes and clinical practice. Discussions and assignments will incorporate considerations of cultural, socioeconomic, and individual differences, ensuring that students are prepared to work effectively with a wide range of populations.

LABY2: Learning Lab: Advanced Clinical Listening and Reflective Practice in Psychodynamic

Psychotherapy: This Learning Lab course is designed to build on the foundational clinical listening skills you acquired in Year 1, advancing your abilities in reflective practice within a psychodynamic model. Through experiential learning, role-playing, and group discussions, you will deepen your understanding of psychodynamic principles and enhance your reflective listening skills.

Reflection in psychodynamic psychotherapy is a critical practice that involves the therapist's ongoing self-examination and contemplation of the therapeutic process, their reactions, and the dynamics with colleagues in preparation for applying these skills with clients. This reflective practice is fundamental in understanding and navigating the complex interplay between the therapist and the other, enhancing therapeutic effectiveness, and fostering the other's psychological growth.

TPPI: *See above description.*

TPPII: *See above description*

Year 3:

HDY3: Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood Through the Developmental Lens: This course focuses on human development during adolescence and emerging adulthood, exploring the multidimensional and multidirectional aspects of these critical life stages. Students will examine identity and change across various domains, including physical, emotional, social, psychological, cognitive, and moral development. The course will delve into common problems and issues faced during these stages and identify markers of well-being.

Students will become familiar with potential issues and psychotherapeutic approaches to provide adolescent-friendly psychotherapy. Additionally, the course will emphasize understanding the impact of adolescence and emerging adulthood on adult clients who may present in clinical practice. Critical approaches to diversity will also be explored, ensuring students are equipped to address these issues sensitively and effectively.

CPY3: Self-Psychology and Comparative Psychodynamic Models: This course provides an in-depth exploration of self-psychology, a branch of psychodynamic psychotherapy founded by Heinz Kohut. The course will delve into the fundamental principles of self-psychology, focusing on its approach to understanding the development and maintenance of the self. We will compare and contrast self-psychology with other influential models of psychodynamic psychotherapy, including feminist, post-modern, integrative, and theories of diversity. Through residency participation, seminars, and interactive discussions, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of how these different models approach the complexities of the human psyche, therapeutic relationships, and cultural contexts. This course aims to equip students with a nuanced understanding of self-psychology and its place within the broader landscape of psychodynamic psychotherapy. Through comparative analysis, students will develop a versatile therapeutic skill set to effectively address diverse client needs.

PPY3: Psychodynamic Practice and Technique: The Therapeutic Relationship: This course provides an in-depth exploration of psychodynamic practice and techniques, focusing on the therapeutic relationship. Students will learn key concepts and techniques, including the safe and effective use of self, assessment, case conceptualization, rapport building, and trust development. The course also emphasizes the importance of understanding power dynamics and diversity within the therapeutic relationship. This course aims to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of psychodynamic practice and techniques, with a strong emphasis on the therapeutic relationship. By integrating theoretical knowledge with practical skills, students will be prepared to build effective therapeutic relationships, conduct thorough assessments, and apply psychodynamic techniques in their clinical practice. The course also emphasizes the importance of understanding power dynamics and diversity to provide culturally competent and ethically sound therapy.

LABY3: Learning Lab: Interventions in Psychodynamic Psychotherapy: In this learning lab, you will develop crucial skills for intervening in psychodynamic psychotherapy. Our goal is to equip you with the knowledge and techniques necessary to effectively engage with patients, facilitate change, and promote psychological well-being. Throughout this course, you will learn to apply psychodynamic principles, focusing on the unconscious mind, early life experiences, and the dynamics of the therapeutic relationship. This course is designed to build a strong foundation in psychodynamic psychotherapy interventions, preparing you for the challenges and rewards of clinical practice. By the end of this learning lab, you will have developed a range of skills essential for fostering therapeutic change and promoting psychological well-being in your future clients.

TPPI: *See above description*

TPPII: *See above description*

3rd Year Exam: Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Competency-Based Exam: The competency-based exam in psychodynamic psychotherapy is designed to evaluate your mastery of essential skills and knowledge acquired throughout the pre-clinical stage of your program. This exam will assess your ability to effectively apply psychodynamic principles, techniques, and interventions in simulated clinical scenarios. The focus will be on demonstrating competence in key areas such as interpretation, clarification, confrontation, supportive interventions, empathy, transference and countertransference, working through, and holding and containing.

Additionally, this exam format aligns with the competency exam formats used by the College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario (CRPO), preparing you for professional certification and practice.

Year 4:

HDY4: Adult Development Through the Lifespan - A Psychotherapeutic Lens: This course provides a comprehensive exploration of adult development through the lifespan from a psychotherapeutic perspective. Special attention will be given to adult attachment theories and their significant implications for clinical practice. Students will examine the various stages of adult development, the factors influencing growth and change, and the role of attachment in shaping adult relationships and mental health. Diversity considerations will be integrated throughout the course, emphasizing the impact of cultural, societal, and individual differences on adult development. By the end of this course, you will have a comprehensive understanding of adult development through the lifespan, with a special focus on adult attachment theories and their application in clinical practice. You will be equipped to work effectively with diverse adult populations, integrating attachment-informed approaches to enhance therapeutic outcomes. This course will prepare you for advanced clinical practice, enabling you to address the complex developmental and relational needs of adults with competence and sensitivity.

