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KAREN FOLEY: In this session, we're going to be looking at DD310, which is Counselling and Forensic Psychology, one of the new third level psychology modules.

I'm joined by Andreas Vossler. Andreas, thank you for joining me to tell us about this module. It sounds so interesting and exciting.

ANDREAS VOSSLER: Yeah, thanks for having me here. And yeah, I'm very happy to talk about DD310, because we are equally excited about it, because we think it's a really great new module we've produced.

KAREN FOLEY: Lovely. Now we've got some widgets that we're going to ask you about. So which age is most likely to experience violence and victimisation? And when was homosexuality removed from the World Health Organisation's International Classification of Diseases? And you're going to tell us why some of this is relevant.

But firstly, let's just take a look at the module and talk a little bit about what it's all about, because this, again, is a very interdisciplinary module. You're looking at three different areas of which really appeal to students

ANDREAS VOSSLER: Yeah. So, I mean, the module is, as you said, a very interdisciplinary module. So we have two kinds of fields or disciplines, which one is counselling and psychotherapy. And the other one is forensic psychology.

And initially, you might think, well, how does this-- how can they come together in a way? But when you study the module, or when you look into the module, there are so many fascinating and interesting intersections between counselling and therapy and forensic psychology.

So, for example, working therapeutically in a forensic setting, like in a prison. Or if you look at issues around sex and sexuality and how they're seen from a forensics perspective versus a counselling or therapeutic perspective, to give just two examples of topics we have there.

So it's really great, I mean, to have the chance to investigate those topics, so counselling and forensic psychology. And the subtitle is Investigating Crime and Therapy. So it's really interesting to look at those intersections and the topics that are at the intersection of crime and therapy and counselling and forensic psychology.

KAREN FOLEY: Now we thought it would be nice to talk about some of these things, because they're so interesting. And so let's just get the admin over with at the beginning. Now you can find out at Study at the OU all about the basics of this and, indeed, all the other modules. But broadly, Andreas, what's included when students sign up?

ANDREAS VOSSLER: So a level 3 module, 60 credits, included is, as students are probably used to at the OU, it's a module textbook. It's not yet published. It's coming out at the end of May, end of this month. But I brought with me the cover. So you can already see how the cover is going to look like. So it's called *Mad or Bad-- A Critical Approach to Counseling and Forensic Psychology*.

KAREN FOLEY: Excellent.

ANDREAS VOSSLER: And so a textbook, then we have the VLE. We have five blocks on the module. The VLE has a lot of interactive elements in it. So we have activities. We have text under VLE. We have voices to hear from practitioners, from people from the other side, like mental health users, for example, perpetrators, victims of crime, so a lot of material under VLE as well.

And then, of course, in terms of tuition, we have online tuition blended with face-to-face tutorials. It's kind of a standard approach we are taking there. So it's a whole package, a really nice package of different teaching material and activities and teaching in terms of online chat rooms and cluster groups, but also face-to-face tutorials.

KAREN FOLEY: Important, and especially because I guess you get such a broad range of students. It would be really exciting to be able to capitalise on some of that diversity from the student population when you're talking about some of these essays in tutorials. Tell us how it's assessed then.

ANDREAS VOSSLER: So we have five TMAs on the module. And what is really important to know about DD310, it's a very applied module.

So when we thought about assessment and the assessment strategy, we had different things in mind. We wanted to have assessments that are innovative. So we have watched. We have some new classes as well on the module. We have other assessment types which are quite innovative. But they are designed in terms of employability and in terms of preparing students for either a career in a forensic setting or in a therapeutic or counselling setting that are really relevant for those kind of employability skills.

So, for example, the first TMA is about a critical evaluation of a media coverage of crime and

therapy-- of crime, sorry. Then the second one is about sociocultural issues. So we provide students with a case study. And then they look into how sociocultural issues play out.

So if students have seen the animation we just saw in the break, that's kind of the sociocultural issue kind of topic we have there. Then we have a presentation. So students are asked in a TMA to prepare a presentation for laypeople.

And the fourth one is a formulation report. So that's something, in therapeutic practise, a therapist has to do for a client. It's about how do we make sense of client problems? So what do we think, which factors have played a role? And that's putting that together in a formulation report. So that's hugely relevant for employability skills, if students learn to do that.

Then a fifth one is a more classical kind of essay. And then we have an EMA at the end of the module, which is kind of overarching, looking at the module content. But, I mean, what's really interesting is that from the very beginning of the module production, we were really very keen on getting student input and student engagement into the production process. So we did set up a website, which is called madorbad.org.

