

Psychology and Mental Health in Conflict and Post-Conflict Contexts

PSYC 3000 (3 credits)

Jordan: Psychology, Wellbeing, and Mental Health

This syllabus is representative of a typical semester. Because courses develop and change over time to take advantage of unique learning opportunities, actual course content varies from semester to semester.

Description

This seminar addresses psychological constructs in post-conflict contexts and the mental health of post-conflict contexts. It provides an overview of what psychology, mental health, and conflict are and how conflict and post-conflict contexts alter psychological constructs and affect mental health. Students learn about biological, social, and psychological bases of mental disorders within the frame of the biopsychosocial approach focusing on post-conflict contexts. In this course, students are also exposed to different frameworks and guidelines of psychological and mental interventions with conflict-affected populations and study psychosocial support needs, design, and implementation in post-conflict environments.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Define psychological and mental constructs in conflict and post-conflict contexts;
- Explain how conflict and post-conflict contexts affect psychological and mental health of affected people;
- Adhere to ethical standards and cultural considerations in the field of psychology and mental health in conflict and post-conflict contexts;
- Apply the biopsychosocial approach in the study of mental health disorders and in conflict and post-conflict contexts;
- Describe common psychosocial and mental health issues among conflict-affected people in Turkey compared to those in Jordan;
- Describe best practices in the field of psychology and mental health in Turkey compared to Jordan;
- Synthesize approaches to determine psychosocial support needs, design, and implementation in post-conflict environments.

Language of Instruction

This course is taught in English. Students are exposed to vocabulary related to course content through in-country expert lectures and field visits.

Course Schedule

Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers' availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.

Module 1: Psychology and Mental Health in the Context of Jordan

This module introduces the concepts of psychology, mental health, and conflict as they play out in the context of Jordan. Students also learn about the concept of conflict and impacts of conflicts on people.

Session 1: Mental Health in Jordan

This session addresses current status of mental health in Jordan. Students will learn about Jordan's mental health services and systems.

Required Readings:

World Health Organization. (2011). WHO-AIMS Report on Mental Health System in Jordan. *WHO and Ministry of Health, Jordan.*

Jordan Ministry of Health. (2011). The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan National Mental Health Policy. *Jordan MoH.* Jordan.

Session 2: Overview of Conflicts in the Middle East

This session addresses current conflicts in the Middle East and their historical, political, economic, and social effects on affected people.

Required Readings:

Milian, et al. (2019). Alert 2019! Report on conflicts, human rights and peace building. *Barcelona: Icaria.* Chapter 1.3.5 Pp 59-65, Chapter 2.3.5. Pp 104-109, and Chapter 3 Pp 109-115.

Mehvar, A. (2019). Regional Overview: Middle East 29 September – 5 October 2019. ACLED.

Session 3: Field Visit

In this session, students will visit a mental health institution and learn about up-to-date status of mental health services in Jordan.

Required Readings:

Hijawi, B., Elzein Elmousaad, H., Marini, A., Funk, M., Skeen, S., Al Ward, N., Saeed, K., Ayoub, Z. (2013). WHO Profile on mental health in development (WHO proMIND): Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. *World Health Organization*. Geneva

Module 2: BioPsychoSocial Approach to Mental and Psychological Disorders

This module teaches students what a psychological/mental disorder is and when it can be considered as one. Students study the bases of disorders from a biopsychosocial approach view. Students also analyze the interaction between biological, social, and individual factors and how that affects the course of a psychological/mental disorder.

Session 1: The BioPsychoSocial Approach of Psychological and Mental Disorders: Biological Bases of Disorders

In this session, students learn about the biological bases of psychological and mental disorders. Students also learn about the main biological contributors to psychological and mental disorders.

Required Readings:

- Havelka, M., Despot Lučanin, J., & Lučanin, D. (2009). Biopsychosocial model—the integrated approach to health and disease. *Collegium Antropologicum*, 33(1), 303-310.
- Álvarez, A. S., Pagani, M., & Meucci, P. (2012). The clinical application of the biopsychosocial model in mental health: a research critique. *American journal of physical medicine & rehabilitation*, 91(13), S173-S180.
- Freitas-Silva, L. and Ortega, F. (2016). Biological determination of mental disorders: a discussion based on recent hypotheses from neuroscience. *ENSAIO*. Cad. Saúde Pública, Rio de Janeiro, 32(8):e00168115.

