

SYLLABUS

1. Program details

1.1 Higher education institution	West University of Timișoara
1.2 Faculty / Department	Psychology and Educational Sciences
1.3 Department	Psychology
1.4 Field of study	Psychology
1.5 Cycle of studies	Undergraduate studies
1.6 Study program / Qualification	Psychology - Cognitive Sciences

2. Discipline details

2.1 Discipline name	Neurodevelopmental Disorders						
2.2 Tenured teacher - course activities	Lecturer Iuliana Costea, Ph.D.						
2.3 Tenured teacher – seminar / laboratory activities	Lecturer Iuliana Costea, Ph.D.						
2.4 Study year	III	2.5 Semester	I	2.6 Type of assessment	C	2.7 Discipline regime	Opt
2.5 Google Classroom code	iul4zz42						

3. Estimated total time (hours per semester) of teaching activities

3.1 Number of hours per semester	56	Of which: 3.2 course	2	3.3 seminar/laboratory	2
3.4 Total hours from the curriculum	56	Of which: 3.5 course	28	3.6 seminar/laboratory	28
Time fund distribution:					hours
Study based on the textbook, course material, bibliography, and notes					25
Additional documentation in the library, on specialist electronic platforms / in the field					25
Preparing seminars/labs, homework, papers, portfolios, and essays					15
Tutoring					-
Examinations					4
Other activities					
3.7 Total hours of individual study	69				
3.8 Total hours per semester	125				
3.9 Number of credits (ECTS)	5				

4. Prerequisites (where necessary)

4.1 for curriculum	• Not applicable
4.2 for competencies	• Not applicable

5. Conditions (where necessary)

5.1 for conducting the course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 50% presence in class
5.2 for conducting the seminar/laboratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 75% presence in class
5.3 course guidelines for the use of generative artificial intelligence (genAI) Tools	<p>The use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude, Copilot) is allowed only under the conditions set by the instructor and in full compliance with academic integrity standards.</p> <p>Permitted uses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorming ideas Support with writing and structuring texts Translations and language editing Creating images, graphs, diagrams, illustrations, video or audio materials, avatars, and other digital products, for educational purposes only <p>Prohibited uses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generating entire assignments (essays, reports, projects) Presenting AI-generated content as if it were entirely one's own original work <p>For any written assignment (essay, portfolio, project, etc.), students must complete a Transparency Declaration Form (available on the course platform), stating:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The tool and version used The type of support received How the AI-generated content was verified and integrated <p>Failure to declare AI use is considered a violation of academic integrity and will be sanctioned according to UVT regulations.</p> <p>Students are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Checking the accuracy and relevance of AI-generated content Respecting confidentiality and copyright rules Critically and personally integrating AI-assisted results into their work <p>Further details will be explained and discussed in the first course and seminar session.</p>
5.4 technical requirements for access and participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students must register on Google Classroom using the course code with their institutional email address. All necessary materials as well as the course recording will be uploaded on Classroom.

6. Discipline objectives - expected learning outcomes to which the discipline's study and promotion contributes. By the end of the course, the student/graduate will be able to

Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> logically and coherently describe the fundamental principles of psychology and their relevance for understanding neurodevelopmental disorders in professional practice. identify and analyze the main characteristics associated with mental health and psychological well-being, as well as typical and atypical developmental functioning, including their prerequisites, in the context of interactions with beneficiaries of psychological services. explain the core features of psychopathological symptomatology and/or dysfunctional or maladaptive behavior (including clinical, educational, and occupational contexts), with particular reference to manifestations of neurodevelopmental disorders, in psychological assessment and intervention. differentiate between the main methodologies used in research and practice in psychology, with specific applications to the study and treatment of neurodevelopmental disorders. appropriately situate major psychological theories within the dominant paradigms of the discipline when conducting literature analysis, and apply them to the understanding of neurodevelopmental disorders. appropriately use the language and terminology specific to the field in interactions with beneficiaries of psychological services, ensuring that the message is communicated in a clear and comprehensible manner.
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> adapt psychological terminology to communicate effectively with different socio-professional categories of clients, as well as in relation to the type of psychological assessment and intervention required in neurodevelopmental disorders. appropriately calibrate behavior when interacting with clients experiencing different emotional states, ensuring a supportive and professional relationship. carry out the necessary procedures for interviewing, active listening, and observing the client as part of professional interaction in the context of neurodevelopmental disorders. critically analyze information from scientific literature, medical, educational, or organizational documents, stakeholder analyses, and other relevant sources when providing psychological services to clients with neurodevelopmental conditions. negotiate tasks, objectives, and necessary resources with clients and significant others (e.g., parents, educators, healthcare professionals) in the provision of psychological services, under supervision. apply ethical principles and professional standards in the process of psychological assessment, using validated procedures and instruments, in accordance with the regulations and guidelines established by representative professional bodies in the field. recognize and appropriately address ethical dilemmas and deviations from professional standards within the process of psychological diagnosis or intervention related to neurodevelopmental disorders, under supervision.
Responsibility and autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> consistently apply norms, standards, and methodologies specific to psychological diagnosis in the design of assessment procedures, under supervision. demonstrate professionalism by formulating relevant questions aimed at understanding the causes of the client's behavior and interpreting life events in which the client is involved, during professional interactions. show interpersonal openness by demonstrating readiness to respond to the client's needs and objectives in the therapeutic or educational relationship. empathize with the client by seeking to understand their situation and by validating and sharing the emotional experiences expressed in the psychologist–client relationship. foster collaborative openness in working with clients and significant others, through a relational style based on respect for the “other.”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate kindness and concern for others, taking into account the client's emotional state in the context of the psychologist–client interaction. • demonstrate a flexible approach in building and maintaining the psychologist–client relationship. • show calmness, professional balance, and adaptability across different contexts, including new or stressful situations, while respecting the ethical standards of the psychology profession in all professional settings. • demonstrate flexibility by showing willingness to explore different interpretations of assessment results and by critically reflecting on their own biases.
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7. Contents

7.1 Course	Teaching methods	Observations
1. Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Themes and contexts	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Cap. I, Psychology Press, New York.
2. Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Definitions and issues	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Cap. I, Psychology Press, New York.
3. Autism Spectrum Disorders	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Cap. VII, Psychology Press, New York.
4. Down Syndrome and Genetic Disorders	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Cap. X Cap XI, Psychology Press, New York.
5. ADHD	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Cap. IX, Psychology Press, New York.
6. Language Disorders	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Cap. VIII, Psychology Press, New York.
7. Learning Disorders	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Fogler J., M., Phelps R., A., (2018), Trauma, Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Integrating Research, Practice and Policy, Cap. IV, Springer, USA
8. Neuromotor Disorders	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Fogler J., M., Phelps R., A., (2018), Trauma, Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Integrating Research, Practice and Policy, Cap. IV, Springer, USA
9. Anxiety in Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Cap. XIV, Psychology Press, New York.
10. Reactive Attachment Disorders	Lecture, conversation,	Fogler J., M., Phelps R., A., (2018), Trauma, Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders.

	presentation, explaining, debate	Integrating Research, Practice and Policy, Cap. VIII, Springer, USA
11. Assessment of Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Fogler J., M., Phelps R., A., (2018), Trauma, Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Integrating Research, Practice and Policy, Cap. IV, Springer, USA
12. Treatment of Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Fogler J., M., Phelps R., A., (2018), Trauma, Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Integrating Research, Practice and Policy, Cap. VII, Springer, US
13. Challenges with Transition to Adulthood in Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Fogler J., M., Phelps R., A., (2018), Trauma, Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Integrating Research, Practice and Policy, Cap. X, Springer, USA
14. Uses of New Technology by young people with Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Lecture, conversation, presentation, explaining, debate	Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Cap. XIII, Psychology Press, New York.
<p>Main reference: Fogler J., M., Phelps R., A., (2018), Trauma, Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Integrating Research, Practice and Policy, Springer, USA Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York.</p> <p>Additional references: 1.Fleischhacker, W.W., Brooks, D.J., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders, Springer, New York 3.Goldstein S., Reynolds, C., (2011), Handbook of neurodevelopmental and genetic disorders in children, The Guilford Press 4.Nicholls, C., J., (2018), Neurodevelopmental Disorders in Children and Adolescents: a guide of evaluation and Treatment, Routledge, New York</p>		
7.2 Seminar / laboratory	Teaching methods	Observations
1. Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Themes and contexts	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	<p>Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York.</p> <p>Extra bibliography: Bishop, D. V. (2010). Which neurodevelopmental disorders get researched and why?. <i>PloS one</i>, 5(11), e15112.</p>
2. Neurodevelopmental Disorders: Definitions and issues	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	<p>Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby, D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York.</p> <p>Extra bibliography: Morris-Rosendahl, D. J., & Crocq, M. A. (2022). Neurodevelopmental disorders—the history and future of a diagnostic concept. <i>Dialogues in clinical neuroscience</i>.</p>