From the very beginning of the production process and on that website, we talk about the production. So we have a block, for example, where we report a bit about the production process. But we also had a forum on that website. And we asked students questions about what kind of, for example, assessment stretch do you-- what kind of assessment types would they like to have. Would they rather want to have an EMA or an exam at the end of the module?

And we got some really good feedback from students with really interesting reasons why they would want one or the other. So that we've chosen an EMA partly has to do with the student feedback we got. So that was a really good thing. And we also-- sorry.

KAREN FOLEY: Yeah. Oh, no, I was just going to say, you also got ideas from them, didn't you? You asked them for images and things. So you were crowdsourcing.

ANDREAS VOSSLER: Yeah, that was another thing we did on the Mad or Bad website. So we asked students to submit artwork they've done around the topic of mad or bad, because that's the topic that runs through the module. And we were overwhelmed by the kind of submissions we got. We got a lot of submissions.

And we are using the student artwork for-- one thing what we do with them is in every chapter

of the book, there is now one artwork from a student or from a staff member, because we also asked staff members to submit artwork. And also, under VLE we have some artwork around mad or bad submitted by students.

I have some examples here, so I can show some of those. So I said it's all around the topic of mad or bad, so this is one. Or another one, another example.

So both of those will be covered in the book as well. So they're in the book. And the book is externally published, so some students got their artwork in an externally published book. So it was really inspiring to see that artwork and to see what students-- how they felt about a topic and what kind of artwork they submitted around that.

KAREN FOLEY: Excellent. No, wonderful, and a great thing to add to your CV as well. Andreas, we have two questions on the widgets which we asked people to vote on. Would you like to see them? And would you like to see whether the one about which groups are most likely to statistically experience violence or victimisation? Or shall we take a look at the World Health Organisation's Classification of Diseases?

ANDREAS If we first have a look at the age-related one, that would be great.

VOSSLER:

KAREN FOLEY: Excellent. So let's see what people said at home. 62% said young people, 23% between 50 and 30. And older than 50 is 15%.

ANDREAS Hmm.

VOSSLER:

KAREN FOLEY: Is that what you'd expect the people to reply?

ANDREAS It's interesting, because it looks like OU students are very smart and--

VOSSLER:

KAREN FOLEY: They are very smart. [LAUGHS]

ANDREAS --and already know a lot about the kind of issues we wanted to cover on the module. So this

VOSSLER: kind of question is related to sociocultural issues and how age is perceived in society and in the criminal justice system, in the mental health system. And a lot of people would think, victims of crimes, what comes to mind? Yes, elderly people who are fragile, who are kind of

vulnerable, like elderly people at home who are kind of-- burglars break in or so.

But actually, and that's what's shown here in the statistics as well, actually, it's the young people who are most vulnerable in terms of violent crime. So in terms of statistics, they are most likely to become a victim of violent crime, young people.

KAREN FOLEY: So this really relates to this whole idea about the social construction of crime and also of therapy.

ANDREAS VOSSLER: Yeah, I mean, that's a really important issue and topic we cover in the module. And as a lot of psychology university modules, we have a very critical approach, looking very critically into discourses that are in society.

So, I mean, one message to get across in a module is we really cannot just label people as mad or bad, which still happens quite a lot in the criminal justice system or in the mental health system, that people are individualised, that we say, oh, this person is mad. Or this person is bad, or even evil, if it's a very serious crime.

And we want to get the message across, it's really important, when we look at crime and also mental health issues, to see the very complex picture, to see that there are a lot of factors. There are psychological factors. There are social factors. There are some law issues around there. There are media representations that play a role, diagnostic criteria that are applied.

So it's a really complex picture. And it's far too easy just to label someone as mad or bad. That's why the book title, we have a question mark around that Mad or Bad, because yeah, we were really in the module into these different factors. So there's a whole block where we look into, for example, race. How does race play out in terms of how people are treated by the police, treated by the criminal justice system?

So for example, if you look at stop and search statistics, it's clear that black people are three times more likely to be stopped and searched. There was talk about institutional racism some time ago, the Stephen Lawrence case, and so on. So this is how race plays out, also in mental health that's certain-- yeah.

KAREN FOLEY: I mean, sex and sexuality hasn't been less off the hook. We asked our audience about when they thought homosexuality was removed. Should we see what they said?

ANDREAS Yeah, let's have a look.

VOSSLER:

KAREN FOLEY: So 50%, now, have said 1992, 1981 at 29%, and 1967 at 21%.

ANDREAS Yeah. I am really-- it's really nice to see how well-informed OU students are, because it's the

VOSSLER: right answer, the 50%-- was it 52%?

KAREN FOLEY: It's 50%, yeah.

ANDREAS 1992. But you might think, if you look at that, that's quite late.

