1. Course Description

This course teaches practice models and methods of intervention for effective social work practice in mental health care, including the promotion of mental health, the prevention of mental illnesses (with special emphasis on relapse prevention), and the delivery of psychosocial treatments and rehabilitation services. A major focus is on enabling individuals with mental health problems to increase their functioning in the least restrictive environments, with the least amount of ongoing professional intervention, so these individuals maximize their success and satisfaction. This course has a specific emphasis on services to individuals who suffer from severe and persistent mental illness, substance abuse in conjunction with mental illness (dual-diagnosis population) and/or who are recovering from the effects of severe traumatic events. Interventions relevant to these conditions help individuals develop/restore their skills and empower them to modify their environments so as to improve their interactions with their environments. A second major focus is on culturally competent and gender-specific interventions and special issues for groups who have been subject to oppression. Privilege and social justice concerns will be a major emphasis of the course. Mental health disparities will be considered in relation to diagnoses, treatment options and case disposition within the mental health system.

2. Course Content

The course will present practice methods for carrying out functional assessments, resource assessments, establishment of client preferences, development of plans to meet service needs, services to enhance client skill development, and the development and modification of relevant community and agency environments. The emphasis of the course is on approaches that enhance problem-solving and coping strategies and are empowering and supportive to consumers, both individually and in groups and families.

This course will provide students with models and methods for the promotion of mental health, the prevention of mental illness, the provision of effective treatment of psychiatric disabilities, with an emphasis on promotion of optimal adaptation when psychiatric disabilities are long lasting. Assessment and intervention strategies will be included for use at the individual, family, group, organizational, community, and societal levels. A special issue is the integration of services for individuals with multiple problems. The course, therefore, will emphasize the integration of micro and macro
methods through which students learn to make social, behavioral, environmental, organizational, administrative, and policy assessments, with an emphasis on risks/strengths assessment and capacity-building.

Students will develop knowledge of empirically-based interventions and will be able to select and implement appropriate methods based on assessments and service plans. A major focus of this course will be gender specific and culturally competent interventions with and for groups who have been subject to oppression, such as people of color, women, lesbian/gay/bi/transgendered people, the aged, and people with disabilities.

### 3. Course Objectives

Students who complete this course will be able to:

1. Assess the risks and strengths of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and/or communities for the purposes of promoting mental health, early intervention, treatment, and continuing service, with an emphasis on problems faced by people who suffer from severe and persistent mental illness, substance abuse, and/or who are recovering from the effects of severe traumatic events.
2. Plan or plan and conduct culturally competent, gender-specific individual, family, group, organizational, and community-based capacity building and preventive interventions.
3. Identify and demonstrate understanding of the many components of the mental health system as team member, advocate, broker, community organizer, and program planner, in order to interact productively with the many components of the mental health system.
4. Build partnerships with key neighborhood and self-help organizations and institutions for the purpose of mental health promotion and disease prevention.
5. Incorporate social work values and ethical standards in practice in mental health.
6. Plan or plan and engage in advocacy at both micro and macro levels to help individuals overcome oppression, discrimination, and other barriers to access and quality of mental health services.

### 4. Course Design

The course will include lectures, discussion, simulations, small group exercises, individual and group projects, guest speakers, and written assignments.

### 5. Relationship to Four Curricular Themes

*Social Science and Behavioral Research* is presented throughout the course and includes findings from evaluation studies and intervention research in social work, psychiatry, psychology, anthropology, and sociology.

*Multiculturalism and Diversity* are integrated throughout the course especially in view of the fact that mental health problems are experienced very differently in various cultures, each of which has its own indigenous responses to healing. In addition, the stresses
associated with mental health problems and access to appropriate services are differentially affected by gender, poverty, race/ethnicity and sexual orientation. The students must be aware of these issues and helped to develop culturally competent and gender-specific interventions and interventions to overcome oppression and discrimination as barriers to access to and quality of care.

Social Justice Issues have special relevance to the processes of psychosocial rehabilitation. Persons with psychiatric disabilities are often discriminated against with respect to access to education, employment, housing, and financial assistance. Health insurance plans often discriminate against persons with mental as opposed to physical disabilities. Social justice issues are often seen with respect to the processes of commitment, the rights of people in mental institutions, the rights to treatment (such as in the criminal justice system), access to attorneys, and the determination of competence to stand trial or when mental illness is offered as a defense in a criminal proceeding. The student will learn about these issues in the course as well as the role of social work in fighting for these and other rights.

