

STUDY GUIDE OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDIES PROGRAM

Environmental Communication and Health Promotion

<https://pchenv.uniwa.gr/>

ATHENS 2024

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University of West Attica

The University of West Attica was founded in March 2018 by Law 4521. The establishment of the newly established University came through the process of merging the TEI of Athens and the University of Piraeus Technological Sector. In 2019, the National School of Public Health joined the newly founded University.

The University of West Attica is a dynamic and constantly evolving institution that aspires to realize its vision and mission and achieve its goals, investing both in the development of modern teaching methods, adapted to the needs of students, the labor market and society, as well as in modern material and technical infrastructure (teaching resources, training rooms, laboratories) which it has.

Our University offers modern undergraduate and postgraduate programs, which provide our graduates with the opportunity to acquire specialized scientific knowledge, skills and abilities, connecting the academic community with society and the labor market.

At the University of West Attica there are a total of twenty-seven (27) departments, which operate under the academic umbrella of six (6) faculties, covering a wide range of scientific fields, such as social, administrative and economic sciences, engineering sciences, health and welfare sciences, food sciences and artistic studies.

According to official data, PADA is the third largest university institution in the country in terms of number of enrolled undergraduate students, with approximately 57,800 students. In order to meet the teaching, research and administrative needs of the University, 608 faculty members, 138 members of EDIP and ETEP and 345 members of administrative staff are employed on a permanent basis.

The combination of a high number of permanent, experienced and highly qualified human resources, along with the existing modern infrastructure, are elements that ensure the further academic development of the University.

Our University offers a wide range of educational services ranging from two-year courses to doctoral dissertations. In particular, HRW offers undergraduate studies leading to a 4-year degree (level 6) or a 5-year diploma in engineering postgraduate studies leading to a postgraduate degree (level 7) doctoral studies (level 8).

Purpose of the MSc

The Postgraduate Program entitled "Environmental Communication and Health Promotion" of the Department of Public and Community Health of the School of Public Health of the University of West Attica aims to further promote scientific knowledge, develop research and high-level specialization of graduates in theoretical and applied areas for issues related to both the promotion of responsible environmental behavior and health promotion. The Postgraduate Program entitled in October 2023 has received Certification from the International Organization ACQUIN.

ACQUIN is a school accreditation system founded as a consequence of the European Bologna process. It is located in Germany and is empowered to award its quality seal to study programs which have successfully undergone accreditation. ACQUIN operates internationally.

The purpose of the master is to provide a high level of postgraduate education in the scientific field of Environmental Communication and Health Promotion by providing them with specific information and critical assessment skills on environmental issues that undoubtedly cause a variety of public health effects. These skills will enable them to participate in and lead decision-making processes, thus determining the quality of health and the environment for decades to come.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Provision of academic knowledge in the field of Environmental Communication and further development of knowledge capital in the field of Ecotherapy and Health Promotion.
2. Conducting research studies in the subject and promoting the introduction of innovative epidemiological research programs.
3. Highlighting the applications of Environmental Communication in the fields of Ecotherapy and Health Promotion.
4. Development of research in the field of new technologies related to Ecotherapy and Health Promotion.
5. Evaluation of advanced and complex concepts, approaches and methods from the science of communication, with particular reference to inter- and interdisciplinary problems and approaches found in the scientific literature.
6. Apply appropriate design for quantitative and qualitative empirical research, selecting appropriate research methods for data collection and analysis and demonstrating the ability to identify needs for new theoretical, methodological and practical approaches.
7. Promote trainee collaboration with practitioners, scientists, policy makers and the general public and deliver project-based oral and written assignments in an interdisciplinary team.
8. Promoting the initiation of constructive interdisciplinary and interdisciplinary discussions and collaborations within and between various social and scientific organizations and professions.
9. Critical analysis of how different health, wellness, and health care knowledge, communications, and practices are used to shape and organize the lives of individuals, groups, and populations.
10. Assessing the tools used in scientific and social approaches to understanding, mediating, advocating for health and well-being and designing innovative ways to bridge these approaches.
11. Creating scientists with the required skills for a successful career in the private, public and academic sectors, in the prevention and promotion of Public Health.
12. Contribution to the upgrading of the health system and to the cooperation of the private sector with the public sector.
13. Preparation for doctoral level postgraduate studies.

Curriculum

In order to obtain the Postgraduate Diploma (MSc), the accumulation of 90 ECTS credits, attendance and successful completion of the relevant obligations of students during three semesters (30 credits/ECTS per semester) are required. The obligations include the preparation of a postgraduate dissertation. The attendance of all educational activities is mandatory and is a prerequisite for the evaluation of the student. Each course corresponds to 6 ECTS. In the third semester a compulsory Master's thesis of 30 ECTS is carried out. Alternatively, the possibility of a technical report is provided

Total ECTS of the programme 90.

traineeship Regulation

In the Study Program of the master's program, an internship of 30 ECTS credits - at least 500 hours of total workload in areas of environmental education and activity, is carried out as an alternative to writing a diploma thesis. It is recommended that the internship be done through the Academy of Environmental Educators of the Special Unit for Environmental Education, Training and Communication.

