

Bachelor of Psychology (BPsych)

Module Descriptors

Academic Literacy (NQF 5, 12 credits)

This module is designed to develop academic and information literacy competency and assists the student with a set of values and skills necessary for academic success. These skills will enable the student to not only comply with the required academic standards of the South African College of Applied Psychology (SACAP) but will also prepare the student for success throughout their academic and professional careers. This module aims to guide the student through developing information literacy competencies, understanding the value of academic honesty and integrity, developing academic reading and writing skills, and finding one's own academic identity and using one's own academic voice.

Introduction to Psychology A (NQF 5, 12 credits)

This module introduces the student to the diverse field of Psychology and provides an overview of some of the various perspectives that have emerged in Psychology over the years. The student will be introduced to central theories from the numerous sub-fields in the discipline of Psychology, such as Research Psychology, Biological and Neuropsychology, Developmental Psychology, and Cognitive Psychology. Throughout the module, the student will be exposed to South African case studies on various topics.

Introduction to Psychology B (NQF 5, 12 credits)

This module follows from the Introduction to Psychology A module and continues to provide the student with a broad understanding of the field of Psychology. The module introduces the student to the terminology, theories and principles related to Personality, Social Psychology, Psychology and Health, and Mental Health Issues in the in South African context. Various Psychotherapeutic modalities will be introduced and a broad overview of the field of Organisational Psychology will be explored. Throughout the module, the student will engage with African theories and perspectives in these sub-fields of Psychology as well as South African case studies on the various topics.

Counselling Modalities 1 (NQF 5, 14 credits)

This module introduces the student to the theoretical foundations of counselling and psychotherapy. Throughout the study of this module, the student will explore various theoretical approaches to counselling and psychotherapy, including the history and development of each theory, key theorists, and the theory's perspective on personality development. In addition, the student will engage with the implications of these on personality theory and counselling modalities. While this module is primarily interested in the theoretical foundations of the different counselling modalities, rather than the application thereof, basic techniques, therapeutic goals, and processes will be explored. This module

focuses on the contextual issues facing counselling and psychotherapy in South Africa, the basic ethical principles requiring consideration in counselling, as well as the following approaches to counselling and psychotherapy: Psychoanalytic Therapy; Jungian Analysis and Therapy; Adlerian Therapy; Existential Therapy; Person-Centred Therapy; and Gestalt Therapy.

Counselling Modalities 2 (NQF 5, 14 credits)

This module continues to introduce the student to the theoretical foundations of counselling and psychotherapy. Throughout this module, the student will gain an understanding of the history and background of various counselling modalities, the theoretical underpinning of each modality, as well as the key theorists for each modality and their perspectives on personality development. In addition, the student will explore the implications of these perspectives on counselling interaction. While this module is primarily interested in the theoretical foundations of the different counselling modalities, rather than the application thereof, basic techniques, therapeutic goals, and processes will be addressed. Counselling Modalities 2 focuses on the following: Behaviour Therapy; Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT); Cognitive Therapy; Choice Theory/Reality Therapy; Feminist Therapy; Solution Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT); Narrative Therapy; Affirmative counselling practices; Family Therapy; and an integrative approach to therapy.

Language and Communication Skills in isiXhosa (CPT) or isiZulu (JHB) (NQF 5, 14 credits)

These modules acknowledge the need that exists for the development of 'profession specific' language to prepare the Registered Counsellor for spheres of work where English or Afrikaans is not the first language of choice. This is in light of the constitutional provision for multilingualism and the advancement of the status and use of the African languages in the National language policy for Higher Education proposed by the Ministry of Education in 2002, Section 3.1.2. These modules highlight the fact that language is more than a set of grammatical rules, with attendant sets of vocabulary to be memorised, but addresses how language is a dynamic resource for creating meaning with the emphasis on learning a language as a social process. Whereas immersion is the best option for an understanding of cultural experiences, the modules hope to use language to gain an understanding of specific cultural experiences and beliefs amongst amaXhosa and amaZulu.

Fundamentals of a Helping Relationship (NQF 5, 14 credits)

This module introduces the student to the essential skills embedded in the helping relationship and prepares the student with the fundamental skills for providing counselling support to others. The module lays a foundation for students in understanding the terminology, key concepts, and the relevant theoretical models related to the profession of counselling. It further teaches the student how to engage in helping relationships and the values that drive these relationships. The module focuses on core counselling skills, such as: attending skills, active listening skills, contracting skills, paraphrasing, summarising, identifying and reflecting feelings, asking questions, the skill of challenging, goal setting and evaluation, and supporting and encouraging the client. The student will explore the value of the counselling environment and the importance of becoming a reflexive practitioner. The Relational Skills Model will be unpacked and comprise of five phases, these are: (i) establishing the relationship, (ii) developing the relationship, (iii) working with the relationship, (iv) the established relationship, and (v) maintaining the relationship.

