



PS360 TRANSCULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY: CLINICAL AND DIAGNOSTIC CHALLENGES IN THE ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT OF CULTURALLY DIVERSE PATIENTS

IES Abroad Milan

DESCRIPTION:

The course will analyze the field of Transcultural Psychology referring to fundamental theories as well as outcomes from the most relevant contemporary studies and clinical applications. Students will be involved in a unique process of learning and will be guided through making the most out of their present transcultural experience in Milan by exploring and acknowledging their current perspective as international students. The course is divided into different areas, covering notions of Transcultural Psychology Theories, Assessment and Diagnostic Approaches to culturally diverse patients with particular attention to Adjustment Disorders, Culture Competence and Sensitivity to be implemented in multicultural settings in a respectful yet clinically effective modality. Integrated therapeutic and innovative rehabilitative models and approaches beyond language barriers, such as Animal Assisted Interventions approved by the Italian Ministry of Health will be presented and discussed.

CREDITS: 3 credits

CONTACT HOURS: 45

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION: English

PREREQUISITES: None

METHOD OF PRESENTATION:

Lectures and discussions, Course-related trips, Critical analysis of assigned readings, Lectures with international guest speakers.

REQUIRED WORK AND FORM OF ASSESSMENT:

- Course Participation - 20%
- Midterm Exam - 20%
- Home Assignment - 30%
- Final Exam - 30%

Course Participation

Students are expected to keep up with class readings and to complete written assignments by due date. Participation in class discussions is also a crucial element for a positive course evaluation.

Midterm Exam

It will comprise 4 open questions, each accounting for 25 points. The mid-term exam will cover all topics presented and discussed in class up until that point. After completion of the exam, students will receive information on their grade breakdown and (on request) can discuss it with their instructor/s

Home Assignment

Students are required to work in sub-groups of 4-5 people each. Each group will select a topic of its choice among the topics presented in class or relevant to the field of Transcultural Psychology from an interdisciplinary perspective. Students are recommended to communicate the topic of their choice to the Instructors **two weeks** before presenting their work in class at the latest. Each group will be assigned 10 minutes to show their Power Point presentation in class followed by 5 minutes for Q&A.

Final Exam

Like the Midterm Exam, it will comprise 4 open questions, each accounting for 25 points. It will cover the material presented and discussed in class in the period from Midterm Exam to the end of the course.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- master the essential theories required to develop a background for different applications of the transcultural approach in various scenarios of psychological work. Focus will be placed on the process of acculturation, experience of change and theories of adjustment, Adjustment Disorder and the relationship between culture and psychopathology;
- explore and apply the cultural dimension of psychological distress in a multicultural as well as domestic patient population, through an in-depth analysis of the DSM 5 Cultural Formulation (APA). Students will learn how to include this evaluation in the diagnostic process, through the analysis of different clinical cases.
- develop critical thinking through the exposure to different experiences (such as field studies and guest speakers) which will enable them to get a better understanding of the applications of the transcultural approach to mental health care and clinical psychology. Focus will also be placed on the development of a transcultural competent and sensitive clinical setting
- learn novel and evidence-based therapeutic approaches to multicultural patients such as Animal Assisted Interventions: an innovative tool aimed at overcoming linguistic barriers and physical and psychological disability.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students of IES Abroad Milan are expected to be responsible for their own class attendance and to give academic responsibilities priority over other activities. Regular class attendance is mandatory. For physical and mental health reasons, IES Abroad Milano allows a maximum of THREE (3) absences in each Italian language course, TWO (2) absences in each Area Studies course, and ONE (1) absence in each Seminar course. Every absence beyond this allowance will automatically result in a penalty of 2 percentage points off the final grade. SEVEN (7) absences will result in a failing grade in Italian language and Area Studies courses. FOUR (4) absences will result in a failing grade in Seminar courses. Failure to attend a scheduled exam, test, quiz, or presentation will automatically result in an F grade on that assessment.

CONTENT:

Session	Content	Resources and Reading Materials
Session 1	Introduction to the course • Overview of the topics • Scope and objectives of Transcultural Psychology	• Glossary Terms in Psychiatry (adapted from DSM 5, American Psychiatric Association)
Session 2	The adjective “trans-cultural” • What does it mean? • The multifaceted concept of culture	• Anheier H, Cultures, Values, and Identities: What Are the Issues?, Global Perspectives, 2020
Session 3	Culture acquisition • How do we acquire a culture?	• Varnum, Michael E. W., PhD, and Ryan S. Hampton. “Cultural Changes in Neural Structure and Function.” PsyArXiv, 27 July 2018. Web.
Session 4	Culture and Mental Health • Clinical objectives of Transcultural Psychology	• Kirmayer, L. “Phenomenology of Psychiatric Disorders” – video interview: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIEdu2yqQA8