The goal of the Academy of Environmental Educators is pioneering education based on the specialization needs of those who train in the field of Environmental Awareness.

The Academy of Environmental Educators innovates in the training of the new generation of environmental educators. Learners acquire knowledge and skills to be able to contribute successfully at all levels of the educational system, Environmental Education Centers, cruise ships, museums, gardens (school, botanical, zoo) and the Mass Media. Therefore the participants will join the formal, non-formal and informal promotion of responsible environmental behavior.

The Summer Academy program is structured in 6 thematic units based on the principles defined by the environmental education standard of the National American Association of Environmental Educators (NAAEE).

The structure of the program in thematic sections:

Thematic Unit 1: Environmental Education

Thematic Unit 2: Foundations of Environmental Education

Thematic Unit 3: Professional Responsibilities of the Environmental Educator

Thematic Unit 4: Design and implementation of Environmental Education

Thematic Unit 5: Enhancing learning and promoting participation

Thematic Unit 6: Assessment and evaluation

In the context of the above thematic sections, lectures, special speeches and interactive practices (simulation exercises dealing with marine pollution, role-playing games for human rights and environmental refugees, etc.) are held in specially designed facilities. Boat trips and sailing lessons are also available.

The lecturers of the program are faculty members of HEI departments, specialized representatives of the Public Agency, specialist environmental scientists, representatives of major Environmental Organizations, professional journalists, photographers, directors and psychologists.

At the end of the scheduled hours, the students write a technical Internship report that they submit to the Director of the MPS.

The PMS Practice Manager has been appointed by the Assembly of the Department of Public and Community Health:

Kostantina Scanavi Professor

The PMS Internship Committee has been appointed by the Assembly of the Department of Public and Community Health:

Konstantina Scanavi Professor

Evanthia Sakellari Associate Professor

Evdokia Vassalou Assistant Professor

Curriculum

SEMESTER A (Fall)

Foundations of Environmental Communication - Protecting Health

6 ECTS- COMPULSORY

Course Coordinator: Professor Konstantina Skanavi

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Human health and well-being are inextricably linked in the web of interactions that characterize life on this planet, and the concept of communication plays a catalytic role in shaping these conditions. The natural environment affects humans and at the same time receives interventions from human societies. The modern way of life causes environmental and social problems arising from the increased consumer demands of people. Current challenges include environmental degradation, climate change, antimicrobial resistance, etc. Global processes of social transformation, related to livelihoods, agri-food networks and the environment, are taking place at both national and international levels. Such processes involve changes at different levels. The changes due to the challenges lead to intense debates about “what is the right way” and “what needs to be done” to address these imperatives. This course emphasizes how to manage change through the lens of communication. The pace of environmental degradation forces the participation of citizens in environmental decision-making. Every citizen must acquire the ability to understand environmental issues, perceive the causes of problems and evaluate possible solutions as well as have participatory skills. This requires the development of a communication process between citizens, administration and experts. Environmental Communication is the process that can ensure the promotion of the most appropriate decisions and legislation for the protection of the environment and the promotion of health. The ability of citizens to influence with their actions the public structure to promote environmental health is emphasized throughout the course. The main purpose of the course is to provide learners with specific information and critical evaluation skills regarding environmental problems. These skills will enable them to participate in decision-making processes, thereby determining the quality of health and the environment in the coming decades

Upon successful completion of the course, postgraduate students will be able to:

- understand the basic concepts and principles governing environmental communication.
- understand the importance of systems thinking and the need for collective action.
- understand the interrelationship between material well-being and the swelling of humanity's ecological footprint.
- conduct research studies in environmental communication and promote innovative programs.
- develop research in the field of new technologies related to environmental communication.

