COURSE DETAIL

EVIDENCE-BASED PSYCHODYNAMIC PSYCHOLOGY
Country Italy
Host Institution University of Padua
Program(s) Psychology and Cognitive Science, Padua
UCEAP Course Level Upper Division
UCEAP Subject Area(s) Psychology
UCEAP Course Number 184
UCEAP Course Suffix
UCEAP Official Title EVIDENCE-BASED PSYCHODYNAMIC PSYCHOLOGY
UCEAP Transcript Title PSYCHODYNAMIC PSY
UCEAP Quarter Units 5.00
UCEAP Semester Units 3.30

Course Description

This advanced course addresses the ongoing theoretical and scientific crisis in psychotherapy research. It begins by presenting and critically discussing the evidence-based treatment (EBT) framework, its historical development, recent meta-analytic findings, and its epistemological and methodological limitations. Particular attention is given to the historical, cultural, and methodological challenges of studying psychodynamic psychology within this framework. On these grounds the course introduces the current effort in literature of pushing the field from its current state of caucus-race, toward individualized treatment and prevention practices. These efforts emphasize repeatable phenomena, causal evidence, and falsifiable theories, while remaining compatible with the unique demands of studying interpersonal relationships between reflective, self-updating individuals. To this end, the course offers a critical reinterpretation of core psychodynamic constructs, such as conflict, resistance, and defense mechanisms, reframing them in light of leading paradigms in neuroscience, cognitive psychology, evolutionary psychology, and infant research. These contemporary perspectives are used to revise and extend Freud’s theory based on decades of experimental evidence. Central attention is given to Karl Friston’s Free Energy Principle and the Bayesian brain model built upon it, as well as computational semiotics, the Dynamic Complex Systems framework, and recent advances in Attachment Theory, particularly regarding epistemic trust and mentalization. The course provides students with foundational knowledge of scientific literature in the field of psychotherapy, as well as the ability to engage with it critically. Furthermore, students are equipped with conceptual tools to develop a critical stance toward clinical models, their effectiveness, integration, and application in clinical practice. Students acquire advanced theoretical tools from an interdisciplinary framework and are trained to apply them to clinical cases, particularly in the context of case formulation.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number

PSQ5108762

Host Institution Course Title
EVIDENCE-BASED PSYCHODYNAMIC PSYCHOLOGY

Host Institution Course Details
https://unipd.coursecatalogue.cineca.it/corsi/2025/9969/insegnamenti/2025/51306...

Host Institution Campus

Host Institution Faculty
Psychology

Host Institution Degree
Second Cycle Degree in CLINICAL, SOCIAL AND INTERCULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

Host Institution Department

Course Last Reviewed
2025-2026

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