

**SOWK 612**

**PSYCHOPATHOLOGY AND DIAGNOSIS OF MENTAL DISORDERS**

**SUMMER 2008**

**Instructor: Kent Peppard, Ph.D.**

**Office: OC Center**

**Telephone: (714) 734-3448**

**Office hours: After class and by appointment**

**E-mail: Kpeppardphd@aol.com**

**Location: OC Center**

**Day/Time: Monday / 4:00 PM – 7:10 PM**

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will provide the student with advanced exposure to important aspects and issues of adult psychopathology and the diagnosis of mental disorders. The course examines psychopathology and mental disorders from biological, psychosocial, ethnic, and cultural perspectives. The mental status examination will be covered as an important tool for gathering relevant clinical information for diagnosing psychopathology. The DSM IV-TR will be utilized as an organizing framework and system for describing and diagnosing mental disorders. The course will examine the strengths and weaknesses of this system, the role of social workers in psychiatric diagnosis, the relationship of diagnosis to social work assessment, and issues of ethical practice. Current research from biological psychiatry and the behavioral sciences regarding the impact of poverty, race/ethnicity, and class will be discussed.

This course emphasizes the acquisition of diagnostic skills as they relate to comprehensive social work assessment of individuals across the lifespan. Knowledge of psychopharmacology and the roles social workers occupy within interdisciplinary practice will be covered. The primary focus is on assessment and case/treatment planning that integrates diagnostic information with evidence-based interventions that are consistent with the individual's needs and strengths.

**II. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The student is expected to demonstrate advanced competency in assessment of psychopathology and differential diagnosis of mental disorders. Upon completion of this course, students will be able:

1. To demonstrate knowledge of biopsychosocial and ethnocultural perspectives in relation to psychopathology and mental disorders.
2. To demonstrate knowledge of assessment methods as basic tools for gathering relevant information to identify psychopathology and make a correct diagnosis.

3. To demonstrate knowledge of the logic, method, and process of diagnostic classification and the criteria necessary for the diagnosis of the various mental disorders contained in the DSM-IV-TR.
4. To demonstrate knowledge of the multi-axial diagnosis of mental disorders described in the DSM-IV-TR.
5. To demonstrate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the DSM-IV-TR diagnostic system and the role of social workers in psychiatric diagnosis.
6. To demonstrate knowledge of current research findings as these relate to diagnostic criteria, prevalence, course of a disorder, and evidence-based treatment methods.
7. To demonstrate skill in the application of assessment and diagnostic knowledge to specific cases, as evidenced in discussion of vignettes and written assignments.

### **III. COURSE FORMAT**

The format of the course will 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. Case vignettes and videotapes will accompany lectures and assigned readings. Professionals from the practice community may be invited to present on their area of expertise. Students are asked to turn their cell phones off before class.

### **IV. COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADING**

All students are expected to regularly attend class and be on time. A student with more than two unexcused absences during the course of this class may receive a no credit. A student who is tardy three or more times to class may receive a grade of no credit. If a student receives a no credit grade in this seminar, they will be required to repeat this class.

Class grades will be based on the following:

3.85 – 4	A
3.60 – 3.84	A-
3.25 – 3.59	B+
2.90 – 3.24	B
2.60 – 2.87	B-
2.25 – 2.50	C+
1.90 – 2.24	C

Final Grade:

93 – 100	A
90 – 92	A-
87 – 89	B+
83 – 86	B
80 – 82	B-
77 – 79	C+
73 – 76	C
70 – 72	C-

### **ASSIGNMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS**

#### **1) Reaction Paper (20%; Due Session 5)**

Read any one of the papers of this syllabus or any other related article pre-approved by your instructor. The assignment is a 2 page critical reaction to one of the main themes of the article you read. State the themes, conclusions, and your honest reactions. Reactions are considered subjective and quantitative grades will not be assigned to this section of the paper.

#### **2) Diagnostic Summary (20%; Due Session 7)**

A diagnostic case summary on an adult client will be required in this course. The student will choose **one** of the following diagnostic categories and will write a diagnostic summary: 1) schizophrenia spectrum; 2) mood disorders 3) anxiety disorders 4) addiction and 5) personality disorders. The diagnostic summary will be the presentation of a prototypic case, including the following information:

- Brief psychosocial information (USE TEMPLATE FROM OUR CLASS)
- Mental Status Exam (USE TEMPLATE FROM OUR CLASS)
- Delineation and illustration of two critical differential diagnostic dilemmas

To create your prototypic case, you may use a client you have worked with, a composite creation of many clients, or a purely fictional case. The case must illustrate your understanding of the inclusionary and exclusionary diagnostic features of the disorder you have chosen. All names must be changed to protect client confidentiality. Most students write a minimum of 9 pages per summary.

#### **3) Mid-term Exam (20%; In-class open book, Session 9)**

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#### **4) Final Exam - Diagnostic Case Study Exam (20%, In-class open book, Session 15)**

## **V. 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.

## **VI. COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

This course is designed to help you become proficient utilizing the DSM-IV-TR. The goal will be to expand your knowledge of psychopathology, assessment methods to gather relevant clinical information to make a correct diagnosis consistent with good social work practice. An emphasis will also be placed on acquiring knowledge of the nomenclature and terminology used in the identification of signs and symptoms of psychopathology and the diagnosis of psychiatric disorders.

