

Faculty of Medicine in Rijeka

Curriculum 2025/2026

For course

Approaches in Psychotherapy

Study program: **Medical Studies in English (R)** (elective)
University integrated undergraduate and graduate study
Department: **Department of Psychiatry and Psychological Medicine**
Course coordinator: **izv. prof. dr. sc. Letica Crepulja Marina, dr. med.**

Year of study: **5**
ECTS: **1.5**
Incentive ECTS: **0 (0.00%)**
Foreign language: **Possibility of teaching in a foreign language**

Course information:

This course aims to introduce students to the role of psychotherapy in the treatment of mental disorders and to the therapeutic and practical foundations of the most important psychotherapeutic approaches. Students will become familiar with the most commonly applied psychotherapeutic techniques, as well as the indications for the use of psychotherapy in general and for specific groups of therapeutic approaches. Students will be encouraged to engage in critical reflection and discussion on different therapeutic orientations, and to explore their own affinities towards particular methods.

Throughout the course, students will be introduced to the theoretical foundations and practical applications of various psychotherapeutic modalities. Special emphasis is placed on distinguishing psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioural, humanistic-existential, systemic and integrative approaches.

Through lectures and seminars, students will be encouraged to think critically about the purpose, applicability and effectiveness of each psychotherapeutic approach, and to deepen their understanding of personality psychology. Topics covered include the historical development of psychotherapy, key theoretical concepts, therapeutic technique and process, as well as ethical and professional standards in practice.

The practical component of instruction includes simulations of selected techniques and case analysis, enabling students to acquire practical skills in therapeutic work. This includes counselling as a therapeutic technique, as well as techniques such as grounding, psychoeducation, recognition and regulation of emotions, fear hierarchy construction, behavioural experiments, de-escalation and similar methods.

The aim of the course is to enable students to develop a deeper understanding of therapeutic dynamics, and to recognise which type of therapy is most suitable for a particular clinical context, while respecting the individual needs of patients. Ultimately, students will be equipped to integrate fundamental psychotherapy knowledge into their future professional practice. The course provides the foundational knowledge and skills necessary for further education and specialisation in psychotherapy.

Prerequisite: passed examination in Psychiatry in the 4th year of study.

[Ishodi učenja]:

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- explain the theoretical foundations, historical development and core concepts of major psychotherapeutic approaches (psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioural, humanistic-existential, systemic and integrative).
- distinguish indications and clinical contexts in which different psychotherapeutic modalities are most appropriate.
- analyse similarities and differences between therapeutic approaches and critically evaluate their effectiveness and applicability based on empirical evidence.
- demonstrate basic practical skills in selected psychotherapeutic techniques (e.g. grounding, psychoeducation, emotion recognition and regulation strategies, exposure hierarchy, behavioural experiment, de-escalation and counselling).
- apply psychotherapeutic reasoning to case examples and simulate elements of therapeutic intervention in a safe educational context.
- identify and integrate professional, ethical and relational standards relevant for psychotherapeutic practice.
- reflect on personal preferences, values and therapist factors that influence approach selection and professional development.
- integrate core psychotherapy knowledge into their broader clinical framework and future professional practice.

List of assigned reading:

Short F, Thomas P. Core approaches in counselling and psychotherapy. London: Routledge, 2015.

<https://dl.uswr.ac.ir/bitstream/Hannan/139799/1/9780415745147.pdf>

Kozarić Kovačić D, Frančišković T. Psihoterapijski pravci. Zagreb: Medicinska naklada, 2014.

List of optional reading:

Corey G. Theory and practice of counselling and psychotherapy. Brooks/Cole Cengage Learning, 2011.

<https://perpus.univpancasila.ac.id/repository/EBUPT190498.pdf>

Curriculum:

Practicals list (with titles and explanation):

Practicals 1-5

Students learn to identify unhelpful thoughts and beliefs (cognitive distortions), link them to emotions and behaviours, and practise techniques such as behavioural experiments, hierarchy of emotions, abdominal breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, and goal setting through structured exercises and role-plays. The emphasis is on developing collaborative, present-focused skills that help clients test and change patterns maintaining psychological difficulties. Students also explore how unconscious processes, early relationships, and recurring interpersonal patterns influence current experience. Through case stories, they practise identifying defence mechanisms and exploring transference and countertransference. Across the practicals, students develop the ability to formulate and reflect on key psychological themes over time.

