CYA Syllabus

PSY 352-1. Psychology in the post-pandemic era: Climate change anxiety, social media boundaries and other mental health challenges.

Semester or Session/ Year and Location(s): Spring Semester 2024, Athens

Course Instructor(s): Eleni Koukouna

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Class Times (days, hours): Monday and Wednesday 11am to 12.35pm

(Office) Hours Available: By appointment

Course Description
This course is an exploration of the current mental health trends in the post-pandemic era. We take an in-depth look at the most significant areas of psychological science that apply to real life. Examples of topics include inequality, climate change anxiety and boundaries with social media. We also address stigma surrounding mental health. Students have an opportunity to explore all the above through readings in the popular press but ultimately a scholarly, critical evaluation of the scientific literature serves as the foundation of our learning throughout the course. We learn about psychopathology and new modes of treatment, from mental health apps and tele-health to taking a holistic approach when treating mental health. Major goals of this course is 1. to critically examine psychological theories and processes 2. to apply them to your life and to real world events.

Course Approach
This course offers an evidence-based, student-centred approach that is filled with ideas and practices for maximising student learning and personal growth.
Lectures on course topics are designed to be as interactive as possible by combining different modes of learning. You will read, analyze and interpret book chapters, journal articles and films/videos. You will work and think with others and you will write. Below we describe our explicit goals for your engagement with each of these types of learning.
Reading: You will read articles from the popular press and scientific articles from published psychology journals.
Analyzing and interpreting: You will watch, analyze and interpret short videos and Ted talks.
Working and thinking with others: You will participate in small group discussions.
Writing and Recording: You will deliver written and audio work throughout the semester.
Presentations: You will present a journal article that relates to one of the topics discussed in the classroom up to that point.
Field Trips: Everyone is expected to attend the Field Trips.

Learning Objectives
There are three basic objectives in this course.
- Develop knowledge about the underlying psychological topics and the basic terms and concepts that come with them.
- Develop critical thinking skills and knowledge of psychological science that will help you become a more cautious and informed consumer of information. There is a great deal of controversy concerning many of the topics we will discuss and it is important that you learn to navigate arguments in ways that allow you to develop a coherent and well-based opinion of your own.
- Apply your psychological knowledge to improve your life and the lives of those around you.

Skills to develop when meeting the Learning Objectives
- Creativity
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Global Responsibility
- critical thinking

Course Requirements
Participation:
It is expected that students will come to class ready to actively and respectfully contribute to discussions of the topics listed on this syllabus and to abide by CYA academic policies while completing assignments. Students are also

encouraged to maintain active and open communication with me regarding any concerns or questions. Participation in field trips is also essential. In other words, this is not a class where you simply show up, pick a seat, and sit and listen passively. Rather, you can expect that on most days of the semester there will be multiple activities, requiring active engagement and participation among you and your fellow classmates. Expect to "learn by doing" in this course, and plan on being an active member of our class community.

Readings:
Book chapters, journal articles and websites are assigned in the weekly schedule list below. Some articles & websites might be assigned as we go along in order to keep up with the most recent developments in the field.

Home Assignments: You will be asked to complete three home assignments during the course.
1st Assignment. Write a one page (double-space) regarding zoom education.
Students need to prepare a two paragraphs reflection on how zoom education has affected their student performance and their sense of self.
2nd Assignment. Write an assignment of 300 words stating whether you agree or disagree with the statement below:

Although the use of AI in mental health training and treatment could increase in the next years, some experts say that technology is unlikely to replace traditional mental health services with human beings.

3rd Assignment:
Write a one page (double-space) reflection on how you think the overall content of this course can be applicable in your life.

Presentation:
Students are asked to prepare a brief verbal presentation in a PowerPoint format. The students will have the opportunity to present their presentations to the rest of the students.
In relation to the presentation try to:
- Use 10-12 slides.
- Use bullets to manage the material presented on the slide and pay attention to the quantity on each slide. Use audio-visual material but not extensively.
- Clarity, precision, expression flow: try to be simple as it is an oral presentation and not an essay
- Maintain visual contact and interaction with the audience
- 10±2 minutes duration
- Reference the sources you have used (e.g. books, movies, youtube-video, etc.) following the APA referencing system.

Podcast:
Select a topic that is listed under the first 13 lectures on the syllabus to base your podcast on. Podcasts are to be between 3-4 minutes long.
Within the first 10 seconds of your podcast, you are requested to clearly state your name. Introductions should be followed by the topic that you discuss. The remaining time is spent analysing your topic, explaining it to the audience, and linking it to concepts and ideas discussed during lectures.
Students are encouraged to be creative with the podcast – to have fun, and find ways to provide an informative and entertaining podcast. Students are encouraged to interview other experts on the topic, and find other content to bring into the podcast.

