COURSE NUMBER: SOWO 758
COURSE TITLE: Differential Diagnosis of Mental Health Disorders
SEMESTER & YEAR: SPRING, 2012
INSTRUCTOR: Matthew O. Howard, Ph.D.
            Office 563A, Tate-Turner-Kuralt Building
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OFFICE HOURS: Monday, 12:00-2:00 p.m. or by arrangement
CLASS HOURS: Monday, 2:00-4:50 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course focuses on the process of conducting a differential diagnosis of mental health disorders using the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
At the conclusion of this course:
1. Students will be able to use the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition to identify major mental health conditions.
2. Students will be able to distinguish between different disorders to complete a differential diagnosis, including issues of comorbidity, and write a diagnostic multi-axial statement for a client.
3. Students will understand the impact of race, ethnicity, gender, age, culture, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status on mental health diagnosis, particularly on symptom presentation, assessment, and access to care.
4. Students will be able to articulate the psychological and behavioral indicators and course of a range of mental health conditions that can affect functioning and development.
5. Students will be sensitive to the potential use of personal data in mental health assessments for persons who may be in vulnerable and oppressed situations.
6. Students will demonstrate an understanding of ethical issues in assessment and diagnosis of mental health conditions.

EXPANDED DESCRIPTION:
This course is designed for students who are interested in mental health assessment and diagnosis. It builds on the foundation HBSE course and the advanced practice/HBSE course by furthering students’ knowledge of mental disorders and how to complete a differential diagnosis using the DSM. Students will read and discuss many cases throughout the semester and gain confidence in using the DSM to complete a formal multi-axial diagnosis.
REQUIRED TEXTS/READINGS:


This is the best book of mental health case studies I have read. The author is a Clinical Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. The case studies included in this book are interesting, informative, and easy to digest.

2. *Collected case studies* (to be distributed by Professor). I will provide each student with a binder of collected case studies. Whereas the Schwartzberg book provides introductory-level case formulations, the binder of case studies includes recent professional-level case discussions selected from the very best professional journals.

OPTIONAL TEXTS/READINGS:


This text is derived from the classic text: *Synopsis of Psychiatry, 10th edition.* Given that we will already be reading many case studies, only the most ambitious students should purchase this book. Each week there will be optional readings drawn from this text for interested students.


I have not made DSM-IV a required text for a number of reasons. First, DSM-V will be out in the not-too-distant future and may be considerably different than DSM-IV. Second, I will present critical information about DSM-IV in class. Third, we will learn a great deal about the DSM-IV diagnostic system by reading the case studies, but will also gain important substantive knowledge with regard to assessment and treatment of many important mental health disorders. As a UNC student, you can access a free online version of DSM-IV at the following website: [http://www.psychiatryonline.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/resourceTOC.aspx?resourceID=1](http://www.psychiatryonline.com.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/resourceTOC.aspx?resourceID=1) Each week there will be optional readings drawn from this text for interested students.
TEACHING METHODS
This class will use a variety of teaching and learning styles to cover the content including lectures, videos, and discussion. The development of a supportive learning environment, reflecting the values of the social work profession, is essential for the success of this class. A supportive learning environment is fostered by listening to the ideas and views of others, being able to understand and appreciate a point of view that is different from your own, articulating clearly your point of view, and linking experience to readings and assignments. I will appreciate your contributions to making this a safe and respectful class for learning and growth.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

1. Class Attendance and Participation (5 points)
2. Number of Annotated Case Studies Completed (90 points)
3. Video Diagnostic Exam (5 points)

CLASS PARTICIPATION

I plan to conduct this class like a graduate clinical seminar. Each week we will spend approximately one hour reviewing and discussing cases we have read the prior week. Thus, it will be critically important that each student has read the assigned cases from the prior week. I will assume that you have read the required cases each week unless you inform me otherwise at the beginning of class and will free to call on students in class to discuss aspects of the cases. It is important that you attend all 7 classes and interact to some degree.

NUMBER OF ANNOTATED CASE STUDIES COMPLETED

Students must complete at least 3 annotated case studies per week. Annotated case studies will each be worth 3 points. Thus, if a student completed 4 annotated case studies a week for the 7 week class they would earn (4 x 7 x 3) 84 points for their annotations, which would likely earn them an H for the class if they attended all classes. Students who complete 5 case annotations a week over the 7-week course will almost certainly earn an H+. To complete an annotated case study, simply read the case study and make brief notes or record questions on the case study itself as well as underline or highlight as you read. It is important that you indicate to me, through these notes and/or questions, that you have carefully read the case in question. That said, it is not critical that the notes be voluminous. If you are uncertain as to whether or not you are annotating enough, please show me one or more of your case annotations and I will give you feedback. You will turn in your binder of annotated cases and annotated case studies in the Schwartzberg book to me at the end of the class. I will then review your binder and book, answer any questions you have raised, and assign you the proper number of points for this component of the class. It is important that you read at least 3 case studies per week, so that you can participate meaningfully in the class discussions and garner sufficient points. If you do not wish to mark up your book
and/or binder, you can choose to prepare your annotations by writing up your notes/questions in long-hand or typing them and submitting them to me.

**Grading System**

In accordance with the Graduate school, letter grades are assigned to the following numeric ranges:

- H = 94-100
- P = 80-93
- L = 70-79
- F = 69 and below

In addition, if you accumulate 115 or more points, you receive an H+ grade, which means that I will write you a personalized letter of recommendation attesting to your outstanding performance in this class.

