

**COURSE: HS-03 APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY**

**PROFESSOR:** Dominika Z. Wojcik, Ph.D.

**CONTACT HOURS:** 50

**CREDITS:** 3 American (recommended), 5 ECTS

**LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION:** English

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will look at the application of psychological principles and theories to psychological practice. Applied psychology covers a wide spectrum of topics and extends to various branches of psychology; however this course focuses on areas directly related to Health Sciences such as clinical, health, counseling, occupational, behavioural and medical psychology as well as ergonomics (i.e. human factors in health care) and neuropsychology. The course further describes, through a series of lectures, the professional development of each area, explores its theoretical background (e.g. models, frameworks), and looks at the assessment systems and tools used in these areas. Furthermore, it aims to talk about current evidence-based psychological therapies and interventions. Five hours of the course are also intended for a "hands-on" experience, where students will be able to participate in an activity related to application of the assessment tools and/or visit specialised centres (therapy centre, clinic etc.).

**OBJECTIVES:**

By the end of the course students should:

- Be familiar with the different areas and careers in applied psychology, in particular, within the field of Health Sciences.
- Be able to describe different theories of each abovementioned areas of applied psychology and know the recent empirical findings within these areas.
- Be aware of issues related to assessment, various models of psychological therapy/intervention (e.g. cognitive, behavioural and psychopharmacological) as well as the measurements of treatment.
- Develop the ability to critically discuss whether or not psychological constructs can explain real-life phenomena.
- Develop and/or reinforce research skills as well as oral and written presentation skills.

**CLASS FORMAT:** Lectures, group work (oral presentation), individual work (researching online resources, independent reading and essay write-up) and group discussions will be part of the teaching methodology. Some topics will be covered in more than one lecture. Videos, documentaries and other visual materials are used as supporting means of teaching during the length of this course. Visits to different medical/health centers will take place during the course.

**COURSE TOPICS:**

**Topic 1:** Introduction to applied psychology, history of the discipline and an overview of different traditional and emerging branches within the area.

**Topic 2:** Description of the different careers exercised within the area of applied psychology. Outline of the role and credibility of the applied psychologists.

**Topic 3:** Description of the scientific method in psychology and exploration of questions such as: *Is psychology a science?* Students will be confronted with a debate on how the psychological concepts are applied in real-world settings and, further, made aware of limitation of these concepts in explaining real-life phenomena.

References:

- McGhee, P (2001). *Thinking Psychologically*. Basingstoke, Palgrave.  
-Valentine, E. (1992). *Conceptual Issues in Psychology*. London, Routledge.

**Topic 4:** Clinical psychology. Introduction to the concept of mental health. These lectures outline common models of psychological assessment and the measurement of treatment (i.e. randomized controlled trial and its ethical issues). Students will be familiarised with some prevalent psychiatric disorders (e.g.: Generalised Anxiety Disorder-GAD, depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder- PTSD) and provided with symptoms description, DSM classifications and different treatment approaches.

References:

-Lindsay S, Powell G. (2007) *The Handbook of Clinical Adult Psychology*, 3rd Edition. Routledge; London.

[-http://www.apa.org/divisions/div12/aboutcp.html](http://www.apa.org/divisions/div12/aboutcp.html)

**Topic 5:** Counseling psychology and its link to clinical psychology. This class deals with the major counseling theories (e.g. humanistic, psychoanalytic, CBT theories) as well as talk about counseling skills. Also some main areas of counsellor's work are outlined (addiction, drug abuse, death and bereavement, depression, counseling young people and children-family therapy, sexuality, counseling at work etc.).

References:

-Fouad, N.A. (2012) *APA Handbook of Counseling Psychology Book/Monograph*.

**Topic 6:** Health psychology and behavioural medicine. Introduction to psychological aspects of health using the biopsychosocial framework. The students will be introduced to the ongoing discussion on the efficacy and limitations that the psychological constructs have in explaining variations in health and illness. Topics touch upon illness cognitions, family/social influences vs. beliefs and health choices, pain, suicide, etc. Furthermore, health psychology is compared and contrasted with behavioural medicine.

References:

-Ogden, J. (2010) *Health Psychology: a textbook*. 5th edition. Open University Press, McGraw Hill.

[-http://www.health-psych.org/](http://www.health-psych.org/)

**Topic 7:** Medical psychology deals with the application of psychological principles to the practice of medicine, not only in terms of physical illness, but also mental disorders. It puts emphasis on somatic and psychotherapeutic modalities into assessment and treatment of mental illness, emotional, cognitive, behavioural and substance abuse disorders. Thus medical psychology is, to some extent, similar to clinical, health psychology and behavioural medicine. This class, therefore, aims to compare and contrast the four areas and talk about the different roles of experts of each field as well as discuss their contributions to current advances in research into health and illness.