Introduction to Epidemiology and Public Health for Communication Professionals

6 ECTS/COMPULSORY

Course Coordinator: Professor Areti Lagiou

Rushing to establish the multifactorial nature of the health-disease model, the supremacy of the subject of public health was significantly extended to areas that directly or indirectly influence each other such as the environment, nutrition, physical exercise, social behavior, etc. Based on the aforementioned, one of the main responsibilities of public health is to identify and deal with critical and constantly changing environmental and social conditions through the formation of behaviors aimed at promoting health in a quality environment. The modern way of life created, among other things, new data in the science of epidemiology. In this specific course, a specialized and in-depth analysis is attempted in the light of environmental epidemiology where it seeks to clarify the relationships that physical, chemical and biological factors have with human health. Thus, the course offers in-depth knowledge in epidemiology as the basic science concerned with the study of the distribution of various diseases and/or characteristics in human populations as well as with the investigation of the causal factors that shape or can influence these distributions. Etiology research concerns both the numerous diseases of unknown etiology and the study of specific epidemics, as well as therapeutic medicine, since treatment is essentially the cause of a better prognosis. From observational studies to experimental studies, the aim is to determine the relationships between exposure (to biological agents, diet, etc.) and outcome (health status, disease, etc.). It is noted that the three important concepts that make up the epidemiological triangle are the following: agent, host and environment. Medical knowledge is revised and enriched at a rapid rate. The continuous updating of health professionals and responsible health officials and their critical consideration of the published findings is deemed imperative. Knowledge of general epidemiology is therefore essential, as more than half of the articles published in major international medical journals are based on epidemiological principles and methods. The course teaches the basic concepts, measures and study design required in epidemiology and public health in order for learners to acquire the skills that will enable them to process and reproduce scientific information correctly.

By successfully participating in this course, as learners you will be able to:

1. To recognize and make good use of available sources of data of epidemiological interest
2. Collect, analyze and interpret methodologically sound primary descriptive data
3. To know and be able to correctly apply the types of descriptive epidemiological designs
4. To correctly formulate causal assumptions
5. Know and be able to correctly apply the types of analytical epidemiological designs to test causal hypotheses
6. To know what the characteristics are and how preventive intervention studies are planned and implemented
7. To be aware of issues that arise in the design, execution, analysis and interpretation of the results of preventive intervention studies.

6 ECTS/COMPULSORY

Course Coordinator: Associate Professor: Evanthia Sakellari

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According to the World Health Organization, Health Promotion is defined as "the process of enabling individuals and communities of people to increase control over the factors that affect their health and thereby improve their health".

Many of the factors that contribute, in the context of a continuous interaction, and make people healthy or sick such as income, social status, geographical area where they live, their educational level, culture, political system – are partially/insufficiently, and/or outside the scope of health promotion. Health promotion practices require a shift in emphasis from messages focused on disease prevention to a more ecological and holistic approach, taking into account the social, environmental and cultural contexts in which human populations live, work and perpetuate themselves (cities, families, spaces work, leisure and communities). An environment can be defined as a place or social context in which people engage in everyday activities, in which environmental, organizational and personal factors interact with health and well-being. The right regulations can provide an opportunity to promote health and well-being, but conversely the absence of regulations can limit it. An integral element for the promotion of health is the policy of actions from preschool age and then the health education that a child receives through his education at school with the aim of forming correct attitudes and behaviors in order for adulthood and integration into the community to occur through of optimal conditions. In this course we focus on analyzing settings, which may include the family/household, educational settings, workplaces, recreation, prisons, hospitals and communities. The course aims to understand the different theories that govern the relationships of their daily living in the environment they interact with. At the same time, the trainees are asked to understand and subsequently be able to apply those strategies that will ensure health promotion (Ottawa Charter, 1986) through the development of personal skills, creation of a supportive environment, in health education being the forerunner of health promotion based in the participation of local communities with the ultimate aim of exerting the right pressures for the drawing up of new policies in matters of public health and the reorientation of health services.

Upon successful completion of the course, postgraduate students will be able to:

- understand the basic concepts and principles governing Health Promotion and Education
- know the aggravating and protective factors that affect health
- they look for valid scientific sources for their use in Health Promotion and Education
- understand scientific studies for their use in Health Promotion and Education
- recognize the health needs of various population groups and communities, either at the individual level, or at the family or community level
- collaborate effectively with the interdisciplinary team for Health Promotion and Education in the Community

Communication Policy in Crisis Management

6 ECTS- COMPULSORY

Course Coordinator: Professor Konstantina Skanavi

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Humanity will often be faced with the risk of possible crises and survival is based on existing knowledge and proven experience at all levels of their management both at the local, national, European and global level. Political communication is concerned with the generation and exchange of ideas and opinions between citizens, public officials, political institutions and related entities such as the media and how information can be used for political gain or to achieve political goals. This course is intended to bridge science with policy making for functioning communities in crises. First, it introduces the field of crisis management in health, nutrition and environmental issues. Subsequently, it promotes the understanding of the scientific issues related to crisis management and specifically to civil protection operations in cases of risk and disasters, as well as adaptation to climate change.

The relationship between the three processes of political communication is studied: production (how messages are developed and transmitted), content (what is contained in each message), and outcome (how messages are received and interpreted). possible cross-sector and interdisciplinary synergies and needs are quickly recognized.

Gaps in understanding and effective intervention during crisis management in health, nutrition and environmental issues are highlighted. The scope includes understanding risk, disasters, communicating risk and formulating a code of communication with all involved.