Session	Content	Resources and Reading Materials
Session 5	Acculturation and Clinical risks The Intercultural Sensitivity Development	Brooks L. et al, Culturally sensitive communication in healthcare: a concept analysis, Collegian, 2019
Session 6	Two Paradigms in Transcultural Psychology - The psychosocial approach - The Identity	Biella-Battista R. et al., "The psychosocial Dimension", chapter from "Handbook on the Reintegration of Returning Migrants", 2019, IOM
Session 7	Clinical Case Study - Presentation of the Patient's History - Presentation of the clinical case - In-class discussion - Diagnosis and Treatment Options	Instructor's clinical material Trigger warnings will be given prior to the presentation of the clinical case
Session 8	Culture Shock and Adjustment Disorders - Description - Differential Diagnosis - Treatment options	- Maercker A. et al Adjustment Disorder as a Stress Response Syndrome: a New Diagnostic Concept and its Exploration in a Medical Sample, Psychopathology (2007); 40: 135-146 - Zaiontz C. et al Migration Fluxes and Adjustment Disorder: an examination of a native English-speaking population in Milan, 2012, <i>Journal of Social, Evolutionary and Cultural Psychology</i> - Zaiontz C. Sarkar A. Cultural Themes in Post Traumatic Adjustment (2014) Clinical Neuropsychiatry II (20-31). - Virupaksha HG, Kumar A, Nirmala BP. Migration and mental health: An interface. J Nat Sci Biol Med. 2014 Jul;5(2):233-9. doi: 10.4103/0976-9668.136141. PMID: 25097389; PMCID: PMC4121889.
Session 9	Guest Lecture - What is a migrant? What is a refugee? - Stress and Trauma in Migrant Population	- Kirmayer L, Narasiah L, Munoz M, Rashid M, Ryder AG, Guzder J, Hassan G, Rousseau C, Pottie K; Canadian Collaboration for Immigrant and Refugee Health (CCIRH). Common mental health problems in immigrants and refugees: general approach in primary care. CMAJ. 2011 Sep 6;183(12):E959-67. doi: 10.1503/cmaj.090292. - Mesa Viera C, et al. "Mental health of migrants with pre-migration exposure to armed conflict: a systematic review and meta-analysis", 2022, The Lancet

Session	Content	Resources and Reading Materials
Session 10	Review Lesson Review of the material covered during the first part of the course	
Session 11	Midterm Exam - It will comprise 4 open questions, each accounting for 25 points. - The Correction of the Exam will take place at the beginning of the next lesson Grading Rubric for the Exam: - Structure and Clarity of Presentation (10 points) - Content (Accuracy and Completeness of the Answer) (10 points) - Critical Thinking (5 points)	
Session 12	Cultural competence - Introduction to Cultural Competence - Cultural Formulation Interview	Kirmayer L., Rousseau C. et al, The cultural context of clinical assessment, Psychiatry, 2008, Third Ed., <i>John Wiley and Sons</i>
Session 13	Cultural competence The process of cultural consultation	Kirmayer L., Jarvis E. et al, The process of cultural consultation, Cultural Consultation: Encountering the Other in Mental Health Care, International and Cultural Psychology, Springer Science and Business Media, New York (2014)
Session 14	People in distress - Counselling people in need - Psychological First Aid (WHO)	- WHO/WTF – Field Manual of Psychological First Aid (open access): https://www.who.int/publications-detail-redirect/psychological-first-aid - Wang L, Norman I, Xiao T, Li Y, Leamy M. Psychological First Aid Training: A Scoping Review of Its Application, Outcomes and Implementation. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2021 Apr 26;18(9):4594. doi: 10.3390/ijerph18094594. PMID: 33926108; PMCID: PMC8123604.
Session 15	Assessment Tools - Cultural Formulation Interview - IPQ-R - McGill Illness Narrative Interview (MINI)	- McGill Illness Narrative Interview (MINI) - Illness Perception Questionnaire -Revised

