INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

**Course number**: SW 537, Section 013, CRN 30611  
**Instructor**: Ashley Childers LCSW  
**Semester**: Spring 2016  
**Meeting Time**: Weds. 6-7PM  
**Credit hours**: 3 Hours  
**Email**: achilde8@utk.edu  
**Office Hours**: By appointment  
**Prerequisites**: 510, 512, 513, 517, 519, 522, 538

**PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE**

I. **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

**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). Students are also expected to sign and adhere to the Social Work Field Placement Code of Conduct.

**HONOR STATEMENT.** The University of Tennessee maintains a commitment to an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. Students of the University must pledge that they neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work (Please see 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.** For course adaptations or accommodations because of a documented disability or to share emergency information, contact The University of Tennessee Office of Disability Services at 100 Dunford Hall (865) 974-6087 to 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.

II. 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-5) 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.

III. 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 burden on families.

IV. COURSE COMPETENCIES:

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

1. Describe different theoretical approaches for the study of psychopathology. 
   4.3, 4.5

2. Identify the components of comprehensive assessment with individual clients including differential diagnosis and psychosocial evaluation.  3.5

3. Identify, describe, and distinguish the major types of psychopathology including symptom logy, etiology, and coping mechanisms.  4.3

4. Identify and critically analyze theories of human growth and development that contribute to understanding psychopathology.  2.1
5. Describe the interaction of biological, sociological, psychological, risk and resiliency factors in the development of psychopathology. 2.1, 2.4

6. Identify the effects of ethnicity, race, culture, economic status, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical and mental ability, and vulnerability on maladaptive behavior. 3.3, 3.1, 4.1

7. Apply knowledge of psychopathology to formulate differential diagnosis and identify the implication of diagnosis for evidence-based social work interventions. 4.3, 2.1

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. 1.3, 3.5

V. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: The student is a co-creator of the learning experience and 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 may include recorded lectures using voice-over PowerPoint, discussion blogs, reading assignments, assignments involving social media, in-class activities, and group presentations.

Some material provided in the class may be of a confidential nature since part of the material will involve examination of ongoing human service organizations. Therefore, all class participants must observe strict rules of professional conduct including treating all information about current human service organizations as confidential, not to be discussed with anyone other than classmates or the Instructor.

VI. REQUIRED TEXTS


NOTE: This text will be referenced in quizzes and the exam. While weekly readings are not assigned you are expected to use this text as a reference both during the class and in your practice.

Also required (only one of these two)*:


OR


* For the assessment paper assignment, you have the option of reading The Glass Castle or reading the Silver Linings Playbook. Students will choose a character from one book in order to complete this paper. Please review the instructions in the syllabus (below), as well as on blackboard. These instructions are located in the Assignments section of blackboard.

Additional readings available on Blackboard
Supplemental Text NOTE: This text will be referenced in quizzes and the exam. While weekly readings are not assigned you are expected to use this text as a reference both during the class and in your practice.


Additional readings will be assigned and posted to Blackboard.

VII. EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND GRADES

The course grade will be based on 4 online quizzes, 4 group discussions, and a paper. Students are expected to read the assigned articles/chapters thoughtfully. The course grade will be computed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Four Quizzes</th>
<th>60 points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Four Group Discussions</td>
<td>20 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>20 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100 points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LATE QUIZZES AND GROUP DISCUSSIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**

**FOR PAPERS:** 10 points will be deducted each day that it is submitted late for the first 4 days. On the 5th day post-due date, the paper will not be accepted and the grade will result in a 0.

**QUIZZES (60%)**
Quizzes will be available on Blackboard and the due dates will be clearly stated (and are listed in each Module discussed below).

Quiz 1 will assess competencies 1, 5
Quiz 2 will assess competencies 2-8
Quiz 3 will assess competencies 2-8
Quiz 4 will assess competencies 2-8

**DISCUSSIONS (20%)**
Group discussion (via Zoom process meetings) are clearly explained on Blackboard with due dates clearly stated (and listed in each Module discussed below).