Finally, the important stages of the crisis management cycle are presented which are prevention, risk reduction, preparedness, reaction and recovery in order to strengthen our resilience.

Upon successful completion of the course, postgraduate students will be able to:

- understand that crises and disasters are political events.
- what is risk. disaster, emergency.
- to understand the necessity of training in natural disasters.
- understand that social and cultural experience influence people's thinking and judgment about the seriousness and acceptance of risks.
- understand the relationship between social vulnerability and environmental risk.

Project Management Communication Plan and Securing Funding

6 ECTS- COMPULSORY

Course Coordinator: Assistant Professor Ioannis Papadas

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One of the most important elements with a catalytic role for the success of a project is effective communication. Effective communication is synonymous with more efficient management of a project, but difficulties are often encountered in its implementation due to various factors such as the nature of the project, the structure of the organization, etc. In recent years, the field of project management and ensuring their funding in public health services has been the subject of intense reflection in every society for various reasons. First, medical advances and the discovery of new forms of treatment and Health Care interventions have increased the supply of Health services. Second, the lengthening of life expectancy and the aging of the population has explosively increased the demand for Health services. Thirdly, the proliferation of social problems has created budgetary dilemmas in the allocation of resources between the Health sector and the rest of the social sectors. Fourth, the growing demand of citizens for effective coverage of Health needs through the provision of high-quality services has a significant impact on social policy. Fifth, many countries have received large numbers of migrants seeking medical care from the existing health service structure and sixth, the global economic crisis is disproportionately putting pressure on the ability to provide quality health services with reduced funds for benefits. The intense reflection has raised interest in the study and review of the various management and financial issues of the Health sector. The course highlights where and how communication takes place within a project, the steps required for effective communication, the main barriers to communication, how barriers can be overcome, the importance of communication strategies in various work groups, the process of effective communication according to the case study. Health systems could make better use of resources, either through better procurement practices, wider use of generic products, better incentives for providers, or improved funding and simpler administrative procedures. Developing an effective communication plan is explained in terms of steps on how to identify communication requirements: What, Why, Who, Where, When and How. By anticipating possible failures as well as successes, unwanted surprises are avoided. The aim of the course is to instill in the trainees the basic principles of implementing an effective management of a project and securing its funding through a successful communication plan in the field of Health Promotion.

After successful completion of the course, postgraduate students will be able to:

- To approach the design, presentation and implementation of projects related to environmental communication and health promotion in an interdisciplinary manner and based on modern, international practices, through the synthesis of 3 complementary perspectives/thematic areas:

- o Corporate social responsibility

- o Project management

- o Business environment management for the sustainability of project results.

- Understand the project life cycle.

- Know the basic dimensions of project risk management, human resources, and stakeholders.

- To know the dynamics of investment and project management.

Second semester (Spring)

Communication Strategies on Health and Environment

6 ECTS- COMPULSORY

Course Coordinator: Professor Konstantina Skanavi

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Through the lens of the communicative approach, the critical interdependence of human health and well-being in relation to the quality of the environment is explored and analyzed. The course structure combines a general ecological concern with specific elements related to personal and community health. The interdependence of environment and health prompts learners to realize how today's environmental issues determine the quality of our daily lives. This course presents the framework of a strategic approach aimed at effective communication about the advocacy and promotion of environmental health. This strategic approach is presented as a framework of principles for effective practice that applies to a wide range of communication functions so that learners are able to put into practice a design that is understandable, valid and reliable. This framework, based on the basic principles of strategic communication of the World Health Organization -WHO, is applicable to the following categories - groups:

People who make health care decisions at the family level (preventive examinations at a health care provider, daily healthy living, preventive methods to avoid infectious diseases during travel, etc.)

Health care providers who make decisions about screening, diagnosis, treatment, recommendations to patients (recommended vaccinations, counseling of vulnerable groups, etc.)

Policymakers at national and international level (investment in training of public health specialists, creation of emergency centers, funding of health promotion programs, etc.)

Municipalities and communities that make decisions about public spaces and related activities and services that take place there (cleaning of public spaces, creation of specially designed walking and exercise areas within residential areas, etc.)

International organizations and stakeholders who make decisions regarding the financing and implementation of health programs (providing assistance to countries with inadequate health systems through strengthening financing programs to reduce chronic diseases, providing support for health promotion research programs, etc.)

Health professionals who make decisions about programmes, coordination, resources and partnerships at national and international levels.

The framework is organized according to the 6 principles of ensuring the correct communication approach according to WHO where they should be at the core of the

respective activities: 1.Accessibility, 2.Activity, 3.Reliability, 4.Relevance, 5.Timeliness, 6 .Comprehensibility.