Session 2: The BioPsychoSocial Approach of Psychological and Mental Disorders: Social and Psychological Bases of Disorders

This session addresses the social factors contributing to the onset of a psychological and mental disorder. Students also learn about the characteristics that are considered as risk factors to the development of a psychological and mental disorder.

Session 3: Field Visit

Students will visit a counseling institution to learn how biopsychosocial approach is applied in clinical medical setting and the different psychiatric and psychological processes followed as part of the biopsychosocial approach in a psychiatric hospital

Required Reading:

- Robert C. S., Auguste H. F., Francesca D, and Richard M. F. (2013). An evidence-based patient-centered method makes the biopsychosocial model scientific. *Patient Education and Counseling*, 9, 265-270.

Module 3: Psychological and Mental Disorders in Conflict and Post-Conflict Contexts

This module focuses on the psychological and mental health issues and problems arising specifically due to conflicts in the Middle East. Students learn how conflicts affect the psychological and mental equilibrium of affected people. The focus is on post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety as the most common psychological and mental disorders in post-conflict populations.

Session 1: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Anxiety

This session tackles how PTSD and Anxiety develop in a post-conflict context. Students learn about the different conceptualizations of PTSD and Anxiety in the context of Jordan.

Required Readings:

- Charlson, F., van Ommeren, M., Flaxman, A., Cornett, J., Whiteford, H., & Saxena, S. (2019). New WHO prevalence estimates of mental disorders in conflict settings: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet*, 394(10194), 240-248.
- Charlson, F. J., Flaxman, A., Ferrari, A. J., Vos, T., Steel, Z., & Whiteford, H. A. (2016). Post-traumatic stress disorder and major depression in conflict-affected populations: an epidemiological model and predictor analysis. *Global Mental Health*, 3.
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-5th edition.

Session 2: Depression and Other Psychosocial Problems in Conflict and Post-Conflict Contexts

This session address depression, grief, sadness, and uncertainty and how they develop in post-conflict context. Students will learn the different conceptualizations and considerations of these mental and psychological issues in conflict and post-conflict contexts.

Required Readings:

- Bryant, R. A., Edwards, B., Creamer, M., O'Donnell, M., Forbes, D., Felmingham, K. L. & Nickerson, A. (2020). A population study of prolonged grief in refugees. *Epidemiology and psychiatric sciences*, 29.
- Zipfel, et al. (2019). Refugee Mental Health. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*. DOI 10.3389/978-2-88945-840-0.

Recommended Readings:

- Hoppen, T. H., & Morina, N. (2019). The prevalence of PTSD and major depression in the global population of adult war survivors: a meta-analytically informed estimate in absolute numbers. *European journal of psychotraumatology*, 10(1), 1578637.

Charlson, F., van Ommeren, M., Flaxman, A., Cornett, J., Whiteford, H., & Saxena, S. (2019). New WHO prevalence estimates of mental disorders in conflict settings: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *The Lancet*, 394(10194), 240-248.

Session 3: Site visit

Students will visit an organization that provides medical and psychological services to urban refugees. Students will learn about psychosocial most common mental and psychological issues among refugees in Jordan and how these issues are being managed.

Required Readings:

Weissbecker, I., Hanna, F., Shazly, M., Gao, J., Ventevogel, P. (2019). Integrative Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Interventions for Refugees in Humanitarian Crisis Settings: Integrative Health Care for the 21st Century Refugees. 10.1007/978-3-319-72914-5_6.

Module 4: Refugee Mental Health

This model addresses mental and psychological issues and health among refugees. This module will introduce the students to the current health status and conditions of refugees in Jordan. Students will study means and tool for assessing mental and psychological disorders among refugees. This assessment study will then be tied to mental and psychosocial intervention options for refugee individuals, families, and communities.

Session 1: Health Situation of Refugees in Jordan-Site Visit

Students will visit the Jordan Health Aid Society international (JHASi). Students will meet with the head of the organization and learn about current health situation for refugees in Jordan. Students will observe the work of one of JHASi clinics.

Required Readings:

Dator, W., Abunab, H., & Dao-ayen, N. (2018). Health challenges and access to health care among Syrian refugees in Jordan: a review. *Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal*, 24(7). 680-686. 10.26719/2018.24.7.680.

