Critical Social Psychology

Module description
This module introduces key concepts in critical psychology with the aim of equipping students with the knowledge and understanding required to think critically about mainstream psychological concepts.

A brief historical and contextual overview is given of where the discipline of critical psychology is situated within psychology as a whole. Focus is given to the application of critical ideas to contemporary psychological and socio-political issues. Critical ideas will be drawn from discursive approaches, feminist and racially/culturally aware approaches, as well as constructionist approaches.

Though constructivist research methods are not covered in great detail due to being included in other modules, an appreciation of how research is conducted in the field of critical psychology is also investigated.

This module aims to:

- Develop students’ ability to:
  - understand the key influences in critical social psychology
  - provide an explanation of where critical psychology fits within the paradigm of mainstream psychological scientific enquiry and the relationship these two approaches have with one another
  - understand the pivotal role of discourse as a construction and action through discourse analysis
  - apply the applications of critical ideas and deconstructions to a wide range of contemporary psychological and socio-political concepts
  - appreciate the key role of discourse as action in critical psychology research
  - use and apply critical ideas in understanding human behaviour

Learning outcomes
On completion of this module, students will be able to demonstrate:

- deconstruct mainstream social psychological ideas and dominant societal discourses using critical theory.
- apply critical theory to a range of contemporary issues, considering how these can be used to enable socio-political change.
- understand how their own use of language can be impactful as a construction of reality and be able to reflect on what this means as a psychologist.
- describe some of the controversies and ethical issues that emerge when considering critical and mainstream social psychology alongside one another.
- critically analyse a range of dominant discourses related to common marginalised or misunderstood groups as well as across a variety of cultures.

Syllabus

- Units 1 & 2: Historical and contextual foundations of critical psychology including a brief overview of Marxism, Feminist Psychology, Social Constructionism, Discursive Psychology, Critical Race Psychology, and Cultural Psychology
- Units 3 & 4: Critical perspectives applied to basic mainstream social psychology concepts e.g. prosocial behaviour, prejudice and discrimination, attitudes and attributions
- Units 5 - 10: Critical psychology approaches as applied to the following (with a particular focus on language and discourse):
  - unit 5: mental health and psychiatric treatment
  - unit 6: race
  - unit 7: gender
  - unit 8: disability
  - unit 9: sexualities
  - unit 10: power in society N.B The themes of power, inequality, marginalised/privileged/dominant discourses, run through all of the above.
- Units 11 & 12: Theoretical application of positive critical psychology ideas in different settings e.g.:
  - community psychology
  - health inclusivity
  - anti-oppressive practice in psychotherapy

Module code
CP_PPSY7E
NQF level
7
Credit value
20
Study duration
12 weeks

Online

Ready to apply?
Complete the online application form and an Admissions Adviser will be in touch to assist you in the enrolment process.
Critical Social Psychology

Learning and teaching methods

Teaching will be delivered through a series of units covering the topics specified in the syllabus with a focus on developing psychological knowledge and skills.

Students are directed in their learning to specified reading materials on the virtual learning platform linked to the core text and supported by selected extracts from other key texts, peer reviewed journal articles, and resources such as software and tools relevant to the module.

Students will engage with interactive lecturecasts that present them with new learning and provide formative assessment on their knowledge, understanding and skills.

Online peer discussion is encouraged through our internet-mediated learning platform where students receive feedback from tutors and peers to enhance their learning and understanding.

Regular online seminar/workshops/tutorials/interactive Q&A sessions are scheduled with the module tutor covering a variety of complementary topics and practical skills related to the course aims and objectives, including, but not limited to: actual course content; study skills e.g. critical analysis through journal article critique; specific skills such as using SPSS software for data analysis; and transferable skills such as developing presentation skills and delivering a presentation.

There will be at least one workshop focused on the student’s personal development planning and portfolio building, maintaining the emphasis on employability throughout the programme.

Tutor support will be available to students via phone, email, Zoom/Skype and synchronous seminar sessions, as required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of unit of assessment</th>
<th>Length/Duration</th>
<th>Submission date</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid module essay</td>
<td>3,000 words</td>
<td>Unit 4</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patchwork text assignment</td>
<td>3,000 words</td>
<td>Unit 12</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>