I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Whether they practice in specialty mental health or general social service settings, social workers commonly encounter adults experiencing mental health problems. Recent studies suggest that at least one-quarter of U.S. citizens experience a significant mental health disorder over the course of their lifetimes. Unfortunately, mental health problems often remain undetected and many opportunities for social workers to intervene with distressed adults are missed. Most social workers do not receive sufficient training in the assessment and treatment of mental health disorders. This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the epidemiology, causes, assessment, and treatment of childhood and adolescent mental health disorders. Specific attention is paid to issues of race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical and mental disabilities, age, and national origin as they influence the manifestations and assessment of mental health problems. Potentially stigmatizing and other adverse social and economic effects associated with assigning psychiatric diagnoses to clients are addressed in light of social work’s historic commitment to social and economic justice and other core social work values. Students will learn the skills they need to discern diverse patterns of mental health symptomatology as they refine their diagnostic and interventive capabilities. Students are also exposed to the values that distinguish social work assessment from more traditional forms of psychiatric evaluation. Available evidence-based psychosocial and pharmacotherapeutic interventions for the treatment of mental health disorders are discussed. Issues in clinical and laboratory assessment are addressed, including interviewing techniques and the use of rating scales. This course will also present state-of-the-art knowledge and research on factors that promote mental health and prevent mental disorders in children and youth. Biopsychosocial theories of resiliency, coping, etiology, and the impact of mental health disorders on adults and the elderly will be presented.
II. COURSE CONTENT

The prevalence, etiology, characteristics, and treatment of mental health disorders afflicting adults will be examined. Disorders with onset in childhood and adolescence such as attention-deficit-hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, oppositional defiant disorder, problems related to child abuse and neglect, elimination and feeding disorders, mental retardation, learning and motor skills disorders, communication disorders, and pervasive developmental disorders will be systematically addressed. Other conditions that may afflict adults and the elderly (and some children and adolescents) such as schizophrenia, tic and stereotypic movement disorders, depression and bipolar disorder, and substance-use, dissociative, obsessive-compulsive, impulse control, anxiety, somatoform, factitious, sexual, gender identity, sleep, personality, eating, adjustment, delusional and other psychotic disorders will also be discussed. Students will develop considerable expertise in applying the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (Fourth Edition-Text Revised) nosology to the diagnosis of psychiatric disorders and other assessment approaches consistent with social work values. Strengths-based approaches to assessment of mental health problems will be discussed and contrasted with approaches that are consistent with the prevailing medical model of psychiatric diagnosis. Students will develop skills in appropriate use of self in relation to mental health assessment as they acquire professional-level screening and assessment skills. Commitment to the social work profession will be fostered as students gain enhanced appreciation of the unique role social work plays in the assessment and care of adults with mental health problems.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will gain application-level familiarity with the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-Fourth Edition-Text Revision framework for the diagnosis of mental disorders and will examine philosophical and professional issues associated with its application.

2. Students will become familiar with psychological, sociological, anthropological, and biological theories of mental disorder.

3. Students will examine issues related to race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical and mental disabilities, age, and national origin as they influence the definition, diagnosis, and treatment of mental disorders in adults and the elderly.

4. Students will learn the demographic distribution, phenomenology, signs and symptoms, and prevalence and incidence of various mental health problems including depression, bipolar affective disorder, and schizophrenia.

5. Students will analyze the concepts of mental health and mental illness from different perspectives, including biomedical, sociopolitical, legal, ethical, and psychological viewpoints.
6. Students will be able to articulate core social work values and ethics in relation to the potentially adverse effects of psychiatric labeling, tension between support for client self-determination and involuntary hospitalization, and other issues they are likely to encounter in professional mental health practice.

7. Students will become familiar with various professional roles in mental health practice and will gain an appreciation for social work's unique contribution to mental health treatment thereby fostering commitment to the profession.

8. Students will be able to use various mental health diagnostic tests and paper and pencil questionnaires, conduct strengths-based assessments, recognize diverse forms of mental health symptomatology and assign appropriate diagnoses.

9. Students will be able to discuss diverse issues of social and economic justice as they relate to psychiatric disorders, including the adverse impact of these conditions on earning capacity and discriminatory application of psychiatric diagnostic labels.

