

Name of the course: **Mental Health Literacy in a Cross-Cultural Perspective**

Elective course : hybrid mode

Faculty	Psychology
Profile of the program	Academic
Level of study	Bachelor's degree
Course type	Intensive seminar
Mode of Study	Full-time
Year of Study	3 rd (Bachelor's degree)
Semester	Summer
ECTS points	3 ECTS
Total number of student work hours	75
Language of instruction:	English
Course coordinator	dr Anna Gabińska (agabinska@swps.edu.pl)

Form of classes	Number of hours
Workshop	27
Online consultations and lectures	12
Field workshop	6

Form of classes	Teacher
Workshop	Magda Borawska-Charko, Ph.D, SWPS University (6h) Anna Gabińska, Ph.D., SWPS University (12h) Maja Baran, Ph.D., SWPS University (4h) Marta Porębiak, Ph.D., SWPS University (9h)
Online lectures	Zoja Ghimire, M.A., Stiftelsen Mangfold i Arbeidslivet (MiA), Norway (1h) Shue Ling Chong, Ph.D., University of Nottignham, China (1h) Surabhi Roy, M.A., University of Nottignham, Malaysia (1h) Reinier Dave P. Zapanta, M.S., RPs, RPsy, De La Salle University, Phillipines (1h)
Field trip	Małgorzata Kierepka M.A., SWPS University (6h)

	Form of classes	Number of hours	
Number of contact hours	Workshop	27	27
	Online consultations & lectures	12	12
	Field trip	6	6
Student's independent work*	Reading literature for classes	30	10
	Completion of assigned tasks		20
Total student workload		75	

*The average number of hours dedicated to completed types of classes (one instructional hour equals 45 minutes)

Learning outcomes	
The code of the directional learning outcome	Course learning outcomes
PS1_W4 PS2_W3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student is familiar with the concept of mental health literacy, is able to identify and describe its core elements. - The student is familiar with the definitions and key components of mental health and mental disorders. - The student is can distinguish between facts and myths related to the most common mental health conditions. - The students understands how misinformation about mental disorders is spread in the digital ecosystems. - The student is familiar with a concept of promotion of mental health and prevention of mental disorders. - The student knows how to approach someone in psychological distress and is able to indicate appropriate first steps when helping someone with mental health issues. - The students is familiar with how to seek help and finding support in times of psychological stress. - The student knows how cultural factors influence mental health literacy, the perception of mental health and disorders, help-seeking behaviors. - The students is familiar with how cultural differences (values and practices) influence approach to health care, seeking help and finding support in case of mental health problems.
PS1_U8, PS1_U10 PS2_U11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student independently plans the development of their academic and practical skills
PS1_K7 PS2_K4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The student is prepared to responsibly undertake social and professional commitments

