PSYCHOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH

INTRODUCTION

Bearing in mind that mental health and wellbeing are central to the quality of life of persons and society, and that prevention, early detection, intervention and treatment of mental disorders considerably alleviate their personal, economic and social consequences, the objectives of this subject (based on the recommendations of the European Parliament) are: providing the appropriate competencies, knowledge and skills to promote mental health and wellbeing in the population (including all age groups and different genders, ethnic origins and socioeconomic groups); combatting stigmatization, discrimination and social exclusion; strengthening preventive action and self-help; and providing appropriate support and treatment to persons with mental health issues and their families and carers. For this purpose, priority will be given to the prevention of mental issues through social intervention, paying particular attention to vulnerable and marginalised groups, such as the unemployment, immigrants, (former) prisoners, users of psychotropic substances, persons with disabilities and persons with long-term illnesses.

The programme, taking as its starting point the contributions of basic, preventive, health and positive psychology, as well as the most influential mental health classification systems (DSM-IV-TR and CIE-10), will foster non-discrimination as regards access to treatment when prevention is not sufficient, in addition to recognizing the rights of persons with mental health issues to be integrated within the education and job market systems.

COMPETENCIES

- Apply the concepts and models of basic, preventive, health and positive psychology to the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and evaluation of mental disorders.
- Evaluate risk and protection factors in the different contexts in which persons, groups and communities live.
- Manage the most influential classification manuals relating to mental disorders.
- Use the social data permitting evaluation, diagnosis and intervention.
- Work in multidisciplinary teams.
- Defend the privacy of persons with mental health issues and assist them in their right to integration within the education system and job market, using the deontological, relational and communicative competencies necessary for ethical and high-quality professional practice.

On completing the subject, students must have addressed some aspect of the following competencies in depth:

- Evaluate possible needs and options to guide an intervention strategy.
- Respond to crisis situations evaluating the urgency of the situation, planning and carrying out actions to address the situation and reviewing outcomes.
- Work with behaviours representing a risk for the client system, identifying and evaluating the situations and circumstances shaping behaviours and preparing strategies to address them.
- Research, analyse, evaluate and use current knowledge regarding best practices in social work to review and update one's own knowledge on the scope of work.

CONTENT

1. Psychology and mental health: basic concepts. Dimensions of the problem. Contributions of basic, preventive, health and positive psychology. Models and levels of prevention. Models of wellbeing.

2. Research methods and models.

3. Knowledge and classification of mental disorders using the most influential manuals.

4. Theoretical models of evaluation and treatment.

5. Five priority areas to promote mental health and wellbeing: prevention of depression and suicide; mental health in young people and the education system; mental health in the workplace; mental health in the elderly and the fight against stigmatization and social exclusion.

6. Social work as an at-risk profession. Mental health in at-risk professions. Stress and trauma. Burnout syndrome. Coping with occupational stress. Self-help strategies.

7. Intervention in catastrophes and emergencies. Psychological consequences of and reactions to trauma. The role of the social worker.