

Identification	Subject name, code and number of credits	Contemporary Theories of Clinical Psychology, CPSY514, 3KU (6AKTS)
	Department	Psychology
	Program (Bachelor, Master)	Master
	Associated Term	Fall Semester 2026
	Instructor	Zarina Aliyeva
	Email:	mzarinaaz@gmail.com
	Phone:	-
	Lecture Room/Schedule	Mahsati str 11, (Neftchilar Corpus)
	Consultations	After classes
Language	English	
Compulsory/ Elective	Compulsory	
Prerequisites	-	
Textbooks and course materials	Main Textbooks 1. Thomas G. Plante. (2005). Contemporary Clinical Psychology. 2nd Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 2. Howard E.A. T., Lease H., Giffin N. (2016). Contemporary Theory and Practice in Counseling and Psychotherapy. Sage Publication. 3. David H. Barlow.(2011). The Oxford Handbook of Clinical Psychology. Oxford University Press. Additional readings 1. Graham Davey, Nick Lake and Adrian Whittington. (2015). Clinical Psychology. New York. 2. American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. DSM-5. Fifth Edition. Arlington, VA. 3. World Health Organization. (1990). The ICD-10: Classification of Mental and Behavioural Disorders. 4. American Psychological Association. (2017). Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.	
Course Description	Contemporary Theories of Clinical Psychology examines major contemporary theoretical perspectives used to understand psychological distress, psychopathology, and clinical functioning. The course provides an integrated overview of cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic, humanistic-existential, systemic, interpersonal, developmental, biological, and integrative approaches to clinical psychology. Emphasis is placed on the theoretical foundations of psychological disorders, mechanisms of psychological change, and the relationship between theory, assessment, case conceptualization, and clinical intervention. Students critically examine contemporary developments in clinical psychology and consider how different theoretical perspectives explain the origins, maintenance, and treatment of psychological problems. The course also addresses evidence-based practice, cultural and contextual factors, individual differences, and ethical considerations in clinical work. Through the analysis of current research, clinical cases, and theoretical models, students develop the ability to compare and critically evaluate different approaches and to apply contemporary clinical theories to the formulation and understanding of psychological difficulties.	

Course objectives	The course aims to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of contemporary theoretical approaches in clinical psychology and their historical, theoretical, and empirical foundations. It seeks to familiarize students with major theoretical models, including psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, humanistic, family systems, integrative, and biopsychosocial approaches, and to examine their relevance to contemporary clinical practice. The course aims to develop students' ability to critically compare different theoretical perspectives and understand how they explain the development, maintenance, and change of psychological difficulties. Particular emphasis is placed on the relationship between theoretical orientation, clinical case conceptualization, and the selection of appropriate psychotherapeutic interventions. The course further aims to develop students' ability to critically evaluate empirical evidence and apply evidence-based principles in clinical psychology. It also encourages students to examine the development of their own theoretical orientation while considering individual, developmental, family, cultural, contextual, and ethical factors in clinical practice. Through lectures, discussions, practical case analysis, and presentations, students are expected to develop critical thinking and the ability to apply contemporary clinical theories to real-world psychological problems.		
Learning Outcomes	1. Explain the historical, theoretical, and empirical foundations of contemporary clinical psychology and major contemporary approaches to counseling and psychotherapy. 2. Describe the fundamental principles, assumptions, and key concepts of major theoretical models in clinical psychology, including psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, humanistic, family systems, integrative, and biopsychosocial approaches. 3. Compare and critically evaluate different theoretical approaches in terms of their explanations of psychological distress, psychopathology, and psychological change. 4. Analyze clinical cases from different theoretical perspectives and identify relevant psychological, developmental, interpersonal, family, biological, and contextual factors. 5. Apply contemporary clinical theories to case conceptualization and establish connections between theoretical orientation, clinical assessment, and psychotherapeutic intervention. 6. Evaluate and justify the selection of appropriate psychotherapeutic interventions based on theoretical perspectives and the characteristics of individual clinical cases. 7. Critically evaluate empirical evidence and demonstrate an understanding of evidence-based practice in contemporary clinical psychology. 8. Develop and articulate a personal theoretical orientation by integrating relevant theoretical perspectives and considering their applicability to clinical practice. 9. Demonstrate an understanding of the major fields and areas of professional practice in clinical psychology and their relationship to contemporary theoretical approaches. 10. Demonstrate effective academic communication, critical thinking, teamwork, and presentation skills through class discussions, practical case analyses, and presentations.		
Teaching methods	Lecture	+	
	Group discussions	+	
	Activities	+	
	Analysis of activities	+	
	Other: Analysis of practical cases	+	
	Components	Deadlines	Percentage (%)

