

## Queen Mary Summer School

SUM701T: The Impact of Trauma on Mental Health

*Wolfson Institute of Population Health*

### Course outline

Level: 5

Credits: 15 (Queen Mary credits)

Course Leader: Dr Robert Blakely

Assessment: Presentation and In-class test

### Course description:

This course will address the impact of trauma on mental health as a lifelong process interrupted in some significant way by the pandemic of COVID-19. The work of researchers to understand mental health conditions will be supplemented by case studies that provide an opportunity for students to glimpse examples of the life stories behind diagnoses. This course will address the challenge of mental health to the field of medicine as a whole. In a recently published book, *The Myth of Normal*, leading trauma academic Dr Gabor Maté suggests society is built on a hidden assumption of trauma passed through generations and presented visibly in the individual as physical and psychological conditions diagnosed by doctors. While diagnostic labels help individuals understand mental health problems, the interactions between doctor and patient may be limited should there not be a parallel effort to recognise the societal factors that contribute to ill health. Through a combination of theory and reflective accounts of ill health the module will illustrate the mechanisms by which life experiences impact the mind and reflect on whether the pandemic modified these.

### Learning outcomes:

On completion of the module, students can expect to have acquired:

- An understanding of the mind in its capacity to respond to threats encountered across the lifespan
- The ability to evaluate the mental health impact of different life experiences
- Capability to interpret the role of trauma as a key factor in mechanisms of ill health, both mental and physical
- Skills regarding critical appraisal and analysis of the scientific literature and the ability to judge and interpret methods and results
- The ability to integrate information from a variety of sources to construct a coherent presentation on a psychological topic
- Fundamental knowledge on the impact of trauma on mental health
- Preparedness to engage and communicate effectively with diverse communities including the lay public and professionals involved in research and clinical practice
- The means to adapt the principles of psychological research and critical evidence-based discovery to new and unfamiliar contexts

### Approximate cost:

The tuition fees for **The Impact of Trauma on Mental Health** course are **£2,100**. There may be additional costs for field trips, such as entry to exhibitions, which will be in the region of **£30-£50**.

All reading material is provided digitally so you are not required to purchase any books.

### Assessments:

The course assessments are not compulsory, however, if you wish to transfer credit for this course to your home university it is essential to complete the assignments.

**Presentation:** 1 hour (50%) and **Test** 1 hour (50%)

**Preparation:**

Before you arrive on campus, it is advised that you familiarise yourself with the course content before it begins. You will be given instructions for accessing our Virtual Learning Environment (QMplus) before you arrive on campus.

**Teaching:**

The course is taught in two two-hour sessions per day (10.00 - 12.00 and 13.00 - 15.00), held Monday to Thursday each week.

**Indicative Additional Reading:**

- Mate, G. (2022). *The Myth of Normal*. Penguin.
- Greene, J., & Cohen, J. (2004). For the law, neuroscience changes nothing and everything. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series B: Biological Sciences*, 359(1451), 1775-1785.

Please note that the information provided may be subject to change.