



**Cornerstone**  
institute

**Bachelor of Arts Honours in Psychology**  
*BPsych Equivalent*

**Brochure 2025**

## YOUR STORY

Do you want to live a life of purpose? Do you worry about the state of the world? Do you genuinely want to make a difference to the lives of others? Are you looking for more than just a qualification? Is leaving a lasting legacy important to you? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then we have a lot in common.

Cornerstone is the institution to help you realise your life's purpose and grow your ambition. While doing so, you will develop and nurture the values that you share with Cornerstone Institute, which will assist you in taking your place in a vibrant and thriving economy. Together, we will learn to change the world.

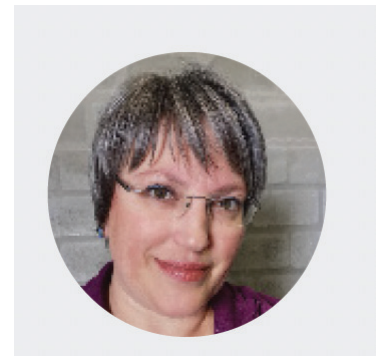
## OUR STORY

We believe in education with a purpose. At the heart of our education philosophy is the firm belief that education leads to transformation. Cornerstone Institute has been generating knowledge that benefits humanity since 1970. We began with two black theology students who were barred from attending university because of the colour of their skin. Today hundreds of Cornerstone graduates from all walks of life are making a difference around the globe.

We are one of only two higher education institutions in the country to offer a BA of Arts Honours in Psychology with a BPsych. Equivalent option to enable you to become Registered counsellor.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DEAN

DR MARIANNE LOUW



*Together we can learn to change the world*

**At Cornerstone Institute, our motto is: Learn to change the world. It's a very simple sentence, but to us, it carries significant meaning.**

The obvious meaning is: Learn how to change the world. And that is true because, at Cornerstone, you will learn new knowledge and skills that will equip you to enter the new world of work and build a career that will positively impact society.

The second meaning is the less obvious but, the more important one: To change the world, learn. We believe you can only change the world if you continue learning. To learn is to grow – first, as a person in connection with other human beings. It is a lifelong journey that may include but by far transcends formal studies and qualifications. As we travel this road with other people who share different parts of our journey, we learn from them, and they learn from us.

Will any single individual ever change the entire world? Probably not! But you can change your world. And we would love to be part of that journey

## **PSYCHOLOGY Department**

### **Vision, Mission and Purpose**

Cornerstone Institute's vision is to mobilize students for active citizenship and is crystallized in our tagline: Learn to Change the World. With a passionate commitment to education as key to social transformation, Cornerstone has, in its 50-year history, remained faithful to creating catalytic spaces for the transformation of students by stretching their thinking, believing, and acting. Transformed students, we believe, become agents of transformation as they take their place within the civic structures of our society.

Pedagogically, Cornerstone as a learning community understands education as an important aspect in facilitating the process of becoming more fully and integratively human. Framed another way, education, as we have understood and practised it, is about supporting, enhancing, exploring and advancing human dignity by providing access to the kind of higher education that values a holistic view of human identity.

With a commitment to transformational education within the concrete realities of life, we aspire to continue to create a robust, world-class, accessible, progressive learning environment, in which students from all walks of life are encouraged to explore what it means to be human. This takes place within multiple intellectual disciplines, where students are mobilised by their knowledge to be agents of transformation in our society, and active citizens and advocates of human dignity.

As part of the Faculty of Humanities, the Psychology Department is focussed on nurturing intellectual advancement through the powers of informed analysis, discernment and creative critique. This vision brings into sharper focus the importance of underwriting a commitment to mobilizing students for preventative and supportive work within communities, to enhance the emotional well-being of all South Africans.

To this end, the Psychology Department strives to maintain a synergistic relationship between theory, practice and research for community transformation, always mindful of ethical norms and scope of practice. The practical application of skills leading to entrepreneurial ventures in society is the ultimate goal, with students reaching their full potential in sustainable and ethical projects and work environments.



