

SUICIDOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH, doctoral study programme, third Bologna cycle

Compulsory and elective course descriptions

COMPULSORY COURSES

Course name: **MENTAL HEALTH**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The course will comprehensively address the basic theories and findings in the fields of mental health:

- a history of studying mental health;
- understanding the diagnostics of mental disorders
- basic concepts of mental health;
- psychological, biological, sociological, cultural, religious, phenomenological, psychiatric, psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic aspects of mental health;
- risk factors and protective factors;
- prevention and interventions.

Course name: **ETHICS IN RESEARCH**

Number of ECTS credits: **6**

Content:

The course will comprehensively cover the contents of the field of ethics in research and the ethics of profession:

- Introduction to ethics and research ethics. An overview of theories and methods in ethics and research ethics.
- Codes of professional ethics.
- Data handling.
- Good research practice and research integrity (criteria and principles of good research practice, significance of infringements, infringement procedures, infringement prevention and sanctions).
- Responsibility for the research and the results and for consequences of the research (limits of responsibility and risk).
- Ethical verification of research (methods of verifying the ethics of research, procedures and ethical principles).

Course name: **INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH WORK 1**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The course will include preparation of a PhD proposal:

- defining the topic of the PhD dissertation
- selecting the research problem
- developing research hypotheses
- inspecting relevant literature
- obtaining an overview of the research in the field of interest
- identifying research gaps

- developing a research plan
- determining research methodology

Course name: **ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 1**

Number of ECTS credits: **6**

Content:

- Descriptive statistics, graphical representation of data.
- Probability concepts.
- The concept of statistical model, parameters, parameter estimation.
- Linear regression.
- Hypothesis testing.
- Measurement in psychology: classical testing theory, facet theory, item response theory.
- Analysis of experimental, quasi-experimental and correlation data: multi-factor designs, designs with small number of participants, effect size and power of the test, meta-analysis.
- Modeling in psychology: general properties of (linear) models, interaction, moderation, analysis of categorical and other non-metric data.

Course name: **ADVANCED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 2**

Number of ECTS credits: **6**

Content:

The course will cover the field of qualitative research and qualitative or narrative methods in an integrated manner:

- fundamentals of qualitative research (what does qualitative research entail, advantages and disadvantages of such research, comparison with quantitative research),
- methodological principles of qualitative research,
- planning of qualitative research;
- types and methods of collecting qualitative data;
- analytical approaches: Discourse analysis, narrative analysis, grounded theory, descriptive phenomenological method, interpretive-phenomenological analysis.
- material analysis: video methods, interview analysis, action research with participation, portraiture, ethnographic methods
- evaluation of qualitative approaches (validity, reliability),
- ethical aspects of qualitative research.

Course name: **SCIENTIFIC WRITING AND PRESENTATION**

Number of ECTS credits: **6**

Content:

The student will review and practice key skills in scientific writing and presentation:

- Reporting scientific results
- Structuring scientific writing
- Oral presentations of scientific results
- Presenting science to non-scientific audiences
- Argument and persuasive writing
- Proposal writing
- Poster presentation
- Role of graphics and visualization

Course name: **SEMINAR 1**
Number of ECTS credits: **6**

Content:

The course will include presentations of PhD proposal:

- oral presentation of the draft of student's PhD proposal
- Written presentation of the draft of student's PhD proposal
- active participation of students as listeners of presentations of their colleagues

Course name: **SUICIDOLOGY**
Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The course will comprehensively address the basic theories and findings in the fields of suicidology :

- a history of studying suicidal behavior;
- nomenclature of the field;
- epidemiological picture of the field;
- psychological, biological, sociological, cultural, religious, phenomenological, medical/psychiatric, psychoanalytic and psychotherapeutic aspects of suicide
- basic theories and models of suicidal behavior;
- risk factors and protective factors;
- prevention and interventions.

Course name: **INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH WORK 2**
Number of ECTS credits: **15**

Content:

The course will include the preparation of a PhD dissertation and preparation of scientific publications:

- carrying out research for the PhD dissertation
- preparation of a review article or meta-analysis
- preparation of an empirical scientific article

Course name: **SEMINAR 2**
Number of ECTS credits: **15**

Content:

The course will include presentations of students' scientific articles:

- written and oral presentation of the student's PhD proposal
- oral presentation of a draft scientific review article or meta-analysis
- oral presentation of a draft empirical scientific paper
- written presentation of drafts of both articles

Course name: **INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH WORK – PREPARATION OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION**
Number of ECTS credits: **45**

Content:

The course will include the preparation of a PhD dissertation in line with the standards of scientific writing in psychology.