VOSSLER:

KAREN FOLEY: Well, it is, yeah.

ANDREAS Because you would think homosexuality, in our day, should be something that's, yeah, it's just

VOSSLER: a normal-- or what is normal? But kind of a way of sexuality.

KAREN FOLEY: So it's all about how things are categorised and also treated that is a central tenet then throughout these various case studies, I guess, that you're using in the module.

I wondered, because we're nearly out of time, Andreas, if you could talk to us a little bit about some of the forensic sides of things, so the challenges of working in forensic settings and also treatments and therapeutic approaches in terms of the aspects that are covered within the module.

So firstly, about the challenges of working in a forensic setting then, you use case studies that are coming through and, again, like you mentioned earlier, different voices of people who are out there doing things. So it's very, very topical and very relevant and also very applied.

ANDREAS Yeah, that's right. So in terms of what we have in terms of the therapeutic work, we call it

VOSSLER: therapy in action, so we have, you could say, it's a therapeutic enactment. We have real therapists, experienced therapist, working with actors who play client families or an individual client so students on the module can see the therapist working with those clients. And afterwards, they can see the therapist talking about their work and why they did certain things, why they used certain interventions.

And in terms of working in a forensic setting, there are of course issues like risk and security and safety that are much more complex in a forensic setting than in the usual therapeutic practise, or consent or voluntary participation in therapy. That's not always the case in a

forensic setting. People might feel under pressure to attend a therapy.

Or disclosure, it might be very, very difficult for someone in a prison to really talk openly about their mental health issues or distress they have. And there might be a culture in a prison where you mustn't show any weaknesses.

So it's a very difficult environment for therapeutic work, so much so, that some people say a forensic setting might even be a countertherapeutic environment, because if you look at the agendas of a prisoner in a forensic setting, it's quite the opposite or different from a therapeutic agenda. So a therapeutic agenda would be improving and promoting well-being. Whereas a forensic agenda would be protecting the public or perhaps punishment or rehabilitation, but not so much the individual well-being of inmates. So we really explore in the module how is it then still possible to work therapeutically and to help people who are in a forensic setting and the different challenges and specific issues there.

KAREN FOLEY: Excellent. And then you're having these four approaches as well. So you spend a week on each of these. So we've got attachment-based, CBT, systemic, and mindfulness DBA. So there are a lot of different ways, I guess, that people get a brief glimpse about some of the key principles of those therapeutic interventions.

ANDREAS VOSSLER: Yeah, that's right. So it's a really basic introduction into each of these approaches. And the good thing is, as we have four of them, students can really compare the different approaches and can see what are the strengths and perhaps the weaknesses or the things that can be done with the different approaches and how do they apply those approaches in a forensic setting, because that's the specific issues we are looking into.

So yeah, I mean, and we've chosen some of the most common therapeutic approaches, so cognitive behavioural therapy, systemic therapy, mindfulness, as you already mentioned, and attachment-based, which is really very relevant for a lot of perpetrators or people in prisons, because whilst they have committed often serious crimes, they themselves have been victims in their youth or childhood and have been sexual-- or yeah, abused or have suffered horrible kind of mental health injuries, if you want.

KAREN FOLEY: Aw, Andreas, thank you so much. It sounds like a brilliant module. And one of the things I think that's so impressive and that will appeal to students is that it is so diverse. Whether you're interested in law or forensic settings or counselling psychology, they would definitely be something that you probably would be least likely to know about.

And also, I guess you are going to have such a nice pool of students who've got experiences from those different pathways to bounce ideas off. So you would really be able to learn from each other, as well as about new therapies and ways of thinking and also the content.

ANDREAS

Yeah, definitely. I mean, that's something we already felt in the module team, because we

VOSSLER:

have had different academics from a more forensic side and more from a therapeutic side. And I think we learned a great deal from each other. And I think exactly the same thing will happen within the student community in that module, because we will have psychology students. But we will also have students from other qualifications, and perhaps more from a criminology or from of a forensic--

KAREN FOLEY:

Or law, even, yeah.

ANDREAS

--or law, even. And I think they can really learn a lot from each other by looking to the other

VOSSLER:

side and how people from the other side see things and the perspectives from the other side. So that's one huge advantage on that module.

KAREN FOLEY:

Andreas Vossler, thank you very, very much.

ANDREAS

You're welcome.

VOSSLER:

KAREN FOLEY:

Well, to find out more about this and other modules, do check out Study at the OU. We're going to have a short video break. We're going to show a small part of the *Making of Wales, Part 1* video. We don't have time to play it all. But you can check that out on the Resources page on the website, because our next session is going to be A329, The Making of Welsh History. So I will see you very soon.

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