



SUBJECT OUTLINE

1. Programme of study description

1.1.	THE "CAROL DAVILA" UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND PHARMACY
1.2.	THE FACULTY OF MEDICINE / THE PRECLINICAL DEPARTMENT 3 (Complementary Sciences)
1.3.	DISCIPLINE Medical Psychology
1.4.	DOMAIN OF STUDY: Healthcare – regulated sector within the EU
1.5.	CYCLE OF STUDIES: BACHELOR'S DEGREE
1.6.	PROGRAMME OF STUDY: MEDICINE

2. Subject description

2.1.	Name of the subject/compulsory subject/elective subject within the discipline: Health Psychology and Medical Communication (<i>English</i>)						
2.2.	Location of the discipline: Faculty of Medicine						
2.3.	Course tenured coordinator: Ovidiu Popa-Velea						
2.4.	Practicals tenured coordinator: Liliana Diaconescu						
2.5. Year of study	1	2.6. Semester	1	2.7. Type of assessment	Written and practical exam	2.8. Subject classification	Complementary, obligatory

3. Total estimated time (hours/semester of didactic activity) – teaching module

Number of hours per week	3	Out of which: course	1	Practicals	2
Total number of hours from curriculum	42	Out of which: course	14	Practicals	28
Distribution of allotted time	14 weeks				Hours
Study from textbooks, courses, bibliography, and student notes					
Additional library study, study on specialized online platforms and field study					
Preparing seminars / laboratories, assignments, reports, portfolios and essays					
Tutoring					
Examinations					
Other activities					
Total hours of individual study					
Number of credit points			3		

4. Prerequisites (where applicable)

4.1. of curriculum	Fundamental notions of General Psychology
4.2. of competencies	

5. Requirements (where applicable)

5.1. for delivering the courses	Media projector, loudspeakers
5.2. for delivering the practicals / clinical rotations	Amphitheater at the Faculty of Medicine

6. Acquired specific competencies

Professional competencies (expressed through knowledge and skills)	At the end of the course the student must: 1. know / understand the pathogenic role of the psychological factors in the onset of psychosomatic diseases and disorders 2. know theories and basic concepts about stress and its psychometric instruments of evaluation 3. know the role of Health Psychology concepts in everyday life; 4. know the specific competencies of the clinical psychologist 5. have the ability to identify the main psychopathogenic factors that claim the necessity of psychotherapy and counselling 6. have the ability to identify the various psychological disorders and the main personality traits correlated with health and disease 7. to possess certain communication skills specific to the doctor role and to be aware about their importance in improving compliance to the recommendations regarding sanogenetic behaviors
--	--



Transversal competencies (of role, of professional and personal development)	1. Knowledge regarding the main ethical values necessary for exerting the medical profession 2. Cultivation of the abilities for research and autonomous learning, including in the formal framework of research themes and projects 3. Cultivation of the abilities for communication, empathy and altruism
--	---

7. Subject learning objectives (based on the scale of acquired specific competencies)

7.1. General learning objectives	Acquiring by the students of theoretical knowledge and practical abilities necessary for applying psychology in health-related interventions
7.2. Specific learning objectives	Knowledge about the modalities through which various behaviors and cognitions influence health and disease. Understanding of the disease in its triple dimension: biological, psychological and social. Knowledge about the main types of psychotherapeutic interventions, their place and role in the general treatment plan, as well as about the distinct role of the clinical psychologist in the therapeutic team

