Course Description

This course will present state of the art knowledge and research on mental disorders of children and youth, as well as factors that promote mental health and prevent mental disorders in children and youth. Bio-psychosocial theories of resiliency, coping, etiology, the impact of mental health disorders on children and family members, and the relationship of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social class to mental disorders will be presented (e.g., the DSM IV and ICDM-IX). The impact of labeling and stigma will be explored in order to develop critical thinking about how mental disorders of children and youth are conceptualized.

Course Content

This course will examine psychological, behavioral and developmental disorders of childhood and adolescence. The particular disorders will be considered in broader psychosocial and ecological contexts which promote mental health or create and maintain symptomatic functioning. These broader contexts will be presented through an overview of theory and research on the following issues: 1) a transactional and developmental perspective on the etiology of mental disorders; 2) parent-infant attachment and family dynamics; 3) risk and protective factors (including individual, familial and socio-cultural factors) and resiliency; and 4) stress and trauma theory, including the impact of maltreatment and loss.

The following conditions will be reviewed in terms of presentation, etiology, prevalence, and incidence at different developmental stages and gender distributions: 1) relationship disorders; 2) stress-response syndromes, including post traumatic stress disorder; 3) depression; 4) anxiety disorders; 5) developmental disorders; 6) behavior disorders; 7) communication and learning disorders; 8) eating disorders; 9) substance abuse disorders; and 10) psychotic disorders. Attention will be given to the analysis of strengths and adaptive functions which may coexist with disorders, as well as to issues in defining mental health and mental disorders in cultural terms.
Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify factors influencing mental health and mental disorders of children and youth at the individual, familial, cultural/ethnic, and social levels.

2. Describe the transactional processes among the above factors which influence the etiology and maintenance of mental disorders.

3. Describe and critique classification systems of mental disorders of children and adolescents, particularly DSM IV.

4. Identify and differentiate a number of disorders of children and adolescents and apply them to the evaluation of clients.

5. Demonstrate empathic appreciation of the client's experience of disorders from the perspective of the client's inner world.

6. Demonstrate an understanding of the impact of the child's or adolescent's difficulties on parents and family members.

7. Discuss typical ethical concerns related to mental health and mental disorders of children and youth.

Relationship of the Course to Four Circular Themes

- Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed through discussion of incidence and prevalence of mental disorders, as related to gender and social class, and through discussion of culture, ethnicity, race, gender and class factors influencing mental health and disorders.

- Social Justice and Social Change will be addressed through discussion of the misapplication of mental health diagnoses based on race, class, and gender bias and the potential impact of poverty, discrimination, and disenfranchisement on the development of mental disorders and disorders of parenting.

- Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be addressed through discussion of protective factors which promote resiliency and positive adaptation.

- Behavioral and Social Science Research will inform the entire content of this course, which will draw especially on current research in the following areas: developmental psychopathology, attachment, risk, resiliency and coping, trauma and maltreatment, and studies of particular disorders.
Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values

Ethical and value issues related to all course topics will be identified and discussed. Examples of this include: how values regarding child development affect judgements we make about the mental health of children, how the use of the DSM IV by social workers can bias judgments of child mental health, what the value issues are when paying attention to the child’s inner world, and how cultural and gender biases also affect professional views of child mental health.

Course Design and Expectations

This course will use a combination of lecture, class discussion, case material, role plays, group discussion and video material when appropriate. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. The instructor must be notified in the event of a possible absence due to illness or emergency. **More than 2 unexcused absences will result in an automatic reduction in the final grade. Class participation is strongly encouraged and worth 10% of your grade.**

Class Requirements

Progress in this course will be assessed by 4 assignments. The aim of the assignments is to give you an opportunity to focus on your own specific area of interest, or explore new areas that may not be covered in detail in the class. My hope is that you will draw from your personal experience and choose topics that will aid you in your current internship placement, or a specific personal interest related to children and youth that you hope to pursue professionally in the future. Hopefully, the more personally interesting to you, the more effort you will put into these projects. **All papers are to be typed, double spaced, and written in professional, clinical style.**

Assignment 1: Due Monday, February 6, 2006.

Assignment 1

**Book Critique:** Read and critique a book of your choice on a topic related to course content. Your critique should be 4 to 5 pages in length and should include the following information:

- Your reasons for choosing this book.
- A brief summary of the book, no longer than a paragraph
- To what readership the book is directed
- Discuss the book’s strengths: this should include what you liked about the book as a therapist, and strengths for its readership
- Discuss the book’s weaknesses: this should include your hesitations about recommending this book to clients, clinicians, other social workers, etc.
- General discussion of the value of the book from a therapeutic perspective. This should include references to the 4 curricular themes:
- Multicultural, diversity and social justice issues
- Social change and social justice issues
- Promotion and prevention
- Social science knowledge
- Relationship to social work ethics and values

Please do not use long quotations from the book, and do not choose a book designed for children unless it is in conjunction with another book. Required texts for other classes are not permissible for this assignment. I must approve all book selections prior to completing the assignment.

This assignment is worth 20% of your grade and is due on February 6, 2006.

Assignment 2, Due March 3, 2003

Choose a child or adolescent (or their parent) with a documented DSM diagnosis. Interview the child, adolescent or parent in order to obtain the following information:

1. History of the condition (first suspicions)
2. Process of diagnosis of the condition
3. History of management of the condition (including medications)
4. Current management of the condition (including medications)
5. Child, adolescent or parent's feelings about the condition
6. Child, adolescent or parent's resulting self beliefs
7. How has this condition affected the family?
8. Any other pertinent information

Document these elements in narrative style as in a psychosocial history. If you are able to have access to both the child and the parent, please include the opinions of both.