You will be graded based on these following criteria:
Format & Quality (length of podcast, sound quality)
Broad coverage of the chosen topic (introduction and explanation and overview of the topic)
Link to the content of this course (links to lecture content, links to other course materials) Synthesis, integration (all parts of podcast linked together, evidence of deeper critical thinking about the topic, opinions presented and discussed)
Creativity (effort to make podcast interesting, fun, entertaining; evidence of creative thinking)

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There will be no exams for this class.

The mid-term grade will be based on any work you have submitted up until that point plus the presentation, plus participation and attendance in class.

Class Field Work
We will visit organisations and day centres whose work relates to topics that we will discuss in the classroom (e.g. climate change anxiety, addictions, etc.).

Evaluation and Grading
Your grade for this course will be based on the following distribution:

Percentages (and any breakdowns)
Assignment 1 - 10%
Assignment 2 - 10%
Assignment 3 - 25%
Podcast - 25%
Presentation - 20%
Participation and Attendance - 10%

Evaluation Criteria - Course Assignments
Paper and written assignments:
- Criteria 1: Thesis
- Criteria 2: Structure
- Criteria 3: Evidence
- Criteria 4: Analysis •Criteria 5: Mechanics

Presentation:
- Criteria 1: Structure
- Criteria 2: Content
- Criteria 3: Communication
- Criteria 4: Use of Media
- Criteria 5: Time management

For further details regarding evaluation criteria kindly check Rubric for presentations and podcasts that are available on Moodle.

CYA Regulations and Accommodations
Attendance Policy
CYA regards attendance in class and on-site (in Athens or during field study trips) as essential. Absences are recorded and have consequences. Illness or other such compelling reasons which result in absences should be reported immediately to the Student Affairs Office.

Academic Accommodations
If you are a registered (with your home institution) student with a disability and you are entitled to learning accommodation, please inform the Office of Academic Affairs and make sure that your school forwards the necessary documentation.

Policy on Original Work
Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be your own original work. Any ideas taken from the work of others must be clearly identified as quotations, paraphrases, summaries, figures etc., and accurate internal citations and/or captions (for visuals) as well as an accompanying bibliography must be provided (Check the Student Handbook, pg. 7).

Use of Laptops

In-class or onsite use of laptops and other devices is permitted if this facilitates course-related activities such as note-taking, looking up references, etc. Laptop or other device privileges will be suspended if devices are not used for class-related work.

Respect: While in class, please show respect not only to the professor but also to your fellow students—be on time, and turn off cell phones and other devices that may cause distractions. Also, please be sensitive to the opinions of others by refraining from unnecessary side conversations, interruptions, sleeping, or making disrespectful comments. Our classroom is a safe and respectful academic environment for learning and engagement.

Pronouns, Correct Names, and Inclusion: It is your right to be identified by your correct name and pronouns. I support people of all gender expressions and gender identities and welcome students to use whichever pronouns or names that best reflect who they are. In this spirit, I expect all students to also use the correct pronouns and names of classmates. Please inform me if my documentation reflects a name different than what you use and if you have any questions or concerns please contact me after class, by email, or by appointment.