Promotion/Prevention/Treatment/Rehabilitation are addressed throughout the course. Mental disabilities often occur or are exacerbated as a result of stressful environmental conditions and the ways of seeking changes in these conditions or preventing them will be stressed.

6. Relationship of This Course to Social Work Values and Ethics:
   Virtually every topic of this course is related to issues of social work values and ethics, and these issues will be dealt with in this course. Examples of these issues are priorities assigned to various services and populations by mental health agencies and the role of social workers in molding these priorities, recognition of the right of self determination of consumers of mental health services, the principle of the utilization of the least restrictive environments for treatment of mental disorders, the values placed on preventive services, an understanding of the responsibility of workers to strive for less stressful environments in relationship to preventing mental problems, the creation of community respect for individuals in the community whose behavior, while lawful, departs from community norms, and promoting community awareness of the “not in my back yard” phenomenon.

7. Accommodation for Disability Statement
   Any student who feels that s/he may need an accommodation for any type of disability (physical, mental or learning, temporary as well as chronic), please feel free to contact me at any time during the semester so that we can discuss options that will enable you to complete the course responsibilities.

8. Writing Assistance
   For further assistance with writing, you may go to the Writing Workshop 1139 Angell Hall 764-0429.
9. Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:

All academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, and misrepresentation will be treated seriously. You will find a discussion of plagiarism and other violations academic integrity. Please consult your Student’s Guide to the Master’s in Social Work Degree Program (online).

Recommended Mental Illness Memoirs/Narratives/Texts:

**Drinking: A Love Story** by Caroline Knapp, 1997 Dial Press

**A Million Little Pieces** by James Frey 2005 Anchor books

**Detour: My Bipolar Road Trip in 4-D** by Lizzie Simon, 2003 Washington Square Press.

**In Small Doses: A Memoir about Accepting and Living with Bipolar Disorder** Mark Pollard, 2004 Vision Books International

**Terry: My Daughter's Life-And-Death Struggle With Alcoholism**
George McGovern, 1997, Plume Books

**Under Observation: Life Inside McLean Psychiatric Hospital**


The Hillside Diary and Other Writings, Robert Gary Neugeboren, 2004.

Natalie on the Street, Ann Nietzke, 1994, Calyx Books (a memoir about the author’s relationship with an elderly homeless woman).


The Quiet Room: A Journey Out of The Torment of Madness, Lori Schiller and Amanda Bennett, 1994, Warner Books. (a schizophrenia memoir).

Call Me Crazy: Stories from the Mad Movement, Irit Shimrat, 1994, Press Gang Publishers (a memoir and history of the ‘mad movement’ or mental health consumers movement in Canada, written by a woman who was diagnosed schizophrenic but lives without medication and is a political activist).

Prozac Diary, Lauren Slater, 1998, Random House, (a memoir written by a woman who suffered from nightmarish mood swings, compulsions, phobias).


**Night Falls Fast: Understanding Suicide**, Kay Redfield Jamison, 1999, Knopf


**Holy Hunger: A Memoir of Desire**, Margaret Bullitt-Jonas, 1999, Knopf

**First Person Plural: My Life as A Multiple**, Cameron West, 1999, Hyperion

**Mockingbird Years: A Life In And Out Of Therapy**; Emily Fox Gordon, Basic Books, 2000.


**Passing For Normal: Living with Tourettes**, Amy Wiletsky, Broadway Books, 2000


**His Bright Light: The Story of Nick Traina**, Danielle Steel, Delacourte Press, 1998. (Bipolar disorder)


**Conquering Schizophrenia: A Father, His Son and a Medical Breakthrough**, Peter Wyden, Knopf, 1998


**A Different Kind of Boy: A Father's Memoir about Raising a Gifted Child with Autism**, Daniel Mont, Jessica Kingsley Publisher, 2001


Unholy Ghost: Writers on Depression, Nell Casey, 2002, Perennial.


Required Texts

Will use but do not need to buy – will be on reserve in the library and in pdf.

Optional Texts

Helpful Websites
http://www.mentalhealthpractices.org/
For article downloads
https://www.socialworkers.org/nasw/default.asp
For access to practice related documents
http://www.nimh.nih.gov/
http://www.nami.org/
http://www.samhsa.gov/
http://schizophrenia.com - BLOG

Course Assignments, Requirements, and Grading

10% of your grade will be based on class participation. Class participation will be graded according to attendance, currency in reading, and participation in group discussions. Class attendance will be taken weekly. The major assignments for the course will be articulated below.