Evaluation Criteria	Midterm exam	Week 8	30
	Individual assignment	November	10
	Being active member of learning community	During semester	5
	Attendance	During semester	5
	Presentation/Group discussion	December	10
	Final exam	January	40
Class Policy	Midterm and Final exams: ➤ Information: detailed, accurate, relevant; key points highlighted; ➤ Use of relevant and accurate Evidence: key points supported with highly relevant and accurate evidence, critically evaluated; ➤ Points will be taken for any case of cheating or irrelevant information to the questions. Individual Assignment: The Individual Assignment will be an academic essay based on a selected diagnosis, pathology, or clinical condition. To achieve the maximum score, students should: Select an appropriate diagnosis/pathology/clinical condition. Clearly introduce and define the condition and explain its etiology, pathophysiology, clinical features, and relevant mechanisms, as appropriate to the topic. Demonstrate a clear understanding of the condition rather than simply describing information from textbooks or websites. Select an appropriate therapy/intervention for the chosen condition. Explain why the selected therapy is appropriate for the diagnosis/pathology. Describe the mechanism, principles, goals, and expected effects of therapy. Critically evaluate the therapy using relevant scientific evidence. Discuss relevant advantages, limitations, contraindications, risks, or clinical considerations, where appropriate. Where relevant, compare the selected therapy with alternative treatment approaches and explain why the chosen approach may be preferable in a particular clinical context. Use recent, reliable, and academically appropriate sources, such as peer-reviewed journal articles, systematic reviews, clinical guidelines, and authoritative academic texts. Demonstrate independent analysis and critical thinking, rather than presenting a collection of facts. Organize the essay logically, with a clear introduction, well-developed body paragraphs, and a strong conclusion. Ensure that all information and references are accurate and appropriately cited. Avoid plagiarism. Ideas, evidence, and wording taken from other sources must be appropriately acknowledged. Maximum-grade principle: Do not only describe disease and therapy. Explain the condition, select an appropriate therapy, justify your choice, critically evaluate the evidence, and demonstrate independent clinical/scientific reasoning. Presentation ➤ Presentation Skills: clear, lively, imaginative; good use of visual aids (where appropriate); ➤ Information: detailed, accurate, relevant; key points highlighted; ➤ Structure: rigorously argued, logical, easy to follow;		

Activity and Attendance:

- High attendance (missing of 2 classes without valid reasons results in losing one point)
- Time Management: perfectly timed, well organised.
- Active participation in class activities, initiative, teamwork results in highest point

AI Ethics and Responsible Use of AI

AI tools may be used for learning support, brainstorming, language improvement, and clarification of concepts when permitted. Students remain responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of their work. AI-generated information and references must be verified using reliable academic sources. Students must not use AI to fabricate information or references, or during assessments where its use is not authorized. Confidential or identifiable clinical or personal information must not be entered into AI systems. Where required, AI use must be appropriately acknowledged.

Week	Date	Topics	Reference
1.	17/09/26	Contemporary approaches to counseling and psychotherapy. Overview	Howard E.A. T., Lease H., Giffin N. (2016). Contemporary Theory and Practice in Counseling and Psychotherapy. Sage Publication. pp. 1-29
2.	24/09/26	Contemporary theory in its historical and empirical context	Howard E.A. T., Lease H., Giffin N. (2016). Contemporary Theory and Practice in Counseling and Psychotherapy. Sage Publication. pp. 29-58; The Oxford Handbook of Clinical Psychology (2011). Oxford University Press. pp. 23-34
3.	01/10/26	Four Major Theoretical Models in Clinical Psychology	The Oxford Handbook of Clinical Psychology (2011). Oxford University Press. pp. 98-127
4.	08/10/26	A psychodynamic approach	Thomas G. Plante. (2005). Contemporary Clinical Psychology. 2nd Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. pp. 117-122, 135
5.	15/10/26	Behavioral and Cognitive-Behavioral Approaches	Thomas G. Plante. (2005). Contemporary Clinical Psychology. 2nd Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. pp. 122-128, 135
6.	22/10/26	Humanistic approach	Thomas G. Plante. (2005). Contemporary Clinical Psychology. 2nd Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. pp. 128-130, 136
7.	29/10/26	Family systems approach	Thomas G. Plante. (2005). Contemporary Clinical Psychology. 2nd Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. pp. 130-134, 136
8.	05/11/26	Midterm exam	All references from the reading list
9.	12/11/26	Integrative Theories in Contemporary Clinical Psychology	Thomas G. Plante. (2005). Contemporary Clinical Psychology. 2nd Edition. John Wiley

Week	Date	Topics	Reference
			& Sons, Inc. pp. 141-148
10.	19/11/26	Biopsychosocial Approaches in Contemporary Clinical Psychology	Thomas G. Plante. (2005). Contemporary Clinical Psychology. 2nd Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. pp. 148-171
11.	26/11/26	Developing a personal theoretical orientation	Howard E.A. T., Lease H., Giffin N. (2016). Contemporary Theory and Practice in Counseling and Psychotherapy. Sage Publication. pp. 465-495
12.	03/12/26	Selection of psychotherapeutic interventions	Thomas G. Plante. (2005). Contemporary Clinical Psychology. 2nd Edition. John Wiley & Sons, Inc. pp.263-275
13.	10/12/26	Fields of clinical psychology	The Oxford Handbook of Clinical Psychology (2011). Oxford University Press. pp. 609-877
14.	17/12/26	Evidence-based practice in clinical psychology	The Oxford Handbook of Clinical Psychology (2011). Oxford University Press. pp. 128-150
15.	24/12/26	Presentations	All references from the reading list
16.	07/01/27	Final exam	