Diversity in the South African Context (NQF 5, 14 credits)

This module is designed to engage and explore diversity within South Africa. The purpose of the module is to create awareness of the impact of context and contextualised dynamics that ultimately shape the development of individuals and counselling practice within South Africa. The module also builds on awareness and expands the student's knowledge of issues of diversity. Diversity within this module is explored as a multidimensional combination of culture, worldview and identity, oppression, power, privilege, race, gender, sexuality, vulnerability, spirituality, religion and disability. The student will be equipped with an awareness of the uniqueness of the South African context and an ability to explore South African identity and come to grips with influences that have shaped and continue to shape South African communities, families and individuals. An understanding of ecological systems theory will be grasped and the development of self in the context of community reflected on. Throughout the module, the student's knowledge of specific contexts will be expanded in order to deepen students' critical awareness, respect, and acceptance of cultural worldviews, behaviour, and contextualised dynamics that ultimately shape the development of individuals and counselling practice within South Africa. The module also builds on awareness and knowledge and encourages the student to apply knowledge, while also conceptualising possible action for effective change within the South African context.

Developmental Psychology A (NQF 5, 14 credits)

Developmental Psychology A focuses on themes in developmental psychology and offers an overview of human development at various stages of life, including conception, infancy, childhood and adolescence. The module explores descriptions of specific aspects of human development, including physical, cognitive, personality, and social development. The following theoretical frameworks will be referred to when engaging with human development across the life-span: Freud's theory of psychosexual development, Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, and Piaget and Vygotsky's theories of cognitive development. The student will also be given the opportunity to explore the impact of socio-cultural contexts on human development, specifically within the South African context, as well as engage with the connection between their life experiences and the theories and process of human development.

Developmental Psychology B (NQF 6, 14 credits)

This module explores adult lifespan development and ageing within the framework of the major areas of development; inclusive of physical development, cognitive development, personality development, and social development. Key theoretical approaches will be discussed that explain adult development and ageing across the major areas of development. This module adopts a holistic approach to adult development and ageing through consideration of the challenges that people experience as they age, alongside its effects on the person's general health and well-being.

Counselling Skills and Process Development (NQF 6, 14 credits)

This module builds on and consolidates counselling competencies gained in Fundamentals of a Helping Relationship and continues to develop the students counselling skills. The module addresses on a deeper level the counselling framework from Fundamentals of a Helping Relationship and places particular focus on the integration of Egan's Skilled Helper Model. The module provides students with an opportunity to further operationalize their helping skills through counselling role plays. Throughout the module, students will be taught to engage in a process of critical self-reflexivity as they sharpen their counselling skills.

Introduction to Psychometric Assessment (NQF 6, 12 credits)

This module provides students with the introductory theory and knowledge embedded in psychometric testing and psychological assessment. Important aspects the module explores is the process involved in psychological assessment (pre, during and post-assessment phases), the development of psychometric measures, the purpose thereof, types of assessment, scales of measurement, and psychometric properties (validity and reliability). The module highlights the scope and role of the Registered Counsellor in the dynamic process of assessment, with a key focus on ethical and legal matters related to assessment. The module concludes with reviewing the advantages and challenges of computer and internet-based assessment, with a specific focus on the future of psychometric assessment.

Gender, Sexuality and HIV Counselling (NQF 6, 15 credits)

This module offers a theoretical foundation of the key concepts embedded in the study of gender, sexuality and the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). It further provides students with a good grounding of the issues related to gender, sexuality, and the current HIV discourses in South Africa. This module encourages the student to engage with contemporary material, that is exciting, challenging, and key to our fluid and dynamic identities, intimate relationships, and our social and cultural positions. The student is encouraged to engage in a process of critical self-reflection on their relationship with gender and sexuality in a counselling context. The student will grapple with the complexity of gender-related challenges and the importance of gender and sexuality in a variety of social contexts and circumstances. Additionally, this module scrutinises gender discourses with respect to persons whose gender identities, and/or behaviours are dissimilar from traditional binary gender roles. This module further explores how gender fluidity and non-conforming genders and identities are currently expressed within the South African context. Finally, this module will address the contemporary landscape of HIV, tuberculosis and sexually transmitted infections in South Africa, with special reference to prevention, antiretroviral (ARV) compliance, and the impact of the disclosure of HIV status with specific reference to the adolescent population.

