

## Global Mental Health

<b>Module Code</b>	PSU34810
<b>Module Name</b>	<b>Global Mental Health</b>
<b>ECTS credit weighting</b>	5 ECTS
<b>Semester taught</b>	Semester 2
<b>Module Coordinator/s</b>	Prof. Frédérique Vallières, Dr. Alina Cosma, Dr. Meg Ryan
<b><a href="#">Module Learning Outcomes with embedded Graduate Attributes</a></b>	<p>LO1. Critically compare and evaluate competing theoretical frameworks for conceptualising mental health in global contexts.</p> <p>LO2. Critically analyse how social, cultural, and contextual factors influence the expression, recognition, and classification of mental health and mental distress across diverse populations.</p> <p>LO3. Critically evaluate the effectiveness, accessibility, cultural relevance, and evidentiary basis of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) interventions across different global settings, including within humanitarian emergencies.</p> <p>LO4. Critically evaluate the influence of social determinants (e.g., poverty, inequality, conflict, gender, displacement, and climate-related factors) on mental health outcomes, and assess implications for research, policy, and practice in global mental health.</p> <p>LO5. Critically compare national and international mental health systems and policy responses in relation to equity, sustainability, accessibility, and rights-based approaches to care.</p> <p>LO6. Apply ethical principles and critically reflect on the challenges of conducting research and delivering mental health practice with vulnerable populations and in low-resource and humanitarian settings.</p>
<b>Module Content</b>	<p>Mental health is increasingly recognised as a major global health and social justice issue, yet experiences of mental health and access to care vary considerably across countries, cultures, and communities. This module introduces students to the field of <i>Global Mental Health</i> and explores how mental health is understood, experienced, researched, and addressed across diverse international contexts.</p> <p>The module examines different ways of defining and conceptualising mental health and considers how social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental factors influence experiences of wellbeing and distress. Students will critically explore how context shapes both the expression of mental health difficulties and the systems used to identify and respond to them.</p>

A central focus of the module is the role of social determinants of mental health, including poverty, inequality, gender, conflict, displacement, and climate-related challenges. Students will consider how these broader structural factors contribute to mental health outcomes and examine their implications for research, policy, and practice.

The module also introduces students to current approaches to mental health care globally, including Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) interventions, public mental health approaches, and national and international policy responses. Students will evaluate the strengths and limitations of different models of care, with attention to issues of effectiveness, accessibility, equity, cultural relevance, and sustainability.

Throughout the module, students will engage with ethical questions involved in conducting research and delivering services in diverse and often resource-constrained settings, including work with vulnerable populations and communities affected by adversity.

By combining theoretical, empirical, and applied perspectives, the module equips students with the knowledge and critical skills needed to understand contemporary challenges in global mental health and to engage thoughtfully with policy, research, and practice in this rapidly evolving field.

## Teaching and Learning Methods<sup>1</sup>

### [Teaching strategies](#)

Teaching will primarily focus on interactive lectures, guided discussion, case-based learning, and structured reading to introduce core concepts, theories, and empirical evidence in Global Mental Health (LO1–LO5), while incorporating opportunities for facilitated discussion to encourage active engagement and deepen understanding. Lectures will foreground contemporary examples, with an emphasis on and international case studies and humanitarian contexts to support students in applying theoretical knowledge to diverse real-world contexts.

Case-based and problem-oriented learning activities will be embedded throughout the module to support students in analysing complex global mental health challenges, evaluating interventions and policy responses, and considering ethical dimensions of research and practice (LO2–LO6). These activities encourage students to work with ambiguity, compare perspectives, and integrate evidence across contexts.

This module is strongly aligned Education for Sustainable Development themes through its focus on health and wellbeing, global inequalities, social justice, cultural diversity, conflict, and climate-related determinants of mental health. The module particularly supports development of the following ESD competencies:

---

<sup>1</sup> [Trinity-INC](#) provides tips and resources on how to make your curriculum more inclusive.

- **Systems thinking** through analysing interactions between social, cultural, political, environmental, and health systems (LO2, LO4, LO5).
- **Critical thinking** through evaluating theories, interventions, and policy approaches (LO1–LO5).
- **Normative competency** through engagement with ethics, rights-based approaches, and questions of equity and justice (LO5–LO6).
- **Strategic competency** through consideration of sustainable policy and service responses to mental health needs (LO3–LO5).
- **Self-awareness and reflective practice** through engagement with positionality and ethical challenges in research and practice (LO6).

This approach supports students in developing not only disciplinary knowledge but also the capacity to engage critically with complex global challenges relevant to sustainable development.

#### Assessment design

Assessment is a **100% examination assessment**, which requires students to demonstrate breadth and integration of knowledge, critical evaluation of evidence, and the ability to construct coherent arguments under examination conditions. Teaching activities therefore prioritise exposure to diverse perspectives, repeated practice in critical analysis, and opportunities to synthesise material across topics rather than producing incremental assessed outputs.

#### Assessment Details<sup>2</sup>

Please include the following:

- Assessment Component
- Assessment description
- Learning Outcome(s) addressed
- % of total

It is recommended that module co-ordinators consider assessment types used across the year to ensure varied assessment methods.

