

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**SW 537 - Introduction to Psychopathology and Social Work Practice  
Section Number 005                      3 credit hours                      Summer 2019**

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**Code of Conduct**

It is the student's responsibility to have read the College of Social Work Ethical Academic and Professional Conduct Code that is in the College of Social Work MSSW Handbook ([www.csw.utk.edu](http://www.csw.utk.edu)). Students are also expected to sign and adhere to the Social Work Field Placement Code of Conduct.

**The Honor Statement**

An essential feature of The University of Tennessee is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. As a student of the University, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity. (*Hilltopics*).

**University Civility Statement**

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus: <http://civility.utk.edu/>

**Disability**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact The University of Tennessee, Knoxville Student Disability Services office at 100 Dunford Hall (865) 974-6087. This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**Dimensions of Diversity**

The College of Social Work and the University of Tennessee welcome and honor all people. In accordance with the U.S. National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the U.S. Council on Social Work Education (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement), "the dimensions of diversity are understood as the intersectionality of multiple factors including" age, class, color, culture, mental or physical disability and ability, ethnicity, gender, gender expression, gender identity, immigration status, marital status, national origin, political ideology, race, regionality, religion and spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, and tribal

sovereign status. The College values intellectual curiosity, pursuit of knowledge, and academic freedom and integrity. "A person's diverse life experiences may include oppression, poverty, marginalization, and alienation as well as privilege, power, and acclaim" (CSWE 2015 Educational Policy Statement). The College of Social Work promotes social justice and social change, and strives to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice.

### **Course Description**

This is a required generalist course. The course examines psychopathology and mental disorders from an ecological perspective. Emphasis is placed on understanding biopsychosocial influences on the incidence, course and treatment of the most commonly presented mental disorders and the differential effect of these factors on diverse populations. The course emphasizes the acquisition of diagnostic skills as they relate to comprehensive social work assessment and the development of social work interventions. Ethical issues, collaboration with families, knowledge of psychopharmacology and the varied roles social workers play in mental health settings will be stressed.

The Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM-IV-TR) is used as an organizing framework for reviewing major mental disorders. Discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of this system, the role of social workers in psychiatric diagnosis, the relationship of diagnosis to social work assessment and practice, and issues of ethical practice, and an emphasis on diagnosis, assessment, ethical issues in practice with diverse/multicultural clients/client systems are a critical part of the course. The course emphasizes the acquisition of diagnostic skills as they relate to comprehensive social work assessment of adults, adolescents, and children. Knowledge of psychopharmacology and the roles social workers play regarding medication with clients as part of an interdisciplinary treatment team will be covered.

### **Course Rationale**

The course examines psychopathology and mental disorders from a systems and ecological perspective. Emphasis is placed on understanding biopsychosocial and cultural influences on the incidence, course, and treatment of the most commonly presented mental disorders and the differential effect of these factors on diverse populations at risk. Current research from biological psychiatry and sociological work regarding the impact of poverty, race, class, social causation and labeling theories and the stress, coping, social support model are highlighted. Special attention is also placed on understanding the human experience of mental illness through the study of subjective experience of clients and the experience of family burden on families.

### **Course Competencies**

By the completion of this course, the students are expected to be able to demonstrate:

1. Using multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks, describe different approaches for the study of psychopathology. 7.2 (Content: *perspectives of psychopathology; the public health model and social justice; understanding the global burden of mental illness; overview of diagnosis and classification; ecological and strengths perspectives*).
2. Identify the components of comprehensive assessment with individual clients including collection of relevant environmental data and symptomatology, to formulate a differential

diagnosis and comprehensive psychosocial evaluation. 7.1, 7.2 (Content: *psychopathology for diverse populations; mental health disparities across diverse populations*).

3. Employ research evidence to identify, describe, and distinguish the major types of psychopathology including symptomology, etiology, and coping mechanisms. 4.3 (Content: *introduction to diagnostic criteria; the role of adverse childhood experiences in the development of psychopathology*).

4. Identify and critically analyze theories of human growth and development using practice experience and research evidence, to inform and improve understanding of psychopathology. 4.3, 4.1 (Content: *neurobiology, risk and resilience, attachment, trauma, diversity assessment models; Biology of stress as it relates to psychopathology and the trauma response cycle*).

5. Use research evidence to describe the interaction of biological, sociological, psychological, risk and resiliency factors in the development of psychopathology. 4.3 (Content: *neurobiology, risk and resilience, attachment and trauma; ACE score as risk factor for development of behavioral health disorders; Two generation intervention approach for preventing and mitigating adverse childhood experiences*).