10. Students will develop skills in conducting Mental Status Evaluations.

IV. COURSE DESIGN

TEXTS

Required:


This text is a classic in the field and will remain a valuable resource on your professional bookshelf for some time to come. The first edition is now nearly 30 years old, but each subsequent edition has been substantially updated; the ninth edition reflects current thought in mental health across a wide range of issues. Although this text was written for psychiatrists in training, the authors and others note its usefulness for students who wish to make a career in psychiatric social work and other mental health professions.


Although other systems for the classification of mental disorders exist, DSM-IV-TR is unique in terms of its social, political, clinical, and scientific influence. We will read the entire text and develop expertise in the application of its multi-axial diagnostic approach.

This is the best collection of case studies I could locate. The case studies are well-written and useful. The author is a practicing psychologist in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School.

Optional:


This book is a useful aid to advanced diagnostic decision-making in cases that are particularly problematic.


This is a collection of cases that are both interesting to read and helpful in developing greater facility in differential diagnosis.

ORGANIZATION OF COURSE

Lectures, films, and discussions will constitute the principal didactic formats. There will be a 10-minute break after the first 90 minutes of lecture. Attendance is required. At a minimum, three or more unexcused absences will lead to the reduction of the final grade by one full grade.

ROLE OF FACULTY AND STUDENTS

Assignments should be completed consistent with the schedule unless otherwise approved by the instructor.

If you have a learning disability, sensory, or physical disability or other impairment or if English is your second language, and you may need special assistance in lecture, reading assignments, and/or testing, please contact the instructor and appropriate arrangements will be made.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Course requirements consist of two objective exams (a midterm and a final), one book report, 15 one-page case study reviews (from Schwartzberg), and a completed DSM-IV Study Guide. In addition, numerous optional “bonus” point opportunities will be available.

The midterm exam is March 14th and will cover the first eight weeks of lecture and reading material.
The book report is due April 18th and should be approximately 3-5 pages in length. It should summarize the contents of a popular or professional book addressing one of the psychiatric disorders we discuss in this course. The book might be a personal account of coping with the disorder, or relevant to the diagnosis or treatment of the disorder. Talk with the instructor if you need help in choosing a book.

The final examination is on April 25th and is not comprehensive. Rather, material covered in weeks 9-14 will be the focus of evaluation.

Midterm and final exams will be a combination of multiple-choice, short answer, and true/false questions. Also, students will be asked to watch videotaped interactions with patients and to assign appropriate psychiatric diagnoses. Please bring your DSM-IV manual to the midterm and final exams.

A one-page case study review will be due most weeks (see below for specific weekly requirements). Please briefly summarize the case, discuss the relevant signs and symptoms of mental illness, and present the multiaxial DSM-IV diagnoses to the best of your ability. Do not exceed 1 page on this assignment and structure your review as you think best. The 15 case studies will be drawn from the Schwartzberg book and are worth 2 points each.

A DSM-IV Study Guide will also be distributed. Students should complete and return pages 1-13 by the midterm and pages 14-25 by the final. Five points will be awarded for each half of the completed study guide.

Grading System

15 Schwartzberg case study reviews @ 2 points each  30 points
DSM-IV Study Guide  10 points
Midterm  25 pts
Final  25 pts
Book Report  10 pts  100 pts*

* Multiple bonus point opportunities will also be available throughout the semester and explained in class.

V. RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO FOUR CURRICULAR THEMES

- Multiculturalism and Diversity will be addressed through examining the prevalence, causes, and consequences of mental disorders in a wide variety of oppressed and at-risk child and adolescent populations and the impact that mental health problems can have on individual members of these groups and on the efforts of these populations as a whole to overcome their disadvantaged circumstances.

- Social Justice and Social Change will be addressed by evaluating the empirical literature pertaining to the differential impact of contemporary mental health laws
and policies on oppressed and at-risk populations and the differential social and human service response to mentally ill members of oppressed groups.

- Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation will be addressed through a comprehensive and systematic examination of prevention and treatment interventions aimed at reducing the social toll taken by mental health disorders on our society. Risk and resiliency factors and evidence-based prevention and treatment approaches will be important components of the course.

- Behavioral and Social Sciences Research will be reflected in a number of the evidence-based approaches to mental health prevention and treatment we will study in this class and in many of the course readings.

