

Master of Social Science in Community Mental Health Promotion

Module Descriptors

Discourses and Diversity in Community Psychology (NQF 9, 18 credits)

In this module, the student will develop a better understanding and facilitate deeper insights in theories and discourses of Community Psychology. The student will develop a comprehensive review of conceptual frameworks for Community Psychology as well as key values and debates within the field. The student will explore the genesis of Community Psychology as a discipline in South Africa and how Community Psychology in South Africa was spurred by debates relating to the relevance of psychology as a discipline in this country. This will enable the students to engage with and critique of current research or practices within Community Psychology globally and to critically assess the relevance of Community Psychology in South Africa and the significance of it for South African communities, families and individuals. Furthermore, the module is designed to critically engage with diversity as a central issue in Community Psychology discourse and uses a unique applied approach within sessions to explore contextual themes that have shaped diversity in South African communities. Thus, the module examines themes of marginalization, prejudice and sustainability and contextual social problems relevant to Community Psychology. The global challenges of Community Psychology, and how constructs of well-being and oppression are central to community mental health promotion, will be addressed. Furthermore, the student will be afforded opportunities to conceptualise how to begin to engage with some of the complex challenges within communities in South Africa. The student will also be afforded opportunities to evaluate the intended and unintended consequences of interventions within an awareness of the unique ecological system of South Africa. The module will allow the student to begin to use learned discourses to communicate and contribute to the conversations in the fields of Community Psychology with new insights.

Effective Community-Based Intervention (NQF 9, 10 credits)

This four-day intensive module engages the student in various paradigms prevalent in the field of Community Psychology, including choice and action implications of post-positivist, constructionist, transformative, and critical paradigms. The relevance of these paradigms for conceptualising community-based intervention in South African communities will be critically assessed. Furthermore, the philosophy, theories, and discourses that underpin community-based planning and intervention will be explored, together with developing knowledge, skills, and processes necessary in the pursuit of social justice and social change, given South Africa's history of oppression and its current diverse social and cultural context. This module brings together concepts of knowledge acquisition, autonomous leadership, and activism in the pursuit of transforming the field of South African psychology to contribute to the transformation objectives of the South African context. This module will stimulate reflexivity in the manner in which students work with people, and help inform the consideration of innovative tools that facilitate a

conducive environment for communities to craft and enact their own realities. In addition, this module will provide an opportunity for students to understand various interlocking systems that make up a particular context, and how to design a community-based intervention. Through engagement with this module, the student will become mindful of the possible intended and unintended consequences of community-based interventions in South Africa as well as evaluate the evolution of community planning and intervention.

Theory and Practice for Community-Based Participatory Action Research (NQF 9, 18 credits)

In this module, the student will engage critically and in-depth with the history, theoretical foundations, key principles, and practice of Community Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR). The student will explore and critically evaluate the design and function of CBPAR projects, the rationale for the selection of particular tools, the use of technology, as well as the advantages and potential disadvantages of CBPAR. In addition, considerations such as the role of the researcher, working with diverse communities, power dynamics, building relationships, establishing trust, and maintaining partnerships will be reviewed. Throughout the module the student will grapple with the ethical and methodological complexities of CBPAR projects and will be given the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the ability to make autonomous and ethical decisions. In exploring the theory, purpose, design, process, and ethical considerations related to CBPAR, this module will equip the student with the knowledge and skills required for their final Community Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) project.

Health Systems, Human Rights and Advocacy (NQF 9, 10 credits)

This four-day intensive provides the student with the opportunity to engage in critical discussion and dialogue with a comprehensive overview of community mental health systems both internationally and within the South African context. Specific focus will include the South African Constitution, the South African Human Rights Bill, and the South African White Paper on Mental Health in South Africa, as well as co-existing current legislation that affects service delivery. Throughout the intensive, a range of innovative workshops for advocacy and interventions will be highlighted, in conjunction with the theory of intersectionality. The intensive aims to equip the student with the knowledge and skills to intervene and advocate for vulnerable and key populations to ensure their human rights remain intact.