6. Identify the effects of ethnicity, race, culture, economic status, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical and mental ability, and vulnerability on maladaptive behavior. 2.1, 2.3, 6.1 (Content: *diversity assessment model; ecological and strengths perspective; psychopathology for diverse populations; mental status examination; psychological testing*).

7. Apply knowledge of psychopathology to formulate differential diagnosis and identify the implication of diagnosis when selecting and implementing evidence-based social work interventions. 8.1, 8.2 (Content: *specific mental illness/disorders, such as those pertaining to childhood and adolescence, delirium, dementia, psychotic disorders, mood and adjustment disorders*).

8. Explicate an understanding of the ethical issues encountered in assessment and intervention with clients with psychopathology and demonstrate the ability to engage in supervision and consultation when analyzing ethical dilemmas. 1.1, 1.5 (Content: *NASW Code of Ethics, ethical principles, ethical dilemma analysis, ethical dilemma resolution strategies, and legal considerations and parameters in mental health assessments and interventions*).

## **Learning Environment**

The student is a co-creator of the learning experience and professional environment. It is the purpose of this class to provide knowledge and access to resources that will serve as a springboard for class collaboration and group projects. The course includes online synchronous class meetings, recorded lectures, discussion boards, reading assignments, assignments involving media, in-class activities, and group presentations. The instructor expects you to be prepared by reading the materials and participating in the discussions PRIOR to attending class meetings.

Some material provided in the class may be of a confidential nature since part of the material will involve examination of ongoing work at human service organizations and students often share their own personal experiences. Therefore, all class participants must observe strict rules of professional conduct including treating all information shared as confidential, not to be discussed with anyone other than classmates or the Instructor.

## **Eastern Time versus Central Time**

Canvas shows two times—your time as you have set it and system time, which is Eastern Time. Please know that you are ultimately responsible for ensuring you adhere to the time designations in Canvas and within this syllabus. An assignment due at midnight Central time will show in the Canvas calendar as due the next day at 12:59am. If you turn it in the next day because you were confused, you will still lose points.

**Required Texts (additional reading provided on Canvas):**

APA. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.). American Psychiatric Association: Washington DC.  
 Corcoran, J. & Walsh, J. (2015). *Mental health in Social Work: A Casebook in Diagnosis and Strengths-based Assessment* (DSM 5 Update). New Jersey: Pearson Education.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS, ASSIGNMENTS, & GRADING**

The course grade will be based on 6 online quizzes, a group presentation on a selected diagnostic category, reflective writing assignments, and participation in online classes and online discussion boards. Students are expected to read the assigned articles/chapters thoughtfully and to come to class meetings prepared to ask questions, make comments, and add to the overall discussion. The course grade will be computed as follows:

	Points	Course Competency	Dimension
<b>Six Quizzes</b>	60	2-8	knowledge
<b>Diagnostic Presentation</b>	60	1-8	knowledge, skills, values, cognitive & affective processes
<b>Reflective Writing</b>	15	1, 2, 3, 4, 7, & 8	knowledge, values, cognitive & affective processes
<b>Discussion Boards</b>	60	1, 2, 6, 7, 8	knowledge, values, cognitive & affective processes
<b>Participation</b>	5		
<b>Total</b>	100		

Late assignments will be docked **5 points per day**. Extenuating circumstances may be discussed at **least 24 hours prior** to the due date to negotiate an adjustment to this policy. Submissions less than 24 hours late will lose 1 point per 6 hours.

Missed quizzes **will not** be re-opened, though quizzes can be taken early with instructor permission.

No adjustments can be made to due dates, time limits, or attendance expectations without a letter from SDS specifying accommodations. In the case of pregnancy, reasonable accommodations will be made following discussion with the instructor. Please initiate this conversation at the beginning of the semester.

**Please note: This is a graduate level course where your professionalism when writing a paper or completing an assignment will factor into your grade. Where there is no specific rubric for writing style, the professor reserves the right to deduct up to 10 points from any assignment that is considered non-graduate level course work due to lack of proofreading, style issues, and generally poor writing. All submissions should be considered formal, professional writing and utilize APA style.**

**GROUP PROJECT POLICY**

Be aware, if one group member is not pulling their own weight, not showing up on time or at

all for meetings, being difficult to deal with, or simply refusing to do work, then this member will receive a lower grade than the rest of the group, possibly a zero, for the project. This is a professional program in which the goal is to prepare students to lead an organization. If students are not acting professionally, it brings the whole group down and this will not be tolerated here or in the workforce. The instructor reserves the right to vary group participants' grades based on performance, participation, and input. The best way to document participation is to utilize a shared document that tracks activity. This can be submitted to the instructor in the event of an unbalanced workload.