The fine print is for problems that hopefully won’t arise. But just in case, here are the rules: If more than two sessions are missed—whatever the reason--the grade will be lowered five points for each session over two unless the session is made up. To make up a session find out from other students what was covered in the missed sessions and develop a make-up plan to be submitted via email for my approval. The plan should focus on the topic of the missed session, and should involve three or more hours of effort.

Papers are expected to be handed in on their due dates and papers must meet all academic standards for ethical documentation. Papers will be marked down 5% for every day late and are due at the beginning of class on the “due date.”

If you are unhappy with your grade, you can turn in a rewrite of Papers 1 & 2 no later than 1 week after it is returned to you. All additions should be highlighted, deletions underlined, and you should also turn in a copy of your original paper. Paper 3 cannot be rewritten.
The following criteria will be taken into account when papers are graded:

- Systematic and logical presentation of arguments;
- Appropriate use of evidence;
- Familiarity with and appropriate use of relevant literature and concepts;
- Clarity and coherence of presentation;
- Originality and creativity;
- Conformity with the requirements of the assignment;
- APA style for final paper

Course Overview
The course will be guided by four important themes:

A) Understanding people with mental illness from multiple perspectives (including gender, race, ethnicity, culture, privilege, oppression, social justice)

B) Understanding the mental health practitioner roles of social workers

C) Understanding the best evidence practice methods for our work with individuals with severe and persistent mental illness

D) Developing intolerance for poor practices or treatment of mentally ill persons and their families and to acquire the skills and muster the courage to “do things differently” if it will aid these courageous persons to have better lives (Mary Ann Test)

Graded Work

Course Grades will be based on three papers, one Group project and on class participation.

Clinical Simulation “Treatment Team” Group Work Case

Due: Last Day of class
10% of Grade

Starting the fourth week of class, each student will participate in a simulated “treatment team,” which will function as a “home base group” for purposes of in-class exercises, problem-solving, and collaboration. Each group will work with an individual case which will require learning how to identify appropriate diagnoses; learning about the unique cultural and personal circumstances in the client’s life; noting unique challenges (or privileges) that affect provision of effective service delivery; and identifying a range of possible intervention strategies and necessary resources. Most of the work on this project can be accomplished during class time
Throughout the semester, students will gain experience with a variety of skills that are critical for working in mental health settings, and each group will PRESENT their case on the last day of class. Presentations are to be NO LONGER than 15 minutes long and should include:

1. A brief introduction to your client – demographics, initial diagnostic impressions based on your intake (with explanation of what led you to these determinations.)
2. A revised diagnosis with explanation of what led you to this revision – was there any dissention in the treatment team, what discussion was there over the possible cultural influences in the choice of diagnosis, etc.
3. Goals, Objectives, and a sample Progress Note which meet reporting/auditing requirements.
4. Your plan to engage the family. (Or an explanation of why this is not needed or not possible)
5. Your plan to coordinate with other services. (Or an explanation of why this is not needed or not possible)
6. A discussion of which aspects of the case require additional self-education or research (e.g. utilizing journal articles, conferences, outside experts, agency contacts, etc.) in order for you to feel competent in providing effective treatment services to your client. This could include issues having to do with your client’s cultural/ethnic background; applying non-western/alternative healing approaches to treatment; investigating the most efficacious modalities of treatment for a particular mental disorder (e.g. cognitive-behavioral therapy versus psychodynamic therapy for depression); the problems of violence and mental illness; problems related to dual diagnoses; services for families and caregivers; availability or access to community-based services for the mentally-ill; the impact of insurance and managed care on service delivery; the challenges of working in multidisciplinary teams on client needs and services (e.g. collaborating on treatments, including medications, psychotherapy, psychiatric emergencies; etc.)
7. What “self” insights you had based on your work with the case. What did you learn about yourselves?

**Paper 1 (Looking at a personal memoir through a “cultural lens”)**

30% of grade.
Length 7-9 pages.
Due: Oct. 6
Please select one or more of the memoirs in the recommended readings list or propose another. Address your reactions to the memoir(s) and consider the following questions:

a. Why did you pick this memoir? What are your personal responses to this story and the author’s construction of his/her illness/disability/disease and the methods of treatment he/she received?

b. Using approaches to understanding the intersections of culture and mental illness in class, discuss how the author’s experience, idioms of distress, and efforts to accept or resist labeling and treatment reflect cultural values, folkways, and
attitudes about psychological suffering. Also discuss how this author’s experience may differ from cultural values, folkways, etc.

c. How do gender, race, class, historical context etc. influence the experience of illness by the author and others in connections with the author?

d. Describe the impacts of the significant relationships on the author’s experience of the illness/disability, particularly emphasizing therapeutic relationship(s) discussed in the book. What stands out to you as especially significant, helpful, not helpful? What is missing in her/his relational world? What are the challenges for the people in relationship to the author and how well were these challenges managed?