**Policy on Incompletes and Late Assignments**

If students encounter unavoidable obstacles to meeting class assignments, the student should discuss the circumstances with the instructor to determine if an initial grade of incomplete (INC) would be appropriate. I prefer not to give an incomplete grade and will give incompletes only in compliance with University policy.

**Policy on Academic Dishonesty**

All completed assignments should contain a signed pledge from you stating that, "I have not given or received unauthorized aid in preparing this written work." In keeping with the UNC Honor Code, if reason exists to believe that academic dishonesty has occurred, a referral will be made to the Office of the Student Attorney General for investigation and further action as required.

**Policy on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities which affect their participation in the course may notify the instructor if they wish to have special accommodations in instructional format, examination format, etc. Please contact the University’s Disability office to request the paperwork necessary for approved accommodations.

**Use of Laptops or Other Electronic Devices**

Please turn off all cell phones or other devices that would disrupt the learning environment of the classroom.
Course Calendar

Class 1: March 14th – Syllabus Review, Introductions, Introduction to DSM-IV and Differential Diagnosis

Class 2: March 21st – Delirium, Dementia, Mild Cognitive Impairment/Medical Disorders that Can Produce Mental Health Symptoms

Class 3: March 28th – Substance Use Disorders

Class 4: April 4th – Schizophrenia, Schizophreniform, Schizoaffective, Delusional, and Brief Psychotic Disorders/Schizoid, Paranoid, and Schizotypal Personality Disorders

Class 5: April 11th – Mood Disorders/Ethical Issues

Class 6: April 18th – Anxiety Disorders/Diversity Issues

Class 7: April 25th – Personality, Eating, Impulse Control, Sleep, Sexual, Childhood Onset, Somatization, Dissociative, Adjustment, and Factitious Disorders/Video Exam/Completing a Multi-Axial Assessment
COURSE OUTLINE

Class 1: August 26th – Syllabus Review, Introductions, Introduction to DSM-IV and Mental Health Diagnosis, Elements of the Mental Health Interview and Mental Status Examination

Case Readings for Next Week: Read the one Schwartzberg case and between 2 and 4 additional cases, depending on how many points you want to earn.

1. Schwartzberg, SS. Case 14: Dementia of the Alzheimer’s Type


Optional Readings:

1. DSM-IV: Delirium, Dementia, and Amnestic and Other Cognitive Disorders, pp. 135-180.

2. Sadock & Sadock: Chapter 7: Delirium, Dementia, Amnestic and Other Cognitive Disorders and Mental Disorders Due to a General Medical Conditions, pp. 46-79.

3. Read the Differential Diagnosis Chapter, pages 1-14.

Class 2: September 2nd – Delirium, Dementia, Amnestic Disorder, Mild Cognitive Impairment/Medical Disorders that Can Produce Mental Health Symptoms

Case Readings for Next Week: Read the one Schwartzberg case and between 2 and 4 additional cases/review articles, depending on how many points you want to earn.

1. Schwartzberg, S.S. Case 10: Heroin (Opioid) Dependence


Optional Readings:

1. DSM-IV: Substance-Related Disorders, pp. 191-296.


Class 3: September 9th – Substance Use Disorders

*Case Readings for Next Week:* Read the one Schwartzberg case and between 2 and 5 additional cases/articles, depending on how many points you want to earn.

1. Schwartzberg, S.S. Chapter 13, Schizophrenia, Paranoid Type


Optional Readings:

1. DSM-IV: Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders, pp. 297-344.


Class 4: September 16th – Schizophrenia, Schizophreniform, Schizoaffective, Delusional, and Brief Psychotic Disorders/Schizoid, Paranoid, and Schizotypal Personality Disorders

Case Readings for Next Week: Read the 2 Schwartzberg cases and between 1 and 6 additional cases/articles, depending on how many points you want to earn.

1. Schwartzberg, S.S. Case 3, Dysthymic Disorder

2. Schwartzberg, S.S. Case 4, Bipolar Disorder


Optional Readings:

1. DSM-IV: Mood Disorders, pp. 429-484.

**Class 5: September 23rd – Mood Disorders/Ethical Issues**

*Case Readings for Next Week:* Read the 2 Schwartzberg cases and between 1 and 4 additional cases/articles, depending on how many points you want to earn.

1. Schwartzberg, S.S. Case 1, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
2. Schwartzberg, S.S. Case 2, Panic Disorder with Agoraphobia

*Optional Readings:*


**Class 6: September 30th – Anxiety Disorders/Diversity Issues**

*Case Readings for Next Week:* Read the 2 Schwartzberg cases and between 1 and 4 additional cases/articles, depending on how many points you want to earn.

1. Schwartzberg, S.S.: Case 8, Narcissistic Personality Disorder
2. Schwartzberg, S.S.: Case 9, Borderline Personality Disorder


**Optional Readings:**

1. DSM-IV: Personality Disorders, pp. 685-730.


**Class 7: October 7th** – Personality, Eating, Impulse Control, Sleep, Sexual, Childhood Onset, Somatization, Dissociative, Adjustment, and Factitious Disorders/Video Exam/Multi-Axial Assessment

*Case Readings for Next Week:* Read the 3 Schwartzberg cases and between 0 and 3 additional articles, depending on how many points you want to earn.

1. Schwartzberg, S.S.: Case 5, Conversion Disorder

2. Schwartzberg, S.S.: Case 6, Dissociative Identity Disorder

3. Schwartzberg, S.S.: Case 7, Bulimia Nervosa


**Optional Readings:**
