SOWK 612

PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND DIAGNOSIS OF MENTAL DISORDERS

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide the student with advanced exposure to several issues in the area of adult psychopathology and diagnostics. First, the mental status exam will be covered as the basic tool for gathering information on psychopathology. Second, the logic and method of diagnostic classification will be covered, as well as the diathesis / stress model of mental illness. Third, the majority of the course will consist of using the DSM-IV as the model for in-depth exposure and practice in the diagnosis of mental disorders. The major emphasis of the course will be on developing the differential diagnostic skills of the student through didactic and experiential modalities. Finally, there will be discussion of cross-cultural diagnostic issues, and the most effective treatment approaches used for each of the major diagnostic categories.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Assess and observe clusters of psychiatric symptoms and robustly categorize them into DSM-IV-TR diagnostic categories, using the multiaxial assessment.

2. Assert and defend differential diagnoses, according to the DSM-IV-TR.

3. Recognize the uses, limitations, misuses of assigning psychiatric diagnoses.

4. Recognize how culture and class can influence psychiatric symptoms, misdiagnosis, and access to mental health services.

5. Develop an understanding of etiology of various mental health symptoms and illnesses.

6. Identify medical, psychodynamic, and alternative methods of treatment for specific mental health symptoms and illnesses.

7. Become familiar with the history of mental health treatment delivery in the United States.

8. Discern how various symptoms can be ego syntonic and ego dystonic.

9. Construct a comprehensive and concise biopsychosocial assessment, including a mental status exam.

10. Develop familiarity with the usual clinical course of each specific mental illness.

III. COURSE FORMAT

Format of the class will primarily be didactic and interactive. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the material and are encouraged to share brief, relevant, clinical experiences. Appropriate videos and case vignettes will be used to illustrate class content.
IV. COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADING

Students are expected to attend all scheduled courses, be on time, contribute to the development of a positive learning environment in the course, and to demonstrate their learning through written and oral assignments, and through class participation. Class participation should consist of meaningful, thoughtful, and respectful participation based on having completed assigned and independent readings.

Class grades will be based on the following:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
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1) Class participation – 10%

2) Diagnostic Summaries (two) – 25% and 25%

Two written diagnostic case summaries on adult clients will be required in this course. The diagnostic summary will be the presentation of a case that the student is currently or has worked with in his/her field placement. The diagnostic summary will include the following information: PLEASE USE ALL THESE HEADINGS.

- **Brief psychosocial information** (USE TEMPLATE FROM OUR CLASS). Use all headings.
  - Mental Status Exam (USE TEMPLATE FROM OUR CLASS). Use all headings.
- **Multiaxial diagnoses**
  - Include at least 1 differential diagnosis. Write this in the form of Rule Out.
- **Justification of primary and differential diagnoses**
  - Write the DSM-IV-TR diagnostic criteria, then write a very brief description of how this client’s symptoms meet this criteria.
    - Example
    - “More talkative than usual or pressure to keep talking.
      - Mr. B talks non-stop for the duration of the interview. He will not be interrupted by clinician. He talks in a tangential manner about the most recent basketball game.
  - Remaining questions: When referring to differential diagnoses, list questions you still have or information that you still need to acquire to be able to rule in or rule out these diagnoses.
All names must be changed to protect client confidentiality. Write a minimum of 9 pages per summary. Most students write a minimum of 9 pages per summary. Full credit will be given to the work that adequately includes all above points and is under the 9 page requirement. Equally, if the paper is over 9 pages, the instructor will read all work. However, make every attempt to write concisely.

3) Final Assignment – 40%

The final exam will consist of a 60 minute video of a client interview that will be shown on the last day of class. No recorders are allowed. The student will derive and justify DSM-IV-TR diagnoses for and answer several questions that pertain to the biopsychosocial circumstances of the client. The paper will be due during exam week. To maximize your grade, follow all instructions on Final Exam Handout that will be given during the last class. The work that social workers do with our clients is very sensitive and can have a significant impact on the lives of the people that we serve. For this reason, social workers make it our professional practice to consult with other professionals to insure comprehension and preciseness. You may consult with your colleagues about this client interview and final exam.