CPY4: Ego/Object Relations Therapy - Theories and Techniques of Otto Kernberg: This course provides an in-depth exploration of ego/object relations therapy as conceptualized by Otto Kernberg. We will examine Kernberg's theories on ego development, his approach to working with clients exhibiting borderline personality organization (BPO), and the specific therapeutic techniques he advocates. Additionally, the course will address issues of power and diversity, emphasizing the importance of cultural competence and sensitivity in clinical practice. By the end of this course, you will have a deep understanding of Otto Kernberg's ego/object relations theory and the skills to apply these concepts in clinical practice. You will be equipped to work effectively with BPO clients, manage complex transference dynamics, and incorporate considerations of power and diversity into your therapeutic approach. This course will prepare you for advanced clinical practice, enabling you to address the needs of diverse clients with competence and sensitivity.

PPY4: Advanced Psychodynamic Techniques and Interventions: This course delves into advanced psychodynamic techniques and interventions, focusing on how to facilitate the therapeutic process effectively. Students will explore sophisticated concepts and practical applications within psychodynamic psychotherapy, including working with transference and countertransference, defense mechanisms, interpretation, resistance, and unconscious processes. The course will also emphasize integrating these techniques into a cohesive therapeutic practice. This course aims to equip students with advanced skills in psychodynamic techniques and interventions. By integrating theoretical knowledge with practical applications, students will be prepared to facilitate the therapeutic process effectively, addressing complex client needs and fostering profound psychological change.

LABY4: Applying Psychodynamic Psychotherapy - Coherent Model of Practice (Part 1): This advanced course represents Part 1 of an in-depth exploration into the application of a coherent model of psychodynamic psychotherapy practice. Building on foundational skills from the previous learning lab focused on interventions, this course is designed to deepen your understanding and refine your application of psychodynamic principles. You will enhance your therapeutic techniques, sharpen your clinical decision-making skills, and develop a comprehensive, integrative approach to psychodynamic therapy. By the end of Part 1, you will have developed a coherent, integrative approach to psychodynamic psychotherapy, equipped with advanced clinical skills and a deepened understanding of the therapeutic process. This course will prepare you for professional practice, enhancing your ability to effectively address diverse client needs and promote therapeutic change.

TPPII: *See above description*

SCPY1: Supervised Clinical Practicum Year 1: The first year of the clinical practicum at the Ontario Psychotherapy and Counselling College (OPCC) marks a pivotal stage in the journey to becoming a skilled psychotherapist. This year focuses on transitioning students from theoretical learning to practical application, emphasizing the development of clinical skills in real-world settings. By the end of the first year of the clinical practicum, students will have gained valuable practical experience, developed essential clinical skills, and deepened their understanding of the therapeutic process. This foundation prepares them for more advanced clinical work and specialization in the subsequent year of the program.

Year 5:

CONY5: Thesis Course: Concentrated Study in Psychotherapy: This thesis course provides a concentrated study in the field of psychotherapy, guiding students through the process of developing, researching, and presenting a comprehensive literature review paper. The course includes the creation of a research proposal, an oral presentation to faculty and peers, and the completion of a thesis review paper. Emphasis is placed on critical analysis, synthesis of existing research, and scholarly communication.

The student has an opportunity to study a specialty area of their choosing. The student is encouraged to bring theory and practice together and concentrate on a specific area of psychotherapy such as: a specific application area (e.g., addictions); a specific approach to psychotherapy (e.g., CBT, dream work, expressive arts); psychotherapy with a particular client population (e.g., Adolescents, asylum seekers); or an issue related to the practice of psychotherapy (e.g., ethics, funding).

The Concentration Study is an opportunity to make an original contribution to psychodynamic and therapeutic knowledge and to demonstrate the ability for independent research and integration of knowledge acquired in the program.

Students work with an advisor and produce a proposal, written thesis and an oral presentation to the faculty and students for discussion and to demonstrate the student's knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.

LABY5: Applying Psychodynamic Psychotherapy - Coherent Model of Practice (Part 2): Part 2 of the "Applying Psychodynamic Psychotherapy - Coherent Model of Practice" course continues to build on the skills and knowledge developed in Part 1. This advanced segment focuses on the practical application of a coherent psychodynamic model, enhancing your ability to engage in complex clinical situations and deepen therapeutic relationships. Additionally, this course emphasizes the importance of cultivating fruitful collegial relationships, which are essential for ongoing professional development and effective clinical practice. By the end of Part 2, you will have developed advanced clinical skills, a sophisticated understanding of psychodynamic principles, and the ability to apply these effectively in complex therapeutic situations. Additionally, you will cultivate the capacities needed for building and maintaining fruitful collegial relationships, essential for ongoing professional growth and effective clinical practice. This course will prepare you for advanced professional practice, enabling you to address diverse client needs and contribute positively to the field of psychodynamic psychotherapy.

TPPII: *See above description*

SCPY2: Supervised Clinical Practicum Year 2:

The second year of the clinical practicum at the Ontario Psychotherapy and Counselling College (OPCC) builds on the foundational skills and experiences gained in the first year. This year is focused on deepening clinical expertise, advancing therapeutic techniques, and developing a more nuanced understanding of diverse client populations. By the end of the second year of the clinical practicum, students will have significantly advanced their clinical skills, developed expertise in handling complex cases, and deepened their understanding of diverse therapeutic approaches. This year prepares them for mastery and specialization in the final year of their clinical training.