

Course Descriptions: M.A. in Clinical-Community Psychology

PSYC 501 Theories of Psychotherapy

This course will offer in-depth discussion on the historical, philosophical and theoretical foundations of various styles of psychotherapy. Specific scholars, clinical orientations, and research will be addressed as well as a critical analysis of each. Emphasis will be placed on multi-cultural, ethnic, racial and gender differences as addressed by varying forms of psychotherapy. The course includes practical application via psychotherapy training sessions and experiential exercises. (3 credits; no prerequisites)

Objectives: 1) Describe basic tenets of major theories of psychotherapy, 2) Identify techniques and strategies associated with major theories of psychotherapy, and 3) apply theoretical concepts in psychotherapy to evaluate case study examples.

PSYC 503 Foundations of Community Psychology

The historical, philosophical and theoretical background to community psychology will be examined. Special emphasis will be placed on involvement in our local urban community with recognition of its existing resources as well as its diverse population. The course will require small field work projects as well as theoretical and research papers. (3 credits; no prerequisites).

Objectives: 1) Describe the history of community psychology; 2) evaluate, compare and contrast major theories of community psychology; 3) apply concepts of community psychology to case examples.

PSYC 511 Humanistic and Phenomenological Approaches to Psychology

This course will address comprehensively and in detail humanistic and phenomenological psychology as used in research and practice. The course will examine the phenomenological approach to research, and explore how this approach provides a foundation for a humanistic understanding of the person in the context of culture and community. (3 credits; no prerequisites)

Objectives: 1) Define basic concepts in phenomenological psychology; 2) Identify major figures in humanistic and phenomenological psychology; 3) demonstrate applications of phenomenological research with analysis of data.

PSYC 521 Advanced Life-Span Development

This course will review various theories and empirical research of development beginning with infancy and continuing throughout adult life. The course will examine the socialization of the person across the life-span, language development, and the role of genetics. (3 credits; no prerequisites)

Objectives: 1) Describe major developmental milestones over the human life-span; 2) Evaluate, compare and contrast major theoretical approaches to developmental psychology; 3) Critically evaluate the role of genetics and environment in human development in light of contemporary research evidence.

PSYC 531 Psychopathology in the Context of Society and Culture

Mental distress, maladaptive behavior and problems in living will be examined broadly and from multiple perspectives, with special emphasis on the social and cultural antecedents and consequences

of human suffering and dysfunction. Critical examination of current diagnostic systems will be explored in light of contemporary research. (3 credits; Prerequisite: PSYC 503)

Objectives: 1) Identify and describe major categories of psychopathology; 2) Explain antecedents and consequences of psychopathology; 3) Evaluate, compare and contrast different models of psychopathology.

PSYC 532 Mental Health & Well-Being: Individual and Collective

Theories of mental health and well-being will be critically examined in light of research evidence. The course will examine positive and adaptive states of mind, as well as personal strengths and virtues, with an emphasis upon the social and cultural antecedents and consequences of mental health and well-being. (3 credits; Prerequisite: PSYC 503)

Objectives: 1) Describe research evidence on positive emotions; 2) Describe research evidence on character strengths and virtues; 3) Describe research findings on social institutions and structures that mediate or moderate mental health and well-being.

PSYC 541 Brain, Body and Experience

This course will interrelate human experiences and behavior with contemporary research in cognitive neuroscience, enactive cognition, and neurophenomenology. Each of the aforementioned disciplines will be discussed and their application to human development, learning, health, and psychological disorders will be addressed. (3 credits; Prerequisite: PSYC 511)

Objectives: 1) Describe the types and structures of brain cells; 2) Describe the gross anatomy of the brain and the various functions of brain anatomy; 3) Evaluate the extent to which functional anatomy of the brain remains plastic and adaptable over various phases of human development.

PSYC 551 Quantitative Research Methods

This course will explore the historical, philosophical, and theoretical foundations to quantitative research and proceed to explore descriptive statistics, correlational analyses, experimental designs, and inferential statistics. Proficiency in information literacy and research will be expected. Understanding of quantitative measures and results within peer-reviewed journals will be stressed. APA ethical guidelines for using human participants will be reviewed. Quantitative lab projects will provide students with opportunities to apply concepts with actual data.

