



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
MELBOURNE AUSTRALIA

COLLEGE OF ARTS

UNIT OF STUDY GUIDE

AMPC Master of Applied Psychology (Community Psychology)

Program Handbook 2015

Victoria University
College of Arts
Melbourne, Australia.

Program Coordinator: Dr Julie van den Eynde

Phone: 9919 5221

Email: Julie.vandeneynde@vu.edu.au

Location: Footscray Park Campus, E410A

We acknowledge the Elders, families and forebears of the Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung tribes of the Kulin Nation who were the custodians of the University land for many centuries.

We acknowledge that the land on which we meet was the place of age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal and that the Kulin Nation people's living culture had and has a unique role in the life of this region.

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1.0 Course Outline

1.1 Philosophy and Aims of the Course

The Master of Applied Psychology course is founded on the scientist-practitioner model of professional training, combining knowledge and skills acquisition with reality-based psychological understandings, and facilitating a clear stance of enquiry in relation to all aspects of theory, research and practice. The unifying philosophy across both streams is the promotion of individual, relational and collective wellness. The course has three components: coursework, practicum placement and research thesis. Graduating students will have completed 1000 hours of placement.

1.2 Objectives

The Community Psychology program draws on the educational and training components of the core subjects, but also provides students with an opportunity to learn and develop broader options for the application of psychological skills and knowledge.

Community psychology developed in Australia in the 1970s in response to a growing recognition that the psychological wellbeing of individuals could not be understood in isolation from broader social contexts. The discipline has its roots in such fields as community mental health, organisational, applied social psychology and more recently, environmental, ecological and health psychology. Its unique identity is defined through its focus on communities as the primary unit for understanding and action.

The Community Psychology stream aims to:

- a) develop students' skills in analysing social and psychological problems from multiple perspectives and at multiple levels. This entails developing a sensitivity to the cultural and experiential forces that impact on such problems;
 - b) develop students' skills in intervention strategies appropriate to multiple-level analysis of problems, from the individual level to broader contexts in relational, collective and community wellness;
 - c) develop students' intervention skills in a variety of areas, such as program and policy design, implementation and evaluation, the organisation and facilitation of groups, and the development of social support networks;
 - d) develop students' independent use of applied research skills for problem resolution, under the supervision of a researcher in community psychology. This includes the identification of a problem that may be resolved by research, the design, execution, analysis and interpretation of a study to address that issue, and the presentation of implications of the study and future directions for research;
 - e) highlight the various ethical and professional conduct issues that will be faced as practising psychologists;
 - f) prepare students for specialist APS membership in the College of Community Psychologists.
- The stream is fully accredited by the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC).

2.0 Details of the Course

2.1 Admission Requirements

To qualify for admission to the course an applicant must normally have

- a) completed an Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) accredited sequence of study in psychology to third year; and
- b) completed an Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) accredited fourth year either in an Honours degree or in a graduate diploma; and
- c) obtained consistent results at the level of distinction or above, or equivalent.

The selection panel reserves the right to consult referees about the applicant's suitability to undertake specialist study at fifth and sixth year levels.

2.2. Registration Requirements

All students in the Master of Applied Psychology (Community Psychology) program need to meet the requirements of the APAC *Provisional registration standard*. That is to say, psychology higher degree students in APAC accredited professional programs at fifth year or higher must be provisionally registered **from the commencement** of enrolment and for **the duration of enrolment** - including the thesis. Students who are commencing or continuing their psychology higher degree in 2015 must be provisionally registered at the commencement of the degree and before completing coursework or undertaking placements. This is a non-negotiable requirement, and all students will be asked to provide evidence of their provisional registration before continuing, or beginning their studies in the program.

2.3 Duration of the Course

Two years full-time or four years part-time.

2.4 Location of course

The Master of Applied Psychology program is offered through the College of Arts at Footscray Park Campus. Some travel to other campuses may be required.

2.5 Administration

The course is administered by the College of Arts. Queries should be directed to the Course coordinator, Dr Julie van den Eynde.

2.6 Student Representatives

Each community psychology cohort can nominate two current student representatives. Their role is relatively informal, and involves liaison with other students, and representation on the APS Community College State and National committees.

