City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Social & Behavioural Sciences
with effect from Semester A 2024/25

Part I   Course Overview

Course Title: Applying Psychology to Contemporary Issues

Course Code: SS5755

Course Duration: One Semester

Credit Units: 3

Level: P5

Medium of Instruction: English

Medium of Assessment: English

Prerequisites: MSSPSY Students : NIL
(Course Code and Title)   Non-MSSPSY Students: SS1101 Basic Psychology or its equivalent

Precursors:
(Course Code and Title)   Nil

Equivalent Courses:
(Course Code and Title)   Nil

Exclusive Courses:
(Course Code and Title)   Nil

Part II   Course Details

1.   Abstract

This course aims at sensitizing students to how human problems are determined by the environments in which they function as well as by their own personal attributes. By doing so, it is hoped that students will have a better understanding of psychology's role in responding to social problems and how psychology can contribute toward social progress.

2.   Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs[#]	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	*A2*	*A3*
1.	Analyze the extent to which human sufferings are a product of individual deficiency as well as social malady	60%	✓	✓	✓
2.	Compare and contrast the roles played by psychologists when a problem is defined as existing within the individual or within a broader social context	10%	✓	✓	
3.	Compare and contrast how psychology has responded to social issues or human suffering by working to change individuals versus by working to change their environments	30%	✓	✓	✓
		100%			

A1:   *Attitude*
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2:   *Ability*
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.

A3:   *Accomplishments*
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)
(LTAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

LTA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3				
Lectures	The lectures will explain common psychological approaches and techniques for dealing with human problems and will discuss how such approaches were developed within mainstream psychology.	✓	✓	✓				
Audio-Visual Aids for Case Examples	Audio-visual aids will be used to illustrate both the complexity of the causes of human problems as case examples, and how different psychological approaches are applied to tackle them.	✓	✓	✓				
Small Group Discussions	Small group discussions will also be conducted to facilitate case analysis and apply psychological theories and knowledge in real life environment.	✓	✓	✓				

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)
(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.					Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3				
Continuous Assessment: __100__ %							
A Case Analysis	✓	✓	✓			10%	
Individual Term Paper	✓	✓	✓			50%	
Quiz	✓	✓	✓			40%	
Examination: __0__ % (duration: , if applicable)							
						100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Adequate (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. A Case Analysis	Successful identification of the key issues of the given case. Innovative application in analysis the case in terms of relevant psychological theories	Sensitive location of a relevant article, clear explanation of methods and findings, and insightful application to the analysis of the child/adolescent.	Sensitive location of a relevant article, clear explanation of methods and findings, and descriptive application to the case of the child/adolescent.	Sensitive location of a relevant article, sketchy explanation of methods and findings, and "vague" application to the case of the child/adolescent.	Does not show sensitive search for appropriate references, or inappropriate application of findings to the analysis of the child/adolescent (i.e., findings cited have no relevance to the case of the child/adolescent).	Assignment not completed (i.e., components missing).
2. Individual Term Paper	Critical analysis and evaluation of etiological factors in both intrapsychic and environmental dimension. Creative and integrative organization of the literature and evidence-based intervention and practices	These are papers which provide a well-organized, integrated review of the literature that speaks to the identified topic. The paper links empirical findings sensibly and creatively with an individual's actual life experiences. A sensible and critical assessment of the literature should also be evident	These are papers which provide a good overview of the literature (both intrapsychic and environmental factors), but without much organization and integration to produce a coherent scientific story about an individual with the specified problem. There was some critical assessment of the literature but not enough "depth."	These are papers which do not evidence going beyond the current learning materials and do not apply any theoretical model to analyze the selected topic. Writing is generally descriptive and summative. Evaluation of the literature is minimal, if existing.	These are papers which do not go beyond the current learning materials, and do not apply any theoretical model to analyze the selected topic. The ideas are not presented coherently. The writing is generally poor, though comprehensible with effort.	Fails to address the objectives of the assignment (eg, covering only the intrapsychic factors, and environmental factors are left out totally).
3. Quiz	Accuracy in applying psychological concepts and knowledge	Excellent command Of psychological knowledge with >75% of accuracy	Good command of psychological knowledge with accuracy between 60-74%	Adequate command of psychological knowledge with accuracy between 45-59%	Marginal command of mastery of psychological knowledge with accuracy between 40-44%	Fail to demonstrate a basic mastery of psychological knowledge at an accuracy level <40%