Course name: **SEMINAR 3**

Number of ECTS credits: **15**

Content:

The course will include presentations of students' draft of PhD dissertations:

- oral presentation of the PhD dissertation draft
- written presentation of the PhD dissertation draft

ELECTIVE COURSES

Course name: **MENTAL DISORDERS – SELECTED TOPICS**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The subject will cover specific content in the area of mental disorders:

- Harmful alcohol consumption and Alcohol addiction
- Addiction to psychoactive substances and suicide risk
- Depression, bipolar disorder
- Late onset depression
- Schizophrenia, acute and persistent delusional disorders
- Personality disorders
- Organic mental disorders: neurological disorders associated with depression and increased suicidality (Parkinson's disease, vascular brain disease...)
- Chronic pain and depression
- Sleep disorders

Course name: **MENTAL HEALTH AND NEW TECHNOLOGIES**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

Classical and modern research topics in the field of mental health-related computing. Possible topics include:

- Social media, personality, and personality disorders
- Sensing personality from digital traces (e.g. social media)
- Sensing psychopathology (dark triad/tetrad) from social media
- Mental health as emotional well-being
- Emotion theories: psychology, cognitive science and neuroscience;
- Emotional design: frameworks (e.g., visceral, behavioural, reflective design)
- Processing, Recognition and Evaluation of emotions: applying machine learning techniques;
- Applications: clinical and biomedical studies, e.g., autism, depression, pain; etc.; implicit (multimedia) tagging; affective wearables);
- Affect and expression synthesis and generation (virtual characters, robots, etc.);
- Hands-on programming work with libraries relevant for affective and behavioural computing;
- Evaluation: automatic analysers, and emotionally and socially intelligent systems;
- Privacy, trust in social media
- Ethical issues and open challenges

Course name: **MENTAL HEALTH / SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR AND GENDER**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The course will address the specifics of gender-related suicidal behaviour and mental health:

- differences in the prevalence of mental illness and suicidal behaviour between the sexes
- the biological basis of differences in mental health and suicidal behaviour between the sexes
- cultural factors influencing differences in mental health and suicidal behaviour between the sexes
- changing the roles of men and women throughout history and the link to mental health and suicidal behaviour
- gender-specific strategies to prevent suicidal behaviour and improve mental health
- sexual minorities (LGBTIQ) and the association of such identifications with mental health and suicidal behaviour

Course name: **GENETICS AND NEUROBIOLOGY IN SUICIDOLOGY / MENTAL HEALTH**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

- DNA and RNA structure
- Detailed knowledge of genome structure and organization
- Detailed processes of duplication, transcription, translation
- Protein structure
- Gene expression in eukaryotes, regulation of expression
- Changes in the nucleotide sequence: genetic, chromosomal, genomic changes
- Epigenetic mechanisms: DNA methylation, chromatin changes, non-coding RNA
- The Human Genome Project
- Experimental methods of molecular biology
- Genetic changes in suicidology / mental health
- Epigenetic mechanisms in suicidology / mental health
- Neurotransmitters and suicidal behavior

Course name: **HUMANISTIC PERSPECTIVES ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The course focuses on two broader thematic assemblies, the problem of mental health as presented from various humanistic perspectives and on suicide as a philosophical problem. The following contents are highlighted and discussed in more detail:

- Mental health (and especially the absence of mental health) as a specific problem of Western society in the period from the Enlightenment to the present time (M. Foucault contributes to the understanding of this problem mainly with his "archaeological" discussion of the "history of madness", which largely follows Descartes' concept of *cogita*);
- the social construction of mental illness and its consequences (from the social construction of hysteria in the 19th century and the treatment of "hysterics" in the Parisian institution la Salpêtrière under the direction of J.-M. Charcot to the problems of the 21st century);
- the problem of the nature and essence of the man and the understanding of models involving evil, destruction and the propensity to death (from Plotin's and Augustine's evil as the absence of good to Freud's destructive drive as the death drive);
- Existentialism - a philosophical view that perceives the man as a *tubit*, a creature "thrown into the world", which is an alien and non-domestic environment for the man, in which death raises one of the central problems of meaning and in which suicide manifests itself as a fundamental philosophical problem (J.-P.Sartre, S. Beauvoir, A. Camus, K. Jaspers, M. Heidegger).