**Geraldine Franciscus**

HOD Psychology

# Bachelor of Arts Honours in Psychology (B. Psych. Equivalent)

(132 credits, NQF 8, Registration Certificate No 2001/HE08/006. SAQA ID: 79046)

**Mode of delivery:** Contact and Distance (As Per CHE Concession)



**January 2025 intake: One year full-time studies or two years part-time studies**

---

**Applications open: 07 April 2025**  
**Applications deadline: 01 July 2025**

---

## **Aim**

The aim of this programme is to respond to the increased need for trained and registered counsellors and life skills facilitators in South Africa, with a particular focus on the psychological challenges present in communities. The programme helps students develop an integrated and relevant counselling praxis. The B. Psych. Equivalent offers a comprehensive practical placement which is integrated with academic and professional training. This practicum forms part of the degree and is completed during the period of study. After completing this B. Psych. Equivalent programme and successfully passing the Professional Board examination, students are able to register with the HPCSA as Registered Counsellors.

**Programme Coordinators - Dr Serahni Symington and Geraldine Franciscus (HoD)**

### **Dr. Serahni Symington (PhD)**

Dr Symington works in the field of family counselling and child and adolescent interventions through counselling and play therapy. She is a Registered Counsellor and holds a PhD in Psychology with a research focus on the adolescent socialisation patterns and impacts of new technological developments (internet, media, social media). She is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Cornerstone Institute. Further she has a part-time private practice in Durbanville, where she mostly works within her communities' schools and ECD centres to look at child development through the lens of healthy social interactions and strong familial relationships. She also sees private clients in the form of children ranging from 4-18 years old.

### **Ms Geraldine Franciscus (M. Psych Coun.)**

Geraldine Franciscus is a Counselling Psychologist and the Head of the Psychology Department at Cornerstone Institute and has over 20 years' experience in tertiary education. She has a practical interest in the Solution-Focussed Brief Therapy approach and has been involved in the training of mental healthcare workers, registered counsellors, interns, psychologists, psychiatric nurses and social workers.

## Academic Programme

The B. Psych. Equivalent programme at Cornerstone Institute has been developed at the Honours level (NQF Level 8), specifically offering professional training towards registration as counsellors. The curriculum for this programme includes the following modules:

Module Name	Credits
Psychological Interventions	18
Psychopathology	18
Research Methods and Statistics	18
Psychology Research Project A	15
Psychology Research Methods Project B	15
Psychological Assessment and Measurement	10
Developmental Psychology	10
Personality Theories	10
Counselling Theories & Skills	18
Community Psychology (Advanced)	18
Family Psychology	10
Practicum (720 hours)	

Students enrolling in the B. Psych. Equivalent programme develop advanced knowledge of psychological theories, concepts and conduct-focused research within the discipline. This programme prepares students to pursue careers that require an in-depth understanding of human behaviour, as well as apply for further studies in psychology (Masters). The academic modules provide the theoretical psychological knowledge that informs the application of skills for psychological interventions in the programme. Those accepted into the B. Psych. Equivalent are required to register with the HPCSA as student registered counsellors, complete the required modules, and a 720-hour Practicum. This programme will require a minimum of 18 months to complete and the Practicum must be completed in 6-8 months within that period.

## Time Commitment

18 months Full-time, on campus January 2025 intake.

## Tuition Cost ([click here](#))

## Admission and Selection Criteria Admission

Admission requirements for the B. Psych. Equivalent programme include:

- A three-year Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) with Psychology as a major subject
- Minimum of 65% average in Bachelors level Psychology
- Completion of the B. Psych Equivalent Programme Application Form (see Appendix 1)
- Two Recommendations, one from Psychology Department faculty (see Appendix 2)
- See further selection criteria as part of the selection process below (4.2).

## Selection Process

Compliance with the admission criteria indicated above does not automatically result in selection for the programme. A limited number of students are selected into the B. Psych. Equivalent Programme annually, which means applicants are required to complete a rigorous selection process. The initial selection process comprises a review of the B. Psych. Equivalent Programme Application Form, reference forms and supporting academic transcripts by a Selection Committee (comprising the HOD of Psychology and at least three other faculty members) Once this process has been completed, successful candidates will be invited to an interview with the Selection Committee (where possible include a representative/s from placement site supervisors). The criteria by which candidates will be assessed for admission into the B. Psych. Equivalent Programme include:

- *Understanding the role and purpose of the Registered Counsellor*
- *Demonstrated competency in academic skills, such as writing*
- *Good intra- and inter-personal skills. (e.g. demonstrated through the student's response to a provided case study and the interview process)*
- *Psycho-social wellness*
- *Potential to learn and apply the necessary skills of a Registered Counsellor:*
- *Ability to work in a team and groups*
- *Ability to work under pressure*
- *Ability to work in a community*
- *Ability to work with diversity.*

All applications must be accompanied by official and certified study records of all qualifications, as well as referee reports from psychology faculty members from the Department of Psychology. Students will be notified within four weeks of the application closing date regarding the outcome of their paper application, if they will be proceeding selection interviews. This is a highly competitive programme and only a limited number of spaces are available.