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
1. A Case analysis (10%)	Successful identification of the key issues of the given case. Innovative application in analysis the case in terms of relevant psychological theories	Sensitive location of a relevant article, clear explanation of methods and findings, and insightful application to the analysis of the child/adolescent.	Sensitive location of a relevant article, clear explanation of methods and findings, and descriptive application to the case of the child/adolescent.	Does not show sensitive search for appropriate references, or inappropriate application of findings to the analysis of the child/adolescent (i.e., findings cited have no relevance to the case of the child/adolescent).	Assignment not completed (i.e., components missing).
2. Individual Term Paper (50%)	Critical analysis and evaluation of etiological factors in both intrapsychic and environmental dimension Creative and integrative organization of the literature and evidence-based intervention and practices	These are papers which provide a well-organized, integrated review of the literature that speaks to the identified topic. The paper links empirical findings sensibly and creatively with an individual's actual life experiences. A sensible and critical assessment of the literature should also be evident	These are papers which provide a good overview of the literature (both intrapsychic and environmental factors), but without much organization and integration to produce a coherent scientific story about an individual with the specified problem. There was some critical assessment of the literature but not enough "depth."	These are papers which do not go beyond the current learning materials, and do not apply any theoretical model to analyze the selected topic. Writing is generally descriptive and summative. The ideas are not presented coherently. The writing is generally poor, though comprehensible with effort.	Fails to address the objectives of the assignment (eg, covering only the intrapsychic factors, and environmental factors are left out totally).
3. Quiz (40%)	Accuracy in applying psychological concepts and knowledge	Excellent command Of psychological knowledge with >75% of accuracy	Good command of psychological knowledge with accuracy between 50-74%	Marginal command of mastery of psychological knowledge with accuracy between 40-49%	Fail to demonstrate a basic mastery of psychological knowledge at an accuracy level <40%

1. **Keyword Syllabus**
   (An indication of the key topics of the course.)

   Historical development of psychological services; orientations of psychological interventions; concept of mental illness and psychological assessment; overview of evidence-based practices; overview of psychotherapy systems; social ecology; resilience; psychological programs to enhance individual development through modifying the environment; mutual assistance groups.

2. **Reading List**
2.1 **Compulsory Readings**
   (Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (7th ed.)*. American Psychological Association.
2.	Bronfenbrenner, U. (1995). Developmental ecology through space and time: A future perspective. In P. Moen, G. H., Jr. Elder, & K. Lüscher, (Ed). *Examining lives in context: Perspectives on the ecology of human development* (pp. 619-647). American Psychological Association.
3.	Compas, B. E., & Gotlib, I. H. (2002). *Introduction to clinical psychology: Science & practice*. McGraw-Hill.
4.	Weisz, J. R., & Kazdin, A. E. (Eds.) (2010). *Evidence-based psychotherapies for children and adolescents (2nd ed.)*. The Guilford Press.
5.	Monroe, S. M., & Simons, A. D. (1991). Diathesis-stress theories in the context of life stress research: Implications for the depressive disorders. *Psychological Bulletin, 110* (3), 406-425.
6.	Tebes, J. K. (2017). Foundations for a philosophy of science of community psychology: Pragmatism, feminism, and critical theory. In M. A. Bond, I. Serrano-Garcia, & C. B. Keys (Eds.) *APA handbook of community psychology: Vol. 2 – Methods for community research and action for diverse groups and issues* (pp. 21-40). American Psychological Association.