The purpose of the strategic framework is for environmental health decision makers and their respective target audiences to educate and adapt in parallel. For this reason, the ability of citizens – in this case the public, to influence the public structure with their actions is emphasized throughout the course. The main purpose of the course is to provide learners with specific information and critical evaluation skills regarding environmental problems. These skills will enable them to participate in decision-making processes, thereby determining the quality of health and the environment in the coming decades.

By successfully participating in this course, as learners you will be able to:

- Identify main principles of information processing theory used in communication.
- Describe the factors involved in how people make decisions based on contact information.
- Recognize the factors that influence the way the non-scientific public processes and understands scientific information.
- Describe how health communication is used to address different levels of health behavior.
- Identify numerous contexts in which health communication occurs.
- Describe how risk perception affects communication outcomes.
- Define the key differences between health communication strategies used to engage, inform or persuade an audience.
- Understand the advantages and disadvantages of different communication strategies and which one is appropriate for each situation.

Behaviour Change Communication: Individuals and Communities

6 ECTS- COMPULSORY

Course Coordinator: Professor Anastasia Barbouni

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The course starts with the idea that behavior change processes require a thorough insight into people's everyday communication strategies. Questions like: "how are people affected by the quality of the environment?", "can people be affected without knowing it?". The processes underlying persuasion and influence will be studied primarily from the perspective of communication sciences and related fields. The course first delineates the subject of communication skills in the light of the ecological model and is particularly concerned with the analysis of psychological factors in the implementation of communication practices, ranging from public discussions about healthy food and climate change to online discussions about new (bio)technologies. The focus is on the various ways in which people influence each other as part of their daily routines, and how practitioners can learn from these methods. It examines how credibility is assessed in negotiations and discussions. It studies how people manage the rights and responsibilities of knowledge in conversation: what causes people to be seen as more or less knowledgeable? Specificity can be a contested issue, as in public debates about vaccination or climate change. It examines when and how scientific knowledge is used to support or challenge an argument and for what purposes experiential knowledge is presented. Finally, the course focuses on various ways in which we can use in practice the interaction-analytic approach with the ultimate goal of making the learners able to participate actively both individually and in groups in making decisions that determine the quality of health and the environment through an effective communication prism.

By successfully participating in this course, as learners you will be able to:

- To understand with his theoretical and practical training the process of formation and change of attitudes and behaviors of individuals and populations.
- Uses his/her knowledge to support processes for promoting behavior change in the health and environment sectors in individuals and groups.

To cultivate and effectively use his communication skills and techniques, both on an interpersonal and collective/community level, as well as to deal with cases that need special handling.

Health Communication and Mass Media

6 ECTS/COMPULSORY

Course Coordinator: Associate Professor: Dimitrios Laggas

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Today more than ever, health is one of the main topics covered by the Mass Media. Good health is a primary concern for all of us, and maintaining it involves many and varied aspects, including financial data. Thus, the public finds itself immersed in a veritable sea of health-related news from many different sources, often without the means to discern what is truly useful or important, or to understand the real meaning of the messages, or even to appreciate their accuracy. Many demographic surveys have identified the Mass Media as the primary source of public health information. The impact on the coverage of citizens' knowledge, perceptions and behaviors can be analyzed from two perspectives: the great power of the mass media in disseminating information by shaping public opinion but also the possibility of being misinformed by inaccurate or unreliable information. These results are due not only to potential information overload but also to poor quality of information in terms of correctness, reliability, comprehensibility, usefulness, balance and independence, which often cannot be properly assessed by the public due to limited health literacy. Mass media campaigns are widely used to expose high percentages of large populations to messages through common uses of existing media such as television, radio, and newspapers. Therefore, exposure to such messages is generally passive. Such campaigns often compete with factors such as widespread product marketing, strong social norms, and behaviors driven by addiction or habit. In cases of crises or emergencies, the mass media may create a "communication storm", which focuses attention on a single health problem, such as AIDS, SARS, avian influenza, etc. Understanding how mass media work is a prerequisite for achieving cooperation between those who control access to media time and space to improve coverage of health issues about which the public needs and often wants to be informed. In this course, results of mass media campaigns are presented in the context of various health risk behaviors (e.g., smoking, alcohol, drugs, heart disease risk factors, gender-related behaviors, road safety, cancer control and prevention, child survival and organ or blood donation). Mass media campaigns can bring about positive changes or prevent negative changes in the health-related behaviors of the population. At the same time, the contribution of the aforementioned results is evaluated as well as the simultaneous availability of the required services and products, the availability of community programs and policies that support behavior change.