Assessment Component	Assessment Description	LO Addressed	% of total
Examination	Students complete a 100% end-of-semester examination, answering two questions from a choice of three, with all questions carrying equal weighting. The examination assesses students' ability to critically evaluate global mental health concepts, evidence,	All	100

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.tcd.ie/academicpractice/resources/assessment/>

	systems, and/or interventions; critically describe how social and contextual factors shape mental health outcomes across populations; and engage critically with debates relating to psychotherapeutic approaches, mental health classification, policy, ethics, and service provision in diverse global contexts.		
--	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--

As this module is assessed through a 100% in-person, invigilated examination, the assessment format has been intentionally selected to reduce opportunities for inappropriate use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) and to ensure that students demonstrate their own understanding and critical thinking.

The examination is designed to assess higher-order cognitive skills aligned with the learning outcomes, including critical analysis, evaluation, synthesis of evidence, and application of concepts to complex global mental health issues. Questions require students to construct arguments, engage with competing perspectives, reflect on their own assumptions, live with ambiguity, and apply knowledge across contexts rather than reproduce module content material.

While students may choose to engage with GenAI tools as part of independent study (e.g., for brainstorming or explanation of concepts where permitted), responsibility for understanding, interpretation, and preparation for assessment remains with the student.

**Contact Hours and Indicative Student Workload<sup>3</sup>**

<b>Contact hours:</b> 11 lectures
<b>Independent Study (preparation for course and review of materials):</b> 55 hours
<b>Independent Study (preparation for assessment, incl. completion of assessment):</b> 59 hours

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.tcd.ie/academicpractice/resources/assessment\\_workload/](https://www.tcd.ie/academicpractice/resources/assessment_workload/)

## Inclusive Curriculum

All modules should be inclusive for all students who learn differently. Please respond to the following questions (i.e. ensuring the course supports engagement and representation of all students)

	PLEASE TICK
1. Have you reviewed the teaching / assessment methods and materials for possible barriers to learning, e.g. students with English as a second language, disabilities, significant external responsibilities, students with IT issues / requiring specific accessibility software etc.?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Have you adapted your resources and teaching materials taking into account Trinity's Accessible Information Guidelines ( <a href="https://www.tcd.ie/disability/teaching-info/TIC/materials.php">https://www.tcd.ie/disability/teaching-info/TIC/materials.php</a> )?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Does the content of your module address diversity? For example, including a diverse demographic profile of authors, diversity of ideas and perspectives, or representation (e.g. pictures of conditions on different skin tones), or by acknowledgement of the homogenous context of the discipline/topic?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>4. Highlight at least two ways which your course/module incorporates principles of inclusivity and accessibility into the curriculum design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Multiple means of engagement and representation:</b> <i>The module uses a range of teaching methods, including interactive lectures, case-based learning, and structured discussion of real-world global mental health scenarios.</i></li> <li>● <b>Support for diverse perspectives and critical reflection:</b> <i>The curriculum explicitly engages with issues of inequality, culture, gender, conflict, disability, and displacement in global mental health. This ensures that diverse lived experiences are embedded within the content rather than treated as peripheral. Students are encouraged to critically reflect on positionality, assumptions in theory and practice, and the cultural specificity of mental health frameworks.</i></li> </ul>	

## Indicative Reading List (approx. 4-5 titles)

- GBD 2023 Mental Disorder Collaborators (2026). Updated trends in the global prevalence and burden of mental disorders, 1990-2023: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2023. *Lancet (London, England)*, 407(10543), 2040–2064. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(26\)00519-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(26)00519-2)
- Cosgrove, L., Mills, C., Karter, J. M., Mehta, A., & Kalathil, J. (2019). A critical review of the Lancet Commission on global mental health and sustainable

development: Time for a paradigm change. *Critical Public Health*, 30(5), 624–631. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09581596.2019.1667488>

- Kirkbride JB, Anglin DM, Colman I, Dykxhoorn J, Jones PB, Patalay P, Pitman A, Sonesson E, Steare T, Wright T, Griffiths SL. The social determinants of mental health and disorder: evidence, prevention and recommendations. *World Psychiatry*. 2024 Feb;23(1):58-90. doi: 10.1002/wps.21160. PMID: 38214615; PMCID: PMC10786006
- Hoppen, T. H., Priebe, S., Vetter, I., & others. (2021). Global burden of post-traumatic stress disorder and major depression in countries affected by war between 1989 and 2019: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *BMJ Global Health*, 6, e006303. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2021-006303>
- White, B. P., Breakey, S., Brown, M. J., Smith, J. R., Tarbet, A., Nicholas, P. K., & Ros, A. M. V. (2023). Mental Health Impacts of Climate Change Among Vulnerable Populations Globally: An Integrative Review. *Annals of Global Health*, 89(1), 66. <https://doi.org/10.5334/aogh.4105>
- Patel V, Saxena S, Lund C, Kohrt B, Kieling C, Sunkel C, Kola L, Chang O, Charlson F, O'Neill K, Herrman H. Transforming mental health systems globally: principles and policy recommendations. *Lancet*. 2023 Aug 19;402(10402):656-666. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(23)00918-2. PMID: 37597892.

**Module Pre-requisite**

None

**Module Co-requisite**

None

**Are other Schools/Departments involved in the delivery of this module? If yes, please provide details.**

School of Medicine