(3 credits; No prerequisite)

Objectives: 1) Solve basic statistical problems relevant to empirical research; 2) Describe basic principles of quantitative research; 3) Apply basic principles of quantitative research to solve problems in clinical-community psychology.

PSYC 552 Qualitative Research Methods

This course will introduce the historical and philosophical foundation to qualitative research including specific theories, methods, practices, and interpretive skills within human science research. Proficiency in information literacy and research is expected. Qualitative research will be compared and contrasted

to natural science quantitative research. APA ethical guidelines for using human participants will be reviewed. The course will include original research: proposal, pilot study, field work (observations, participant observations), and interviews as well as analysis and scholarship. (3 credits; No prerequisite)

Objectives: 1) Define basic concepts in qualitative research; 2) Collect and organize qualitative data; 3) Analyze and interpret qualitative data using established methods of analysis established in the field of psychology.

PSYC 561 Social Psychology and Cultural Transformation

This course will ask how theories of social psychology may, as participatory action research, affect beneficial cultural transformations within communities. Socio-cultural therapeutics will be analyzed in-depth. Traditional foundations to social psychology will be comprehensively presented along with current and cutting edge perspectives in the field. (3 credits; Prerequisite: PSYC 503)

Objectives: 1) Define and describe basic concepts of social psychology; 2) Apply basic concepts of social psychology to case examples; 3) Apply basic concepts of social psychology to social and cultural issues.

PSYC 563 Program Development, Evaluation and Assessment

Practical skills will be learned regarding the creation and implementation of programs related to community building, health initiatives/services, and non-profit organizations. The course will include necessary knowledge of local and federal restrictions and support, coalitions, technical assistance and local community partnerships. Program evaluation and assessment skills will be taught. (3 credits; Prerequisites: PSYC 551 & 552)

Objectives: 1) Identify basic tools for strategic planning for program development; 2) Identify and define basic tools for the evaluation and assessment of programs; 3) Apply basic tools for evaluation and assessment of programs to solve common organizational problems.

PSYC 611 Marriage and Family Life

Historical and cross-cultural accounts of a diversity of families, marriages and couples will be explored using family systems theories generally and corresponding community relations. Students will be encouraged to form their own views on marriage and family that may include both traditional and nontraditional understanding and that fully supports the psychological health of couples and children. (3 credits; Prerequisite: PSYC 521)

Objectives: 1) Identify and describe various types of marriage and family structures across cultures and over history; 2) Describe and evaluate various approaches to family systems theory; 3) Explain how family systems can help explain human dysfunction.

PSYC 691 Thesis

One faculty member will chair the thesis, and at least one other faculty member will serve on the committee. Students will identify a regional community that appears to be in need of intervention, due to a high prevalence of antecedent social factors that are likely to increase or mediate mental illness and/or wellbeing. Based on a review of the research literature and assessment of the community,

students will design a plan for a community intervention that promises to improve the mental health and well-being of members of the identified at-risk community. (3 credits; Prerequisite: PSYC 563)

Objectives: 1) Apply assessment and evaluation tools to identify a problem in a community; 2) Complete an in-depth review of the literature on the identified problem; 3) Identify and recommend research-based clinical-community psychology interventions to resolve the problem.

PSYC 631 Ethical and Professional Issues in Psychology

This course will provide a detailed account of ethical issues that arise within clinical and research settings. Specific case examples will be studied and ethical issues will be role-played and scrutinized in class. The American Psychological Association's ethical standards as well as the Pennsylvania Psychological Association's ethical guidelines will be examined in depth.

Objectives: 1) Describe and critique professional codes of ethics in psychology; 2) Apply professional codes of ethics in psychology to case examples; 3) Evaluate the philosophical presuppositions of professional codes of ethics in psychology and other professions.