Course name: **HUMAN – COMPUTER INTERACTION AND MENTAL HEALTH**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

Classical and modern research topics in the field of human-computer interaction and their relation to mental health. Possible topics include among others:

- Mental models
- Advanced adaptive techniques for modeling user behaviour
- User experience
- Task load and stress
- Factors of immersion
- Embodied Conversational Agents
- Designing for and with People Living with Challenging Circumstances
- Inclusive Design
- The Quantified Self
- Persuasive technologies (changing behaviour)
- Advanced user based evaluation of the system or product using biofeedback.

The above-mentioned topics are the basis for understanding the approaches to the use of technology for the purposes of application in the field of e-mental health. All topics will also be considered in the light of e-mental health through the literature and the latest findings in this field.

Course name: **PUBLIC HEALTH ASPECTS OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR / MENTAL HEALTH**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The content of the course will include:

- Introduction to public health interventions,
- different levels of interventions in the field of public mental health and suicidology (promotion and USI differentiation),
- strengths, limitations and drawbacks of different interventions in the field of public mental health and suicidology,
- the importance of multidisciplinary approach to public mental health and suicidology,
- specifics of interventions in the field,
- planning, implementation, evaluation of public mental health and suicide prevention intervention, presentation of case studies,
- introduction to legislation applicable to the field.

Course name: **CULTURAL ASPECT OF SUICIDE / MENTAL HEALTH**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The course will cover specific topics in the field of cultural aspects of suicidal behaviour and mental health:

- the importance of culture in the field of suicidology and mental health
- the effects of culture on suicidal behaviour and mental health
- specifics of the fields of suicidology and mental health by individual cultures
- intercultural similarities and differences in suicidal behaviour and mental health
- the connection of culture with other factors of suicidal behaviour and mental health
- intercultural similarities and differences in prevention activities and interventions

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Course name: **DEVELOPMENTAL PERSPECTIVE ON MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The course will address the specifics of suicidal behaviour and mental health in different developmental stages of the individual:

- mental health and suicidal behaviour of children and adolescents (prevalence, specific risk factors, preventive strategies for young people)
- mental health and suicidal behaviour of adults (prevalence, work environment factors, negative life events and other risk factors, seeking help, preventive activities)
- mental health and suicidal behaviour of the elderly (prevalence, loneliness, physical illness, dementia and other risk factors, retirement, loss and other adverse events)

Course name: **SUICIDOLOGY AND MEDIA**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The course will incorporate contents regarding media reporting in the field of suicidology:

- a review of the basic theoretical starting points of media reporting on suicide
- a review of existing traditional and online forms of media reporting
- identifying and comparing various media guidelines for responsible reporting on suicide that have been developed in various countries
- recommendations for the guidelines development and the preparation of media publications
- effects and consequences concerning (in)appropriate media reporting on suicide
- advanced knowledge of the social media effects in the field of suicidology

Course name: **THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES AND TREATMENT – SELECTED TOPICS**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The content of the course includes various aspects of therapeutic treatment and approaches to deal with suicidal behaviour and related mental health problems:

- links between mental disorders and suicidal behaviour
- suicide risk assessment (theoretical guidelines for obtaining information in suicide risk assessment)
- strategies and techniques of crisis interventions (theoretical background for recognizing suicidal behaviour; review of crisis interventions)
- specific therapeutic approaches and techniques derived from fundamental theoretical models (psychoanalytic, cognitive-behavioural, humanistic-existential, systemic, integrative) that are related to the treatment for suicidal behaviour
- research on psychotherapeutic approaches and common factors of this approaches in
- psychotherapy therapeutic relationship and working alliance in working with suicidal patients
- fundamentals of psychotherapeutic methods: empathy, attunement, inquiry, involvement, affect regulation, mindful awareness, compassion.
- supervision and self-care.

Course name: **BEREAVEMENT AND POSTVENTION**

Number of ECTS credits: **12**

Content:

The course will include the contents from the areas of the bereavement and postvention:

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- modern theories of bereavement
- effects of bereavement on health
- specifics of bereavement regarding various losses
- specifics of bereavement regarding gender
- bereavement in different developmental periods
- posttraumatic growth
- model of reintegration after a suicide
- support for bereavement (characteristics of different forms of support)
- bereavement in different environments