### **Please Note:**

Successful applicants are not confirmed for placement until they have officially registered both as a student of Cornerstone, and with the HPCSA as a Student Registered Counsellor. Students will need to provide confirmation of registration with the HPCSA.

## Programme-specific outcomes

By the end of this programme students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of psychological theory and biological influences on behaviour
- Demonstrate systematic thinking about selection of techniques for various research scenarios
- Develop comprehension of the theoretical traditions within qualitative research
- Demonstrate the ability to execute the techniques of analysis covered in the programme
- Explain how developmental, cultural, socioeconomic, and gender factors affect the clinical diagnosis and conceptualisation of psychopathology
- Develop conceptual and procedural knowledge of the descriptive system that is codified in the DSM-V for purposes of referral
- Apply critical thinking skills in the assessment and resolution of community mental health needs
- Demonstrate an advanced understanding of professional ethics in psychology, with special reference to issues of statutory control (According to scope of practice, HPCSA Form 258)
- Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of counselling modalities and counselling skills; appropriately developing treatment plans and intervention programs from these modalities as they pertain to the scope of practice for registered counsellors
- Demonstrate critical thinking about the applicability of western models to the multicultural South African context
- Engage critically in current debates on the use of different interventions, modalities and theoretical perspectives in psychology
- Address community dilemmas through developing and implementing psycho-educational programmes and appropriate community interventions
- Work effectively with other professionals in a team setting
- Understand the scope and practice of a professional counsellor
- Gain access to the HPCSA board examinations for professional registration as a registered counsellor; upon successful completion of this examination.

Students enrolling in the programme develop advanced knowledge of psychological theories, concepts and conduct-focused research within the discipline. This programme prepares students to pursue careers that require an in-depth understanding of human behaviour, as well as apply for further studies in psychology (Masters). The academic modules provide the theoretical psychological knowledge that informs the application of skills for psychological interventions in the programme.

In the year prior to enrolment, students engage in a selection process designed to identify and screen students for admission into the programme. Those accepted into the Bpsych option are required to register with the HPCSA as Student registered counsellors, conduct their Independent Research Project in a community setting, complete the required modules, and a 720-hour Practicum. This programme will require a minimum of 18 months to complete and the Practicum must be completed within 6-12 months.

## Training

Students will be required to complete:

- **An intensive preparatory orientation programme** which takes place a week before the Practicum starts.
- **Training workshops:** an additional 24-30 hours of training workshops (approx. 3-6 hours each) are required to address specific knowledge and skills needed for the Practicum. 720 hour Practicum and Professional training.

# PRACTICUM AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

## DESCRIPTION

This Practicum aims to help the student gain practical fieldwork experience in a community setting. In this module the student will be given opportunities to integrate theoretical counselling modalities, practical counselling skills and community and group interventions. The module exposes the student to a variety of mental health needs and issues in the community. There is an emphasis on the recognition and screening of mental health issues, and management/referral skills within the registered counsellor scope of practice and framework.

### 1. Practicum Placements

Students are placed in a setting under supervision where they can gain valuable knowledge and experience. They will put skills into action and provide a voluntary service in psychosocial prevention interventions in a variety of community settings. Students will have an on-site external placement supervisor, to whom they report and to whom they are accountable. Cornerstone Institute has established relationships with community organisations, providing students with various options to undertake their practicums (depending on placement availability) such as:

- *Hope House (Bergvliet, Kuilsriver & Table View)*
- *Gene Louw Primary School (Durbanville)*
- *Cornerstone Student Counselling Services*
- *WCED(North)*
- *WCED (South)*
- *Community Keepers*
- *Goodhope Psychological Services*
- *CMH Clinics*
- *Valenture Institute*
- *Table View High*
- *Monte Vista Primary*
- *CPUT (Mowbray, District 6 & Bellville)*

### 2. Supervision from Cornerstone Institute

Internal supervision from Cornerstone Institute will be provided bi weekly by either a registered clinical psychologist, counselling psychologist, educational psychologist, or registered counsellor (as required by the HPCSA). The supervisor will need to have 3 years' post registration experience. There should be a ratio of supervisor 1: 5 students. There will also be two (2) individual consultation sessions with students at Cornerstone Institute to measure progress.