After successful completion of the course you will be able to:

- Understand the concept of interaction and communication
- To understand the concept of social learning
- Understand the mediating power of health communication

Media representations of people's health

Technology and Digital Design in Health Communication

6 ECTS-ELECTIVE

Course Coordinator: Associate Professor Venetia Notara

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Digital design in health communication examines the strategic use of digital technologies for communication professionals. This course addresses how to use the Internet and social media to reach diverse citizens and how to integrate digital with traditional communication campaigns. Courses include effective internet planning and strategy, public relations in the digital age, use of digital and social media, and digital strategy planning. Digital communication tools are an important part of the modern communication space. Learners will examine how social media is used in healthcare and why its effective use has become a prerequisite for many healthcare professionals. They will gain the required knowledge of the value and importance of traditional, social and emerging digital media practice in the field of health communication. They will also be able to design communication strategies and methods that use digital and visual information to influence audiences or affect change on health-related topics and issues as well as analyze, synthesize, interpret and present health and scientific information for public consumption using clear and concise messages. The ultimate goal is to understand how learners will succeed in communicating through digital design a message on social media, isotopes, mobile apps, video, in order to achieve a well-designed health promotion campaign through technology.

Upon successful completion of the course, postgraduate students will be able to:

- improve cognitive abilities, individual skills (self-confidence, social communication), as well as the development of motor skills.
- They build their ideas with alternative ways of expression and favor direct access
- Understand the concepts and value of communication

Ecotherapy: From Theory to Practice

6 ECTS-Elective

Course Coordinator: dr Ioannis Skiadas

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According to research, spending too much time indoors and not taking regular nature trips can have negative effects on health and well-being. Ecotherapy, also known as physiotherapy or green therapy, is the applied practice of the emerging field of ecopsychology, developed by Theodore Roszak. In recent decades there has been a growing interest in the healing potential of nature and interest in the possibilities of "green interventions" for the benefit of mental health. Ecotherapy, in many cases, stems from the belief that humans are part of the fabric of life and that our souls are not isolated or separate from our environment. Ecopsychology provides individuals with an opportunity to explore their relationship with nature – an area that may be overlooked in many other types of psychotherapy. While some professionals teach and practice ecopsychology exclusively, other mental health professionals incorporate aspects of ecotherapy into their existing practices. Since ecotherapy is an umbrella term for nature-based approaches to healing, the types of interventions used are many. Some activities are performed under the guidance of a therapist while others are performed individually. Some interventions are done in groups, while others require a one-on-one setting. Additionally, while some ecotherapy sessions take place within the confines of an office, an effort is often made to conduct sessions in natural settings whenever possible. Some of the most common ecotherapy activities are: Meditation in nature, Healing cultivation, Therapy with animals, Physical exercise in nature, Participating in activities to restore or preserve the natural environment. The course will provide learners with evidence-based approaches to transforming the human relationship with nature in the service of healing and well-being. These deep approaches include practical interventions and guidelines for carrying out therapeutic work in outdoor indoor spaces that can be applied on an individual as well as a societal level. Ecopsychology and ecotherapy are still relatively emerging fields.

Note: Various institutions offer short courses in ecopsychology, ranging from a few months to a year. For example, Naropa University and Antioch University offer courses in ecopsychology as part of their curriculum. JFK University in San Francisco also offers an annual ecotherapy certification program

By successfully participating in this course, as learners you will be able to:

- Understand the main concepts governing ecotherapy.
- Embrace the importance of implementing ecotherapy.
- Realize the value of environmental awareness.
- Understand what are the application levels of ecotherapy.
- Understand the role of ecotherapy in dealing with crises, epidemics and chronic diseases.
- Understand the relationship between finances and ecotherapy

Intercultural Communication in the field of environmental health

6 ECTS- Elective

Course Coordinator: dr Andromachi Bouna

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In today's increasingly globalized society, citizens are challenged to respond to the complexity of communication in different cultural and geographical environments. The ideas people have about health, the languages they use, their health literacy skills and their health communication environments reflect their culture. Effective communication can be enhanced when cultural differences that can contribute positively to it are recognized and bridged. Culture is a way of thinking and living, a set of attitudes, values, norms and beliefs that are taught and reinforced by other group members. This set of basic assumptions and solutions to the world's problems is a shared system passed down from generation to generation to ensure survival. A culture consists of unwritten and written principles and laws that guide how a person interacts with the outside world. Members of a culture can be identified by the fact that they have some similarity. They may be united by religion, geography, race or ethnicity. As part of a cultural group, people learn rules of communication, such as who communicates with whom, when and where something can be communicated as well as what to communicate. Members of a cultural group also learn one or more languages that facilitate communication within the group. Intercultural communication refers to communication between people who have differences in any of the following: forms of work, age, nationality, race, gender, sexual orientation, etc., that is, how people belonging to different cultures communicate with each other. Intercultural communication creates a feeling of trust and enables cooperation. Sometimes, however, language can get in the way of successful communication. When people and organizations try to use their terminology, in other contexts and with people outside the group, communication often fails and creates misunderstandings and barriers to understanding a situation. When two people of different cultures meet each other, not only do they have different cultural backgrounds, but their speech systems are also different. For example, doctors, epidemiologists and other public health and health care workers belong to professional cultures with their own languages, which are often not the everyday language of most people. When these professionals want to share information, their terminology can have an even greater impact when limited education and cultural differences are part of the communication exchange with patients and other health care workers. On a larger scale, a strong

