

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK

SW 537 - Introduction to Psychopathology and Social Work Practice
(2 credit hours)

Summer 2008 (Second Session)
Tuesday and Thursday Classes: Section 003
5:30-8:30pm – RM 234

Professor: Phyllis Thompson, LCSW
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782-6156

Office Hours:
Tuesday 4:30-5:30 pm
Thursday 4:30-5:30 pm

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)

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 191 Hoskins Library (865-974-6087). This will ensure that you are properly registered for services.

Course Description

This is a required concentration 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 symptomology, 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

Gray, S.W. Zide, M, M. R. (2008). *Psychopathology: A Competency-Based Assessment Model for Social Workers, Second Edition*

Additional readings available on BlackBoard

APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. American Psychiatric Association: Washington DC.

Supplemental Text (suggested STRONGLY)

APA (2000). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Treatment Revision* (4th ed.). American Psychiatric Association: Washington DC.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/GRADING

The course grade will be based on 6 online quizzes and a group presentation on a selected mental disorder. Students are expected to read the assigned articles/chapters thoughtfully and to come to class prepared to ask questions, make comments and add to the overall discussion. The course grade will be computed as follows:

Reflection Paper	15%
Diagnostic Presentation	20%
Abstinence Project	20%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	25%

Reflection Paper: Subjective Experience of Mental Illness

Purposes: To increase your own awareness of the subjective experience of person's and their families suffering from major mental illnesses and (2) to increase your awareness of your attitudes, feelings, strengths and weaknesses you bring to work with clients with major mental illness.

Assignment: Read an autobiography of a person regarding their experience with a mental illness. Write a 5-7 page double spaced reflection paper which incorporates APA guidelines and follows the following format:

1. Introduction of what you read including title, author, publisher and date.
2. Describe your reactions, thoughts and feelings about the book you read. Discuss what you learned, what had impact on you, what questions or issues were raised for you. Provide examples.
3. Incorporate readings from the semester that has also impacted you. What do you take from these readings that support or what you think may support your practice.
4. Reflect on your experiences of mental illness: these may include personal, family, friends, or neighbors experiences, professional work experiences as well as experiences derived from television, movies, books, class. Discuss your attitudes, feelings, fears and assumptions regarding major mental illness (they may vary with different types of illness). Discuss the implications of these things for your social work practice. What personal attributes do you bring to work with clients that may impact your work in ways positive, negative and the unknown. These may include, fear confusion, prejudice, compassion, understanding, experience, commitment, etc.

This paper emphasizes personal reflection on issues that can affect your practice with people and your increased awareness of these issues can improve your practice. Also these issues tend to be works in progress and I do not take them to be a fixed aspect of your professional self. What you learn from the inside out will be your best learning.

Diagnostic Presentation Description

Purpose: to allow you the opportunity to explore a disorder with more depth, and to demonstrate your understanding of psychopathology generally through your presentation. Since this presentation will be given to the entire class, I will not cover the material in class; it will be your group's responsibility to do so. I will develop questions for the midterm and final from your presentations so it is important that all class participants are engaged and ask questions for clarification to ensure that they understand the material.

Your presentation should be no longer than 20 minutes with an additional five to ten minutes for questions.

Define the disorder: Note all the pertinent *symptoms, risk factors*, and how said symptoms may *present clinically*.

Etiology/Neurobiology: Critically assess any theories as to the cause of the disorder. This can include *social, genetic, or psychological explanations*. Be sure to discuss any *neurobiological* explanations of the disorder.

Prevalence: Use *research statistics* to describe the general prevalence of the disorder as well as the *prevalence among pertinent subgroups* as defined by age, sex, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation etc.

Evidence base for practice: Review the research literature to determine the most empirically supported *assessment measures* and *interventions* (including *psychopharmacological interventions* if there are any). Be sure to cite the studies supporting your assertion and *defend why you have chosen these studies as the most rigorous*.

Diversity: Critically analyze any issues that you have discovered in the literature to guide clinicians on appropriate *diagnosis and treatment* of this disorder in *pertinent subgroups*. These subgroups can be defined by race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age or any other pertinent grouping.

Presentation: Provide a creative and informative *professional* presentation. This needs to include the use of PowerPoint and other exercises or demonstrations to aid in understanding the disorder you have chosen. Your ability to stick to the *time limit* will also be evaluated here.

Abstinence Project:

Week 2 through the end of week 4 of this course, you will keep an abstinence journal. The purpose for this journal is to create a record of your experience while abstaining from a specific substance or behavior that you have come to rely on in some way. You will select a substance or behavior that you will abstain from for three weeks, and every day you will record your thoughts, feelings and reactions. A total of 18 journal entries including the introduction is the requirement for this assignment. Each entry is worth one point with the exception of the introduction that is worth 2 points.

This assignment will give you the opportunity to experience the mental discomfort and perhaps the physical craving that is associated with eliminating something from your life that you have come to depend on. It will help you take a critical look at what happens internally when you give up a substance or behavior that is important to you.

In selecting what you will abstain from, choose something that you will miss; something that will be challenging to cut out of your life. Some examples of behaviors or substances that are used or exhibited frequently (preferably on a daily basis) may include caffeine, soda, alcohol, nicotine, sugar, nail biting, hair pulling etc.

Note: Do not select a substance that is needed to maintain your health such as a prescription medication, or a substance that might require a medically supervised detoxification period.

You must make a serious attempt to abstain from a substance or behavior that will challenge you. You will be asked to turn in a paragraph stating what you have chosen and why this choice will meet the spirit of this assignment. Note: a half-hearted attempt at abstaining from something will not fulfill the requirements for this assignment. While your journal may cite outside sources, it should be primarily subjective, based on personal thoughts and feelings. Please include the following elements:

1. Introduction

- a. Describe the substance or behavior you chose to abstain from and explain why you picked it. Describe the history of this element in your life and any previous attempts that you have made to eliminate it. Describe your expectations for what it will like to give it up.