3. Autism Spectrum Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	<p>Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York.</p> <p>Extra bibliography: Livingston, L. A., & Happé, F. (2017). Conceptualizing compensation in neurodevelopmental disorders: Reflections from autism spectrum disorder. <i>Neuroscience & Biobehavioral Reviews</i>, 80, 729-742.</p>
4. Down Syndrome and Genetic Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	<p>Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York.</p> <p>Extra bibliography: Ashworth, M., Palikara, O., & Van Herwegen, J. (2019). Comparing parental stress of children with neurodevelopmental disorders: The case of Williams syndrome, Down syndrome and autism spectrum disorders. <i>Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities</i>, 32(5), 1047-1057.</p>
5. ADHD	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	<p>Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York.</p> <p>Extra bibliography: Moffitt, T. E., Houts, R., Asherson, P., Belsky, D. W., Corcoran, D. L., Hammerle, M., & Caspi, A. (2015). Is adult ADHD a childhood-onset neurodevelopmental disorder? Evidence from a four-decade longitudinal cohort study. <i>American Journal of Psychiatry</i>, 172(10), 967-977.</p>
6. Language Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	<p>Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York.</p> <p>Extra bibliography: Bishop, D. V. (2009). Genes, cognition, and communication: insights from neurodevelopmental disorders. <i>Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences</i>, 1156(1), 1-18.</p>
7. Learning Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	<p>Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York.</p> <p>Extra bibliography:</p>

		Crisci, G., Caviola, S., Cardillo, R., & Mammarella, I. C. (2021). Executive functions in neurodevelopmental disorders: Comorbidity overlaps between attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder and specific learning disorders. <i>Frontiers in human neuroscience</i> , 15, 594234.
8. Neuromotor Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York. Extra bibliography: Shriberg, L. D., Strand, E. A., Jakielski, K. J., & Mabie, H. L. (2019). Estimates of the prevalence of speech and motor speech disorders in persons with complex neurodevelopmental disorders. <i>Clinical linguistics & phonetics</i> , 33(8), 707-736.
9. Anxiety in Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York. Extra bibliography: Hansen, B. H., Oerbeck, B., Skirbekk, B., Petrovski, B. É., & Kristensen, H. (2018). Neurodevelopmental disorders: prevalence and comorbidity in children referred to mental health services. <i>Nordic Journal of Psychiatry</i> , 72(4), 285-291.
10. Reactive Attachment Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York. Extra bibliography: Mirza, K., Mwimba, G., Pritchett, R., & Davidson, C. (2016). Association between reactive attachment disorder/disinhibited social engagement disorder and emerging personality disorder: A feasibility study. <i>The Scientific World Journal</i> , 2016.
11. Assessment of Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York. Extra bibliography: McCarthy, J., Chaplin, E., Underwood, L., Forrester, A., Hayward, H., Sabet, J., ... & Murphy, D. (2015). Screening and diagnostic assessment of neurodevelopmental disorders in a male

		prison. <i>Journal of Intellectual Disabilities and Offending Behaviour</i> , 6(2), 102-111.
12. Treatment of Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York. Extra bibliography: Castrén, E., Elgersma, Y., Maffei, L., & Hagerman, R. (2012). Treatment of neurodevelopmental disorders in adulthood. <i>Journal of Neuroscience</i> , 32(41), 14074-14079.
13. Challenges with Transition to Adulthood in Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York. Extra bibliography: Norbury, C. F., & Sparks, A. (2013). Difference or disorder? Cultural issues in understanding neurodevelopmental disorders. <i>Developmental psychology</i> , 49(1), 45.
14. Uses of New Technology by young people with Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Exercise, conversation, reflexive dialogue, explanation	Main reference: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York. Extra bibliography: Valentine, A. Z., Brown, B. J., Groom, M. J., Young, E., Hollis, C., & Hall, C. L. (2020). A systematic review evaluating the implementation of technologies to assess, monitor and treat neurodevelopmental disorders: A map of the current evidence. <i>Clinical psychology review</i> , 80, 101870.
References: Van Herwegen, J., Riby., D., (2015), Neurodevelopmental Disorders. Research Challenges and Solutions, Psychology Press, New York.		