### **QUIZZES**

Quizzes will be available on Canvas **Thursday after the class meeting until midnight Saturday.** Missed quizzes will **not** be re-opened. The final quiz will close at Noon, not midnight.

### **REFLECTIVE WRITING**

There will be three reflection papers worth 5 points each that can be turned in at any time before the due date. Details of the topics are in the assignments tab of Canvas.

### **DIAGNOSTIC PRESENTATION**

The goal of this assignment is to creatively explore a disorder or category of disorders in-depth and to demonstrate your understanding of psychopathology and your ability to conceptualize a case. The presentation will include an in-class presentation and a video to be posted online to be viewed by the entire class. It is the group's responsibility to cover the topic in enough detail that the class participants gain a working knowledge of the disorder category and are able to answer questions on the quiz.

The presentation has four parts.

- An in-class presentation (10-15 minutes)
- An interview role play which will be recorded & posted for students to view & critique in which you will demonstrate an initial interview with a person who has the symptoms within your assigned category.
- A written initial case summary that matches the role play interview, as if it is the documentation of that initial meeting, concluding with a diagnostic impression and brief treatment plan.
- Finally, each student will individually complete a reflection paper on the experience of completing the presentation and viewing the other student presentations.

The group members will receive a joint grade for the presentation (50 points=15 for interview, 10 for case summary and 25 for text and description in slideshow).

Individuals will be graded for completing the reflection paper on the presentation (10 points total). Detailed instructions will be posted on Canvas.

### **DISCUSSION BOARDS**

Even in a class with face-to-face meetings, discussion boards serve two purposes: (1) they help you integrate the information presented in this course and (2) they help demonstrate the application of knowledge so that the instructor can evaluate your progress. Discussion boards have two primary types of postings and each is worth half of the total value: (1) Creating threads and (2) engagement in a minimum of three other threads in your discussion group.

Creating threads allow you to individualize a topic based on your background, experience, strengths, and ideas. Each thread that is created should not be single sentences nor should they be extremely wordy. Use an economy of language but be sure to fully explore your ideas. They are to be original, "on topic," and highlight your understanding of the assigned readings and unit objectives. Initial thread posting is due on **Tuesday at noon** and discussions will continue until midnight central time on Saturday. This is so your thread can be part of a robust discussion; posting late prevents your peers from joining your conversation. Late initial posts and brief, repetitive, or extremely late reply comments will not receive full credit.

Reply comments are designed to allow you to give feedback to your peers' threads and develop critical thinking skills in response to new ideas. Again, one liners or books are discouraged. It will be important that you reply with novel ideas that focus on your peers' thread topics and assigned unit readings. In addition, please try to be honest in your reply comments but also show an ability to be diplomatic and polite. I encourage disagreement as this denotes critical thinking but dissension must be presented in an appropriate way. For the purpose of free expression, I generally do not engage in the discussion, only watch quietly.

#### **Discussion Board Rubric**

100%	Thread and reply comments were created on time and highlight a superior understanding of assigned reading and unit competencies. In addition, the ideas presented are original and creative, reflecting a personal style that is unique to the individual and demonstrate strong critical thinking skills.
75%	Thread and reply comments were created on time and highlight an average understanding of assigned reading and unit competencies. In addition, the ideas presented are original, reflecting a personal style that is unique to the individual and demonstrate some critical thinking skills.
50%	Thread and reply comments may not have been created on time, be of insufficient or overly sufficient length, or highlight less than adequate understanding of assigned reading and unit competencies. In addition, the ideas presented may not be completely original, reflecting a tendency to feed off of others' ideas, and/or demonstrating less than adequate critical thinking skills. May have failed to meet thread/reply comments time requirement.
25%	Thread and reply comments may not have been created on time, be of insufficient or overly sufficient length, or highlight poor understanding of assigned reading and unit competencies. In addition, the ideas presented are not original and/or demonstrate poor critical thinking skills. May have failed to meet thread or reply comments time requirement.
0	Thread and reply comments were not created on time or were completely missing. Lack of understanding of course competencies and unit objectives.

#### **ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION**

Participation in the class meetings is a requirement and points will be deducted for each absence after the first. Classes will likely include lectures, but when everyone is prepared there is more opportunity for discussion, activities, and answering questions. Please come prepared to have these conversations. The most interesting discussions are prompted by questions and examples from your own experiences AND involve answers from multiple people, not just the instructor's opinion.