Introduction to Community Development (NQF 6, 12 credits)

This module lays a conceptual foundation for the processes and skills required to address culturally appropriate responses to community based challenges. The module will introduce macro theories pertaining to development as well as providing an understanding of the basics of community development with a view to rendering effective psychological services. In this module students will gain an understanding of the meaning and contextualization of poverty and the global and local issues contributing to this. Students will identify the clusters that create the deprivation trap and be able to describe the process of community development, its features and outcomes and the necessary steps in working towards breaking the cycle of poverty in different cultural settings. Students will learn to demonstrate the kinds of skills necessary for the community development process with a particular focus on communication, and recognizing their own, and others,' roles in community development.

Crisis and Trauma Counselling (NQF 6, 14 credits)

This module explores the counselling context with particular reference to people who have experienced situations of crisis and trauma. The module provides the student with the knowledge and skills needed for the effective intervention and management of a crisis. In this module, students would be able to differentiate between a crisis and trauma, and the types of intervention strategies that each requires. This module explores the foundations of trauma counselling related to health, illness, death, the family context

and the phenomenology of rape in South Africa. It further provides an understanding of the effects of indirect trauma and introduces the student to the following intervention strategies: brief interventions, cognitive behavioural counselling, narrative practices, and strengths-based interventions. Further areas of foci for this module include the exploration of ways to effectively manage behavioural and emotional responses to crisis and trauma contexts, the assessment of a person who has been exposed to crisis and trauma incidents, as well as how best to respond in such contexts, and when to refer the person for specialist services.

Community Psychology (NQF 6, 14 credits)

The module introduces the student to the field of community psychology, specifically looking at the historical development of community psychology in the South African context. The unique social challenges faced by communities in South Africa will be explored through its conceptual definitions, looking at the implications for the community and the intervention strategies proposed. This will acquaint the student with the realities faced by many South African citizens. The module further delves into the concept of an African cosmology as well as culture, how the individual perceives themselves existing in a community with others, and how this reality impacts their position and role in the community. Considering that people interact with their social and physical environments and that a community may be considered a social system, with its interacting members comprising of various subsystems within it, students are familiarized with various ecological approaches that are used to better understand the community as a system. This module offers insight into the assessment of a community's needs and existing resources, as well as information on what to consider when planning and implementing a community project. This module further places emphasis on bringing community members together to collaboratively work on empowering the community resulting in greater social change.

Statistics for the Social Sciences (NQF 6, 14 credits)

This module introduces students to the basic concepts in social science research, and the statistical terminology and notation used when engaging in statistics. Descriptive data analysis techniques namely frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, variability, and probability in statistics will be explored. The underlying principles, practice and ethics in research for the behavioural sciences and various inferential data analysis techniques will be explored. The student will learn how to perform appropriate statistical techniques and how to interpret the results from quantitative analyses making sound conclusions with appropriate inferences.

Social Psychology (NQF 6, 14 credits)

This module introduces the student to the field of social psychology and explores the social environment in influencing attitudes and behaviour. This module describes social psychology and identifies how it is distinct from, but related to other areas of study within psychology. The history of social psychology will be reviewed by looking at key experiments in social psychology, e.g. Milgram's obedience experiment and the Stanford prison experiment. Various theories of social psychology will be unpacked and how it can be applied to better understand the individual in their social context, with particular emphasis on the formation of one's social identity, one's perception of the self, prosocial behaviour and anti-social behaviour. The role of cognition and emotion in the establishment of relationships, inclusive of the following key concepts will be explored extensively: attitudes, stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, conformity, social influence, and the determinants of aggression and happiness.

Needs Assessment in the South African Context (NQF 7, 14 credits)

This module provides the student with an opportunity to draw on the knowledge they have gained in other modules to conceptualise a plan in conducting a needs assessment. Students will be familiarised with the steps and processes to be followed in conducting a needs assessment within a community or organisational context. Various models will be highlighted to enable the student to identify strategic priorities in the needs assessment process. Considerations for managing, analysing, and using data, to identify priorities and to establish criteria for addressing community or organisational needs, will be identified. Further exploration will focus on the cyclical process that integrates needs assessment within the larger scope of strategic planning activities of communities or organisations.

