

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

**Syllabus: SW-524 - PSYCHOPATHOLOGY  
Fall 2003**

**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 (<http://www.csw.utk.edu/mssw/>)

**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*, 2003).

**Disability**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or if you have emergency information to share, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library at (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**Course Description**

Psychopathology is an advanced clinical course focusing on knowledge and assessment of psychosocial functioning of the individual. This course examines mental disorders in terms of clinical presentation, problems, causes, and processes. An ecological perspective is used to understand that mental illness occurs within a social context. Theories of and recent research in the etiology of psychic dysfunction and social variance are reviewed. Methods of assessment currently used in clinical social work practice are demonstrated and critically examined. The interactions of biological, psychological social, risk and resiliency, cultural, political, and environmental factors are stressed in understanding the development and maintenance of mental disorders.

**Course Rationale**

This course is an advanced elective for MSSW students. It is designed to provide understanding of psychopathology and dysfunctional behavior in terms of manifestation, etiology, dynamic causation and diagnosis as a basis for intervention.

## **Course Objectives**

By completion of this course, the student is expected to be able to (through course activities, assignments and/or exams):

1. Describe different theoretical approaches or models for the study of psychopathology;
2. Identify the components of comprehensive assessment with individual clients, including the use of the mental status examination, differential diagnosis and psycho social evaluation;
3. Identify, describe, and distinguish the major types of psychopathology including symptomology, etiology, and coping function served;
4. Identify theories of human growth and development that contribute to understanding psychopathology;
5. Describe the interaction of biological, sociological, psychological, risk and resiliency factors in the generation of psychopathology;
6. Identify the effects of ethnic, racial, cultural, economic, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical and mental ability characteristics on and vulnerability to maladaptive behavior;
7. Apply knowledge of psychopathology to formulate differential diagnosis and identify the implications of diagnosis for social work intervention;
8. Explicate an understanding of the ethical issues encountered in assessment and intervention in regard to psychopathology, and psychiatric diagnosis with clients and the ability to analyze ethical dilemmas that may arise.