3.0 Course Schedule

Year 1

Semester 1		Semester 2	
APM5010	Psychological Practice 1: Ethics & Professional Practice	APM5003	Qualitative Research Methods
APM5013	Quantitative Research Methods	APM5021	Practicum 1
APM5018	Psychological Practice 2: Psychological Assessment	APM6009	Psychological Practice 3: Counselling Theories, Skills & Interventions
APM6030	Thesis Research	APM6030	Thesis Research
APM5001	Foundations of Community Psychology	APM6060	Psychology of Community Health

Year 2

Semester 1		Semester 2	
APM6021	Practicum 2	APM6050	Practicum 3
APM6070	Extended Research Thesis	APM6070	Extended Research Thesis
AXXXXXX	Elective	AXXXXXX	Elective
APM6002	Community Psychology Interventions	APM6040	Psychological Practice 4C

4.0 Resources for students

4.1 Library

There is a library of psychological tests and measures on the Footscray Park campus. Access to this library is via the College of Arts.

4.2 Email addresses and network access

These are available to all enrolled students. Information to students will be disseminated by email, so all students should ensure they have regular access to their student email address, which can be linked to a private address. It is unlikely staff will use your private email address to contact you, so your student email account must be activated.

4.3 Collaborate Learning Management System

Collaborate is the online learning system at Victoria University. Most of your units will have a Collaborate site which you will need to access, and check regularly. Most units will have learning material loaded in Collaborate – e.g., journal articles and book chapters, your Learning Guides, and Discussion Boards will be available. In some cases, assessment tasks will be completed in Collaborate. You will be able to access Collaborate through the VU student portal at the following address <http://www.vu.edu.au/student-tools/myvu-student-portal>.

4.4 Conference Support

Students presenting papers at scientific or professional conferences in a relevant field of Applied Psychology may apply for assistance with expenses such as registration and airfares, subject to current budgetary limits. Applications should be made in writing to the Psychology School Research Professor, Anthony Love. Evidence of the presentation's acceptance, together with any original receipts or details of advance bookings required, must be attached.

5.0 Academic Progression

5.1 Unsatisfactory Progress

The demand for tertiary study places exceeds the number of places available. Every year a considerable number of applicants fail to gain entry to the University. It is assumed that every person selected into an award course has the capacity to succeed. However, if students do not progress satisfactorily, they will be asked to show cause as to why they should be permitted to continue in the course.

An important aim of the University is to assist its students to succeed. Therefore, students should make use of the free counselling services provided if they are encountering problems or difficulties that are affecting their studies. These difficulties could include problems in organising time, financial difficulties, personal problems or difficulties in writing and presenting assignments and essays. An excellent careers counselling and resumé assistance service is also available.

On the recommendation of the relevant College, the University may specify academic progression rules for each individual course. Students should carefully read the progression rules relating to their course of study as detailed in the relevant section of the Handbook or in course regulations.

A student who fails to make satisfactory progress in a course of study is liable for exclusion from that course. This applies where a student does not achieve a satisfactory performance on a component of assessment, fails to attend, without good reason, for the performance of a component of assessment, or does not perform a component of assessment. In these cases, the relevant College, after investigating the circumstances and allowing the student to be heard, either personally or through a representative, may notify the student in writing that he or she has made unsatisfactory progress in a subject.

In addition to notifying the student of unsatisfactory progress, the relevant College may also notify the student that it intends to make a recommendation to the Academic Board that the student be excluded or suspended from the course or only be allowed to continue under certain specified conditions. As a general policy, the following will form part of all award course progression regulations within the University.

Students may not:

- enrol in any sequential subject without having passed all prerequisite subjects
- enrol in any unit with a co-requisite subject without having either previously passed the co-requisite subject or enrolling simultaneously in the co-requisite subject. This is especially applicable to Practicum placements.

Students must complete APM5010 Psychological Practice 1: Ethics and Professional Practice before commencing a Placement.

In reaching its decision about what action should be recommended with respect to unsatisfactory progress by a student, the College may establish one or more committees to consider the circumstances and hear any submission that a student wishes to make. After receiving a recommendation from a College, the Academic Board, as appropriate, may exclude or suspend the student from a course. Alternatively, the relevant Board may specify the conditions under which the student may continue in a course.

5.2 Discipline

The University will act to protect good order and the rights of individuals within its confines. To this end, a formal process will be followed to deal with any alleged breach of discipline or misconduct. The University's approach to Student Discipline is governed by two pieces of internal legislation: Statute 2.7 - Discipline; and Regulation 2.7 - Discipline.

5.3 Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation, for assessment, of the work of another person as original work. Plagiarism is a serious offence, and will generally result in a failing grade for the plagiarised work. If plagiarism is found to be extensive, the offending student may be required to withdraw from the course.

5.4 Policy on retaining work

Students are advised that they should retain an electronic copy of all work submitted and also hard or electronic copies of work that has been returned.