Grading:
5 Points – how well does author explain personal responses to the memoir
11 Points – how well does author explain the intersections of culture and psyche in the book
11 Points – how well does author explicate issues of gender, race, and/or class
3 Points – grammatically correct, referenced properly, comprehensible

**Paper 2**

**Self-Exploration in relation to the readings**

Paper 2 is in the form of a Readings Journal. This paper will provide an opportunity to consider the readings in light of your own experiences and should respond to at least three of the readings, in depth. You can consider personal and practice experience as well as current dilemmas you may now face in your work.

Length: 4-6 pages.
20% of Course Grade
Due: Nov. 3

Throughout the semester we will attempt to become aware of the beliefs and biases that shape our intellectual and emotional responses to work with people who present symptoms of or have been diagnosed with mental illnesses. These beliefs and biases are deeply embedded in our culture’s mythology and ideology regarding:

- acceptable feelings and behaviors
- what we define as civilized conduct
- what are appropriate expressions of one’s gender identity, age, familial role, citizenship
- illness, disease, and impairment
- the role of the helper
- who may become a client/patient/consumer
- the long term consequences of being psychiatrically-labelled and treated in the mental health system
These same biases have influenced the ways in which psychiatry, social work, and psychology have organized systems of diagnosis, treatment, and care-giving. As we read, we will attempt to uncover some fundamental assumptions about normality, “humanness,” and illness/disease that underlie our practices as social workers in mental health care roles and settings, as well as speculate about who these practices may serve or disserve. You may want to use these ideas as ways to approach your own reading and journaling.

In general, try to answer the following:

a--Describe your personal responses to the reading. What are the central ideas that seem most salient or significant to you? Why? Which are appealing, problematic, troubling?
b--What questions do the readings pose for you or answer for you?
c--How do the perspectives described make claims about health or illness that are adequately or inadequately inclusive, stigmatizing, and/or potentially empowering to clients?

Grading:
9 Points – how well did author genuinely share about and reflect on own experiences.
9 Points – how well did author tie in this sharing to the specific issues raised in the readings
2 Points – grammatically correct, referenced properly, comprehensible

**Paper 3 – Reviewing a case – Diagnosis, assessment, treatment strategies and cultural implications for treatment**

30% of grade
Length 7-10 pages
Due: Dec. 1

Each student will choose an individual case which will involve thought about assessment, diagnosis, understanding cultural implications and identifying intervention strategies and resources. If you are not seeing individuals, you can use the person in the memoir. Examples of challenges related to treatment and service delivery in the case might include:

- Problem of violence and mental illness
- Problems related to dual disorders
- Challenges of working on an interdisciplinary team
- Incorporating alternative and complementary treatments
- Services for families and care-givers
- Innovative community-based treatments and restrictions to executing those evidence-based treatments

The paper will have 5 parts:

1. Define the severe and persistent mental health disorder represented in your case (Discuss disorder features and use the DSM multi-axial assessment in the first section of the paper to describe your case) – 1 page 3 points
2. Choose an empirically focused treatment for that disorder – use something from class presentations or something we have not covered that you feel is a good fit. You may talk about complementary or alternative treatments for this case. You should justify your choices in terms of the disorder as you defined it. (2-3 pages) Use references here. **10 points**

3. Choose the social work role(s) that align best with delivery of this treatment from the Bentley book and discuss the role in relation to the case. (1-2 pages) **5 points**

4. Adjust and alter the delivery of the treatment for a particular ethnic group, gender, developmental life-stage, location, socio-economic group that is presented in your case (1 page) e.g. a Latino male in prison with severe depression and substance abuse) **5 points**

5. Discuss who you are as a practitioner – your characteristics and what you bring as the ‘treater’ in this therapeutic relationship (1 page) **5 points**

6. Grammatically correct, professionally written **2 points**

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**Class Schedule and Readings**
The chapters and articles are to be read by the date under which they are listed in the schedule unless re-negotiated in class.