Conclude with:
1. YOUR impressions of the interview.
2. What feelings did it bring up for you?
3. Do you agree with the handling of the condition? What would you change?
4. What did you learn about the condition or its effects?
5. How could you as a social worker be helpful to the child or the family?

This assignment is worth 20% of your grade.

Assignment 3: Due Monday, April 10, 2003.

This is a research project.

1. Diagnostic Category: Choose a diagnostic category from the DSM IV that pertains to children and/or adolescents.
   ✓ Read 10 references about the diagnosis.
   ✓ Write a brief definition of the diagnosis and the common symptoms. (This section may be a paraphrase of the DSM IV.
   ✓ Discuss common hypotheses regarding the development of the disorder (psychosocial and biological)
Discuss how the diagnosis is likely to affect the individual in terms of development, functioning, view of self and view of reality
Describe the potential impact on the child’s family
Describe commonly co-occurring risk factors for this diagnosis
Describe how issues of culture and gender relate to this diagnosis
Present a brief case example, either from your reading or from your practicum experience which illustrates behaviors or emotional symptoms of the diagnosis.

All assignments should be 7 to 8 pages in length. (Please no more than 8) Assignments must be typed, double spaced, written in clinical style and following A.P.A. documentation form. Please include a bibliography of your references. Please protect confidentiality by using pseudonyms, and changing any other identifying data.

This assignment is worth 30% of your grade.

Assignment 4: Due date to be determined in class.

This assignment is an in-class group presentation with 2 or 3 of your classmates. This presentation will simulate a social work treatment team responsible for creating a diagnostic summary for a child or adolescent client. This client may be one from your practicum experience, or it may be a child or adolescent client that you choose from the media. Your presentation should include the following:
- A brief bio-psychosocial history of the identified client (If you choose a client from the media, please show a video clip of the client to the class.)
- Presenting problems
- History of presenting problems
- Brief family assessment (this may be assumed in the case that the material is unknown)
- A discussion of possible diagnoses including your reasons for ruling out certain of them
- A five axial DSM diagnosis, including supporting evidence for each axis.

Please submit a brief outline to me at the time of the presentation. You may use whatever media you need for your presentation. Your presentation should be 20 to 30 minutes.

We will pick dates for the presentations during the first and second class sessions.
This assignment is worth 20% of your grade.

Grading:
The requirements listed above are the minimal expectations for class assignments, and if followed precisely will result in an A- grade for the assignment. A grade higher than A- would be given to work that has gone above and beyond the minimal qualifications. This would reflect more
thorough, thoughtful and thought provoking work on your part. This will be discussed in detail in class. Feel free to ask questions about this policy!

Assignments that are turned in later than the due date will receive an automatic grade reduction. There are no exceptions to this policy!

Required Texts:


Course Outline and Reading Schedule:

**Monday, January 9, 2006**

*Introduction to Course*
*Introduction to DSM*
*Utility and Limits of Diagnostic Systems*
*The Interface of Assessment, Treatment, and the Therapeutic Relationship*

**Monday, January 16, 2006**

NO CLASS: Martin Luther King Day

**Monday January 23, 2006**

*Biopsychosocial Assessment*
*Meanings of Child Psychopathology*
*Other Considerations: Family, Development, etc.*

Mash and Barkley: Chapter 1
DSM IV TR: 1-12, 27-38, Appendix D 829-844

**Monday, January 30, 2006**

*Childhood Mood Disorders*

Mash and Barkley: Chapters 6 and 7
DSM IV TR: 345-429
Monday, February 6, 2006: Assignment 1 Due

*Childhood Mood Disorders, cont.*
*Separation Anxiety Disorder*

Mash and Barkley: Chapters 5 and 8  
DSM IV TR: 429-485, 121-125

Monday, February 13, 2006

*Attention Deficit and Disruptive Behavior Disorders*

Mash and Barkley: Chapters 2,3,4  
DSM IV TR: 85-103

Monday, February 20, 2006

*Mental Retardation*  
*Feeding Disorders*  
*Selective Mutism*  
*Elimination Disorders*  
*Tourette’s/ Tic Disorders*  
*Reactive Attachment Disorder*

Mash and Barkley: Chapter 11  
DSM IV TR: 41-49

Monday, February 27, 2006

*NO CLASS: Spring Break*

Monday, March 6, 2006 Assignment 2 Due

*Pervasive Developmental Disorders*

Mash and Barkley: Chapter 9  
DSM IV TR: 69-84

Monday, March 13, 2006

*Learning and Language Disorders*

Mash and Barkley: Chapter 12  
DSM IV TR: 49-69
Monday, March 20, 2006

Psychotic Disorders

Mash and Barkley: Chapter 10
DSM IV TR: 297-343

Monday, March 27, 2006

Disorders of Adolescence:
Eating Disorders
Substance Abuse Disorders

Mash and Barkley: Chapters 4, 15
DSM IV TR: 191-297, 583-597

Monday, April 3, 2006

Adjustment Disorders
Personality Disorders

DSM IV TR: 685-729, 679-683

Monday, April 10, 2006  Assignment 3 Due

Effects of Diversity, Multicultural Issues, and Gender in Diagnosis

Readings on Coursetools

Monday, April 17, 2006:

To be determined