8. Correlation of discipline contents with the expectations of the representatives of the epistemic community, professional associations and representative employers in the field related to the program

Knowing and understanding the main theories and concepts from the Neurodevelopmental disorders of the human being, from early childhood, resents a fundamental acquisition for every practitioner in mental health field. Getting familiar with and understanding the specific problems of the people with neurodevelopmental disorders is a very good prerequisite for working in the field of assessment and intervention, health psychology or even special education. The frequency of this kind of disorder is unfortunately growing and giving a vast number of

possibilities for the students graduating from this course to find work in this field. Also, being able to think and understand a large number of concepts from neurodevelopmental disorders gives each student the capacity to ask questions, make intervention plans and elaborate a research plan, to bring value and be efficient at his working place

9. Assessment

Activity type	9.1 Assessment criteria	9.2 Assessment methods	9.3 Weight of final mark
9.4 Course	Competing a theoretical quiz	Evaluation will consist in a multiple-choice test from the main information discussed during the course.	60%
9.5 Seminar / laboratory	Creating a project Designing an Inclusive Cognitive Toolkit	<p>Group of 3–4 students choose one neurodevelopmental disorder from the ones proposed in the seminar.</p> <p>They design a prototype intervention, toolkit, or digital concept that addresses a specific cognitive or social challenge (e.g., attention regulation, executive functioning, social interaction, language processing).</p> <p>The project must combine scientific foundations (evidence from literature) with creative application (technology, education, or therapy).</p> <p>Requirements:</p> <p>Scientific Foundations Summarize evidence from at least 5 peer-reviewed studies that describe challenges and effective interventions for the chosen disorder.</p> <p>Creative Application Develop an original concept (technological, educational, or therapeutic) that responds to the identified challenge.</p> <p>AI–Human Comparison – Use a generative AI tool (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini) to propose an intervention strategy for the selected disorder. Document the exact prompt(s) used. Then, as a group, develop your own intervention strategy without AI assistance. Compare the two outputs in a short section (1–2 pages):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What ideas did AI generate? • What were the limitations (e.g., lack of nuance, oversimplification, generic suggestions)? • How did the human version differ (e.g., deeper contextualization, ethical considerations, tailoring to specific cases)? • Which aspects of each version could be integrated into the final project? <p>Deliverables</p>	40%

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A written report (8–10 pages) including: Literature review (scientific foundations) Description of both AI-generated and human-generated intervention proposals Critical comparison (AI vs. human reasoning) Final integrated intervention design Optional: Visual prototype, mock-up, or demo concept. 	
9.6 Minimum performance standard			
<p>The final grade is represented by the arithmetic average of the two grades obtained in the evaluation (course and seminar), with the requisite that each grade be at least 5. Being able to participate in the first exam session is possible only if the students finish their seminar task and have enough presence face-to-face in university activities. If the student fails the quiz, in the next session the grade from the seminar will be kept on account of. For grade improvement sessions and re-examinations, students are required to submit:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The portfolio (like the one developed during the semester). A short literature review (based on 5–8 relevant scientific studies), which must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a synthesis of the main findings from the reviewed literature, a final section with practical suggestions in the form of an intervention plan. <p>The intervention plan should demonstrate how theoretical concepts from Neurodevelopmental disorders can be applied in practice, focusing on one of the topics covered in the course. Compensation Assignment (for students who fail to meet the minimum attendance requirement and present themselves for the resit examination session) – Glossary Expansion. Students must select 4–5 key terms related to the missed topic (the list can be chosen by the student with approval). For each term, create a glossary entry containing: Definition – a clear and concise explanation (preferably based on at least one academic source). Theoretical context – explanation of how the term fits into developmental/cognitive psychology (e.g., link to a specific theory, author, or framework). Applied example – one short example of how the concept appears in practice (e.g., clinical case, classroom situation, intervention design, everyday behavior). Up to 1 bonus point may be granted for voluntary participation in research activities.</p>			

Date of completion:
12.09.2025

Tenure teacher:
Iuliana COSTEA, Ph.D.
Lecturer

Date of approval in the department

Head of Department:
Delia VÎRGĂ, Ph.D.
Professor