**Class 1 (Sept. 8)**
*Introduction to class*

*Choose a memoir and begin reading*

**Class 2 (Sept. 15)**
*A Cultural Framework for Understanding Mental Illness and Working With the Mentally Ill*

**Readings**

Castillo
- Chpt 1 “Why Culture?”
- Chpt 2 “Culture and Clinical Reality”
- Chpt 3 “Culture and Personality"


Cuellar & Paniagua Chap 2 Cultural Models of Health and Illness [On Ctools](#)

Bentley, Walsh *The Social Worker and Psychotropic Medication*, Ch. 5
- “Interventions for Special Populations” [On Ctools](#)
Class 3 (Sept. 22)
*A Cultural/Strengths-based Framework for Assessing and Treating Mental Illness*

**Readings**
- Castillo Chpt 4 “Cultural Assessment”
- Zide & Grey Chpt. 1 Competency Assessment *On CTools*
  Chpt. 2 Counseling and Social Work Theories *On CTools*

Class 4 (Sept. 29)
*Disorders of Mood (Depression and Bipolar Disorders)*

**Readings**
- Hofmann & Tompson Chap 5 & 6 CBT *On Ctools*
- Castillo, Chap. 12, Mood Disorders

**On Going Cases:** ONC: – *Intake information and Case Material*

Class 5 (Oct. 6)

**Cognitive Behavioral Therapy/Treatment of Depression, Bipolar Disorder, and Anxiety**

**Readings:**
- Zide and Grey, Chap. 6 Anxiety Disorders, *On Ctools*
- Dulmas & Rapp-Paglicci, Chap 2 – Anxiety, *On Ctools*
- Castillo, Chap. 10, Anxiety Disorders

**On-going Cases:** Prepare for “Teaming” with Psychiatrist

**Paper I Due**
Class 6 (Oct. 13)

Medication Management in Psychiatry
Cultural Sensitivity in Medication Use

Readings

Bentley, Walsh  The Social Worker and Psychotropic Medication
Chap 3, “Basic Principles: Neurotransmission, Pharmacokinetics, and Pharmacodynamics”
Chapters 6 & 7 Medication Education and Medication Adherence

Bentley, Social Work Practice in Mental Health
Chap 9 Social Workers as Medication Facilitators
Chap 7 Social Workers as Skills Trainers

Castillo  Chapter 15, “Toward a client-centered paradigm: A Holistic Synthesis”

Presentation:  Dr. Ernesto Figueroa on Psychotropic Medication and on Social Worker/Pyschiatrist collaboration

On-going Cases:  Developing Goals and Objectives

Class 7 (Oct. 20)

Personality Disorders/The Legacy of Trauma/Suicidality

Readings:

Azar & Gehl  Physical Abuse  On Ctools
Castillo Chap 6  Personality Disorders
Hofmann and Tompson, Chap 16, DBT  On Ctools
                       Chap 10 Suicidality  On Ctools
                       Chap 17 Multiple -family Group therapy  On Ctools

On–going Cases:  Progress notes and Suicidality
Class 8 (Oct. 27)

Psychotic Disorders/Schizophrenia
Discussion of Treatments- Psychosocial Rehabilitation/Assertive Community Treatment and others

Readings:

- Castillo Chap 14  Psychotic Disorders
- Hofmann & Tompson Chapters 1-4  (On reserve in Library)

Guest Speaker:  Ryan Lyndsay will speak on Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Class 9 (Nov. 3)

Homelessness/Housing/Legal Issues/Mental Illness & Jail
Continue Discussion of Treatments- Psychosocial Rehabilitation/Assertive Community Treatment and others

Readings:

- Hughes:  Chap 2 What is PSR?  On Ctools (2 separate documents)
- Chap 3, Research in PSR  On Ctools (2 separate documents)
- Chap 4, Psycho Social Rehabilitation - Person Centered Planning & Practice On Ctools
- Chap 11, Housing  On ctools

On-Going Case:  Task of Self Education
Presentation:  Dr. Tim Florence on Homelessness and mental illness

Class 10 (Nov. 10)

Dual Disorders Treatment/Motivational Interviewing

Readings:

- Hofmann & Tompson Chap 11, Motivational Interviewing  on Ctools
- Horan, Rude and Keillor, Chap. 14, Substance Use Disorders  on Ctools
- Castillo Chap. 9, “Substance-Related Disorders

On-Going Case -  Task of service coordination
Class 11 (Nov. 17)
Family Psychoeducation and Treatment

Readings:
Bentley
Chap 10 Social Workers as Consumer and Family Consultants
Chap 4 Social Workers as Therapists
Chap 15 Emerging Knowledge & Future Trends in Mental Health

Hofmann & Tompson Chap 17 Multi-family Group Treatment on Ctools

OnGoing Case: Task of family coordination

Presentation Presentation from Jim Toy on the TLGB issues

Class 12 (Dec. 1)
Complementary and Alternative Treatments for Mental Health
Mind/Body Medicine

Class 13 (Dec. 8)
Wrap-up and Case Presentations