VI. RELATIONSHIP OF THE COURSE TO SOCIAL WORK ETHICS AND VALUES

Mental health problems and their treatment within the human services (and too often criminal and juvenile justice systems) raise a host of ethical issues relevant to social work practice. We will examine the NASW Code of Ethics in relation to practice in this area and a set of specific issues including the appropriate role of involuntary treatment for mentally ill adults, the effective use of national and local policy to promote greater mental health on the part of adults, and issues specific to adult and elderly mental health treatment including confidentiality and effective professional communication.

VII. SOURCE MATERIALS

In addition to the required and optional course material described above, bonus point readings will be drawn from a variety of sources including case studies and pertinent articles in medical and social service journals.

VIII. COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Session One</th>
<th>COURSE INTRODUCTION, PSYCHIATRIC EPIDEMIOLOGY, AND MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL ROLES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 10th</td>
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Topics: Overview

1. Introductions
2. Syllabus Review
3. Epidemiology of Mental Health Disorders
4. The Role of Social Workers in the Mental Health Arena
5. Mental Health: Definitions and Perspectives
6. Introduction to Psychiatric Diagnosis and DSM-IV: History,
Current Uses, and Structure


MENTAL HEALTH ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Topics: This session will examine various issues pertinent to mental health assessment, including the signs and symptoms of mental illness, various paper and pencil measures of mental health functioning and a recent practice guideline for mental health assessment.

1. Interviewing and Clinical Examination of the Psychiatric Patient
2. Signs and Symptoms of Psychiatric Illness
3. Use of Psychiatric Rating Scales
4. Laboratory Tests and Physical Examination


Bonus Point Assignments: New Yorker, Swango Case Study. New Yorker, Salvi Case Study (instructor will distribute).

Session Two  
January 17th

CHILDHOOD PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS

Topics: Mental health disorders first diagnosed in infancy, childhood, or adolescence with a special focus on attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, autism, separation anxiety, and other prevalent conditions.

Readings: Pages 39-134 in DSM-IV: "Disorders Usually First Diagnosed in Infancy, Childhood, or Adolescence."

Case 15, Schwartzberg: ADHD Case Study.

**Session Three**

**CHILDHOOD PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS**

January 24th

Topics: Continues Session Three.

Readings:


**Session Four**

**DELIRIUM, DEMENTIA, AND AMNESTIC AND OTHER COGNITIVE DISORDERS/SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS**

January 31st

Topics: This session will examine the full gamut of substance use disorders and their social and medical consequences, personal and social costs, and signs, symptoms, and methods of treating.

Readings:

Pages 135-180 in DSM-IV: “Delirium, Dementia, and Amnestic and Other Cognitive Disorders”

Pages 191-295 in DSM-IV: "Substance-Related Disorders."

Chapter 10 in Sadock & Sadock: “Delirium, Dementia, and Amnestic and Other Cognitive Disorders and Mental Disorders Due to a General Medical Condition”

Chapter 12 in Sadock & Sadock: "Substance-Related Disorders."

Case 14, Schwartzberg, “Dementia of the Alzheimer’s Type” Case Study

Case 10, Schwartzberg: Opioid Dependence Case Study.

**Session Five**

**SCHIZOPHRENIA AND OTHER PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS**

February 7th

Topics: Schizophrenia in its various manifestations will be addressed along with other disorders involving hallucinations, delusions, and other characteristic features of thought disorders.
Readings: Pages 297-343 in DSM-IV: "Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders."

Chapters 13 & 14 in Sadock & Sadock: "Schizophrenia," and "Other Psychotic Disorders."

Case 13, Schwartzberg: Schizophrenia Case Study.

Session Six
February 14th

MOOD DISORDERS

Topics: The full spectrum of depressive and manic-depressive illnesses will be characterized in terms of their etiology, presenting symptoms, and diagnostic criteria.

Readings: Pages 345-428 in DSM-IV: "Mood Disorders."

Chapter 15 in Sadock & Sadock: "Mood Disorders."

Cases 3 & 4, Schwartzberg: Dysthymic Disorder and Bipolar Disorder Case Studies.

Session Seven
February 21st

ANXIETY DISORDERS

Topics: Signs and symptoms of the full-range of anxiety disorders will be presented including phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and social anxiety.