Seminars list (with titles and explanation):

Seminar 1-2 Psychodynamic approaches in psychotherapy

Psychodynamic approaches in psychotherapy

Seminar 3-4 Cognitive-behavioural approaches in psychotherapy

Cognitive-behavioural approaches in psychotherapy

Seminar 5-6 Humanistic-existential approaches in psychotherapy

Humanistic-existential approaches in psychotherapy

Seminar 7-8 Integrative approaches in psychotherapy

Integrative approaches in psychotherapy

Seminar 9-10 Specific approaches in psychotherapy

Lectures list (with titles and explanation):

Lectures 1-4

Psychotherapy: Fundamental Principles

Definitions of Psychotherapy

Features of Psychotherapy

History of Psychotherapy

Neurobiology and Psychotherapy

Evidence-Based Psychotherapy

Lectures 5-8

Ethical principles in psychotherapy

Indications for Psychotherapy: Why It's Done

Benefits of Psychotherapy

Effectiveness of psychotherapy

Lectures 9-10

Who qualifies as a good psychotherapist?

Elements of psychotherapy

Student obligations:

Regular attendance, preparing and presenting seminar work, actively participating in discussions in class.

Exam (exam taking, description of the written/oral/practical part of the exam, point distribution, grading criteria):

The overall assessment in the course consists of points from teaching (active participation in teaching material) (50%) and 50% points obtained for the preparation and presentation of a seminar paper.

Other notes (related to the course) important for students:

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COURSE HOURS 2025/2026

Approaches in Psychotherapy

Lectures (Place and time or group)	Practicals (Place and time or group)	Seminars (Place and time or group)
01.12.2025		
Lectures 1-4: • / (14:30 - 18:30) [221] ◦ Approaches in Psychotherapy MainGroup		
izv. prof. dr. sc. Letica Crepulja Marina, dr. med. [221]		
02.12.2025		
Lectures 5-8: • / (16:31 - 20:30) [221] ◦ Approaches in Psychotherapy MainGroup		
izv. prof. dr. sc. Letica Crepulja Marina, dr. med. [221]		
08.12.2025		
Lectures 9-10: • / (14:30 - 16:30) [221] ◦ Approaches in Psychotherapy MainGroup		Seminar 1-2 Psychodynamic approaches in psychotherapy: • / (16:30 - 18:00) [221] ◦ Approaches in Psychotherapy MainGroup Seminar 3-4 Cognitive-behavioural approaches in psychotherapy: • / (18:00 - 19:30) [221] ◦ Approaches in Psychotherapy MainGroup
izv. prof. dr. sc. Letica Crepulja Marina, dr. med. [221]		
12.01.2026		
		Seminar 5-6 Humanistic-existential approaches in psychotherapy: • / (16:00 - 17:45) [221] ◦ Approaches in Psychotherapy MainGroup Seminar 7-8 Integrative approaches in psychotherapy: • / (18:00 - 19:45) [221] ◦ Approaches in Psychotherapy MainGroup
izv. prof. dr. sc. Letica Crepulja Marina, dr. med. [221]		
11.02.2026		
	Practicals 1-5: • Clinic for psychiatry - 2nd floor (17:00 - 21:00) [221] ◦ Approaches in Psychotherapy MainGroup	Seminar 9-10 Specific approaches in psychotherapy: • Clinic for psychiatry - 2nd floor (15:00 - 16:45) [221] ◦ Approaches in Psychotherapy MainGroup
izv. prof. dr. sc. Letica Crepulja Marina, dr. med. [221]		

List of lectures, seminars and practicals:

LECTURES (TOPIC)	Number of hours	Location
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Lectures 1-4	4	/
Lectures 5-8	4	/
Lectures 9-10	2	/

PRACTICALS (TOPIC)	Number of hours	Location
Practicals 1-5	5	Clinic for psychiatry - 2nd floor

SEMINARS (TOPIC)	Number of hours	Location
Seminar 1-2 Psychodynamic approaches in psychotherapy	2	/
Seminar 3-4 Cognitive-behavioural approaches in psychotherapy	2	/
Seminar 5-6 Humanistic-existential approaches in psychotherapy	2	/
Seminar 7-8 Integrative approaches in psychotherapy	2	/
Seminar 9-10 Specific approaches in psychotherapy	2	Clinic for psychiatry - 2nd floor

EXAM DATES (final exam):