PSYC 642 Critical Theory in the Social Sciences

Students will define and evaluate major concepts in critical theory and apply the theories to social systems and social science. Students will identify major movements in the field of critical theory, such as the Frankfurt School and French post-structuralism, including major figures within these movements, such as Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Erich Fromm, Michel Foucault, and others. Critical theory within these traditions will be applied in critiques of ideological presuppositions and other biases in contemporary social and behavioral sciences.

Objectives: 1) Identify and define major movements in critical theory of the social sciences; 2) Identify major figures who influences major movements in critical theory of the social sciences; 3) Apply major concepts of critical theory to the critique of ideological and other biases in contemporary social science theory and methods.

PSYC 643 Dynamics of Social Systems

Systems theory will be defined and applied to the understanding of social systems and social change. An emphasis will be placed on phenomenological foundations for social systems theory. Students will evaluate various theories of social systems, and apply these theories to concrete examples and problems related to current issues in clinical-community psychology.

Objectives: 1) Identify and define major theoretical approaches to understanding social systems, including phenomenological approaches; 2) Evaluate the effectiveness of social systems theories for aiding in the resolution of real-world problems in communities; 3) Apply concepts of social systems theory to case examples of problems in communities.

PSYC 644 Psychology of Social Capital

This course will examine social networks and dynamics with an emphasis on the ways in which social capital (resources, organization, shared governances, and interpersonal power) is potentially shared through cooperation and mutual empowerment.

Objectives: 1) Define and evaluate various approaches to understanding social capital; 2) Describe contemporary research on the antecedents and consequences of enhanced social capital in communities; 3) Identify applications of the concept of social capital to case examples of problems in communities.

PSYC 645 Empowerment Theory

This course will review empowerment theory and examine issues such as accountability, organizational freedoms, health initiatives training and general community well-being.

Objectives: 1) Define and evaluate various approaches to understanding the construct of empowerment; 2) Describe contemporary research on the antecedents and consequences of empowerment on personal and community functioning; 2) Identify applications of the concept of empowerment theory to case examples of problems in communities.

PSYC 646 Psychology of Religion and Spirituality

This course will explore the relationships between religion and spirituality and individual and community well-being. The psychological life of religiosity and spirituality will be examined, including various forms of religious and spiritual beliefs, rituals and practices.

Objectives: 1) Define and compare various definitions of religion and spirituality within the field of psychology; 2) Describe research findings identifying psychological antecedents, consequences and correlates of religiousness and spirituality; 3) Evaluate theories about the role of religion and spirituality in psychological health, well-being, and psychopathology.

PSYC 647 Psychology of Sex and Gender

This course will offer understanding and descriptive accounts of sexual diversity and preferences, gender and transgendered distinctions and the relation of these choices and identities (self-identification) with clinical-community practices and research.

Objectives: 1) Evaluate various definitions of sex, sexuality and gender in the field of psychology; 2) Critique assumptions about sex and gender in behavioral and social science; 3) Outline theories of sex and identity development and their relevance to personal and community functioning.

PSYC 648 Psychology of Human Diversity

Human diversity in all forms will be explored in relation to community building. Theories of diversity will be identified, described and applied to understand and solve social problems of contemporary relevance. The course will examine the role impact of diverse social identities, including racial, ethnic, sexual, gender and other categories of social identity, and seek to understand the role of these identities in the development of mental and physical health and well-being.

Objectives: 1) Define the concept of diversity from various theoretical and critical perspectives in psychology and the social sciences; 2) Identify various challenges to community building within diverse communities; 3) Identify antecedents, consequences and correlates of diverse human identities on mental health and well-being.

PSYC 649 Psychology of Emotion and Motivation

Emotion and motivation will be examined through various theoretical perspectives, including evolutionary, cognitive-behavioral, neuro-cognitive, psychodynamic, and phenomenological perspectives. Emphasis will be placed on emotion and motivation in the context of family and interpersonal dynamics.

Objectives: 1) Describe major theoretical approaches to emotion and motivation; 2) Describe methods of research on emotion and motivation; 3) Apply theories of emotion and motivation to problems within families, communities, and other interpersonal relationships.