2.2 **Additional Readings**
   (Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Au, A., Lai, M. K., Lau, K. M., Pan, P. C., Lam, L., & Thompson, L. (2009). Social support and well-being in dementia family caregivers: The mediating role of self-efficacy. *Aging & Mental Health, 13*(5), 761-768. https://doi.org/10.1080/13607860902918223
2.	Bauer, J. J., McAdams, D. P., & Sakaeda, A. R. (2005). Interpreting the good life: Growth memories in the lives of mature, happy people. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 88*(1), 203-217. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.88.1.203
3.	Charles, S. T. (2010). Strength and vulnerability integration: A model of emotional well-being across adulthood. *Psychological Bulletin, 136*(6), 1068-1091. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0021232
4.	Cheung, K. S.-L., Lau, B. H.-P., Wong, P. W.-C., Leung, A. Y.-M., Lou, V. W. Q., Chan, G. M.-Y., & Schulz, R. (2015). Multicomponent intervention on enhancing dementia caregiver well-being and reducing behavioral problems among Hong Kong Chinese: A translational study based on REACH II. *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, 30*(5), 460-469. https://doi.org/10.1002/gps.4160
5.	Chiu, Y. C., Shyu, Y., Liang, J., & Huang, H. L. (2008). Measure of quality of life for Taiwanese persons with early to moderate dementia and related factors.

	International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, 23, 580-585. https://doi.org/10.1002/gps.1938
6.	Chung, K. K. H., Ho, C. S. H., Chan, D. W., Tsang, S. M., & Lee, S. H. (2010). Cognitive profiles of Chinese adolescents with dyslexia. *Dyslexia, 16*(1), 2-23. https://doi.org/10.1002/dys.392
7.	Conner, K., Duberstein, P., Conwell, Y., Seidlitz, L., & Caine, E. (2001). Psychological vulnerability to completed suicide: A review of empirical studies. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior, 31*, 367–385. https://doi.org/10.1521/suli.31.4.367.22048
8.	Crowell, J. A., Treboux, D., & Brockmeyer, S. (2009). Parental divorce and adult children's attachment representations and marital status. *Attachment & Human Development, 11* (1), 87–101. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616730802500867
9.	Cudjoe, E., & Chiu, M. Y. L. (2020). What do children know about their parent's mental illness? A systematic review of international literature on children in families with mental illness. *Children and Youth Services Review, 119*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2020.105638
10.	Hoffman, K.T., Marvin, R. S., Cooper, G., & Powell, B. (2006). Changing Toddlers' and Preschoolers' Attachment Classifications: The Circle of Security Intervention. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 74*(6), 1017–1026. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.74.6.1017
11.	Jamison, K. R. (1996). *An unquiet mind: A memoir of moods and madness*. Picador.
12.	Lai Kwok, S. Y. C., & Shek, D. T. L. (2010). Hopelessness, parent-adolescent communication, and suicidal ideation among Chinese adolescents in Hong Kong. *Suicide & Life-Threatening Behavior, 40* (3), 224-233. https://doi.org/10.1521/suli.2010.40.3.224
13.	Lee, H. P., Chae, P. K., Lee, H. S., & Kim, Y. K. (2007). The five-factor gambling motivation model. *Psychiatry Research, 150*(1), 21-32. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2006.04.005
14.	Lee, I. (2010). *Tony: Blessings from a special needs child*. Red Corporation Limited.
15.	Lee, S., Ng, K. L., Kwok, K., & Fung, C. (2010). The changing profile of eating disorders at a tertiary psychiatric clinic in Hong Kong (1987-2007). *International Journal of Eating Disorders, 43*(4), 307-314.
16.	Legenbauer, T., Kleinstäuber, M, Müller, T., & Stangier, U. (2008). Are individuals with an eating disorder less sensitive to aesthetic flaws than healthy controls? Journal of Psychosomatic Research, 65(1), 87-95. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychores.2008.02.014
17.	Leung, S. F., Ma, J., & Russell, J. (2013). Enhancing motivation to change in eating disorders with an online self-help program. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing, 22*(4), 329-339. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1447-0349.2012.00870.x
18.	Li, D., Zhang, W., Li, X., Zhen, S., & Wang, Y. (2010). Stressful life events and problematic internet use by adolescent females and males: A mediated moderation model. *Computers in Human Behavior, 26*(5), 1199-1207. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2010.03.031
19.	Lu, X., Watanabe, J., Liu, Q. B., Uji, M., Shono, M., Toshinori, K. (2011). Internet and mobile phone text-messaging dependency: Factor structure and correlation with dysphoric mood among Japanese adults. *Computers in Human Behavior, 27*(5), 1702-1709. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2011.02.009
20.	Mersky, J. P., Topitzes, J. (2010). Comparing early adult outcomes of maltreated and non-maltreated children: A prospective longitudinal investigation. *Children and Youth Services Review, 32*(8), 1086-1096. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2009.10.018
21.	Nelson, D. L., Simmons, B. L., Quick, J. & Tetrick, L. (2003). Health psychology and work stress: A more positive approach. In J. C., Quick & L. E. Tetrick (Eds.), *Handbook of occupational health psychology* (pp.97-119). American