Program content and forms of classes

Workshop – onsite at the SWPS campus

Time/teacher	Program content and Obligatory readings
Block 1 (4h) 07.09, Monday 9.00 – 12.15 Anna Gabińska, Ph.D.	Misinformation and the Digital Ecosystem. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The consequences of the spread of information regarding mental disorders in online spaces · Group integration: Getting to know each other
Literature	Corzine, A., & Roy, A. (2024). Inside the black mirror: current perspectives on the role of social media in mental illness self-diagnosis. <i>Discover Psychology</i> , 4(1), 40.
Block 2 (4h) 08.09, Tuesday 9.00 – 12.15 Maja Baran, Ph.D.	How cultural beliefs affect approach to mental disorders and health care. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The influence of cultural factors on the perception of mental health and disorders, and help-seeking behaviors. · Investigating the intersection of gender, race, and culture in attitude to mental disorders and health care. · Evaluating Language Barriers in Health Care Settings
Literature	Bennett, J. M., & Bennett, M. J. (2004). Developing intercultural sensitivity: An integrative approach to global and domestic diversity. In D. Landis, J. Bennett & M. Bennett (Eds.), <i>Handbook of intercultural training</i> (3rd ed, pp. 147–165). Thousand Oaks: Sage. Berry, J.W., Poortiga, Y.H., Segall, M.H., Dasen, P.R. (2010). <i>Cross-cultural Psychology. Research and Applications. 2nd ed.</i> Chapter 16: Health Behaviour.
Block 3 (4h) 08.09, Tuesday 13.30-16.45 Anna Gabińska, Ph.D.	How to be and stay mentally healthy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Promotion of mental health and prevention of mental disorders · Positive mental health literacy · Protective and risk factors: resilience, resources and deficits
Literature	Kearney, Ch. A. & Trull, T. J. (2015). <i>Abnormal Psychology and Life. A Dimensional Approach. Cengage Learning.</i> Chapter 3: Risk and Prevention of Mental Disorders (pp. 51-71) Mjøsund, N.H. (2021). A Salutogenic Mental Health Model: Flourishing as a Metaphor for Good Mental Health. In: Haugan, G., Eriksson, M. (eds) <i>Health Promotion in Health Care – Vital Theories and Research</i> . Springer, Cham., pp. 47-60 https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-63135-2_5
Block 4 (6h) 09.09, Wednesday 9.00-14.00 M. Borawska-Charko, Ph.D.	Mental Health First Aid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Mental health first aid: the help provided to a person developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. · Approaching, assessing, and assisting with a psychological crisis; · listening and communicating non-judgmentally; · giving support and information; · encouraging appropriate professional help and other forms of support.
Literature	Jorm, A.F., Kitchener, B.A. & Mugford, S.K. (2005). Experiences in applying skills learned in a mental health first aid training course: a qualitative study of participants' stories. <i>BMC Psychiatry</i> 5, 43. https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-244X-5-43
Block 5 (4h) 09.09, Wednesday 15.15 -18.30 Marta Porębiak, Ph.D.	Mental health literacy and mental disorders: myths and facts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Suicide risk factors: misconceptions and increasing social awareness. · The stigma of mental illness
Literature	Svensson, B., & Hansson, L. (2016). How mental health literacy and experience of mental illness relate to stigmatizing attitudes and social distance towards people with depression or psychosis: A cross-sectional study. <i>Nordic Journal of psychiatry</i> , 70(4), 309–313 https://doi.org/10.3109/08039488.2015.1109140

Block 6 (5h) 12.09, Saturday 12.00 – 16.15 A.Gabińska, Ph.D. M.Porębiak, Ph.D.	Mental Health Literacy: Health promotion and disease prevention. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Students presentations and discussions in the audience. · Final exam · Wrap up of the course
Online lectures	
Time/teacher	Program content
Lecture 1 (3h) 31.08, Monday 9.00 – 11.30 Anna Gabińska, Ph.D.	1. Overview and introduction - getting to know each other, presentation of course structure and main requirements. 2. Mental health literacy: introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What is mental health literacy and why do we need it? · Mental health and mental disorder: what are they?
Literature	Kutcher, S., Wei, Y., Coniglio, C. (2016). Mental Health Literacy: Past, Present, and Future. <i>Can J Psychiatry</i> . 2016 Mar;61(3):154-8. doi: 10.1177/0706743715616609 Weiten, W., Dunn, D., Hammer, E. Y. (2024). <i>Psychology Applied to Modern Life: Adjustment in the 21st Century, 13th ed.</i> Cengage Learning. pp. 392-421
Lecture 2 (2h) 31.08, Monday 12.00-13.30 Marta Porębiak, Ph.D.	Mental health literacy and mental disorders: myths and facts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The most common mental disorders and myths surrounding them.
Literature	Gerrig, R.J. (2014). <i>Psychology and life, 20th edition</i> . Harlow, Essex: Pearson Education Limited. Chapter 14: Psychological disorders.
Lecture 3 (1h) 10.09, Thursday 9.00 – 10.00 Shue Ling Chong, Ph.D.	From Screen Time to Mental Well-Being: Understanding Problematic Internet Usage and Social Media Addiction among Malaysian Adolescents.
Lecture 4 (1h) 10.09, Thursday 10.30 – 11.30 Surabhi Roy, M.A.	Socio-Cultural Predictors of Psychological Help Seeking among Indians
Lecture 5 (2h) 11.09, Friday 9.00 – 10.00 Reinier Dave P. Zapanta Zapanta, M.S.	Unpacking Mental Health Challenges in the Philippines: Lessons for Global Literacy
Lecture 6 (2h) 11.09, Friday 10.30 – 11.30 Zoja Ghimire, M.A.	Taking care of immigrants' mental health in Norway: challenges and possibilities of system solutions.
Field trip	
Time/teacher	Program content
Field trip (6h) 07.09, Monday 15.00-19.30 Małgorzata Kierepka M.A.	Getting to know Warsaw: Warsaw in a Nutshell - around Traditions, Legends, Famous Historical and Literary Places The field trip in the city aims to introduce students to Warsaw from the legendary and historical perspective, as well as from the contemporary one, showing the most important places, monuments, buildings and significant people connected with them.