### 3. Types of evaluation procedures for the Practicum

- *Reflective journals to be submitted on a regular basis.*
- *Identify student difficulties and refer for professional assistance if necessary.*
- *Report writing and record keeping.*
- *Supervision and consultations.*
- *Presentations and Intervention discussions.*
- *Psychological assessments.*
- *Client and Case Management reviews.*
- *Psycho-educational Workshops, Prevention Programmes, Supportive Counselling, and Group work completed.*
- *Portfolio of Evidence to be compiled throughout the Practicum.*
- *Progress report provided by Supervisors quarterly.*



## 4. Learning Outcomes

The placement experience is an essential component of learning for student registered counsellors and they will be expected to:

- *Apply theory to psychosocial developmental and preventative interventions in a supportive environment to cope with challenges.*
- *Consolidate and develop their knowledge and skills base.*
- *Learn to offer appropriate containment and support in stressful and traumatic contexts.*
- *Network and develop links within and outside the placement organisation to enable good referral processes.*
- *Work effectively with others as a member of the team, group, institution and community.*
- *Explore career options.*
- *Enhance their personal and professional development.*

## 5. Exit Level Outcomes

Demonstrate competence in their ability to integrate theory and skills of basic counselling, and apply specific psychosocial preventative and developmental intervention strategies within an organisational setting. On completion they will be able to:

- *Demonstrate an awareness of multi-culturally sensitive counselling.*
- *Display an awareness of skills of different approaches to supportive counselling, community interventions and group work.*
- *Accurately demonstrate skills in report writing and keeping of client records.*
- *Demonstrate awareness and an understanding of supervision for ongoing professional development and accountability.*
- *Reflect on learning and application.*
- *Demonstrate basic crisis intervention skills.*
- *Demonstrate appropriate psychometric competencies.*
- *Screen and identify mental health challenges.*
- *Contain presenting difficulties of clients.*
- *Provide preventative, developmental counselling services and interventions.*
- *Provide psycho-education and training.*
- *Promote primary psychosocial well-being.*
- *Apply the correct procedures for referral of clients. Referral to appropriate professionals (such as psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker) and/or other appropriate resources (such as SAPS, Childline, Day Hospitals).*
- *Work in a context appropriate, multi-professional team (According to HPCSA, 2013, Form 258).*

## 6. Design of Practicum

The practicum may be completed over 6 months full-time (up to 12 months if needed). During the practicum placement/s, students will engage in a range of activities that count toward the required hours.

### **The Programme comprises the following:**

- Practicum orientation activities
- Preparatory workshops, which are designed to cover the following: general placement preparation, psychometric testing and assessment, report writing, and professional development and ethics, HPCSA code of conduct, Bill of Rights, and basic counselling and interviewing skills, trauma counselling, course revision of core elements and entrepreneurial skills.
- Further training and development workshops (some specific to placement site).
- Supervision with the on-site (external) supervisor, internal supervisor and group supervision.
- Debriefing and consultations with the programme coordinator.
- Research and reading.
- Placement orientation/s.
- Engagement with clients, e.g. psychometric testing, psychological interventions, basic supportive counselling, interviewing, referrals, observations, discussions, group work etc.
- Report writing and administration.
- Resource and material development
- Case discussion and presentations.
- Portfolio presentation preparation and delivery.
- Community workshops and interventions, and psycho education training provided.
- Other involvement within the organisation/s which has a practical focus

*Learn to change  
the World*

**PHYSICAL ADDRESS:**

1 Cedar Road Sandown  
Milnerton Rural  
South Africa  
7441

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:**

+27 (0)21 448 0050

**EMAIL:**

helpdesk@cornerstone.ac.za

*Scan to  
find us on  
Social Media:*