8. Content

8.1. Course	Teaching methods	Observations
1. Health Psychology: domain of interference between Medicine and psychosocial sciences Medical Psychology, Behavioral Medicine, Psychosomatics and Clinical Psychology: commonalities and differences. The role of the clinical psychologist in the clinical environment. The orientation of the clinician when confronted with a behavioral disorder. Protective traits and cognitive styles. Personality traits correlated with vulnerability to disease (A, C, D). Main methods of research in Health Psychology.	Interactive teaching, according to the syllabus, examples of clinical cases, including with the help of multimedia software (Prezi®, Powerpoint®).	2 hours
2. Stress Definition, various types of stressors. Theoretical models of stress (classical vs. modern approaches). Stress agents: types, particularities when compared with other stressors. The Holmes – Rahe Scale of major life events: an attempt to quantify the pathogenic potential of various stressors. The relativity of stressor's perception and appraisal. Hormonal correlates of stress. The difference between eustress and distress. The anagenic role of endorphins. Allostatic load. The hopeless – helplessness syndrome (experiment, clinical usefulness). Coping strategies. Antistress programs and strategies.		2 hours
3. The multifaceted approach of the disease, from the perspective of Health Psychology Concepts about the disease: models (biomedical, psychological, bio-psycho-social). Social and cultural aspects of the disease. The role of social support. Psychosomatic disorders and diseases: commonalities and differences. Models about the pathogenesis of psychosomatic diseases (classic: Alexander, Cannon, Pavlov; modern) Critical symptoms from a psychological viewpoint: e.g. pain. General aspects (types of pain, causes of pain). The role of psychological factors in what concerns the onset and increase of pain (e.g., depression, anxiety). The particularities of painful syndromes in chronic / incurable diseases. Psychological interventions for pain alleviation (hypnosis, relaxation, guided imagery).		2 hours
4. Medical communication (1) Communication: functions, principles, components, types of communication (verbal, non-verbal). The doctor-patient relationship. The assumed statuses and roles of the doctor and of the patient. Theoretical models regarding attitudes towards illness and treatment (HBM, TRA, TPB, the Leventhal model). The practical utility of knowing these models in the relationship with problematic / difficult patients.		2 hours
5. Medical communication (2) Different types of anamnesis and their usefulness, doctor's skills to increase the efficiency of communication (active listening, empathy). Communication with problematic patients (e.g., anxious, depressed, aggressive, with personality disorders). Ways of communicating bad news. Peculiarities of communication with the patient's family.		2 hours
6. Indicators of doctor-patient communication Burnout syndrome in medical personnel. Iatrogenic effects (e.g. psychiatric comorbidity induced by the doctor, psychological addiction to medication). Adherence vs. compliance. Psychological factors that influence them (example in chronic diseases). Informational contagion. Information balance from authorized / unauthorized sources. The perceived quality of life of the patient and their family. The balance between gains and losses. The placebo, pseudoplacebo, and nocebo effects. Factors that influence their occurrence, usefulness in the		2 hours



clinical environment.		
7. Psychotherapy (1) (the second part – in the second study year, at the course of Behavioral Sciences and Medical Sociology) Definitions. Classification and indications of psychotherapy. Behavioral modeling: from theoretical principles to counseling and psychotherapy. Psychoanalysis (definition, theoretical bases, indications, efficiency). Cognitive-behavioral therapy (definition, theoretical bases, indications, efficiency). Relaxation techniques and hypnosis (definition, theoretical bases, indications, efficiency). Rogersian psychotherapy (definition, theoretical bases, indications, efficiency).		2 hours
8.2. Practicals	Teaching methods	Observations
Practical 1. Health Psychology: field of interference between Medicine and psychosocial sciences (1) The role of Clinical and Health Psychology (case discussion where the role of the clinical psychologist is important). Examples of questionnaires and projective tests. Discussion of their advantages and disadvantages, and conditions of application.	Interactive teaching using psychological tests, case presentations, literature data, including multimedia use (Powerpoint®)	2 hours
Practical 2. Health Psychology: field of interference between Medicine and psychosocial sciences (2) Cognitive traits with health implications. Immunogenic traits: self-efficacy, locus of control, hardiness, coherence, self-esteem, optimism. Disimmunogenic features; anxiety, depression, neuroticism. Behavioral traits (A,C,D) related to an increased susceptibility to the disease. Practical examples.		2 hours
Practical 3. Stress (1) Stressors. Clinical case presentation illustrating the impact (cumulative, individual) of stressors. Presentation of experimental paradigms demonstrating stress reactivity. Ways of evaluating the stressful load of life events. Discussion - Holmes-Rahe Scale / other similar instruments. The concept of allostatic load – methods of testing.		2 hours
Practical 4. Stress (2) Defensive mechanisms - presentation, discussion, examples. Coping strategies - presentation, discussion, examples. Coping strategies in the academic environment - presentation, discussion, examples. Antistress programs and strategies - presentation, discussion, examples.		2 hours
Practical 5. Psychological correlates of somatic illnesses Psychosomatic disorders and diseases: similarities and differences. Clinical examples. The psychological-somatic-psychological vicious circle - discussion, examples. Historic interesting models of the pathogenesis of psychosomatic diseases (Alexander, Cannon, Pavlov). Modern approaches - presentation, discussion. Reactions of the patient to the disease: regression, evasion, informational contagion, non-productive use of the disease - presentation, discussion, clinical examples		2 hours
Practical 6. Individual and psycho-sociocultural variables that influence the attitude towards the disease and treatment (age, gender, socio-economic status, social support, cultural factors). The role of social support. Discussion, clinical examples, practical applications.		2 hours
Practical 7. Psychological implications of pain The role of psychological factors in the production and intensification of pain). Psychological interventions to reduce pain (hypnosis, relaxation, guided imagery) (clinical case example). Chronic/incurable disease and pain (1h) Seminar recovery session (1h).		2 hours
Practical 8. Medical communication (1) General principles of effective communication: empathy, active listening, assertiveness. Doctor-patient communication: particularities, different types of anamnesis and their usefulness (discussion, clinical examples). Exemplification of ineffective / effective verbal / non-verbal communication (roleplay, video materials). The HBM, TRA, TPB, Leventhal, Prohaska & DiClemente models regarding the attitude towards illness and treatment: examples, implications in medical practice.		2 hours
Practical 9. Medical communication (2) Communication with problematic patients (e.g., anxious, depressed, aggressive, with personality disorders). Identification of behavioral problems with the help of psychometric instruments. Ways of communicating bad news. Peculiarities of communication with the patient's family.		2 hours
Practical 10. Consequences of doctor-patient communication / lack of communication (1).		2 hours