Psychopathology (NQF 7, 14 credits)

This module introduces the student to the core theoretical aspects of psychopathology and the different ways in which abnormal behaviours manifest themselves. Students will be introduced to the landscape of mental illness and what distinguishes it from normal experiences, as well as some of the complexity involved in the understanding and diagnosis of mental disorders. Whilst there is a strong focus on the prevailing western systems of classification, namely the DSM-5 and the ICD-10, students will be encouraged to critically engage in some of the benefits, limitations and applicability of these nosology systems broadly, and specifically in a South African context. The module concludes with a critical examination of African Aetiological and Well-Being Perspectives and an overview of ethical considerations related to the diagnosis and treatment of individuals who experience mental illness.

Psychometric Assessment and Interpretation in Practice (NQF7, 14 credits)

The module involves a revision of key concepts involved in psychological assessment before teaching students how to conduct an intake interview and select a test battery for assessment purposes. The skills required to interpret and convey results, in verbal and written format, are highlighted. The focus then shifts to the training of students in the selection, use, administration, scoring and interpretation of a selection of psychological tests that form part of the list of psychological measures for use by Registered Counsellors as outlined by Form 258, published by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). Underlying theories of career counselling will be explored to assist students in understanding the theoretical rationale of various tests. Students will be trained in measures that fall into the following categories: interests, aptitude, ability and study habits.

Theories of Personality (NQF 7, 14 credits)

This module provides students with an opportunity to explore a range of theoretical frameworks that are used in the study of personality. This module further describes the development of the history of the study of personality and critically evaluates core definitions, assumptions and issues within the field of personality psychology. Concepts of assessment and research in the study of personality are described and various types of assessment instruments used in studying personality are explained. Key themes related to individual differences in people with reference to a variety of personality theories, including psychoanalytic, neo-analytic, social-behavioural, humanist, existential and trait theories of personality will be explored. Factors related to the unconscious, temperament, affect regulation and development of personality will be discussed.

Ethics and the Registered Counsellor in South Africa (NQF 7, 14 credits)

The focus of this module is to provide the student with a thorough input on ethical codes and principles that inform good practice in health care. Ethical decision making models are explored and the impact of social, cultural and personal values and beliefs are discussed. Knowledge of the code of professional ethics that guides the conduct of all aspects of psychological practice and research in accordance with guidelines for professional practice of the HPCSA and the Professional Board for Psychology will be attained. Relevant ethical rules, regulations, guidelines and policies are considered within the scope of practice of the Registered Counsellor in South Africa. Throughout the module, the student is exposed to current thinking regarding ethical practice in psychology in South Africa. Various ethical dilemmas are examined and the complexities of these in the application of psychological principles are considered.

Community Mental Health: Policy and Planning (NQF 7, 12 credits)

This course introduces the student to the fundamentals and complexities of the South African mental health system. Relevant legislative and policy frameworks that influence psychological practice and psychosocial service delivery, planning and research are introduced, and specific focus is given to mental health policy and planning in South Africa. The student will be exposed to pressing mental health challenges, including: trauma, violence, women's health, HIV, substance and process addictions, adolescence, suicide, self-harm, and key populations (including sex work MSM and IDU), all within the South African Context. The presence and/or absence of policies/planning that interface these challenges is central throughout the sessions. The module is designed to be practically focused, and encourages students to critically engage with the design, implementation, and evaluation of mental health policies and interventions supported with scholarly contemporary research within South African society.

Group Work Skills (NQF 7, 14 credits)

This module provides knowledge, skills and capabilities for effective interpersonal communication in group contexts. In this module, the student gains a broad understanding of contemporary interpersonal theory and practice, and a comprehensive skills-base to work effectively and efficiently with people in a variety of interpersonal situations within diverse social contexts. In this module, the student will develop an understanding of group work including the major types of groups; basic ideas of multicultural perspectives on group work and being a diversity-competent group worker. Ethical and legal issues in working with groups will be explored. Major categories of theoretical approaches to group counselling will be identified and an integrative approach to group work will be developed. A rationale for the importance of adequate preparation and an overview of the main tasks required in group processes will be explored. Characteristics, issues and challenges of designing and working with groups in a variety of settings will be discussed. Throughout this module, the student develops an understanding of the factors and influences that directly and indirectly affect interpersonal and group work communication processes.