5.5 Extensions

Please note, that applications for extensions will only be accepted before the due date of the assessment piece. Extensions will not normally be granted unless there are extraordinary reasons which can be substantiated (for example, through presentation of a medical certificate or other substantive evidence). The following requests will *not be considered substantive reasons for an extension*:

- Work commitments
- Other assessments due at the same time
- Demands of Placement
- Holidays
- Sporting commitments
- Computer issues

It is expected that students *undertake a degree of planning to take these factors into account*. However, if for any reason, you believe that you will have such extraordinary difficulties submitting work on time, you must follow Victoria University processes. These are outlined below:

Step 1: Obtain an application form for an extension for assignments.

Step 2: Complete the form, and attach substantive evidence to support your case.

Step 3: Submit the completed application to the Unit coordinator.

Step 4: You will be informed via email of the result of the application for extension. If you are successful you will be provided with an amended due date for submission.

Extension Forms can be found at: <http://www.vu.edu.au/student-tools/student-forms>

5.6 Special Consideration

If you feel that illness or personal difficulties have impaired your performance you may ask for Special Consideration which can facilitate late submission, and alternative arrangements for assignments. This can cover both emotional and physical difficulties.

More information can be found at: <http://www.vu.edu.au/student-tools/student-forms>

4. Once a budget has been approved, claims for reimbursement may be made directly to the Head of Psychology. Where there is any doubt about whether a claim has formed a part of the approved budget, the claim will be referred to the course co-ordinator for verification.

7.0 Unit Descriptions

APM 5010 Psychological Practice 1: Ethics and Professional Practice

PRE-REQUISITE : Nil.

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit investigates the role of systems and contexts on psychological practice, for example, in the government and non-government sectors, welfare, education, industrial, sporting, health and mental health systems in Victoria. Within these settings, the psychologists' role is considered within the guidelines of the Australian Psychological Society (APS) Code of Ethics and the Psychological Board of Australia (PBA) registration guidelines. Placement expectations are discussed, including an overview of both the probable roles and responsibilities of students.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of professional practice issues in psychology;
- 2) Relate the unit content to their own professional and personal experience;
- 3) Report on the professional contexts of psychological practice within at least one of the health, mental health, legal corporate, sport and public sector systems;
- 4) Appraise the APS Code of Ethics and Ethical Guidelines and the AHPRA and PBA registration requirements;
- 5) Contextualise factors such as power, ethnicity, class and gender into psychological practice;
- 6) Explain the ethical considerations proceeding from APS Code of Ethics and their applications to generalist and specialist practice.

APM 5013: Quantitative Research Methods

PRE-REQUISITE : Nil.

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit extends students skills and knowledge in advanced research methods. These include a statistics review, inferential statistics, parametric and non-parametric statistics, univariate and multivariate statistics, repeated measures and independent groups, regression and multiple regression, LISREL and path analysis. Further skill development includes the interpretation and presentation of data, an examination of published research papers, critical analysis of research arguments hypotheses, methods, analysis, interpretation and conclusions.

The social responsibility of researchers is also examined.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Apply advanced quantitative research skills to social research;
- 2) Demonstrate advanced theoretical knowledge related to quantitative inquiry; Critically review published research related to research design;
- 3) Utilise quantitative research skills to design a research proposal.

APM 5018: Psychological Practice 2: Psychological Assessment

PRE-REQUISITE Nil

DESCRIPTOR:

This unit focuses on approaches to the assessment of client characteristics and the implications of this assessment for the selection of appropriate interventions. The generic features of assessing the status of individuals, groups and larger social systems are emphasised. Models of psychological health and normality used to diagnose the client system are explored as the basis for professional judgement. Tests, measures and other indicators of client characteristics are examined as means to specifying, confirming and/or modifying the initial assessment of the client's needs. The validity, reliability and utility of these different measures are scrutinised. Consent, interpretation and reporting practices are emphasised.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:

1. Identify and appraise the various functions, roles and duties performed by psychologists related to assessment;
2. Apply knowledge and understanding of the ethical and professional conduct related to assessment and report writing in professional settings;
3. Evaluate and apply psychological assessment protocols;
4. Utilise a range of skills related to informal assessment processes.
5. Select appropriate interventions strategies based on the assessment of client characteristics.

APM 6030: Thesis Research

This unit is designed to provide students with experience in planning, conducting, analysing and reporting a major research project in their area of interest. The thesis will be of the same quality as a Master degree by research, but the scope of the research will be smaller.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit students are expected to be able to:

1. Identify an academic research question and design a research project to investigate this thesis;
2. Choose a research methodology and methods and use these methods to collect and analyse data;
3. Utilise standard APA (6th) formatting style;
4. Apply academic learning to develop an original research thesis.

