

**UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE  
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**Syllabus: SW530 - Seminar in Clinical Social Work: Introduction to Dialectical  
Behavior Therapy  
Fall 2005**

**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, 2005*).

**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 Office of Disability Services at 191 Hoskins Library (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**Course Description**

This course is designed to introduce second year MSSW students to the basics of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). It focuses on the development of therapist skills necessary to implement DBT in the treatment of patients with emotion regulation disorders. Individual psychotherapy, skills group, and consultation team settings will be reviewed in theory and practiced real time and role play in the classroom setting. Emphasis will be placed on understanding how DBT is different from other treatment approaches, practicing the structure and principles of a DBT approach, and reviewing the literature on the different populations benefitting from a DBT approach to treatment.

**Course Rationale**

Patients with emotion regulation disorders often have a long history of unsuccessful and unsatisfactory treatment. It is not uncommon for such patients to report years of psychotherapy with no decrease in frequency or intensity of crisis episodes. And, what is just as disturbing is that often these patients are blamed for the ineffectiveness of their therapies. Professionals have been heard to say that these patients are resistant or that they don't really want to change. The data shows just the opposite. The data shows that these patients are highly motivated when they experience validation and compassionate push for change from a therapist willing and able to engage a transactional relationship.

This course is designed to encourage new therapists to consider this form of treatment as they begin practice in our southeastern communities.

### **Course Objectives**

By the completion of the course, students will be expected to be able to:

1. Identify the five goals of DBT treatment and demonstrate their application to a specific case context. Demonstrate an understanding of the five goals of DBT treatment and their application in practice.
2. Identify the four components of DBT treatment. Demonstrate an understanding of the four components of DBT treatment and how they are applied in practice.
3. Identify the four stages of DBT treatment, the primary treatment task for each stage, and demonstrate their application in a case example. Demonstrate an understanding of the four stages of DBT treatment, the primary treatment task for each stage, and the ability to (how to) apply them in practice.
4. Identify at least 5 factors associated with long term risk of suicide or parasuicide and demonstrate appropriate use of this understanding in a role play situation with the instructor.
5. Identify at least 5 factors associated with imminent risk of suicide or parasuicide and demonstrate appropriate use of this understanding in a role play situation with the instructor.
6. Describe situations in which specific DBT skills could effectively be applied.
7. Explain the bio-social theory and discuss how it is demonstrated in case studies.
8. Identify the therapist assumptions, characteristics, and consultation team agreements and discuss how they have impact on the transactional relationship.
9. Example the six levels of validation.
10. Role play use of metaphor, behavior chains, coaching calls, reinforcement and exposure strategies.