Readings: Pages 429-484 in DSM-IV: "Anxiety Disorders."

Chapter 16 in Sadock & Sadock: "Anxiety Disorders."

Cases 1 & 2, Schwartzberg: Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Panic Disorder with Agrophobia Case Studies.

Session Eight
March 7th

SOMATOFORM DISORDERS

Topics: Somatoform disorders will be discussed with special attention to somatization and hypochondriasis.

Readings: Pages 485-511 in DSM-IV: "Somatoform Disorders."

Chapter 17 in Sadock & Sadock: "Somatoform Disorders."
Case 5, Schwartzberg: Conversion Disorder Case Study

**Session Nine**  
**March 14th**

**FACTITIOUS AND DISSOCIATIVE DISORDERS**

Topics: Factitious and dissociative disorders will be presented including conditions such as Munchasen's Disorder by Proxy. Differentiating between the various dissociative disorders conditions will be a central feature of the discussion.

Readings: Pages 513-517 and 519-533 in DSM-IV: "Factitious Disorders" and "Dissociative Disorders."

Chapters 19 & 20 in Sadock & Sadock: "Factitious Disorders" and "Dissociative Disorders."

Case 6, Schwartzberg: Dissociative Identity Disorder Case Study.

**Session Ten**  
**March 21st**

**SEXUAL AND GENDER identity DISORDERS**

Topics: Characteristics of sexual and gender identity disorders will be the focus of the lecture, including impotence, anorgasmia, premature ejaculation, paraphilias, and controversial issues surrounding the diagnosis of gender identity disorder.

Readings: Pages 535-582 in DSM-IV: "Sexual and Gender Identity Disorders."

Chapters 21 & 22 in Sadock & Sadock: "Human Sexuality" and "Gender Identity Disorders."

Cases 11 & 12, Schwartzberg: Transvestic Fetishism and Male Erectile Disorder Case Studies.

**Session Eleven**  
**March 28th**

**EATING DISORDERS**

Topics: Diagnostic features of anorexia nervosa, binge eating, bulimia nervosa, and issues related to the etiology, diagnosis, and treatment of eating disorders will be examined.

Readings: Pages 583-595 in DSM-IV: "Eating Disorders."

Chapter 23 in Sadock & Sadock: "Eating Disorders."
Case 7, Schwartzberg: Bulimia Nervosa Case Study.

Session Twelve
April 4th

**SLEEP DISORDERS**

Topics: Normal and abnormal sleep processes will be described including primary and secondary insomnia and sleep disruptions secondary to psychiatric and medical disorders.

Readings: Pages 597-661 in DSM-IV: "Sleep Disorders."

Chapter 24 in Sadock & Sadock: "Normal Sleep and Sleep Disorders."

Case 8, Schwartzberg: Narcissistic Personality Disorder Case Study

Session Thirteen
April 11th

**IMPULSE CONTROL DISORDERS/ADJUSTMENT DISORDERS**

Topics: Impulse control disorders including pathological gambling, kleptomania, and pyromania will be discussed, as will adjustment disorders and suicide. Special attention will be paid to diagnostic issues.

Readings: Pages 663-677 and 679-683 in DSM-IV: "Impulse Control Disorders Not Elsewhere Specified" and "Adjustment Disorders."

Chapters 25 and 26 in Sadock & Sadock: "Impulse Control Disorders Not Elsewhere Classified" and "Adjustment Disorders."

Case 9, Schwartzberg: Borderline Personality Disorder Case Study

Session Fourteen
April 18th

**PERSONALITY DISORDERS/OTHER ISSUES/LEGAL ISSUES**

Topics: Cluster A, B, and C personality disorders will be examined with regard to their diagnostic features and will other conditions, which may be the focus of clinical attention such as criminal behavior and legal issues.

Readings: Pages 685-729 and 731-742 in DSM-IV: "Personality Disorders" and "Other Conditions That May be a Focus of Clinical Attention."

Chapters 27, 31, 32, 33, and 34 in Kaplan & Sadock: "Personality Disorders," "Relational Problems," "Problems Related to Abuse or
Neglect,” "Additional Conditions that May be a Focus of Clinical Attention," and "Emergency Psychiatric Medicine."