APM 5001: Foundations of Community Psychology

PRE-REQUISITE : Nil.

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit reviews the history of community psychology and the national and international development of the discipline. Students gain an understanding of the impact of social systems on mental health. Philosophical underpinnings include examining psychology's role in the use of knowledge production and action for social justice, eg. students critically review the 'medical' model of mental health, power relationships, social capital, social institutions, health inequalities, blaming the victim and social exclusion. Within these parameters, notions related to multiple levels of analysis and prevention are highlighted, as well as tensions between deficit models versus competencies, and the issues of social identities, social inequalities and social processes.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:

1. Clarify key concepts and values in community psychology;
2. Critically apply community psychology philosophical and theoretical approaches to a social issue;
3. Assess the psycho-political bases of community psychology;
4. Critically evaluate theories underpinning the aetiology and interventions in health and wellbeing.

APM 5003: Qualitative Research Methods

PRE-REQUISITE : Nil.

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit includes research philosophies including positivist, post-positivist, constructivist and interpretive social science approaches. The research process is examined, including the research assumptions and paradigms. Multiple qualitative research techniques are highlighted, from case studies, focus groups, observational techniques, interviewing to ethnographic fieldwork and needs analysis. Qualitative analysis and reporting is explored from pre-evaluation data assessment and negotiation, ordering data and interpretation and matrix analyses. Program evaluation techniques are analysed including formative and summative evaluation, goal-free evaluation, empowerment evaluation, utilisation-focused methods, action research and cost-benefit analysis.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:

1. Identify and differentiate between the different strategies of qualitative inquiry;
2. Explain the relationship between epistemology, method and knowledge;
3. Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of obtrusive and unobtrusive data sources;
4. Identify the differences in assumptions underlying different strategies of inquiry;
5. Explain different ethical challenges associated with qualitative strategies of inquiry;
6. Design a small qualitative study.

APM 5021: Practicum 1

PRE-REQUISITE : APM5010 - PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE 1: ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit provides support to students whilst they are undertaking their practicum placement. Therefore, the seminar sessions translate content to the applied setting of the practicum. For example, legal and ethical issues in the practice of professional psychology, competing roles and priority setting in the professional agency, developing one's 'place' as a professional psychologist and troubleshooting problems in the professional psychology setting.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

- 1) On successful completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:
- 2) Evaluate and link Psychologist Competencies to Learning Contracts;
- 3) Assign the skills and knowledge learned in the course to applied settings;
- 4) Apply a sound knowledge of legal and ethical issues to the practice of professional psychology;
- 5) Appraise and determine the competing roles and priority settings of the professional agency;
- 6) Develop one's 'place' as a professional psychologist; and
- 7) Identify and troubleshoot problems in the professional psychology setting.

APM 6009: Psychological Practice 3: Counselling Theories, Skills & Interventions

PRE-REQUISITE : APM5010 - PSYCHOLOGICAL PRACTICE 1: ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

DESCRIPTOR :

In this unit, students study theories of psychological change and therapy along with their empirical evaluation. These are based on research and in particular, outcome studies. A major focus is on developing interviewing and counselling skills, and developing group work skills. The skill development aspect draws on the large body of process research. Students have the opportunity to learn specific therapeutic techniques and when and where to apply them.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

- 1) On successful completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:
- 2) Evaluate and analyse psychotherapy, counselling and group work research;
- 3) Appraise what is known about effectiveness in practice and effective therapists/counsellors;
- 4) Draw upon psychotherapy process research to identify important core processes in counselling and psychotherapy;
- 5) Demonstrate skills in those core processes and specific techniques.

APM 6060: Psychology of Community Health

PRE-REQUISITE : Nil.

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit is designed to apply theories and principles of health and community psychology to fieldwork in community settings. Special emphasis is given to social health issues impacting on the western region of Melbourne. The focus is on community-based strategies such as self-help, consumer participation and illness prevention, and social policy initiatives in health promotion and public administration contexts. Relevant roles and skills for applied psychologists, such as group facilitation and training, networking and advocacy, consultation, submission writing, program implementation and evaluation will be developed by involvement in group and individual projects.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Critically examine the principles of community based health prevention;
- 2) Conceptualise and apply theories of social determinates of wellbeing to a social issue;
- 3) Evaluate the effectiveness of health promotion concepts and strategies;
- 4) Apply an ecological model to explain external socio-cultural factors related to health and wellbeing.

