

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

**SW 537 Introduction of Psychopathology and Social Work Practice  
(2 credit hours)**

**Professor:** William (Bill) Nugent, Ph.D.

**Day:** Wednesday 9:05 to 1:20 pm

**Contact:** 974-3802 email: [wnugent@utk.edu](mailto:wnugent@utk.edu)

**Office:** 308 Henson Hall

**Prerequisite(s):** 510, 512, 513, 517, 519, 522, 538.

**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.utk.csw.edu](http://www.utk.csw.edu))

**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*, 2007).

**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 2227 Dunford Hall (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

**Course Description**

This is a required Advanced Curriculum 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 (through course activities, assignments, and/or exams):

1. Describe different theoretical approaches for the study of psychopathology. (CT/EBP-C.1, C.2; HBSE-C.1; Practice-C.1). (*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 differential diagnosis and psychosocial evaluation. (Practice-C.2, C.3; Diversity-C.1, C.3). (*content: psychopathology for diverse populations; mental health disparities across diverse populations; utilize information technology to locate disparities*).
3. Identify, describe, and distinguish the major types of psychopathology including symptoms, etiology, and coping mechanisms. (Practice-C.1, C.3). (*content: introduction to multi-axial diagnostic criteria*).
4. Identify and critically analyze theories of human growth and development that contribute to understanding psychopathology. (Diversity-C.3; CT/EBP-C.1; HBSE-C.1, C.2; Practice-C.3). (*content: neurobiology, risk and resilience, attachment, trauma, diversity assessment models*).
5. Describe the interaction of biological, sociological, psychological, risk and resiliency factors in the development of psychopathology. (Diversity-C.3, C.4; HBSE-C.2). (*content: neurobiology, risk and resilience, attachment and trauma*).
6. Identify the effects of ethnicity, race, culture, economic status, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical and mental ability, and vulnerability on maladaptive behavior. (Diversity-C.1, C.3; HBSE-C.2; Practice-C.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 for evidence-based social work interventions. (CT/EBT-C.1; Practice-C.3). (*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 analyze ethical dilemmas. (Values/ethics-C.1, C.2, Diversity-C.2). (*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*).

### **Required Texts (on sale at bookstore in University Center):**

Corcoran, J. & Walsh, J. (2006). *Clinical assessment and diagnosis in social work practice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kirk, S. (Ed.), (2005). *Mental disorders in the social environment*. New York: Columbia Press.

**Supplemental Texts: You will be asked to read chapters from the following (which will be on reserve in the library and in the PhD Program office in Henson Hall):**

American Psychiatric Association. (2000). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.) (DSM-IV-TR).

Barlow, D. (2002). *Anxiety and its disorders* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). New York: Guilford.

Beutler, L., and Malik, M. (Eds.). (2002). *Rethinking the DSM: A psychological perspective*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Morrison, J. (1997). *When psychological problems mask medical disorders*. New York: Guilford.

Offer, D., & Sabshim, M. (1991). *The diversity of normal behavior: Further contributions to normatology*. New York: Basic Books.

Whitaker, R. (2002). *Mad in America: Bad science, bad medicine, and the enduring mistreatment of the mentally ill*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus.

There will also be journal articles and web based materials that will be assigned for Reading, including:

Burke, P., & Elliott, M. (1999). Depression in chronic pediatric illness: A diathesis stress model. *Psychosomatics*, 40, 5-17. Available online at: <http://psy.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/full/40/1/5> .

Kanter, J., Cautilli, J., Busch, A., & Baruch, D. (2005). Toward a Comprehensive Functional Analysis of Depressive Behavior: Five Environmental Factors and a Possible Sixth and Seventh. *The Behavior Analyst Today*, 6(1), 65-81. Available online at: <http://www.uwm.edu/~jkanter/5%20factors.pdf> .

Gregg, H. Depression: Disease or Behavioral Shutdown Mechanism? Published in Journal of Science and Health Policy. Online at: <http://psychweb.cisat.jmu.edu/ToKSystem/Tok%20System/BSM.doc> .

Depression: Beyond the catecholamine theory of mood. Online at: <http://www.flyfishingdevon.co.uk/salmon/year3/psy337DepressionTheory/PSY337DepressionTheory.htm#Introduction> .

**Course Requirements/Grading:**

Case Study Diagnostic Write-Up	30%
Home Work Assignment on Diagnostic Issues	15%
Suicide Risk Assessment take-home exam	15%
Literature Searches on Assessment Tools and Diverse Populations	10%
Final Exam	<u>30%</u>
	100%

**Description of Course Requirements:**

### *Case Study Diagnostic Write-up*

A critical skill you must develop is the ability to use the DSM to make valid diagnoses using a wide range of forms of evidence; to think critically as you make diagnostic inferences; and to understand the strengths and limitations of the diagnostic inferences that you make. This assignment is designed to help you develop these skills.

