SW636 MENTAL HEALTH POLICIES AND SERVICES

Winter, 2003
Instructor: Jamie Miller Abelson
Tuesdays, 2-5 pm
Classroom: 2302 SEB
Office Hours by Appointment
Office: 2766 SSW
jabel@umich.edu
Phone: (734) 769-4820 (home)

Course Descriptive

This course will cover the various mental health services and programs for adults, children, and youth. It will discuss the roles that social workers perform in promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services to persons with mental illness, developmental disabilities and substance abuse problems. Contemporary policy issues in mental health services, particularly as they relate to larger political and social trends will be discussed. Legislation, ethical issues, stakeholder controversies and social movements affecting services to persons with mental health problems will also be discussed. The historical context of services and how the mentally ill have been historically stigmatized and conceptualized will be reviewed. The impact of race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social class on mental health policies and services will be examined. The course will also examine the potential and actual role of various self-help, and natural/informal helping systems.

Course Content

The process and politics of mental health policy making and program development will be examined from the perspective of historical, contemporary, and future models of the mental health system. Alternative approaches to defining mental health and mental illness, developmental and other disabilities, and substance related disorders will be studied. Epidemiological findings related to the incidence and prevalence of disorders and the utilization of mental health services will be examined. Local, state, and national models of mental health programs including self-help and advocacy programs will be reviewed. These programs will represent a range of approaches to promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services, along with a range of financing, and service delivery mechanisms. Individual rights, especially as they relate to involuntary treatment and professional conduct will be discussed.

Attention will be given to persons with mental illness, developmental disabilities, learning disabilities, and substance abuse disorders—or combinations of these conditions—with a special focus on individuals with severe and persistent mental conditions, US mental health policy will be examined as it is enacted in programs and services, social entitlements, financing arrangements, and organizational missions. Associated ethical and value dilemmas will be examined within an American as well as comparative historical and cultural context. The major focus of the course will be on public policies and services, with simultaneous examination of the relationships among the increasingly overlapping public, non-profit and for-profit sectors. Special consideration will be given to how the contemporary mental health system is experienced by economically disadvantaged persons, women, gay male, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons, and persons of color.
Objectives:

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

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical context of mental health policies and services, and apply this knowledge in making a critical analysis of existing and proposed mental health systems.

2. Identify the social work practitioner’s role in mental health policies and services in relation to:
   a) initiating and modifying policy and programs through their service providing activities and other professional activities, e.g. advocacy, public education, service coordination.
   b) applying the values and ethics of the social work profession to the mental health field, especially the rights of individuals regarding commitment, treatment, and social services.

3. Explain how public health concepts and epidemiological data are used in developing and changing policies and monitoring mental health programs.

4. Identify and analyze the effects of oppression, discrimination, stigma and other negative social influences on consumers of mental health services.

5. Analyze current mental health policies, legal issues, delivery systems, service settings, target populations, service approaches, in relation to contemporary social work practice in mental health.

6. Use knowledge about the etiology of mental illness and other disabilities and the effects of labeling to design prevention and promotion programs for the prevention of illness and promotion of health.

Relationship to Curricular Themes

1. Multicultural Issues
   Multicultural issues are presented in relation to the various definitions of mental health, mental illness, disabilities, and substance related disorders. Data from epidemiological studies are examined in order to focus on racial/ethnic/cultural groups and other populations at risk in regard to (a) incidence and prevalence rates; (b) acceptability, access, availability, and utilization of services.

2. Social Change and Social Justice
   The study of the mental health service delivery system provides students opportunity for assessment of the system in terms of injustice and the effects of stigma and discrimination or those with psychiatric labels to populations at risk. The objectives of system improvement and social justice are explored in relation to legal issues and individual rights that pertain to mental health policy making and program development.

3. Promotion and Prevention
   An examination of the community mental health movement will allow for an emphasis on promotion of mental health and prevention of mental illness and disabilities. Research on risk and protective factors related to mental health prevention programs and how knowledge can be translated into effective interventions will be explored.

4. Social Science
   Social and behavioral science conceptual frameworks and empirical findings are presented throughout the course on such topics as: epidemiology of disorders and disabilities; causes of illness and disability; program evaluations on the effectiveness of community-based mental health programs; financing of mental health services; and services to women, ethnic minorities, and economically disadvantaged populations.
**Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values:**

This course will examine current ethical issues and controversies in the field of mental health policies and services. The NASW Code of Ethics will be used to inform practice in this area. Students will analyze ethical issues related to: stigmatization and psychiatric labels; client confidentiality; client rights and prerogatives, especially the rights of populations at risk and those related to civil commitment and treatment; prevention and elimination of discrimination; equal access to resources, services, and opportunities; respect for the diversity of cultures; changes in policy and legislation that promote improvements in social conditions; and informed participation of the public.