Burnout syndrome in doctors. Description of symptoms, discussion of clinical implications, presentation of methods of diagnosis, prevention and treatment (individual and group - e.g., the Balint group). Adherence vs. compliance. Psychological factors that influence them. Examples in certain chronic diseases (TB, asthma, hypertension).		
Practical 11. Consequences of doctor-patient communication / lack of communication (2). Iatrogenesis (e.g., psychiatric comorbidity induced by the doctor, mental drug addiction). Clinical case exemplification, discussion of implications. Informational contagion. Information balance from authorized / unauthorized sources. Presentation, discussion implications. The perceived quality of life of the patient and his family. The balance between gains and losses. Presentation of assessment and improvement methods. Placebo, pseudoplacebo, nocebo effects. Clinical case exemplification, discussion of implications.		2 hours
Practical 12. Psychotherapy (1) Psychoanalysis (definition, theoretical bases, indications, efficiency). Practical applications, discussion of clinical cases. Cognitive-behavioral psychotherapy (definition, theoretical bases, indications and efficiency). Practical applications, discussion of clinical cases. Rogersian psychotherapy (definition, theoretical bases, indications and effectiveness). Practical applications, discussion of clinical cases.		2 hours
Practical 13. Psychotherapy (2) Relaxation and hypnosis techniques (definition, theoretical bases, indications and efficiency). Practical applications, discussion of cases (1h). Seminar recovery session (1h)		2 hours
Practical 14. Revision		2 hours
Bibliography for course and practicals 1. Popa-Velea, O., Diaconescu, L.V. "Health Psychology and Medical Communication" (course handouts). 2019, Bucharest: Carol Davila Publishing Press 2. Popa-Velea, O. (Ed.). Diaconescu, L.V., Mihăilescu, A.I., Jidveian Popescu, M., Trușescu, C.I., Ionescu, C.G., Stan, S., Pană, M. "Health Psychology and Medical Communication". 2020, Bucharest: Carol Davila Publishing Press. 3. Popa-Velea, O. - "Behavioral Sciences in Medicine", 2015, Bucharest: Carol Davila Publishing Press - (volume 1) pp.11-35, 43-56, 145-154, 160-167, 170-184, 189-202, 206-213, 236-247; - (volume 2) pp.422-471, 474-485, 487-499, 533-542, 544-562. 4. (OPTIONAL) French, D., Vedhara, K., Kaptein, A., Weinman, J. "Health Psychology" (2nd Edition), 2010, London: BPS Blackwell. - „Illness-related cognition and behaviour” (pag.149-161). „Symptom perception and help seeking” (pag.162-174), „Adherence to advice and treatment (pag.175-188), „Coping with stress” (pag.271-282), „Social support” (pag.283-293). 5. (OPTIONAL) Bradley Wright, K., Sparks, L., O' Hair, H.D. "Health Communication in the 21st Century", 2012, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. - „Provider-patient communication” (pag.17-55). 6. (OPTIONAL) American Psychiatric Association "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of mental disorders (DSM-V) (5th Ed.), 2013, Washington, DC. Description of main personality disorders: paranoid (pag.649-652), schizoid (pag.652-655), histrionic (pag.667-669), obsessive-compulsive (pag.678-682). 7. De la Torre-Luque, A., Gambará, H., López, E., Cruzado, J.A. (2016). Psychological treatments to improve quality of life in cancer contexts: A meta-analysis, <i>International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology</i>, 16: 211-219.		

9. Corroboration of the subject content with the expectations of the representatives of the epistemic community, professional associations, and major employers in the field of the programme of study

The appropriate training in this course offers the premises for a better management of the clinical cases within the portfolio of somatic diseases in which a significant etiopathogenic contribution is played by the psychopathogenic factors, as well as a more fructuous collaboration in these circumstances with the clinical psychologist



10. Assessment

Type of activity	Assessment criteria	Assessment methods	Assessment weighting within the final grade
Course	Knowledge of theoretical notions taught at the course	Written exam: 45 questions (one correct variant out of five)	85%
Practical	Knowledge of the practical applications exemplified at the practicals	Written exam with the teaching assistant: 15 questions (one correct variant out of five)	15%
	Attendance at the seminar	Fulfilling the criterion of min.70% attendance	
Minimum performance standard			
Correct answer at min.30% of exam questions and passing the seminar exam			

Date of filing
28.09.2022

Signature of the course
tenured coordinator

Signature of the seminar tenured
coordinator

Associate Professor Dr. Ovidiu Popa-Velea

Senior Lecturer Dr Liliana Diaconescu

Date of approval in the
Council of the Department:

Signature of the Head of the
Department