Session 2: Assessing mental and psychological disorders in Refugees-Site Visit

This session will take place at Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) (Doctors without Borders). An agency that provides medical assistance to people affected by conflict, epidemics, disasters, or exclusion from healthcare. Students will learn about how mental and psychological issues and disorders are assessed and diagnosed.

Required Readings

Kronick, R. (2019). Mental Health of Refugees and Asylum Seekers: Assessment and Intervention. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*. Vol. 63(5) 290-296.

Session 3: Mental Health and Psychological Intervention Guides for Conflict-Affected People

This session will enhance the students' understanding of the internationally recognized post-conflict intervention guidelines. Students develop insight into procedures, techniques, and intervention strategies in the field of psychology, counseling, and mental health in the context of Jordan. The focus is on the Psychological First Aid (PFA) and the World Health Organization Mental Health GAP Intervention Guidelines (WHO mhGAP).

Required Readings:

WHO. (2017). mhGAP Intervention Guide: from mental, neurological and substance use disorders in non-specialized health settings, Version 2.0

WHO. (2011). Psychological first aid: Guide for field workers. *World Health Organization*. ISBN: 978 92 4 154820 5.

Module 5: Mental Health and Psychological Disorders in Post-Conflict Context of Turkey

This module will take place in Turkey. This module addresses Turkey's mental health and psychology systems and practices, and how mental health and psychological issues are dealt with and managed in Turkey. Students will study mental health and psychological services provided to post-conflict refugees in Turkey. In addition, this module will explore psychosocial support efforts and programs oriented to conflict-affected people and refugees in Turkey.

Session 1: Mental Health and Psychological Systems in Turkey-Site Visit

Students will visit MADALYON Psychiatric Center in Istanbul and learn about mental health and psychological procedures and processes in Turkey.

Required Readings:

The Ministry of Health of Turkey. (2006). Republic of Turkey national Mental Health Policy. Ankara. Turkey.

Session 2: Mental Health and Psychological Disorders of Refugees in Turkey-Site Visit

Students will visit Muntada Aid's Broken Minds Center in Istanbul and will learn about mental and psychological services provided to refugee children and women.

Required Readings:

Tekeli-Yesil, S., Isik, E., Unal, Y., Aljomaa Almossa, F., Konsuk Unlu, H., & Aker, A. T. (2018). Determinants of mental disorders in Syrian refugees in Turkey versus internally displaced persons in Syria. *American journal of public health, 108*(7), 938-945.

Alpak, G., Unal, A., Bulbul, F., Sagaltici, E., Bez, Y., Altindag, A., ... & Savas, H. A. (2015). Post-traumatic stress disorder among Syrian refugees in Turkey: a cross-sectional study. *International journal of psychiatry in clinical practice, 19*(1), 45-50.

Session 3: Refugee Psychosocial Support in Turkey-Site Visit

Students will visit Doctors of the World organization. A non-governmental organization that provides medical, psychological, and psychosocial support to conflict and disaster-affected people.

Required Readings:

International Medical Corps. (2017). *Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Considerations for Syrian Refugees in Turkey: Sources of Distress, Coping Mechanisms, & Access to Support*. IMC. Turkey.

Module 6: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Post-Conflict Contexts

This module addresses the concept of psychosocial support, its importance and significance, psychosocial needs assessment procedures and protocols, and building a psychosocial support program in post-conflict context. Students also learn about gender, culture, and communities' sensitive psychosocial support services and how to produce a comprehensive community-based psychosocial support program for conflict-affected populations.

Session 1: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Needs Assessment

This session addresses processes and procedures, as well as issues sensitive to MHPSS needs assessment in post-conflict contexts. Students will learn assessment conduction of conflict-affected populations and local communities.

Required Readings:

WHO. (2012). *Assessing mental health and psychosocial needs and resources*.

WHO and IMC. (2013). *Assessment of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Needs of Displaced Syrians in Jordan*.

Session 2: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Program Design

In this session, students will learn how to design a culturally and ethically sensitive MHPSS programs and community-based programs. Students will learn what core elements of MHPSS programs should be considered and to adjust elements of MHPSS programs to become culturally and ethically sound.

Required Readings:

McNatt. Z. (2019). *Addressing Mental Health, Psychosocial Support, (MHPSS) and NCDs in Urban Jordan. Policy Brief, 2*.

International Organization for Migration. (2019). *Manual on Community-Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies and Displacement*.