current phenomenon that is consistent with this theme also includes groups of populations that migrate voluntarily or are forced by vulnerable situations, such as poverty, or are displaced due to conflict or natural disaster, migration which entails, among other things, significant adjustments. During migration, people have to redefine personal, interpersonal, socio-economic, cultural and geographical boundaries. This entails a redefinition of individual, family, group and collective identity, roles and value systems and can be a source of stress for the individual, the family and the communities involved.

The aim of the course is to introduce the fundamental principles and issues of intercultural communication from an interdisciplinary perspective as well as to develop an understanding and appreciation of different cultural perspectives and values.

After successful completion of the course they will be able to:

- Understand the concept of intercultural interaction and communication
- Understand the concept of intercultural understanding.
- Know and integrate the intercultural model of education within the wider educational context.
- To respect cultural differences and peculiarities

Introduction

C' semester

Writing of the thesis-30 ECTS

An important prerequisite for the completion of studies and the award of the title to each postgraduate student is the writing of the postgraduate dissertation. Thus, after the successful completion of the courses, the writing of the postgraduate dissertation and the approval of its content by the three-member committee, the thesis is presented at a special event (support), after the announcement of the date and the place of presentation at least 15 days before the specific date. The Master's thesis is credited with 30 ECTS credits.

1. The process

At the end of the second semester, the proposed topics for postgraduate thesis are announced on the website of the MSc. The student studies the topics and comes in consultation with the instructor of the MSc who has proposed a topic that interests him. Subsequently, the instructor of the MSc submits an application to the Coordinating Committee for the acceptance of supervision of the postgraduate thesis of the specific student no later than June 30 (of the second semester). The Coordinating Committee approves the appointment of a supervisor and decides to appoint two more teachers of the program to become, together with the supervisor, members of the three-member evaluation committee that will grade the postgraduate dissertation.

A prerequisite for the submission of the postgraduate dissertation and the support is the successful completion of the courses and the internship. The work is supported from 1-30 March after the end of the third semester. The Thesis is submitted to the Secretariat of the Master's (in electronic form), from 1 to 28 February. In any case, the work must come of the evaluation committee one month before the support. The three-member committee submits its comments at least one week before the support.

For serious and documented reasons, the postgraduate student may, with the agreement of the Supervisor, request an extension for one month of the date of submission of his/her postgraduate dissertation.

This dissertation is presented in an extraordinary open seminar lasting one (1) hour and is graded by the members of the three-member evaluation committee. For the approval of the postgraduate dissertation, a positive vote of the three members of the evaluation committee is required. The grade of the dissertation is derived from

the average of the passing grades of the examiners. The grade of the Master's Degree is deduced from the average grade of the postgraduate dissertation and the average of the grade of the courses. The grading scale is defined from 0-10; the passing grade is defined as six (6) and its greater.

Each work is checked with the help of special plagiarism software. If any part of the postgraduate dissertation contains part of or makes use of another author's scientific work without attribution, it is considered plagiarism and the postgraduate dissertation is nullified. In this case, it is possible by decision of the Coordinating Committee to allow the student to submit an postgraduate dissertation on the same or another subject within the next semester.

After the support process, the student passes the corrections proposed during the support process and submits his/her corrected work in electronic form to the Secretariat of the MSc and submits it to the repository of postgraduate theses.

In case of a negative judgement, the postgraduate student has the possibility of resubmission after a maximum period of 4 months and after improving the work according to the observations of the evaluation committee. A second judgment follows and the examination-presentation of the Master's Thesis takes place in September. In this case, the postgraduate student is obliged to register for each additional semester and pay the relevant tuition fees, in order to be entitled to submit the corrected assignment by the end of the sixth semester.

In case of second failure, the postgraduate student will not be awarded a Master's degree

2. Posting of the Diploma Thesis in the repository "Polynoe"

The dissertation should be submitted to the institutional repository "Polynoe" according to the instructions listed below:

https://polynoe.lib.uniwa.gr/item_submission_guide.pdf.

Before posting the diploma theses in "Polynoi", the digital signature of the document is considered necessary. After signing, no modification of the document is allowed, because all digital signatures are canceled.