APM 6021: Practicum 2

PRE-REQUISITE : APM5021 - PRACTICUM 1

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit is designed to provide students with support in their field experience in a specialist setting. Class content focuses on the ethical and legal issues relating to specialist practice, the translation of theories to the specialist applied setting, troubleshooting any practical problems arising on placement, and determining the appropriate use of specialist and generalist skills.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate the application of knowledge of APS Code of Ethics in the placement setting;
- 2) Make the connection with psychological theories and the work performed in the placement setting;
- 3) Seek advice on practical problems and challenges arising in the placement setting;
- 4) Consider the appropriate use of generalist and specialist skills in the placement setting;
- 5) Construct an appropriate learning contract in consultation with placement supervisor.

APM 6070: Extended Thesis Research

PRE-REQUISITE : Nil.

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit of study is a continuation of the same project undertaken in APM6030 Thesis Research. In this unit, however, students are expected to devote proportionately more of their study time to completing their research project than during other semesters. The unit is designed to provide students with the experience in planning, conducting, analysing and reporting a major research project in their area of interest. The thesis will be of the same quality as a Master degree by research, but the scope of the research is smaller.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Identify an academic research question and design a research project to investigate this thesis;
- 2) Choose a research methodology and methods and use these methods to collect and analyse data;
- 3) Utilise standard APA (6th) formatting style;
- 4) Apply academic learning to construct an original research thesis;
- 5) Produce an original research thesis based upon a topic with either Community Psychology or Sport and Exercise Psychology relevance;
- 6) Evaluate project outcomes and determine the implications for the specialist area.

APM 6002: Community Psychology Interventions

PRE-REQUISITE : Nil.

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit examines community psychology interventions in multiple levels of analysis, from small groups, to organisational contexts to broader community settings. Prevention strategies are critically explored, including primary prevention programs, secondary prevention strategies, tertiary prevention strategies and the notion of 'at-risk'. The emphasis is on evidence-based interventions, and the capacity to critically evaluate existing community-based interventions.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Demonstrate an understanding of the multiple levels requiring analysis for community problem-solving ; from individual to broader contexts, including cultural factors and notions of empowerment;
- 2) Explain and apply the philosophy and principles for successful and sustainable community interventions;
- 3) Examine the range of prevention strategies, including individual and larger group interventions, in light of local and international practices;
- 4) Critically analyse a current community problem, with a view to developing an intervention strategy/ies;
- 5) Design a complete intervention plan, including an evaluation plan, informed by relevant research.

APM 6050: Practicum 3

PRE-REQUISITE : APM6021 - PRACTICUM 2

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit provides students with extended knowledge of specialist psychological practice settings, and the roles and responsibilities taken by professional psychologists in these settings. It is also designed to integrate academic learning with professional applications. Work will be carried out on tasks and activities negotiated with the placement supervisor and approved by university staff.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Successfully complete a supervised practice in an agency setting;
- 2) Integrate psychological theories with issues that arise in agency settings;
- 3) Employ complex negotiation skills to determine strategies for resolving practical problems and challenges in psychological practice settings; and
- 4) Distinguish between generalist and specialist skills and apply them in psychological practice settings.

APM 6040: Psychological Practice 4C

PRE-REQUISITE : Nil

DESCRIPTOR :

This unit examines and evaluates the multiple roles of the community psychologist as a practitioner. These roles include a participant-observer, evaluator, consultant, researcher, change agent, planner-designer, networker, trainer, negotiator, facilitator; intervener and activist. Students reflect upon and identify their existing capabilities, competencies and skills, and then identify their gaps in competencies. From this self-reflection, a learning contract will be developed to formulate a professional practice plan in preparation for their future workplace.

LEARNING OUTCOMES :

On successful completion of this unit, students are expected to be able to:

- 1) Identify and discuss professional issues relevant to psychological practice;
- 2) Integrate and evaluate the learning acquired in academic coursework and on placement;
- 3) Clarify values in relation to working as a community psychologist, in the light of Course and Practicum experience, with particular emphasis on culture, gender, ability and minority group identification; and
- 4) Develop plans for enhancing competencies as community psychologists in future work settings.

8.0. Appendix - Budget Pro forma

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
 COLLEGE OF ARTS
 MASTER OF APPLIED PSYCHOLOGY (COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY AND SPORT PSYCHOLOGY)
 ESTIMATED BUDGET FOR RESEARCH PROJECT

DETAILS	COST \$

TOTAL

STUDENT NAME		Signature	Date
RESEARCH SUPERVISOR		Signature	Date
COORDINATOR OF COURSE		Signature	Date
HEAD OF PSYCHOLOGY		Signature	Date
APPROVED		Signature	Date