Applied Perspectives on Psychosocial and Mental Health Challenges in South Africa (NQF 7, 14 credits)

This module has been designed for students to apply their acquired knowledge, and to provide a synthesis of their academic journey and learned theories in a comprehensive, practical and experiential learning environment. Recognition is afforded to the importance and value of mental health promotion. Students are provided with an opportunity to select a population, group, or individual they would like to work and to assess their need with the aim of planning and implementing their uniquely designed mental health

promotion prevention or intervention plan, strategy or programme. This module adopts a good theoretical approach to developing and evaluating intervention programmes and provide students with a step-by-step guide to mental health promotion, intervention planning and implementation. This module is a student-driven initiative requiring students to direct their learning activities from a more independent stance, supported by the relevant literature, and complemented by two formal fieldwork sessions.

Life Skills Planning and Psycho-educational Development (NQF 7, 12 credits)

This course emphasises the value of psycho-educational and life-skills-oriented interventions that are aimed at promoting the mental well-being of individuals, groups or communities, or assists in preventing illness. Students will be equipped with an understanding of the ethical and cultural considerations that affect the intervention process. Through this module, students will be provided with the tools they need to conceptualize, develop, and implement intervention strategies aimed at the particular needs of specific individuals and groups. An understanding of life-skills as adaptive, positive behaviours that enable individuals to deal effectively with the challenges of everyday life, is emphasized. The module emphasises the tools of self-awareness, esteem and confidence, problem solving, critical thinking and decision making skills, effective communication, negotiation and assertiveness skills, decision-making, creative thinking, interpersonal relationship skills, empathy, and coping with stress and emotions.

Applied Research Methodology for the Registered Counsellor (NQF 8, 12 credits)

This module explores various research methodologies frequently employed in studies within the social sciences. It further introduces the student to the philosophical assumptions that underpin research, as well as the paradigms embedded in one's choice and approach to research in a particular study. It explores the rationale behind adopting a quantitative or qualitative approach to research, relative to answering the research question/s. This module disseminates knowledge on the selection of a research design, sampling technique, data collection procedure, as well as the analysis of data and places emphasis on the importance of ethical principles that guide ethical research practices.

Advanced Psychometric Assessment and Interpretation in Practice (NQF 8, 12 credits)

In accordance with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA)'s scope of practice for the Registered Counsellor (Form 258), this module is a continuation of the students' training in psychological assessment. In this module, students will be practically trained in the selection, use, administration, scoring and interpretation of psychological measures. They will also deepen their understanding and skills in report writing and providing feedback on results. Within the scope of practice of the Registered Counsellor, students will explore various measures. The tests covered in this module fall into the following domains: Personality; Scholastic; Intelligence; and Learning Potential. The learning will include careful examination of the test manual so as to understand the test development, psychometric properties, administration, scoring, interpreting and reporting on the measures covered.

Research Thesis (NQF 8, 30 credits)

This module provides an opportunity for the student to engage in the research process and to conduct a research study on a researchable topic. This module holds a dual focus whereby students will conceptualize the research, write the proposal and collect the data as a group project, and then analyse, write up and

report on the findings in their individual capacity. Furthermore, this module enrolls the student in areas that are key to the research process. These areas consist of: i) the conceptualisation of the topic guided by the assigned supervisor, ii) an extensive literature search, iii) constructing relevant research questions, objectives and/or hypotheses, iv) detailing the methodology underlying the study, v) analysing the data, as well as vi) the presentation of the results. Ethical procedures specific to the research process will be explored, with strong impetus on the adherence of sound ethical practice in research and the dissemination of research findings. The research thesis module comprises of i) the research proposal, ii) the research mini-thesis, and iii) the research day poster presentation and is run over two academic terms.

Practicum (NQF 8, 72 credits)

The Practicum is a 6-month full-time module that provides an opportunity for professional students to engage with the community under supervision, at a partner site registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). The student will ensue practical training in accordance with the scope of practice for Registered Counsellors, legislated by the HPCSA as per Form 258. The focus for the practicum is to provide student Registered Counsellors with the opportunity to render psychological services that are focused on primary prevention and intervention for psychological difficulties in diverse community contexts as well as the promotion of psychosocial wellbeing and community-based care. The Practicum provides an opportunity for the student to work alongside other interdisciplinary professional teams to render effective mental health services, thereby protecting and promoting the well-being of the general public in South Africa. The Practicum is a full-time 6-month module that spans two academic terms in the final year of study.