After the check by the managers of the repository "Polynoe" and the posting is completed, a confirmation message is sent via e-mail from "Polynoi", which you forward to the secretariat of the Postgraduate Program, with notification to the secretariat of the Department (pchealth@uniwa.gr). Only then is the process considered complete

Academic Advisor

For each postgraduate student, a faculty member is appointed by the Coordination Committee, following a proposal as an advisor. The study advisor monitors the course of the postgraduate student, provides specific information about the Postgraduate Program and the correlation of studies with his/her scientific background and perspective, discusses with the postgraduate student his/her future plans for his/her academic and professional development, advises him/her on improving his/her work in relation to the requirements of the Department, for the use of the University's resources and infrastructure and, more generally, for academic, organizational or administrative issues and may suggest issues concerning the postgraduate student in the CC. The study advisor does not necessarily undertake the supervision of the Master's Thesis.

Interconnection of the Academic Advisor with Students of the MSc

After the appointment of the Academic Advisors, the secretariat of the MSc provides them with the e-mail addresses of the students assigned to them in order to communicate with them about the topics of their studies.

The Academic Advisor of Studies holds every month a scheduled meeting with all the students assigned to him and for each meeting he prepares a relevant report where he informs in writing the Coordinating Committee of the MSc about the progress of the institution and conveys to it the problems posed by the students and concern the operation of the Postgraduate Program. In his report, he can point out malfunctions or shortcomings that create problems for students and suggest measures to address them.

The first meeting of the Academic Advisor (meeting of acquaintance, reception, determination of the way of communication, is set at the beginning of the winter semester).

The Academic Advisor announces on the website of the MSc how it is accessible and conducts, in addition to the predetermined meetings, personal meetings with each student if requested.

The Director of the MSc and the Coordinating Committee are obliged to cooperate and support the Academic Advisors in their work and to take into account comments, suggestions, recommendations and applications.

Complaints Management Committee

HAVING REGARD TO THE PROVISION OF ARTICLE 23, PARA. 11, CASE H' OF LAW 4485/2017 "ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION, REGULATIONS FOR RESEARCH AND OTHER PROVISIONS" (GOVERNMENT GAZETTE: 114 / T. A / 4-8-2017) AND AIMING AT STRENGTHENING the student-

centered educational process and systematically improving the quality of the educational and administrative services provided, the Coordinating Committee of the Postgraduate Studies Program "*Environmental Communication and health promotion*" decided to establish the Committee for the Management of Student Complaints and Objections.

The Committee consists of two members of the teaching staff of the MSc, who are appointed by the Coordinating Committee (CC) of the MSc, and the Director of the MSc, who is appointed automatically President of the Committee.

The members of the Commission shall have a term of office of two years, which shall be renewable.

The Committee accepts complaints and objections of postgraduate students, which relate to the educational and administrative services provided by the MSc. Matters relating to the purely academic work of teachers do not fall within the competence of the Committee.

The members of the Committee are committed to follow the personal data protection policy of University of West Attica posted at: <https://www.uniwa.gr/politiki-prostasias-dedomenon-prosopikoy-charaktira/>.

The Committee ensures that complaint handling data, while protecting the personal data of complainants and ensuring their confidentiality, are available for review by the bodies that evaluate the operation of the School.

The Commission shall take a final and irrevocable decision on any question referred to it. If he/she deems it appropriate, he/she may refer an issue to the Assembly of the Department or to the Ethics Committee of the University of West Attica.

Facilities and services for students

The University of West Attica, having as its mission the provision of excellent quality education and education through high-level undergraduate and postgraduate programs in the cognitive fields it treats, tries during its studies to ensure for its students a series of quality services and benefits. Quality services and benefits aimed both at ensuring satisfactory living conditions and at promoting social, cultural, physical and mental development of its students. Following the above approach, the University of West Attica through its administrative services tries to facilitate its students in their daily lives, always taking into account the current legislation and the decisions of the administration of our University. Thus, students can benefit from a range of benefits and facilities depending on their needs and interests.

European Health Insurance Card (E.K.A.A.)

<https://merimna.uniwa.gr/eyropaiki-karta-asfalisis-astheneias-e-k-a-a/>

Healthcare

<https://merimna.uniwa.gr/iatrofarmakeytiki-perithalpsi/>

Psychosocial Support

<https://prosvasi.uniwa.gr/atomiki-psychologiki-ypostirixi/>

USEFUL INFORMATION

- 1) Courses that take place remotely, are carried out through **MS Teams** MS Teams is located as an application in the institutional e-mail given to students, but also the application is installed on mobile or computer :<https://www.uniwa.gr/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/UNIWA-MS-Teams-Student-Guide.pdf>
- 2) The educational material is provided to students through the **e-class**.

The UNIWA Open e-Class platform is an integrated e-Course Management System. It follows the philosophy of open source software and supports the Asynchronous Distance Learning service without restrictions and commitments. Access to the service is done using a simple web browser without requiring specialized technical knowledge: <https://eclass.uniwa.gr/>

Useful Links

Academic Identity Acquisition Service

<https://academicid.minedu.gov.gr>