You will receive a case description of a client and her/his situation. You will use this scenario description to write a diagnostic summary in which you do the following:

1. Use the information available in the description to make a tentative DSM IV diagnosis. Include some estimate of the prevalence of the disorder you have tentatively diagnosed, as well as the sensitivity and specificity of the methodology used to make the tentative diagnosis, and use these values to estimate the PPV of this tentative diagnosis;
2. describe and discuss the evidence (including its strengths and weaknesses) that is consistent with your tentative diagnosis. If standardized scale information is reported, provide estimates of reliability and validity evidence;
3. describe and discuss evidence (including its strengths and weaknesses) inconsistent with this tentative diagnosis;
4. describe and discuss possible alternative explanations (including misinterpretation of “normal” cultural behaviors) for the client’s problems and situation;
5. describe and discuss what information/evidence is missing and is needed to disconfirm, or rule out, your tentative diagnosis and how you would get that information/evidence;
6. describe and discuss what information/evidence is missing and needed to confirm any of the possible alternate explanations;
7. describe and discuss what information/evidence is needed to rule out the possible alternate explanations; and
8. describe and discuss information that is missing ***and that you will most likely never obtain***, and hence the information uncertainty context within which you must make a diagnosis.

Be specific in your write-up. Avoid such vague statements as, “There are possible behaviors normal to this client’s culture that I may be misinterpreting.” Instead, provide specific behaviors of the client that are normal to her or his culture that you may be misinterpreting as indicators of psychopathology. This write up should be in APA style and double spaced. There is no page number requirement – it should be as long as is necessary for you to complete the assignment.

After you turn this in, you will be given a second portion to the case description that provides new information obtained about the client and her or his situation. You are then to go back and add an addendum to your first diagnostic write-up in which you take into account the new information and possibly make changes to your initial diagnostic write-up. You will need to go through the same steps as in the first write-up, but adding changes to each section as you deem necessary based upon the new information you have received. You will make any changes to your initial write-up in ***bold italics***.

### *Homework Assignment on the PPV and NPV of a Diagnosis*

There are a number of important issues you need to understand about a diagnosis in order to be able to accurately interpret what it is telling you. These include clearly understanding the important issues of base, or prevalence, rates; the sensitivity, specificity, false negative rate, and false

positive rate of diagnostic procedures; and the positive predictive value and negative predictive value of a diagnosis. You will do a home work assignment, to be given out in class, in which you will do some exercises to help you to understand, and to be able to use, these important concepts. This activity will include the need to do a literature search on the prevalence of certain disorders in given populations.

### *Take-Home Exam on Suicide Risk Assessment*

You will be given a take-home exam on suicide risk assessment. This exam will be handed out in class.

### *Literature Searches on Standardized Measurement and Assessment Tools*

You will be asked to do two literature searches on measurement and assessment procedures in which you will identify possible assessment tools, and then find information on the reliability, validity, sensitivity, and specificity of these tools for use in diagnosis and assessment. You will also be asked to do a literature search on diagnostic bias against minority populations.

### *Final Examination*

You will take a comprehensive final exam, which will include multiple-choice, true/false, and similar types of objective questions.

## **Class Participation and Attendance**

In order for the class to be more dynamic and meaningful to the student, being on time for class, class attendance, and participation is expected (Hilltopics, 2007). If you must miss a class, you are responsible for obtaining the material missed from a classmate. It is expected that you will not have to miss more than one class. There will be in-class activities designed to help your learning, and missing classes will affect your opportunity to learn important course material.

## **Assignment of Final Grades**

A	92-100 (indicates superior performance)
B+	87-91 (indicates better than satisfactory performance)
B	82-86 (indicates satisfactory performance)
C+	77-81 (indicates less than satisfactory performance)
C	70-76 (indicates performance well below graduate school standard)
D	64-69 (failure at graduate school level)
F	below 64 (failure)

*TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE*

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>
<p>Introduction to Psychopathology: Different Perspectives (1 – 2 Class sessions)</p>	<p><b>Corcoran &amp; Walsh:</b> Chapters 1 and 2            Ch. 1: Introduction            Ch. 2: Social Work and the DSM: Person-in-environment vs. medical model  <b>Kirk:</b> Chapters 1 (Introduction: Critical perspectives); 2 (Balancing act: Assessing strengths in mental health practice); 5 (Disorders versus problems of living in DSM); 7 (Assessing the scientific status of schizophrenia); 10 (Empowerment: The foundation for social work practice in mental health); Chapter 22 (Social work, mental health, and mental disorders: Ethical dimensions).</p> <p><b>Whitaker:</b> Chapter 1 (Bedlam in medicine).</p> <p><b>Offer &amp; Shabshim:</b> Chapter 1 (Psychiatric diagnosis and normality).</p> <p><b>Journal Articles:</b> Luthar, S., Cicchetti, D., &amp; Becker, B. (2000). The construct of resilience: A critical evaluation and Guidelines for future work. <i>Child Development</i>, 71(3), 543-562. (Available online through JSTOR at UT Library).</p> <p><i>Course Competencies: (1): perspectives of psychopathology; the public health model and social justice; understanding the global burden of mental illness; ecological and strengths perspectives; (4) and (5): neurobiology, risk and resilience, attachment, trauma; (6): ecological and strengths perspective; psychopathology for diverse populations; psychological testing; and (8): NASW Code of Ethics, ethical principles, ethical dilemma analysis, ethical dilemma resolution strategies, and legal considerations and parameters in mental health assessments and interventions.</i></p>
<p>1) Assessment, measurement, and diagnosis            2) Culture – effects on assessment            3) Physical disorders that masquerade as psychopathology             (1 - 2 class sessions)</p>	<p><b>DSM-IV-TR:</b>            DSM Cautionary statement (page xxxvii) and Use of the manual (read pages 1 - 12, skim pages 13 – 26, and Appendix A [decision trees for differential diagnosis])            Multiaxial Assessment (pages 27 – 37)            V codes (pp. 731-742)</p> <p><b>Kirk:</b> Ch. 3 (The limits of diagnostic criteria: The role of social context in clinician’s judgements of mental disorder); 4 (Mapping practice: Assessment, context, and social justice); 6 (The probabilistic nature of diagnosis); 8 (“To stem the tide of degeneracy”: The eugenic impulse in social work); 12 (Power, gender, and the self: Reflections on improving mental health for males and females); 14 (Critical thinking, evidence-based practice, and mental health); 23 (Managed care and mental health).</p> <p><b>Beutler &amp; Malik:</b> Chapter 2 (Discovery, invention and the expansion of the modern DSM).</p> <p><b>Read articles:</b> Mental status exam (To be handed out in class); Rosen, D. (1973). <i>On being sane in insane places</i>. Available Online:</p>

	<p><a href="http://psychrights.org/Articles/Rosenham.htm">http://psychrights.org/Articles/Rosenham.htm</a> or <a href="http://www.stanford.edu/~kocabas/onbeingsane.pdf">http://www.stanford.edu/~kocabas/onbeingsane.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Website:</b> Surgeon General report on Culture, Race, Ethnicity <a href="http://www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cre/">www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cre/</a></p> <p><b>Morrison:</b> Pages 7 – 41.</p> <p><b>Homework assignment on PPV and NPV of a diagnosis.</b></p> <p><i>Course Competencies: (1): 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): psychopathology for diverse populations; mental health disparities across diverse populations;(3): introduction to multi-axial diagnostic criteria; (6): diversity assessment model; ecological and strengths perspective; psychopathology for diverse populations; mental status examination; psychological testing</i></p>
PTSD (1 CLASS SESSION)	<p><b>Corcoran &amp; Walsh:</b> Chapter 7 ; <b>Barlow:</b> chapter 12</p> <p><b>DSM-IV-TR:</b> Disorders first diagnosed in infancy, childhood, or adolescence</p> <p>Article: Nemeroff, Bremner, Foa, Mayberg, North, and Stein (2006). Posttraumatic stress disorder: A state-of-the-science review. <i>Journal of Psychiatric Research</i>, Vol 40(1) Feb 2006, 1-21.</p> <p><i>Course Competencies: (2): psychopathology for diverse populations; mental health disparities across diverse populations; (3): introduction to multi-axial diagnostic criteria; (7): specific mental illness/disorders, such as those pertaining to childhood and adolescence, delirium, dementia, psychotic disorders, mood and adjustment disorders;</i></p>
Depression and Suicide (1 ½ CLASS SESSIONS)	<p><b>Corcoran &amp; Walsh:</b> Chapter 10 Depression ; <b>Barlow:</b> Chapter 9 (Classification of anxiety and mood disorders)</p> <p><b>DSM-IV-TR:</b> Mood Disorders</p> <p>Journal articles: Joiner, T., Walker, R., Pettit, J., Perez, M., and Cukrowicz, K. (2005). Evidence-based assessment of depression in adults. <i>Psychological Assessment</i>, 17(3), 267-277; Klein, D., Dougherty, L., and Olino, T. (2005). Toward guidelines for evidence-based assessment of depression in children and adolescents. <i>Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology</i>, 34(3), 412-432; Burke, P., &amp; Elliott, M. (1999). Depression in chronic pediatric illness: A diathesis stress model. <i>Psychosomatics</i>, 40, 5-17. Available online at: <a href="http://psy.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/full/40/1/5">http://psy.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/full/40/1/5</a> . Kanter, J., Cautilli, J., Busch, A., &amp; Baruch, D. (2005). Toward a Comprehensive Functional Analysis of Depressive Behavior: Five Environmental</p>