V. FINAL EXAM POLICY

According to the University, graduate school policies may be determined by the dean of individual schools. The School of Social Work’s policy on final exams is as follows:

• No classes are to be held during the University’s study days
• The first allowable due date for a final paper is the last day of study days
• If a final exam is given it will be scheduled according to the University’s schedule of classes. (Please consult the University’s annual academic calendar for the correct dates)

VI. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend every class and to remain in class for the duration of the session. Failure to attend class or arriving late may impact your ability to achieve course objectives which could affect your course grade. Students are expected to notify the instructor by telephone or email of any anticipated absence or reason for tardiness.

University of Southern California policy permits students to be excused from class, without penalty, for the observance of religious holy days. This policy also covers scheduled final examinations which conflict with students’ observance of a holy day. Students must make arrangements in advance to complete class work which will be missed, or to reschedule an examination, due to holy days observance.

VII. COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

I. Diagnostic Summaries

A - (Due Session 7) 25%
B - (Due Session 11) 25%

II. Final Exam (Due during finals week) 40%

III. Meaningful class participation 10%
(Including class discussion, attendance, tardiness, leaving early, behavior that is distractive to other students. Please do not use your computer in class for any other reason than for taking notes.)
VIII. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS


OR (Andreasen or Berzoff)


Tarascon International Pharmacopoeia. (most recent annual publication).

IX. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. *Please be sure the letter is delivered to the instructor as early in the semester as possible.* DSP is located in STU 301 and is open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

X. EMERGENCY RESPONSE INFORMATION

To receive information, call main number (213)740-2711, press #2. “For recorded announcements, events, emergency communications or critical incident information.”

To leave a message, call (213) 740-8311
For additional university information, please call (213) 740-9233
Or visit university website; http://emergency.usc.edu

If it becomes necessary to evacuate the building, please go to the following locations carefully using stairwells only. Never use elevators in an emergency evacuation.

**University Park Campus**
MRF – Lot B
SWC – Lot B
WPH – McCarthy Quad
VKC – McCarthy Quad

**City Center**
Front of the building (12th & Olive)

**Orange County Campus**
Faculty Parking Lot

**Skirball Campus**
Front of building

Do not re-enter the building until given the “all clear” by emergency personnel.

XI. COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

**Session 1 - Introduction and Course Overview**

- Person-In-Environment perspective in mental illness
- Clinical diagnosis among diverse populations including culture, race, gender, socioeconomics
- Critique of use of diagnostic frameworks
- DSM-IV-TR and the Multiaxial Assessment

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.

Readings


Session 2 - The Mental Status Exam

- Aspects of observing and assessing mental status in children, elderly, people who are experiencing psychosis and intoxication, and people who are difficult to engage.
Meets objectives 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9.

Readings


Optional Readings

Session 3 - The Effects of Trauma

- Paradigm perspectives on PTSD vs. Personality Disorders
- Differing traumas and their associated responses (war, rape, childhood sexual abuse, battered women)
- Controversy related to dissociative disorders
- Factors in resiliency

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10.

Readings


Session 4 - Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders – 1 – Understanding

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.
Readings


Session 5 - Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders – 2 – Associated Challenges and Treatment

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Readings


Session 6 - Developmental and Childhood Disorders

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Readings


Session 7 - Addiction – 1 – Understanding the Process of Addiction

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.
Readings


Session 8 - Addiction – 2 – Treatment Options

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Readings


Session 9 - Mood Disorders - Depression

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Readings


**Session 10 - Mood Disorders - Bipolar Disorders**

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

*Readings*


**Session 11 - Anxiety Disorders**

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

*Readings*


**Session 12 - Personality Disorders – 1 – Cluster B**

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

*Readings*


www.behavioraltech.org (Marsha Linehan website – trainings)


**Session 13 - Personality Disorders – 2 – Clusters A & C**

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.


**Session 14 - Eating Disorders**

Meets objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

**Readings**


**Optional Reading**

Session 15 - Final Exam Video and Handout

Final Paper is due during Final’s Week at the usual beginning time of our class.