Requirements to pass the course/assessment criteria	
In order to pass the subject one must acquire 51-100 points. The points will be transformed into grades according to the following rules:	
Very good (5,0)	91 to 100 points
Good plus (4,5)	81 to 90 points
Good (4,0)	71 to 80 points
Satisfactory plus (3,5)	61 to 70 points
Satisfactory (3,0)	51 to 60 points
Unsatisfactory (2,0)	below 51 points

Methods of verifying the learning outcomes		Points*
Task 1	Completing Google Classroom tasks in the class (ongoing, during practical workshop and online lectures). Tasks may include multiple choice questions from literature and/or presentations, request for an short written answer prepared individually or in group.	15-30
Task 2	Presentation of a prevention/promotion program aimed at increasing mental health literacy in a chosen group. In groups of four-five, students present on a class forum a prepared plan of a prevention/promotion program aimed at a selected issue from within the area of their interest. Additionally they need to answer one question regarding their work. Specific project requirements will be presented on the first meeting.	20-40
Task 3	Final Exam: multiple choice test (20 questions) + open-ended questions (2 questions).	16-30

* Obtaining the minimum score given in the table is a condition for passing the task.

Detailed requirements to pass the course:

Students are required to comply with the Study Regulations and Study Rules at the Faculty of Psychology at the SWPS University in Warsaw. During the classes, rules of earnest cooperation and respect for each other apply. Students who do not comply with these rules will face statutory consequences, starting with being removed from class (which equals absence), leading to the initiation of the Disciplinary Committee procedure.

Absence of a maximum of 20% of hours during compulsory classes in a given module is allowed. Class attendance on workshops it is obligatory. It is possible to miss 9 didactic hours of classes without any negative consequences. Having more than 9 didactic hours of absences results in failing the module.

Etiquette: The quality of this course depends in large part upon your level of engagement. Classes will include group discussions and debates. Students are expected to encourage and support each other while trying to improve their skills and learn. Therefore criticism should be offered tactfully as a part of the learning process. Please remember to conduct yourself collegially and professionally.
e-Etiquette and Netiquette: We are all expected to show common courtesy and turn off our cell phones when we arrive (or, ideally, just prior to arriving) in class. You may bring a laptop if it helps you to take notes however Facebook is not intended for use during classes. Any non-class related computer activity will serve as a distraction and it will undermine our experience.

Students should come to the class on time. It is disruptive to the class discussion, the lecturer and other students to walk into class late. Thus, students who come 15 minutes after the beginning of class, should not enter. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to get notes, handouts, etc., from another student.

Students are required to read all assigned literature before the first meeting on 07.09. The online classroom for this course, hosted on Google Classroom, will be opened four weeks prior to the start of the course and will provide access to all obligatory literature.

On 31.08, before the first online lecture, an online organizational meeting will take place via Google Meet at 9.00 and will last around 45 minutes. All necessary details regarding the course will be provided during this meeting. A link to the meeting will be sent to all students enrolled in the course a few days in advance.

Students should work in their assigned groups on the project on afternoons starting from Tuesday when no classes are scheduled.

On 10.09 and 11.09 there will be 3 one-hour online consultations held by dr. Gabińska aimed at helping students to prepare their presentations. Concrete hours will be given to students on 08.09.2026.

Course Description: Mental Health Literacy in a Cross-Cultural Perspective explores the concept of mental health literacy, equipping students with the knowledge and skills to recognize, understand, and respond to mental health issues across diverse cultural settings and digital ecosystems. The course aims to develop a clear understanding of mental health, mental disorders, and the myths and stigma surrounding them. Students will learn how to promote mental well-being, provide initial support to individuals in psychological distress, and navigate help-seeking behaviors. A special emphasis is placed on two aspects: 1) underrecognized risks such as the spread of misinformation and stigmatizing content in online spaces occupied mostly by young persons; 2) the role of cultural values, traditions, and systemic factors in shaping perceptions of mental health and access to care. Through lectures, discussions, and practical exercises, students will critically examine the intersections of culture, online spaces, language, gender, and race in mental health contexts, preparing them to approach mental health issues with cultural sensitivity and practical knowledge.