Zoom group discussions consisting of groups of 4 students will meet during each two-week Module. The leader will pick 5 process questions and coordinate the meeting time/schedule. The meeting will last a minimum of 45 minutes. Leaders will inform the professor who was present and on time, in addition to the questions that they selected to discuss. Each meeting is worth 5 points. **All meetings will be recorded and sent to the professor.**

Discussion 1 will assess competencies 1, 5
Discussion 2 will assess competencies 2-8
Discussion 3 will assess competencies 2-8
Discussion 4 will assess competencies 2-8

**ASSESSMENT PAPER** (20%) Due Tuesday April 12 by midnight CST
You will need to read either *The Glass Castle*, by Jeanette Walls OR *Silver Linings Playbook*, by Matthew Quick. Based on a character that you select from one book, you will need to demonstrate content from all of the course competencies. This paper will average 4-6 pages in length and include the following:

1) **Define the disorder of the character you have chosen to assess:** Note all the pertinent symptoms, risk factors, and how said symptoms may present clinically. (3 points)

2) **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. (3 points)

3) **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. (3 points)

4) **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. (3 points)

5) **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. (3 points)

6) **Professionalism:** Please note that grammar, proper use of subject headings, spelling, content and over all organization of your paper/assessment will be factored into your 20 points. (5 points)

The paper assignment will assess competencies 1-8

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**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 (70-79) Poor: There is lack of understanding of content. Student does not meet expectations.
F (69-Below) Very Poor: There is a lack of attendance or incomplete assignments. Course expectations are not met.
X. COURSE OUTLINE

MODULE #1: Wednesday 1/27-Tuesday 2/9

Synchronous class * Prior to Module 1* Wednesday 1/13 6-7PM CST. This class is not mandatory. We will go over the course syllabus, blackboard site, due dates, and assignments. This class will be recorded.

Readings:
- DSM-5 In Action: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4

Additional required Readings, Powerpoints, and Podcasts can be found on Blackboard

Please take Quiz #1 by Tuesday 2/9 at 11:59 p.m. CST. The quiz will close at this date/time. The quiz is worth 15 points and covers all material in Module 1.

Please complete Zoom process meeting by Tuesday 2/9 at 11:59 p.m. CST. See instructions on Blackboard for completion of this meeting.

MODULE #2: Wednesday 2/10- Tuesday 2/23 at 11:59 p.m. CST

Synchronous class Wednesday 3/23 6-7PM CST. This class is not mandatory and will be recorded. We will check in regarding assignments, I will answer questions, and we may also discuss this modules’ disorders.

Readings:
- DSM-5:  
  - Bipolar and Related Disorders  
  - Depressive Disorders  
  - Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders

- DSM-5 In Action: Chapters from text: 6, 7, 8

Additional required Readings, Powerpoints, and Podcasts can be found on Blackboard

Please take Quiz #2 by Tuesday 2/23 at 11:59 p.m. CST. The quiz will close at this date/time. The quiz is worth 15 points and covers all material in Module 1.

Please complete Zoom process meeting by Tuesday 2/23 at 11:59 p.m. CST. See instructions on Blackboard for completion of this meeting.

MODULE #3: Wednesday 2/24- Tuesday 3/8 at 11:59 p.m. CST
Readings
  • DSM-5:
    o Schizophrenia Spectrum & other Psychotic Disorders
    o Trauma and Stress-Related Disorders
    o Sexual and Dysfunctions
  • DSM-5 In Action: Chapters 5, 9, 10

Additional *required* Readings, Powerpoints, and Podcasts can be found on Blackboard

Please take Quiz #3 by Tuesday 3/8 at 11:59 p.m. CST. The quiz will close at this date/time. The quiz is worth 15 points and covers all material in Module 1.

Please complete Zoom process meeting by Tuesday 3/8 at 11:59 p.m. CST. See instructions on Blackboard for completion of this meeting.

**MODULE #4: Wednesday 3/23-Tuesday 4/5 at 11:59 p.m. CST**

Readings:
  • DSM-5:
    o Disruptive, Impulse-Control, and Conduct Disorders
    o Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders
    o Personality Disorders
  • DSM-5 In Action: Chapters 11, 12, 13

Additional *required* Readings, Powerpoints, and Podcasts can be found on Blackboard

Please take Quiz #3 by Tuesday 4/5 at 11:59 p.m. CST. The quiz will close at this date/time. The quiz is worth 15 points and covers all material in Module 1.

Please complete Zoom process meeting by Tuesday 4/5 at 11:59 p.m. CST. See instructions on Blackboard for completion of this meeting.