Session	Content	Resources and Reading Materials
Session 16	Clinical Case Study - Presentation of the Patient's History - Presentation of the clinical case - In-class discussion - Diagnosis and Treatment Options	Instructor's clinical material Trigger warnings will be given prior to the presentation of the clinical
Session 17	Animal Assisted Therapy (1) • Theoretical Foundations and research-based approaches to Animal Assisted Interventions	• Brioni J. et al "Dog-assisted interventions and outcomes for older adults in residential long-term care facilities: A systematic review and meta-analysis", Int J Older People Nurs, 2020 • O'Haire M. at. "Animal-Assisted Intervention for trauma: a systematic literature review", Front Psychol, 2015
Session 18	Animal Assisted Therapy (2) • In-class demonstration of the application of Dog Assisted Intervention in the clinical setting	• Ambrosi C. et al. "Randomized controlled study on the effectiveness of animal-assisted therapy on depression, anxiety, and illness perception in institutionalized elderly", Psychogeriatrics, 2018
Session 19	Animal Assisted Therapy (3) • In-class demonstration of the application of Dog Assisted Interventions in the educational setting	Handlin L. et al. "Short-Term Interaction between Dogs and Their Owners: Effects on Oxytocin, Cortisol, Insulin and Heart Rate - An Exploratory Study", Anthrozoös, 2011 • Ang Chin-Sian., MacDougall F.A., An Evaluation of Animal Assisted Therapy for Autism Spectrum Disorders: Therapist and Parental Perspectives Psychol Stud 2022 67(1): 72-81
Session 20	Course-related trip Visit of Museum of Art "Paolo Pini", former Milan's Mental Asylum	
Session 21	In-class Presentation by Students	
Session 22	Review Lesson in preparation of the Final Exam • Review of the material covered during the first part of the course	

COURSE-RELATED TRIPS:

- Visit of the Museum of Art "Paolo Pini", former Mental Asylum of Milan

REQUIRED READINGS:

- Ambrosi C. et al. "Randomized controlled study on the effectiveness of animal-assisted therapy on depression, anxiety, and illness perception in institutionalized elderly", *Psychogeriatrics*, 2018
- Ang Chin-Sian., MacDougall F.A., An Evaluation of Animal Assisted Therapy for Autism Spectrum Disorders: Therapist and Parental Perspectives *Psychol Stud* 2022 67(1): 72-81
- Anheier H, Cultures, Values, and Identities: What Are the Issues? *Global Perspectives*, 2020
- Biella-Battista R. et al. Handbook on the Reintegration of Returning Migrants – Psychosocial Dimension – IOM, 2019
- Brioni J. et al "Dog-assisted interventions and outcomes for older adults in residential long-term care facilities: A systematic review and meta-analysis", *Int J Older People Nurs*, 2020
- Brooks L. et al, Culturally sensitive communication in healthcare: a concept analysis, *Collegian*, 2019
- Handlin L. et al. "Short-Term Interaction between Dogs and Their Owners: Effects on Oxytocin, Cortisol, Insulin and Heart Rate—An Exploratory Study", *Anthrozoös*, 2011
- Kirmayer L, Narasiah L, Munoz M, Rashid M, Ryder AG, Guzder J, Hassan G, Rousseau C, Pottie K; Canadian Collaboration for Immigrant and Refugee Health (CCIRH). Common mental health problems in immigrants and refugees: general approach in primary care. *CMAJ*. 2011 Sep
- Kirmayer L., Jarvis E. et al, The process of cultural consultation, *Cultural Consultation: Encountering the Other in Mental Health Care*, International and Cultural Psychology, Springer Science and Business Media, New York (2014).
- Kirmayer L., Rousseau C. et al, The cultural context of clinical assessment, *Psychiatry*, Third Ed., John Wiley and Sons (2008).
- Kirmayer, L. Phenomenology of Psychiatric Disorders - video Interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HIEdu2yqQA8>
- Maercker A. et al Adjustment Disorder as a Stress Response Syndrome: a New Diagnostic Concept and its Exploration in a Medical Sample, *Psychopathology* (2007); 40: 135-146.
- Mesa Viera C, et al. "Mental health of migrants with pre-migration exposure to armed conflict: a systematic review and meta-analysis", *The Lancet* 2022
- O'Haire M. at. "Animal-Assisted Intervention for trauma: a systematic literature review", *Front Psychol*, 2015
- Varnum, Michael E. W., PhD, and Ryan S. Hampton. "Cultural Changes in Neural Structure and Function." *PsyArXiv*, 27 July 2018. Web
- Virupaksha HG, Kumar A, Nirmala BP. Migration and mental health: An interface. *J Nat Sci Biol Med*. 2014 Jul;5(2):233-9. doi: 10.4103/0976-9668.136141. PMID: 25097389; PMCID: PMC4121889
- Wang L, Norman I, Xiao T, Li Y, Leamy M. Psychological First Aid Training: A Scoping Review of Its Application, Outcomes and Implementation. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2021 Apr 26;18(9):4594. doi: 10.3390/ijerph18094594. PMID: 33926108; PMCID: PMC8123604.
- WHO, WTF, Field Manual on Psychological First Aid, 2013, <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/psychological-first-aid>
- Zaiontz C. et al Migration Fluxes and Adjustment Disorder: an examination of a native English speaking population in Milan, *Journal of Social, Evolutionary and Cultural Psychology* (2012) 5(5).
- Zaiontz C. Sarkar A. Cultural Themes in Post Traumatic Adjustment (2014) *Clinical Neuropsychiatry II* (20-31).