Social Innovation: Theory and Impact (NQF 9, 18 credits)

This module outlines the concepts and frameworks of social innovation and addresses their relevance for community development. In this module the student will develop specialist knowledge in the themes, discourses and practices of social innovation to enable engagement with, and critique of current research and practices, both nationally and internationally. Critical focus is given to the theory and processes of social innovation including: understanding systems, hierarchical relations and targeting of interventions, the role of social innovation vis-à-vis purely market based, and public sector interventions in developing countries, with the aim of identifying key role players necessary for successful social innovation. Furthermore, the common challenges faced by those designing and implementing social innovation interventions and assessing systems and frameworks for engaging investors and stakeholders, will be interrogated. The ability to evaluate processes and improve interventions will also be explored.

Strategic Leadership (NQF 9, 10 credits)

The quality of any intervention into communities in South Africa depends in part on the quality and understanding of leadership and their capacity to act in transformational ways. This module will enhance the student's capacity to engage in critical reflection and provide students with insight into their levels of emotional intelligence, emotional resilience and a strategic understanding of how they need to facilitate, guide and support people. The next 50 years will be a period of great change in the nature of life, power, and how we mobilise toward transformation. Students will explore and engage in critical discussion about the digital revolution, its resulting disruptions and challenges, and climate change, and will explore their own struggles around power, resources and access. The need for leaders who can manage consistent change and disruption, while remaining steady and have the capacity to lead individuals and communities to opportunity and growth are crucial.

Mental Health Promotion and Project Management (NQF 9, 18 credits)

This module recognises the value of mental health promotion and its intersection with prevention and social justice aspects. It places the unique South African context at the heart of the community's well-being, describing the process to effective mental health promotion and interventions. The module explores the theoretical foundations of successful interventions. It recognises the importance of effective, relevant and innovative mental health and preventative practices that are aimed at promoting the mental well-being of individuals, families, groups or communities. Mental health promotion initiatives and interventions must be feasible and sustainable, as such the module provides insight into how this can be achieved through monitoring and evaluation processes. The tools necessary for developing, implementing and monitoring preventative and developmental programmes will be explored. Students will develop an understanding of the project planning process, project risk management, formulating a budget and how to effectively manage a project team.

Mini-Dissertation on Community-Based Participatory Action Research Project (NQF 9, 60 credits)

This module is comprised of the Community Placement Partnership, Community-Based Participatory Action Research Project (PARP) and mini-dissertation component of the Masters of Social Science (Community Mental Health Promotion). The community partnership is designed to give students exposure and experience in applying their knowledge, theories and skills within a specific community setting and to gain invaluable exposure to the inner workings of community organisations. The intention throughout the partnership and CBPARP is to broaden training and thinking in mental health care beyond working with the needs of individuals to include addressing the needs and wellness of groups, organisations and communities. As such, no counselling of individual clients should be conducted in the community organisation, even if the student is a registered professional. The specific community organisations have been chosen where SACAP has established an ongoing relationship with specific communities, community organisations and with new organisations that have interests which are well aligned with the overall aims of the MSocSci programme. Because of the time constraints of the academic programme, the scope of the community partnership and CBPAR project are limited and specific.

Social Entrepreneurship (NQF 9, 10 credits)

This module prepares students to understand how to address community mental health challenges through innovative social entrepreneurship approaches. Students will explore the theory of

entrepreneurship, specifically focusing on social entrepreneurship and its place within the community mental health sector. Students will enhance their capacity to engage an entrepreneurial mind-set and develop entrepreneurial skills. Students will practise adopting an entrepreneurial mind-set in their work, whether they are creating a business initiative themselves, or using this mind-set as an employee within an organisation, to identify and harness gaps and opportunities.

MSocSci Preparative Workshops (NQF 9, 12 credits)

Throughout the course of the Master's programme, students are required to engage in a series of six three-hour workshops which cover the following topics: How to Succeed in your Masters; Preparing for your Community Placement; Technologies for Data Collection and Analysis; Ethics and Ethical Clearance, Implementing your Community Intervention; and Writing your Master's Dissertation.