## College of Social Work Grading Scale (this class operates on points, not percentages)

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- A (190-200) Outstanding/Superior:** Exceptional performance. Consistently exceeds expectations.
- B+ (180-189) Very Good:** Student consistently meets, and occasionally exceeds, normal expectations for the course.
- B (170-179) Good:** Student consistently meets normal expectations for the course.
- C+ (160-169) Average:** There is unevenness in grasping course content. Student is inconsistent in meeting normal expectations for the course.
- C (140-159) Poor:** There is lack of understanding of content. Student does not meet expectations.
- F (139-Below) Very Poor:** Course expectations are not met due to a lack of attendance or incomplete assignments.
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**ANTICIPATED COURSE OUTLINE**—Additional readings are included in folders on Canvas and may not be identified on this syllabus. *Students should follow the Modules in Canvas to be fully prepared for class sessions and quizzes.* Adjustments may be made to schedule to accommodate schedule changes or student learning.

537 schedule	Topic	Reading	Assignments & quizzes are due <b>Saturday at midnight central time</b> Unless otherwise specified here.
Module #1 May 30-June 8  <b>Zoom June 5</b>	Intro/MMSE	Corcoran & Walsh: Chapters 1 & 2 DSM 5: Introduction, pages 5-25 Additional readings on Canvas	View introduction video before live meeting on the 5th. We will <b>not</b> review the syllabus & assignments in detail in the first class meeting.
		Slide Presentation: 5-MMSE	
Module #2 June 9-15	Basics of Diagnosis, Neurobiology, and Pharmacokinetics	Additional readings on Canvas	
		Slide Presentation: Neurotransmission	
Module #3 June 16-22  <b>Zoom June 19</b>	Neurodevelopmental Disorders	Corcoran & Walsh: Chapters 3, 4, & 10 DSM 5: Neurodevelopmental Disorders Impulse-Control and Conduct DO Additional readings on Canvas and video	Quiz #1—Neurodevelopmental disorders, Neurobiology, and MMSE
		Slide Presentation: 5-Childhood D/O	
Module #4 June 23-29  <b>Zoom June 26</b>	Mood Disorders	Corcoran & Walsh: Chapters 6 & 7 DSM 5: Bipolar & Related Disorders Depressive Disorders Additional readings on Canvas	Quiz #2—Mood disorders
		Slide Presentation: 5-Mood Disorders	
Module #5 June 30-July 6	Anxiety Disorders	Corcoran & Walsh: Chapter 8 DSM 5: Anxiety Disorders Trauma- & Stressor-Related D/O Additional readings on Canvas	
		Slide Presentation: 5-Anxiety Disorders	
Module #6 July 7- July 13  <b>Zoom July 10</b>	Psychotic Disorders	Corcoran & Walsh: Chapter 5 DSM 5: Schizophrenia Spectrum & other Psychotic Disorders Additional readings on Canvas	Quiz #3—anxiety & psychotic disorders
		Slide Presentation: 5-Psychotic Disorders	
Module #7 Jul 14-Jul 20	Student Presentations	<b>Presentations in class session.</b> Role plays uploaded by the beginning of class Thursday. <b>Review each interview role play</b> in your discussion board group and critique <b>EACH ONE.</b>	Interview role play uploaded to discussion board by <b>9a Thursday</b>  Presentation reflection paper due Reflection paper #1 due Quiz #4—Student Presentations
Module #8 Jul 21-Jul 27 <b>Zoom Jul 24</b>	Substance Use Disorders	Corcoran & Walsh: Chapter 11 DSM 5: Substance-Related & Addictive D/O Additional readings on Canvas	Reflection Paper #2 due Quiz #5—substance use disorders
		Slide Presentation: 5-Substance Use D/O	
Module #9 July 28-Aug 3  <b>Zoom July 31</b>	Personality Disorders	Corcoran & Walsh: Chapter 13 DSM 5: Personality Disorders AND section III, Alternative Model for PD	Reflection paper #3 due
		Slide Presentation: 5-Personality D/O	
Module #10 August 4-10	Neurocognitive Disorders	Corcoran & Walsh: Chapter 12 DSM 5: Neurocognitive Disorders Additional readings on Canvas	Quiz #6—cognitive & personality disorders ( <b>Noon Saturday</b> ) Extra Credit assignments due by <b>Noon, Saturday, August 10<sup>th</sup></b>
		Slide Presentation: 5-Neurocognitive Disorders	