**POTENTIALLY USEFUL INTERNET ADDRESSES**

(Thanks to Tom Powell.)

http://www.lib.umich.edu/socworklcollect.html
http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/mentalpol.html
http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/sw636.html
http://coursertools.ummu.m11ich.edu
http://www.nyu.edu/socialwork/wwwrsw  (a very comprehensive site)
http://www.samhsa.gov/
http://www.mentalhealth.org/
http://www.health.org/
http://psychcentral.com/resources  (Links to many other mental health references)
http://www.mentathealth.com  (Internet Mental Health)
http://www.fedWorld.gov  (gateway to federal government information)
http://www.NAMI.org  (National Alliance for the Mentally ill (NAIMI))
http://!mentalhelp.net/selfhelp  (American Self-Help Clearinghouse).
http://www.mdch.state.mi.us  (Michigan Department of Community Health)
http://www.macmhb.org/ (Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards)
http://www.co.washtenaw.mi.us/DEPTS/CMH.HTM

Please add to this list of important Internet sites.
Required Readings:
http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/lib/mentalhealth/home.html
(This can be accessed electronically via the Social Work Library. Visit http://www.lib.umich.edu/socwork/collect.html then click on Electronic Reserves, Winter 003)


Recommended Texts:

Mechanic, David, Mental Health and Social Policy – The Emergence of Managed Care, Allyn and Bacon, 1999.


I will be providing you with a copy of the Surgeon General’s supplement on Culture, Race and Ethnicity. You will need to get your own copy of the main report. You can read it on-line, but I’d encourage you to make a copy (three hole punch and keep in a note book). I’ll be handing out some articles (hoping to save you some money) at the beginning, but there will be a course pack for you to purchase later in the semester.

Assignments

1) Participate in Class (10 percent)

Criteria for good Classroom Participation:
Come to class;
Ask good questions;
Read the required readings;
Be involved and interactive with the teacher and your fellow students;
Don’t be afraid to make suggestions to the teacher;
Bring in information from other places;
Don’t just speak up a lot, but think about how to facilitate the involvement and learning of others in the classroom;
Follow the multicultural ground rules we establish.
Attendance is required. Please let me know in advance if you have to miss class. You will be responsible to obtain copies of handouts and to find out what took place while you were gone.

2) Cultural Competency Assignment: (25 percent)

Design a learning experience that will increase your cultural competence. This should be something that you work on over the course of the semester (not just over one weekend). This is an extremely flexible assignment but it should involve some self-reflection. You can do what you want, but I would like you to actually learn something new and useful. The purpose of the assignment is to learn more about some group you don’t know enough about. The following are a few ideas; you should feel free to design your own project:

- Attend a series of lectures;
- Read a series of articles or books;
- Meet once a week for lunch with a member of this group; ask this person to share his or her experiences as a member of the group.

Keep a journal about your experiences that you will be willing to share with me. You should put your plans in writing, and propose a grading scheme. I won’t mind if your plans change over the course of the semester.

Please submit your proposal on or before January 21. I will read it over and give you feedback by the 28th. We’ll talk more about this assignment in class, but you should feel free to ask me questions about it at any time.

3) Class Presentation Assignment: (30 percent)

Focusing on one of the topics listed below, or on one you choose yourself, prepare a presentation to give in class. The presentation should be approximately 10-15 minutes in length. One week before it is due, I would like to see a fairly well developed description/outline of the presentation so that I can incorporate it into my plans for the next week.

You can prepare for some of these topics by gathering information from the library. In other cases, you may also want to make contact with someone in the community to gather information about what they are doing. I can make suggestions about possible contacts.

You may work individually, or in pairs. You may teach the class about something you already know well, or about something you are just learning yourself.

Each suggested topic has a due date (date of the presentation – submission of the draft is one week earlier). I’d like to have students sign up for a topic by January 21, unless you know you want to present on the topics due on the 21st of January. (In that case, please sign up by January 14th.

I will be happy to discuss the topic with you, and make suggestions regarding resources.

In addition to the presentation you prepare for class, you should submit a paper to me on the day of or one week after your presentation.
Potential Presentation Topics/Due Date

The Community Mental Health Movement (January 21)
Deinstitutionalization (January 21)
The VA system (mental health care for Veterans) (February 4)
Mental health care provided through religious institutions (esp. through African American churches) (Feb 4 or later)
Alternative therapies (Feb 4 or later)
Psychiatric Rehabilitation (February 11)
PACT (Program for Assertive Community Treatment) (February 11)
Family Education (February 11)
National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (February 11)
Local Programs: mental health care at The Shelter (February 18)
Local Programs: Avalon Housing (February 18)
Local Programs: Ypsilanti’s SOS (February 18)
Alcoholics Anonymous (March 4)
Programs for children (March 11)
Programs for adolescents (March 11)
Programs for the elderly (March 11)
Mental health Parity (March 18)
Mental health care provided through Medicare/Medicaid (March 18)
SSI/SSDI (March 18)
Mental health services to Criminal Offenders (March 25)
Outpatient Commitment (April 1)
Licensing in the State of Michigan (April 1)

4) Exam (35 percent)

More information to come.