**Topic 8:** Occupational psychology. In this part of the course the students will learn about the ways in which psychological theories and empirical evidence are applied in workplace in terms of assessment, selection, training and development of the individual at work. A description of different theories is provided such as: motivation, leadership, job design as well as workload/stress in workplace.

References:

-Arnold J., Silvester, J., Petterson, F., Robertson IV, Cooper, C.L., Burnes, B. (2005) *Work Psychology - Understanding Human Behaviour in the Workplace*, Pearson Education Limited, Essex, England.

[-http://www.bps.org.uk/networks-and-communities/member-networks/division-occupational-psychology](http://www.bps.org.uk/networks-and-communities/member-networks/division-occupational-psychology)

**Topic 9:** Ergonomics, i.e. Human Factors at workplace. This part focuses on the importance of human factors at workplace settings, and specifically, in health care settings. The class provides the historical as well as future perspective on work psychology. It describes such concepts as workload and task allocation, human error and system failure as well as safety at work.

References:

- Spector, P. (2008). *Industrial and Organizational Psychology: Research and Practice*. (5<sup>th</sup> Ed) New York: Wiley.
- Carayon, P. (2011) *Handbook of Human Factors and Ergonomics in Health Care and Patient Safety* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). CRC Press, Taylor and Francis Group.
- <http://www.iea.cc/about/technical.php?id=51dea4f031b42>

**Topic 10:** Neuropsychology. This unit looks at how different brain areas relate to human cognition and behaviour. Moreover, it looks at how changes in brain (whether following brain damage, brain cell death, or resulting from neurodevelopmental disorders) affect behaviour and cognitive functioning. The focus is on neuropsychological assessment (outlining both behavioural and neuroimaging tools), diagnosis and rehabilitation of different common brain pathologies like: Traumatic Brain Injury, Neurodevelopmental Disorders (like autism, ADHD), Alzheimer Disease etc. These disorders are explained in terms of their symptomatology using well-established models within the field. The course also looks at different ways of studying brain pathology using such methods as: experimental, longitudinal, cross sectional, case study and individual differences.

References:

- Snyder, P.J., Nussbaum, P.D., Robins, D.L. (2006) *Clinical Neuropsychology: A Pocket Handbook for assessment* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). American Psychological Association.
- <http://www.the-ins.org/>

**Topic 11:** Forensic psychology. Introduction of the area and its contribution made to different branches of psychology. This unit focuses on relating psychological theories to crime and offending, sex offenders, mental illness, and violent offenders in terms of offender profiling, risk assessment, and rehabilitation.

References:

- Bartol CR. (2007). *Criminal Behavior: A Psychosocial Approach* (8th Edition). Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.
- <http://www.aa4cfp.org/>

**Topic 12:** In this unit different areas of applied psychology beyond Health Sciences are discussed.

**ASSESSMENT AND GRADING SYSTEM:**

**Group and independent work:** Students will be asked to do a mini project in small groups where they will be asked to research one of the topics (topics: 1-10) and present it orally (40%-group work) and in a form of a short essay (40%- independent work).

**Class participation:** 20%

**GRADE EQUIVALENCE**

UPSA	USA
10	A+
9.5 - 9.9	A
9 - 9.4	A-
8.5 - 8.9	B+
7.5 - 8.4	B
7 - 7.4	B-
6.5 - 6.9	C+
6 - 6.4	C
5 - 5.9	C-
0 - 4.9	F

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Every student is expected to attend all regularly scheduled class sessions on time and to be thoroughly prepared for day class activities.

In order to meet the requirements of crediting institutions, instructors compile regular attendance records for every course and when evaluating student participation and performance, the instructor takes this record into account. Absences in excess of 5 contact hours are not permitted and will result in failure of the course.

Limited absence from regularly scheduled class time may be permitted for properly document illness and emergencies. Students must petition in writing the Academic Dean to authorize excused absence. For such excused absence, the students shall immediately consult with the instructor concerning make-up work.

Both the course instructor and the Academic Dean retain the right to dismiss from the course any student who has been absent more than the maximum amounts stipulated above.

#### **GENERAL REFERENCES:**

The topic-specific references are provided along with the topic description (see above), however each lecture will be supported with a list of relevant references (such as up-to-date scientific articles). Some general references and online resources are also listed below:

-IAAP Handbook of Applied Psychology (2011) Paul R. Martin, P.R., Cheung, F. M., Knowles, M.C., Kyrios, M., Littlefield, L., Overmier, J.B., Prieto, J.M. Wiley-Blackwell.

-International Association of Applied Psychology:

<http://www.iaapsy.org/>

-The British Psychological Society:

<http://www.bps.org.uk/>

-America Psychological Society:

<http://www.apa.org/>