Session 3: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Program Implementation

This session teaches students different phases of MHPSS program successful implementation. Students will also learn how to monitor MHPSS implemented programs success throughout the implementation process. This session will provide students with pinch marks to measure program success.

Required Readings:

Giz. (2015). Guiding Framework for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) in Development Cooperation As exemplified in the context of the crises in Syria and Iraq.
Dickson, K. and Bangpan, M. (2018). What are the barriers to, and facilitators of, implementing and receiving MHPSS programs delivered to populations affected by humanitarian emergencies? A qualitative evidence synthesis. *Global Mental Health*, 5, e21, page 1 of 13. doi:10.1017/gmh.2018.12

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Timely completion of all assignments is expected. Late hand-ins will be penalized. All assignments are evaluated according to organization, analytical quality, and depth of understanding, argumentation, and presentation of evidence.

Description of assignments

Students will be assessed in this course through the following assignments:

Conceptual Paper (30%)

Conceptual framework of psychology and mental health in post conflict context. Students are required to turn in 6-page paper in which they conceptualize mental health in the context of post-conflict. They will be analyzing risks, course, and psychopathology of PTSD, Depression, and Anxiety in a post-conflict context. Students are expected to show ability conceptualize mental and psychological disorders as they related to post-conflict context.

Comparison Paper (30%)

Students are expected to turn in a 4-page paper in which they compare and contrast mental health and psychological constructs and practices between Jordan and Turkey as they pertain to post-conflict contexts. Students will identify clearly commonalities and differences in mental health and psychological services between the two countries and how these commonalities and differences contribute to the quality of services in both countries.

Design of MHPSS Program (30%)

Students are expected come up with a 12-page MHPSS program successful basic model for conflict affected people. Students will design a needs assessment tool, an implementation strategy, and usefulness and impact assessment tool.

Participation and Attendance (10%)

Attendance during the thematic seminar is mandatory, and your grade will reflect your involvement in class and outside class.

Assessment

Conceptual Paper	30%
Comparison Paper	30%
Design of MHPSS Program	30%
Participation and Attendance	10%

Grading Scale

94-100%	A
90-93%	A-
87-89%	B+
84-86%	B
80-83%	B-
77-79%	C+
74-76%	C
70-73%	C-
67-69%	D+
64-66%	D
Below 64	F

Program Expectations

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak.
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates', lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.
- Storing Your Work: Keep several copies of your work as back up and keep one copy accessible to you through an online forum, such as an attachment in your email, the course learning management system, or cloud-based storage. This way your work will always be available to despite technical issues. Lost files, deleted drives, or computer crashes are not excuses for late, missing work.
- Personal Technology Use: Cell phones and other personal electronics can be used for taking notes and other class activities. Off-task usage is not acceptable. You may be marked as absent for habitually using them for something other than classroom activities.
- Course Communication: Course documents and assignments will be posted on the learning management system, Canvas. Although the course calendar provides a broad overview and the general sequence of work and assignments for the course, what we accomplish in class will vary, and revisions to the calendar will be posted at the

course site. You will need to check the course site regularly. You are responsible for letting me know about any network-related problems that prevent you from accessing or submitting assignments.

- **Content Considerations:** Some texts and activities you will encounter in this course delve into sensitive topics that may be emotionally and intellectually challenging. Our classroom is a space where we can engage with challenging ideas, question assumptions, and navigate difficult topics with respect and maturity. As possible, I will flag content and activities that are especially graphic or intense, so we are prepared to address them soberly and sensitively. If you are struggling to keep up with the work or participate in the course because of the nature of the content and activities, you should speak with me and/or seek help from counseling services.
- **Classroom recording policy:** To ensure the free and open discussion of ideas, students may not record classroom lectures, discussion and/or activities without the advance written permission of the instructor, and any such recording properly approved in advance can be used solely for the student's own private use.

SIT Policies and Resources

Please refer to the [SIT Study Abroad Handbook](#) and the [Policies](#) section of the SIT website for all academic and student affairs policies. Students are accountable for complying with all published policies. Of particular relevance to this course are the policies regarding: academic integrity, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), research and ethics in field study and internships, late assignments, academic status, academic appeals, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and misconduct, and the student code of conduct.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Handbook and SIT website for information on important resources and services provided through our central administration in Vermont, such as [Library resources and research support](#), [Disability Services](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Title IX information](#), and [Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) resources.