**Structure of the Class**

Each class section will be divided into three parts. Each week we will spend some time discussing the readings, and hearing a lecture. The third part of the class will focus on “Cultural Competence”. We will learn about mental health disparities, and work to improve our multicultural awareness.
January 7 Session One: Introduction to the Course
- Introductions
- The Syllabus
- Cultural Competence Exercise

January 14 Session Two: Orientation to the Course
- Definitions of Mental Health and Illness, Policies and Services
- Public Health Perspective
- Policy Making Groups
- Mental Health Personnel
- Global Burden of Disease Research
- Discussion of Multicultural Ground rules
- Discussion of Cultural Competence Readings

Readings Due on January 14:
Surgeon General’s Report:
Chapter 1 (Introduction and Themes), pages 1-11.
Chapter 2: Fundamentals, pages 31-45, 49-52, 64-73, 80-92 (52-64 is optional)
SGR Culture, Race and Ethnicity Supplement: “Message, Forward, Preface and Chapter 1”

January 21 Session Three: History of MH Policies and Services
- History
- The CMH movement
- Deinstitutionalization

Readings Due on January 21:
Surgeon General’s Report, Chapter 2: Fundamentals, pages 73-80
SGR Culture, Race and Ethnicity Supplement: “Chapter 2. Culture Counts: The Influence of Culture and Society on Mental Health”

On Reserve:
January 21 Session Four: Epidemiology

- The DSM
- Prevalence, Incidence, Utilization, Mental Health problems in the Community
- ECA, NCS,
- WMH2000, NCS2, NSAL, NLAAS
- Social Factors in Mental Health and Illness

Readings Due January 21:
SGR Culture, Race and Ethnicity Supplement: “Chapter 3. Mental Health Care for African Americans”

February 4 Session Five: Mental Health Services

- Current Structure of Services
- Small Group Discussion of Criteria for Assessing Quality, and Making Priorities
- Care for Veterans
- Through Religious Institutions
- Alternative Treatments

Readings Due February 4:
SGR: Chapter 4, Adults and Mental Health
The President’s New Freedom Commission on Mental Health “Interim Report to the President” October 29, 2002.
SGR Culture, Race and Ethnicity Supplement: “Chapter 4. Mental Health Care for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders”

February 11 Session Six: The Seriously Mentally Ill

- Rehabilitation
- PACT
- Family Education
- NAMI

Readings Due February 11
February 18 Session Seven: Homelessness

* Local Programs:
  The Shelter
  Avalon Housing
  SOS

Readings Due February 18

February 23 Vacation

March 4 Session Eight: Alcohol, Drugs, and CoMorbidity
* Guest Speaker
* AA/NA
* Impaired Practitioners

Readings Due March 4:

An article on the PACT program
An article on the McFarlane Psychoeducational Multiple Family Group model
SGR Culture, Race and Ethnicity Supplement: “Chapter 5. Mental Health Care for Asian American and Pacific Islanders”
March 11 Session Nine: Children, Adolescents, and the Elderly

- Michael Trout’s Film: Multiple Transitions
- Children
- Adolescents
- The Elderly

Readings Due March 11:
SGR Chapter 3 “Children and Mental Health”
SGR Chapter 5 “Adults and Mental Health”

March 18 Session Ten: Financing of Mental Health Care

- Insurance
- Managed Care
- Government Programs (Medicaid, Medicare, SSI, SSDI)
- Parity

Readings Due March 18:
SGR: Chapter 6 “Organizing and Financing Mental Health Services”

March 25 Session Eleven: The Courts

- Services to Criminal Offenders
- The Mentally Ill in Jails instead of Mental Hospitals
- The Relationship between Violence and Mental Illness

Readings Due March 25:
Tumbo, C., and Murray, D. “The State of Mental Health Services to Criminal Offenders”
Teplin, L., and Voit, E. “Criminalizing the Seriously Mentally Ill: Putting the Problem in Perspective”
NIMH Strategic Plan for Reducing Health Disparities
April 1 Session Twelve: Other Policy Issues

- Involuntary and Outpatient Commitment
- Licensing
- Legal Risk Management
- Preparation for Being Sued

Readings due April 1:
SGR: Chapter 7 “Confidentiality of Mental Health Information”
Multi-cultural handout - to be determined

April 8 Session Fifteen: Wrap Up

- Advocacy
- Prevention
- Anti-Stigma Efforts
- Vision for the Future
- Self-care for Mental Health Practitioners (Secondary PTSD; need for Tx, impaired providers)

Readings Due April 8:
SGR: Chapter 8 “Vision for the Future”
Multicultural handout - to be determined

April 15 Session Sixteen: (Last Class) Exam

April 16 Exam Period