- b. Daily Entries

- i. Each day (except for one day's rest) report any discomfort or cravings that you experience. When do you have these uncomfortable feelings? What cues seem to be associated with them? What are you thinking before, during and after they occur. What helped you refrain from using the substance or behavior at this time? If you did

- not refrain from using the substance or exhibit the behavior, what happened?
 - ii. Using the information that you are learning in this course, discuss what you think may be the emotional and/or physiological basis for your discomfort or cravings.
 - iii. Maximum length of each journal entry is 250 words (1 page) however the length of your journal entries is likely to vary considerably day to ay. A short paragraph or two is fine on days when you have little to report. At other times you may have more to say.
 - iv. If you start using your substance or behavior again, continue your daily journal entries and describe what you are experiencing during your relapse. Make another attempt to abstain.
 - v. In your final journal entry, explain what you plan to do next. If you decide to resume the behavior that you are abstaining from; this is your choice and it will not affect your grade.
- c. Evaluation
- i. Even though this is a personal journal, I will count spelling, punctuation and grammar in grading. You will not be grade on whether you maintain abstinence for the entire three weeks. However, if you do not maintain abstinence, you must still make daily journal entries and write about your relapse experience. The first time you elapse, you must make a second attempt at abstinence. If you relapse again, continue to write but only make another attempt if you wish. Relapse is not considered a failure. Most people will relapse at some point after deciding to refrain from a substance or behavior. It is what you learn from the relapse that is most important.

You must be serious about stopping your behavior. Feigned attempts will not be considered as fulfilling the requirements for this assignment.

Exams:

There will be two examinations in this course. The midterm exam is 20% of the final grade and the final exam is worth 25% of your final grade. These exams will be taken on blackboard.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND GRADES

A (95-100) Outstanding/Superior: Exceptional performance. Consistently exceeds expectations.

B+ (90-94) Very Good: Student consistently meets, and occasionally exceeds, normal expectations for the course.

B (85-89) Good: Student consistently meets normal expectations for the course.

C+ (80-84) Average: There is unevenness in grasping course content. Student is inconsistent in meeting normal expectations for the course.

C (70-76) Poor: There is lack of understanding of course content. Student does not meet course expectations.

F (69-Below) Very Poor: There is a lack of attendance or incomplete assignments. Course expectations are not met.

Note this course outline is tentative and more journal articles will be incorporated at the beginning of the semester.

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK #1	Introduction to the Course
7/8/08	Critically thinking about mental health diagnosis
	The Multiaxial System
	Public Health Model
	Social Justice

The Competency-Based Assessment Model
Disorders Usually First Diagnosed in Infancy, Childhood, or Adolescence.

Readings: APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. pp. xi-47 and 51-81.

Gray & Zide (2008). *An Introduction to the Competency-Based Assessment Model*. pp. 1-21.

Williams, J. B., & Spitzer, R.L. **YES!** Kutchins, H., & Kirk, S. **NO!** (1995). Should the DSM be the basis for teaching social work practice in mental health? *Journal of Social Work Education*, 31, 148-168.

7/10/08 Cognitive: Disorders: Delirium and Dementia

Readings: APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. pp. 83-103.

Gray & Zide (2008). *Cognitive Disorders: Delirium and Dementia* pp. 24-40

WEEK#2

7/15/08 Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders

Readings: APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. pp. 153-165.

Gray & Zide (2008). *Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic* pp. 43-82.

7/17/08 Mood Disorders

Readings: APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. pp. 167-208.

Gray & Zide (2008) *Mood Disorders* pp. 87-114..

WEEK#3

7/22/08 Anxiety Disorders

Readings: APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. pp. 209-218; 222-228.

Gray & Zide (2008) *Anxiety Disorders* pp. 118-138; 153-158.

Lopez, S.R. Guarnaccia, P.J.J. (2000). *Cultural psychopathology: Uncovering the social world of mental illness*. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 51, 571-598.

**7/24/08 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
Acute Stress Disorder
Secondary Stress Disorder**

Readings: APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. pp. 218-222.

Gray & Zide (2008) *Anxiety Disorders* pp. 138- 153.

WEEK#4 **Dissociative Disorders**
7/29/08

Readings: APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. pp. 239-243.

Gray & Zide (2008). *Dissociative Disorders* pp. 215-241.

7/31/08 **Somatoform, Factitious, and Malingering Disorders**

Readings: . APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. pp. 229-238.

Gray & Zide (2008). *Somatoform, Factitious, and Malingering Disorders* pp. 165-241.

WEEK #5 **Personality Disorders**
8/5/08

Readings: APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. pp. 287-314.

Gray & Zide (2008). *The Personality Disorders* pp. 268-319.

8/7/08 **Eating and Substance-Related Disorders**

APA (2000). *Desk Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from the DSM-IV-TR*. pp. 105-151.

Gray & Zide (2008). *Eating Disorders* pp. 242-267 and *Substance-Related Disorders* pp. 268-319.

NIAAA, *Social work education for the prevention and treatment of alcohol use disorders*. Module 4: Screening for alcohol problems in social work settings
Module 5: Diagnosis and assessment of alcohol use disorders

Recommended Readings:

Kosten, T.R., George, T.P. (2002). The neurobiology of opiod dependence: Implications for treatment. *Science and Practice Perspectives*, 13-21.

Nestler, E.J. (2005). The neurobiology of cocaine addiction. *Science and Practice Perspectives*, 4-12.