	Psychological Association.
22.	Oei, T. P., Lin, J., & Raylu, N. (2008). The relationship between gambling cognitions, psychological states, and gambling: A cross-cultural study of Chinese, Caucasians in Australia. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 39*, 147-161. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022107312587
23.	Oei, T. P. S, Raylu, N., & Lai, W. W. (2018). Effectiveness of a self help cognitive behavioural treatment program for problem gamblers: A randomised controlled trial. *Journal of Gambling Studies, 34*(2), 581-595. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10899-017-9723-1
24.	Poon, K. W., Li-Tsang, C. W. P., Weiss, T. P. L., & Rosenblum, S. (2010). The effect of a computerized visual perception and visual-motor integration training program on improving Chinese handwriting of children with handwriting difficulties. *Research in Developmental Disabilities, 31*(6), 1552-1560. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ridd.2010.06.001
25.	Rahl, H. A., Lindsay, E. K., Pacilio, L. E., Brown, K. B., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). Brief mindfulness meditation training reduces mind wandering: The critical role of acceptance. *Emotion, 17*(2), 224–230. https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0000250
26.	Siu, O. L., Cooper, C. L., & Phillips, D. R. (2014). Intervention studies on enhancing work well-being, reducing burnout, and improving recovery experiences among Hong Kong health care workers and teachers. *International Journal of Stress Management, 21*(1), 69-84. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033291
27.	Tam, I. O. L., & Leung, C. (2019). Evaluation of the effectiveness of a literacy intervention programme on enhancing learning outcomes for secondary students with dyslexia in Hong Kong. *Dyslexia, 25*(3), 296-317. https://doi.org/10.1002/dys.1626
28.	Tandon, R., Keshavan, M. S., & Nasrallah, H. A. (2008). Schizophrenia, "Just the facts" what we know in 2008: Epidemiology and etiology. *Schizophrenia Research, 102*(1), 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.schres.2008.04.011
29.	Tsang, H. W. H., Fung, K. M. T., & Chung, R. C. K. (2010). Self-stigma and stages of change as predictors of treatment adherence of individuals with schizophrenia. *Psychiatry Research, 180*(1), 10-15. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2009.09.001
30.	Van Orden, K.A., Witte, T.K., Cukrowicz, K. C., Braithwaites, S. R., Selby, E. A., & Joiner, T. E. (2010). The interpersonal theory of suicide. *Psychological Review, 117(2)*, 575-600. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0018697
31.	Wei, L., Zhang, S.-Y., Turel, O., Bechara, A., & He, Q.-H. (2017). A tripartite neurocognitive model of Internet Gaming Disorder. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyt.2017.00285
32.	Zhang, C.-Q., Zhang, R., Lu, Y., Liu, H., Kong, S., Baker, J. S., & Zhang, H. (2021). Occupational stressors, mental health, and sleep difficulty among nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic: The mediating roles of cognitive fusion and cognitive reappraisal. Journal of Contextual Behavioral Science, 19, 64-71. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcbs.2020.12.004
33.	郭飛瑩 (2009). 《我復悠然：一個精神病患者的新生》香港：新生精神康復會。 Kwok, C. (2009). *A recovery story: A new birth of an individual with mental illness*. New Life Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association.