

Not Law

Elective course description

Leveraging psychology to better understand Society and the Self
By Tamara Hovorun

The material covered by this elective focuses on understanding individual development, particularly in young adulthood. It explores effective functioning in various spheres of social and private life, emphasizing personal growth and psychological enrichment. The course also addresses mechanisms for reducing and preventing pathological behaviors such as depression, anxiety, and eating disorders.

To better understand the ways to prosper as youth, students will explore their own life through the influence of their parents' communication styles. They will examine the origins of main personality traits and behavioral characteristics, as well as the details of self-concept and self-esteem. Lectures will enrich students' understanding of core psychological concepts related to personality-specific peculiarities in modern cultures, such as feminine and masculine, and collectivistic and individualistic distinctions. The course will also cover basic indicators of subjective well-being, including conscious harmony between terminal and instrumental values, the androgynous concept of gender behavior, emotional intelligence, internal job satisfaction necessary for self-actualization, communication skills in transactional analysis, and reducing self-discrepancy.

The main objective of the elective is to acquaint students with practical knowledge to better understand the differences between socialized personality structures and behaviors, such as criminal and prosocial. This course is also oriented towards acquainting youth with personality disorders that stem from a constellation of pathological traits and features. As future lawyers, students should understand and be able to analyze these disorders in the process of investigating the motivations behind illegal behaviors, as well as identifying the strengths and opportunities for individuals to overcome these disorders and maintain well-being. Finally, the course will also focus on love, intimacy, and close relationships, discussing major psychological theories as they apply to young adulthood.

Identifying the genuine drives behind human actions is mostly based on knowledge of personality and social psychology. This course focuses on the different ways of transforming human beings from biological units to socially mature personalities. This transformation depends not only on external factors but also on internal ones, including self-reflection, self-comparison, and self-development through the estimation of self-schematic values, strivings, aspirations, and self-helping behavior in the perception of everyday micro stresses and heavy moments, such as post-traumatic syndrome triggered by crisis.

The social and private lives of individuals depend on their skills in self-presentation by analyzing their own pros and cons in different spheres of human activities. Students will be

able to apply psychological concepts from main personality theories—psychoanalytic, learning (cognitive-behavioral), humanistic-existential, traits, and socio-cultural determination—in analyzing normal and deviant individual behavior. They will use psychological terms in estimating ordinary individual or group behavior and interpreting the social-psychological causes of charismatic personality influence on positive and negative social movements in small and large groups. Additionally, students will understand and forecast the possibility of antisocial mass behavior under the influence of stalker and harassment effects.

Durga and Sinha Psychology for India with an Introduction by G. Misra and A. Dalal, SAGE Publications India, 2015. 221p.

At Risk Youth: A Comprehensive Response for Counsellors, Teachers, Psychologists, and Human Service Professionals, 4th edition by J. Jeffries Mc Whirter. Brooks / Cole Publishing Co. 2007. 378 p.

Seligman, M. E. P. Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment. New York: Free Press. 2002. 321p.