2017-2018

Psychology and Social Issues

Category: Psychology
Code: IS083
Level: 5
Credits: 15

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Outline

This 15 credit upper division elective module offers an interdisciplinary exploration of issues of current societal concern. Each session aims to introduce you to a specific societal concern to provide a platform for debate and interactive activities. Areas covered include: bullying and ostracism; prejudice and discrimination; body image and the media; rape and victim blaming; advertising and the growth of social media; income inequality and materialism. You have the opportunity to explore these contemporary social issues from a psychological and sociological perspective, applying relevant readings to engage in small group discussion and activities with a focus on applying theory to real world situations.

Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate an understanding of psychological and sociological approaches to studying social issues.
2. Demonstrate an awareness of the major contemporary debates in psychology theory applied to explore social issues and identify areas where the knowledge base is most/least secure.
3. Analyse and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of competing theoretical perspectives and/or research evidence
4. Interact effectively within a team, giving and receiving information and ideas and modifying responses where appropriate

Assessment of Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode of assessment</th>
<th>Learning outcomes assessed</th>
<th>Duration or word length</th>
<th>Day and week of submission</th>
<th>Submission point</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESSAY</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
<td>2000 words</td>
<td>Thursday W4</td>
<td></td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP PRESENTATION</td>
<td>1, 4</td>
<td>5-10 mins per student</td>
<td>Varied</td>
<td>In class</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBSERVATION REPORT</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>10</td>
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</table>
Teaching Structure and Delivery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Method</th>
<th>Session length</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>3 x weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>3 x weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent study</td>
<td>Approx. 114 hours</td>
<td>As required</td>
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Seminars
Seminars follow on from each lecture. They offer students the opportunity to work collaboratively in groups to explore some of the contemporary debates identified in the lecture in more detail. Seminar activities are varied in their nature but have a focus on encouraging critical thinking and applications of theory and research within predefined contexts.

Prerequisites
There are no strict prerequisites for this module but it is strongly recommended that students have successfully completed at least one previous module in any area of psychology (preferably applied).

Module Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Introduction to the module</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Income inequality and materialism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Group presentation and essay writing masterclass</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Media and body image</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bullying and ostracism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Social media and relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Victim blaming and perceptions of rape victims</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Essay workshop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Persuasion and health campaigns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Critical perspectives on psychiatry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Critical perspectives on addiction and the “War Against Drugs”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance policy, class etiquette, academic integrity

Students are expected to attend and engage fully in all lectures and seminars. In order to do so, they will need to have completed the essential reading before each session. Engagement in the seminars activities is assessed by means of an observation report completed by the tutor at the end of the module. In order to achieve a good observation report grade, students need to arrive on time, regularly make positive contributions in the workshops, and respect the opinions of their classmates.

Consistent with all teaching at the University of Sussex, strict adherence to the principles of academic integrity is expected and suspected plagiarism will be dealt with by our academic misconduct panel.
Reading

Core text

Because we will focus in on some specific social issues and psychological theories, individual research articles are generally preferred to a core text for this module. However the following textbook offers some introductory reading in many of the topics covered:-


Other essential and recommended reading by topic

Income inequality and materialism

Essential

Recommended


Media and body image

Essential
Recommended

Bullying and ostracism

Essential

Recommended

Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination

Essential
Recommended


Social media and relationships

Essential


Recommended


Victim blaming and perceptions of rape victims

Essential


Recommended


Persuasion and Health Campaigns

Essential


Recommended


Critical perspectives on psychiatry

Essential


Recommended


Critical perspectives on addiction

Essential


Recommended


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