	<p>Factors and a Possible Sixth and Seventh. <i>The Behavior Analyst Today</i>, 6(1), 65-81. Available online at: <a href="http://www.uwm.edu/~jkanter/5%20factors.pdf">http://www.uwm.edu/~jkanter/5%20factors.pdf</a> . Gregg, H.</p> <p>Depression: Disease or Behavioral Shutdown Mechanism? Published in Journal of Science and Health Policy. Online at: <a href="http://psychweb.cisat.jmu.edu/ToKSystem/Tok%20System/BSM.doc">http://psychweb.cisat.jmu.edu/ToKSystem/Tok%20System/BSM.doc</a> .</p> <p>Depression: Beyond the catecholamine theory of mood. Online at: <a href="http://www.flyfishingdevon.co.uk/salmon/year3/psy337DepressionTheory/PSY337DepressionTheory.htm#Introduction">http://www.flyfishingdevon.co.uk/salmon/year3/psy337DepressionTheory/PSY337DepressionTheory.htm#Introduction</a></p> <p><b>Power Point</b> on suicide risk assessment.</p> <p><b>In-Class exercise:</b> Diagnostic work-up on hypothetical case.</p> <p><b>Assignments:</b> 1) Do search on standardized measures of depression; 2) Suicide risk assessment take home exam; 3) Receive case study and do first part of case study work up; 4) Do literature search on diagnostic bias against minority populations.</p> <p><i>Course Competencies: : (1): perspectives of psychopathology; (2): psychopathology for diverse populations; mental health disparities across diverse populations; utilize information technology to locate disparities; (3): introduction to multi-axial diagnostic criteria; (4): neurobiology; (7): specific mental illness/disorders, such as those pertaining to childhood and adolescence, delirium, dementia, psychotic disorders, mood and adjustment disorders;</i></p>
<p>Anxiety Disorders (1 ½ CLASS SESSIONS)</p>	<p><b>Corcoran &amp; Walsh:</b> Chapter 8 Anxiety Disorders (pp. 191-230); <b>Barlow:</b> Chapters 6 (Biological aspects of anxiety and panic) and 8 (The origins of anxious apprehension, anxiety disorders, and related disorders: Triple vulnerabilities); pp. 29 – 30 (Is anxiety a female disorder?); and pp. 30-35 (Anxiety across cultures).</p> <p><b>DSM-IV-TR:</b> Anxiety Disorders.</p> <p>Journal articles: Anthony, M., and Rowa, K. (2005). Evidence-based assessment of anxiety disorders in adults. <i>Psychological Assessment</i>, 17(3), 256-266; Silverman, W., and Ollendick, T. (2005). Evidence-Based Assessment of Anxiety and Its Disorders in Children and Adolescents. <i>Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology</i>, 34(3), 380-411.</p> <p><b>Assignment:</b> 1) Do search on standardized measures of anxiety and anxiety disorders; 2) Turn in first part of diagnostic case study write-up; receive second portion of case study; turn in final version of diagnostic case study write-up.</p> <p><i>Course Competencies: : (1): perspectives of psychopathology; (2): psychopathology for diverse populations; mental health disparities across diverse populations; utilize information technology to locate disparities;</i></p>

	<i>(3): introduction to multi-axial diagnostic criteria; (4): neurobiology; (7): specific mental illness/disorders, such as those pertaining to childhood and adolescence, delirium, dementia, psychotic disorders, mood and adjustment disorders;</i>
	<b>Final Exam</b> - Comprehensive exam over course material and readings. Details of exam will be presented and discussed in class.

**It is important to me that you have the opportunity to learn all the material covered in this class and to receive the good grade you deserve. To this end, if you are having difficulty with this course, please make an appointment to meet with me.**