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| Course title | Digital Wellbeing | | | | |
| Course code | PSY4706 | | | | |
| Course type | Elective | | | | |
| Level | Bachelors | | | | |
| Year / Semester | Year 4 / 7th Semester | | | | |
| Teacher's name | Dr Florentia Hadjiefthyvoulou/Prof Daria Kuss/Dr Halley Pontes | | | | |
| ECTS | 6 | Lectures / week | 3hrs | Laboratories / week | - |
| Course purpose and objectives | <p>This course critically examines the complex relationship between digital technologies and mental health. It explores how mental health conditions manifest, are shaped by, or are influenced by the digital environment. Topics include emerging disorders in cyberspace, the impact of social media on mental wellbeing, and the growing challenge of digital addictions. Learners will evaluate both the risks and therapeutic potential of digital technologies, including online interventions and the use of virtual reality in mental health care. Students will engage with theoretical frameworks, current research, and ethical considerations, and will reflect critically on the implications of living in a hyperconnected world.</p> | | | | |
| Learning outcomes | <p>On successful completion of the course and with further independent study, students will be able to:</p> <p>Knowledge</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Analyse the emergence and presentation of mental health conditions in cyberspace. 2. Demonstrate understanding of the psychological risks and opportunities posed by digital technologies, including social media, gaming, and emerging platforms like virtual reality. <p>Competencies</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Evaluate and apply psychological treatment options for digital addictions. 4. Critically assess the influence of digital technology use on mental health outcomes across different populations. <p>Transferable Skills</p> | | | | |

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| | <p>5. Communicate contemporary research and theories in digital wellbeing effectively to both specialist and non-specialist audiences in written and oral form.</p> <p>6. Apply critical thinking to the evaluation, prevention, or treatment of digital addictions</p> | | |
| Prerequisites | | Required | |
| Course content | <p>Indicative Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to digital wellbeing- Definitions and frameworks • Digital use and mental health • Mental Disorders in Cyberspace • Technology and mental health: Opportunities and risks. • Social media use and mental health: Positive (connection, empowerment) and negative (comparison, anxiety) effects • Digital addictions (e.g. Problematic internet use; Gaming and online gaming addiction; (problematic) Social media use; Mobile phone dependency; online pornography, online gambling) • Therapeutic options to digital addictions (e.g. CBT, Psychoeducation, talking therapies etc) • Young People and Cyberspace (e.g. The positive and negative effects of technology; Cyberbullying) • Emerging Technologies and Mental Health (e.g. VR applications for mental health) • Digital Tools for Mental Health and Wellbeing • Role of online social support communities in promoting wellbeing, reducing stigma, and enhancing help-seeking • Digital Resilience and Coping: Protective factors, digital literacy, SEL-based frameworks; designing resilience-building interventions. | | |
| Teaching methodology | <p>Teaching will consist of lectures, in-class discussions, case studies and quizzes designed to assess understanding and provide opportunities for formative feedback. Teaching will be supported by online materials and additional readings</p> | | |
| Bibliography | <p>Core Text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stein, D. J., Fineberg, N. A., & Chamberlain, S. R. (Eds.). (2021). <i>Mental health in a digital world</i>. Academic Press. 22€ • https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003092513 | | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shahsavar, Y., & Choudhury, A. (2025). Effectiveness of evidence-based mental health apps on user health outcomes: A systematic literature review. <i>PLOS ONE</i>, 20(3), e0319983. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0319983 • Torous, J., Linardon, J., Goldberg, S. B., Sun, S., Bell, I., Nicholas, J., Hassan, L., Hua, Y., Milton, A., & Firth, J. (2025). The evolving field of digital mental health: current evidence and implementation issues for smartphone apps, generative artificial intelligence, and virtual reality. <i>World psychiatry : official journal of the World Psychiatric Association (WPA)</i>, 24(2), 156–174. https://doi.org/10.1002/wps.21299 • Pontes, H. M. (Ed.). (2022). <i>Behavioral addictions: Conceptual, clinical, assessment, and treatment approaches</i>. Springer Nature. • Kuss, D. J., & Pontes, H. M. (2018). <i>Internet addiction</i>. Hogrefe Publishing GmbH. <p>Recommended:</p> <p>Attrill-Smith, A., Fullwood, C., Keep, M., & Kuss, D. J. (Eds.). (2019). <i>The Oxford handbook of cyberpsychology</i>. Oxford University Press.</p> <p>Kirwan, G., Connolly, I., Barton, H., & Palmer, M. (Eds.). (2024). <i>An Introduction to Cyberpsychology (2nd ed.)</i>. Routledge.</p> <p>Kaye, L. (2021). <i>Issues and debates in cyberpsychology</i>. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).</p> <p>Further reading:</p> <p>A reading list will accompany each lecture, highlighting relevant articles accessible through the library, as well as open-access and e-learning resources.</p> | | | | | | | | |
| Assessment | <table> <tr> <td>Attendance and participation</td> <td>10%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Digital Wellbeing Podcast</td> <td>15%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Written Assignment</td> <td>30%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Final Exam</td> <td>45%</td> </tr> </table> | Attendance and participation | 10% | Digital Wellbeing Podcast | 15% | Written Assignment | 30% | Final Exam | 45% |
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| Language | English | | | | | | | | |