## **VII. REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

American Psychiatric Association (2000). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (text revision). Washington, DC: Author

Andreasen, N. & Black, D. (2006). *Introductory textbook of psychiatry*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc.

## **VIII. 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.

## **IX. 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 (12<sup>th</sup> & 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.

## **X. COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Session 1**

#### **Introduction & Overview of Course**

- Brief review of the biopsychosocial model considering situational, developmental, and psychopathology aspects of assessment
- An essential consideration of ethnocultural influences and social environmental context
- Introduction to DSM IV-TR: History and present format

#### **Readings:**

DSM IV-TR – Introduction and Review Appendix A-H

Andreason & Black. (2006). Chapters 1, 2

Widiger & Sankis (2000)

### **Session 2**

#### **DSM IV-TR (continued); The Mental Status Exam**

- Multiaxial assessment and decision trees
- Review Cultural Formulation and Culture-bound Syndromes
- Differential Diagnosis; Importance of ruling out medical problems and substance abuse
- Overview of Axis Disorders important to rule out (R/O): Cognitive Disorders, Mental Disorders due to a General Medical Condition and Substance Abuse Disorders
- Adjustment Disorders and V-Codes
- Subjective experience of mental illness

**Readings:**

DSM IV-TR – Cautionary Statement, Use of the Manual, Multiaxial Assessment, and Review  
pp. 135-295; pp. 679-683, pp. 739-743; and Appendix I

Andreason & Black. (2006). Chapters 3, 4

Carrillo et al. (1999)

Lopez (1997)

Kagawa-Singer & Blackhall (2001)

**Sessions 3 & 4****Schizophrenia Spectrum disorders and other Psychotic Disorders**

- Definitions, prevalence, course and outcome
- Diagnostic criteria and diagnostic practice
- Medications
- Cross-cultural diagnostic issues
- Other disorders to R/O
- Global assessment functioning scale (GAF)
- Family Context, protective factors and family burden

**Readings:**

DSM IV-TR – pp. 297-343

Andreason & Black. (2006). Chapter 5

Barrio (2000)

Chadwick (2006)

Wasow (2001)

Weiser (2001)

**Session 5 & 6****Mood Disorders**

- Definitions, prevalence, course, and outcome
- Diagnostic criteria and diagnostic practice
- Cross-cultural diagnostic issues
- Other disorders to R/O

**Readings:**

DSM IV-TR – pp. 345-428

Andreason & Black. (2006). Chapter 6

Brown, Abe-Kim, Barrio (2003)

Hartman (2002)

Jacobs (2000)

## **Sessions 7 & 8**

### **Anxiety Disorders**

- Definitions, prevalence, course and outcome
- Diagnostic criteria and diagnostic practice
- Cross-cultural diagnostic issues
- Other disorders to R/O

### **Readings:**

DSM IV-TR – pp. 429-484

Andreason & Black. (2006). Chapter 7

Cusack et al. (2006)

Michael, S.J. (1999)

Shevlin et al. (2007)

## **Sessions 9**

**In Class Case Study Exam, Open Book (class texts, readings and class notes only)**

## **Session 10 & 11**

### **Discussion of exam**

### **Personality Disorders**

- Definitions, prevalence, course, and outcome
- Diagnostic criteria and diagnostic practice
- Cluster A, B, and C
- Cross-cultural diagnostic issues
- Other disorders to R/O

### **Readings:**

DSM IV-TR – pp. 685-729

Andreason & Black. (2006).

Chapter 10

Golier et al. (2003)

Shedler & Westen (2004)

Zittel Conklin & Westen (2005)

## **Session 12**

### **Disorders Usually First Diagnosed in Infancy, Childhood, or Adolescence**

- Definitions, prevalence, course, and outcome
- Diagnostic criteria and diagnostic practice
- Cross-cultural diagnostic issues
- Other disorders to R/O

**Readings:**

DSM IV-TR – pp. 39-134  
 Andreason & Black. (2006)  
 Chapter 16

Carey, B. (2006)  
 Costello et al. (2003)

**Session 13****Substance-Related Disorders and Comorbid Conditions**

- Definitions, prevalence, course, and outcome
- Diagnostic criteria and diagnostic practice
- Cross-cultural diagnostic issues
- Other disorders to R/O

**Readings:**

DSM IV-TR – pp. 191-295  
 Andreason & Black. (2006)  
 Chapter 9

Montross et al. (2005)

**Session 14****Other Disorders (Eating Disorders, Sexual Disorders) and Wrap-up: Integration & Synthesis**

- Definitions, prevalence, course, and outcome
- Diagnostic criteria and diagnostic practice
- Cross-cultural diagnostic issues

**Readings:**

DSM IV-TR – pp. 535-582; pp. 583-595  
 Andreason & Black. (2006).  
 Chapters 11, 12

Pike et al. (2001)  
 Schwartz et al. (2001)

**Session 15****Final Exam – Comprehensive Diagnostic Case Study**

*Note: Information contained in this course syllabus (including topics, readings, & assignments) is subject to change as deemed necessary by the instructor.*



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