Class Schedule

Class 1.	**Introductions, review syllabus, questions about the course, etc.** **No reading**
Class 2.	**The impact of COVID-19 on mental health** Required reading: Al Dhaheri et al. (2021) Impact of COVID-19 on mental health and quality of life: Is there any effect? A cross-sectional study of the MENA region. Podcast topic: The psychological impact of COVID-19 is considered to be more profound in comparison to the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic in 2003, due to the extensive social media exposure.
Class 3.	**The zoom fatigue: How remote learning and working has affected the way we perceive ourselves and others** Required reading: A national study of zoom fatigue and mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic: Implications for Future Remote Work. Homework: Students need to prepare a two paragraphs reflection on how zoom education has affected their student performance and their sense of self. Podcast topic: One 2021 study in the journal NeuroRegulation found that almost 94 percent of undergraduates had "moderate to considerable difficulty with online learning." Discuss the finding above.
Class 4.	**Climate change anxiety. Is it adaptive or maladaptive?** Required Reading: Taylor (2020) Anxiety disorders, climate change, and the challenges ahead: Introduction to the special issue. Podcast topic: The lessons learned from COVID-19 might prepare us for better dealing with anxiety disorders during the forthcoming adverse events due to climate change.
Class 5.	**Field Visit to Navarino park, which is a community initiative that represents action as an answer to climate change and climate change anxiety.** **No required reading.**
Class 6.	**Stigma and mental health** Required reading: Blume A. (2022) Microaggressions toward minority university students and their mental health symptoms one year later. Podcast topic: College students who belong to minorities experience frequent microaggressions at school. These experiences act as chronic stressors that can negatively impact well-being, even more so than overt forms of racism.
Class 7.	**Guest lecturer or field visit (NGO Orlando) relating to the topic of race/ethnicity/ culture and mental health.** No required reading
Class 8.	**You will present in pairs on the topic of stigma and mental health. Find a journal article that relates to the topic and present its content in the classroom.**
Class 9.	**Presentations part II.**
Class 10.	**Setting the boundaries with social media. What psychological research has showed us so far.** Required reading: Ostic et al. (2021) Effects of Social Media Use on Psychological Well-Being: A Mediated Model. Podcast topic: Discuss the opinion that substantial use of social media use leads to an increase in smartphone addiction.
Class 11.	**Emotion and Memory.** Required Reading: Markowitsch et al. (2022) The importance of a synchrony between emotion and memory-cases with dissociative amnesia
Class 12.	**Pain, anxiety and depression**

	Required Reading: Kim S, Lee J, Boone D. Protective and Risk Factors at the Intersection of Chronic Pain, Depression, Anxiety, and Somatic Amplification: A Latent Profile Approach. J Pain Res. 2022 Apr 15;15:1107-1121. doi: 10.2147/JPR.S340382. PMID: 35450061; PMCID: PMC9018014.
Class 13.	**Perspectives on the global mental health system. The case of Rwanda.** Required Reading: Peritogiannis, V.; Papathanasiou, I.V.; Giotakos, O. Community Psychiatry in Rural Greece: The Role of the Mobile Mental Health Units. Psych 2022, 4, 277–280. https://doi.org/10.3390/ psych4020024 Podcast topic: Globally, mental health services are increasingly defunded and neglected under austerity, structural adjustment and economic crisis. At the same time, care is delegated to family, friends and civil society with 'community' as the idealised location for inclusion, independence and self-determination.
Class 14.	**Addictions** Required Reading: Moreau et al. (2022) Impulsivity and emotion regulation in gifted adults with addictive behaviors
Class 15.	**Field Visit to KETHEA** No reading
Class 16.	**Eating Disorders** Required Reading: Frank et al. (2021) Reward processing across the eating disorders spectrum implicates body mass index and ventral striatal-hypothalamic circuitry.
Class 17.	**Field Visit to Goulandri museum where we can explore body image representation in the art world.** No required reading, on-site activity.
Class 18.	**The psychological impact of the migration experience** Required Reading: Lopez de Leon A. et al. (2022). Migratory grief, coping, and psychological distress of vulnerable groups in mobility in Spain.
Class 19.	**Promoting mental health at schools** Required Reading: Cavioni et al. (2020) Mental health promotion in schools: A comprehensive theoretical framework.
Class 20.	**We invite a school psychologist to talk to us about their experience working in a greek school and how they handle challenges within the school community.** No reading
Class 21.	**Treatments: telehealth and mental health apps** Required Reading: Chandrashekar P. (2018) Do mental health mobile apps work: evidence and recommendations for designing high-efficacy mental health mobile apps.
Class 22.	**A holistic approach when treating mental health.** https://www.commoncarecentral.com/mental-health-a-to-z/why-mental-health-recoveryrequires-a-holistic-approach
Class 23.	**Artificial intelligence in clinical settings.** Advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) technologies could improve the future of therapy sessions and mental health diagnoses. According to research published in October 2021, AI motion sensors can be used to detect symptoms of anxiety such as, nail biting, knuckle cracking and hand tapping. Another research published again in October 2021 suggests that AI can help train therapists by evaluating their skills, including whether or not they're creating an optimal environment for their clients. You will watch 2 you tube videos and read an article by the New York Times before coming to lecture.
Class 24.	**Epilogue and Reflection** **Submit a one page reflection on how you think this course can apply in your life**

N.B.: The course schedule, in terms of subjects and readings, may be subject to change to benefit student learning and to keep up to date with current research.

Course Bibliography

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https://aiforgood.itu.int/how-can-ai-improve-mental-health-for-100-million-people/
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