Course Instructor: Nick Yackovich, PhD
Class Time: Tuesdays 10:15am – 12:10pm
Location: Social Work Building, Room 106
Office: Social Work Building, Room 309
Office Hours: By Appointment
Phone: 608-263-3677 (University Office)
608-301-1641 (Mendota Mental Health Institute Office)
Email: yackovichjr@wisc.edu

Course Description

Psychopathology for Social Work Practice in mental Health is a practice course that focuses on a biopsychosocial understanding of mental wellbeing and mental illness from a social work and social environment perspective. It gives special attention to the social work view in relation to the person-in-environment and other classification systems available to the practitioner. The course emphasizes an appreciation of the critical influence of culture, class, race and ethnicity, religion, and social values of the individual, family, group, and social institutions in the assessment of client strengths and vulnerabilities. The course critically reviews current classification systems and major theories regarding the nature of mental disorders, their diagnoses and etiologies, and the treatment approaches available to help people in their recovery.

At the conclusion of the course, students should be able to: complete comprehensive assessments of mental wellbeing and mental illness in various areas of biopsychosocial functioning; critically utilize the DSM-5 when appropriate; create working case formulations based on their assessments; and identify empirically informed interventions relevant to their case formulations.

Course Prerequisites

Participants in this course should be in the advanced phase of the social work education. They will have completed their foundational courses and should have completed SW 712-Psychopathology and Social Work, or a designated equivalent. SW 862- Psychopathology for Social Work Practice in Mental Health will build on a base of knowledge that includes familiarity with the DSM 5 and a foundation of conducting a biopsychosocial assessment.
Course Goals

It is crucial going into a learning experience that the participant conducts a self-assessment of both their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. How will the new course enhance what they know, fill any voids in their current knowledge base, and facilitate a critical reflection of what was once believed to be established knowledge or ideas. Each student in this class should have already taken SW 441 and SW 712. In each of these courses you would have been introduced to terminology and concepts that will be useful in benefiting from (SW 862) Psychopathology for Social Workers in Mental Health. Specifically, the practice concepts of assessment, diagnosing, and treating should not be new to you, and hopefully a few specific features for each of these concepts will also be somewhat familiar. The field of mental health is one that employs a multidimensional team of professionals. Each profession has their own approach to assessing, diagnosing, and treating the subjective distress of their clients. It is imperative for the comprehensive and effective care of all individuals seeking services in the field of mental health that the social work perspective is present and effectively represented.

It is the general goal of this course that participants will develop the ability to confidently examine a series of subjectively distressful experiences identified by a client; and use this information to establish a working diagnosis using a multidimensional framework that includes: a biopsychosocial assessment, the DSM-5, culturally relevant variables, and contemporary research on the etiology of mental illness.

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Recognize and identify a symptom of mental illness
- Conceptualize a “symptom cluster” in a manner that enables them to establish a DSM-5 diagnosis
- Compare and examine symptoms and diagnoses in reference to the DSM-5 criteria to conduct a differential diagnosis
- Articulate and critically apply conceptual frameworks to guide the process of assessment and evaluation
- Develop collaborative and mutually agreed on intervention goals and objectives that are evidence informed, strengthen client capacity and well-being through assessments that identify strengths and address obstacles.
- Critically examine historical and contemporary circumstances (at the micro, mezo, and macro levels) associated with client’s disorder, as well as multiple environmental contexts that potentially contribute to the client’s disorder or may interfere with client’s recovery efforts.
- Utilize a culturally-competent and strength’s based approach to assessing, diagnosing and treating the client’s subjective distress (which has been categorized and labeled by the DSM-5 diagnosis).
• Apply critical thinking skills in practice by integrating multiple sources of knowledge to professional work and evaluation and utilize effective communication and writing skills.

**Core Competencies** (The following are the Council on Social Work Education Core Competencies that are addressed in this course, along with examples of practice behaviors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CSWE Competencies</th>
<th>Practice Behavior (PB)</th>
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| 1. **Demonstrate Ethical and Professional Behavior** | • Exercise continual self-reflection and self-awareness in order to understand personal values, beliefs and biases, and how they may potentially influence assessment of clients and their situations, as well as ethical issues and decisions that arise in the area of focus;  
• Demonstrate professional demeanor in behavior; appearance; and oral, written, and electronic communication in the area of focus;  
• Exercise continual self-reflection, and employ supervision and consultation to monitor professional judgments and behavior in the area of focus; and  
• Employ technology ethically, appropriately and professionally in the area of focus. |
| 2. **Engage Diversity and Difference in Practice** | • Demonstrate and communicate a recognition and understanding of the important role that diversity plays in shaping life experiences at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of practice in the area of focus;  
• Present oneself as a learner to clients and constituencies, and engage them as experts of their own culture and experience in the area of focus; and  
• Exercise continual self-reflection and self-awareness in order to understand your personal values, beliefs and biases regarding diversity, and the potential role they may play in working with diverse clients and constituencies in the area of focus. |
| 3. **Engage In Practice-informed Research and Research-informed Practice** | • Use practice experience and theory to inform social work interventions in the area of focus.  
• Autonomously apply critical thinking in analysis of research methods and research findings to inform practice. |
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<tr>
<th>6. Engage with Individuals, Families, Groups, Organizations, and Communities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies across all levels of practice in the area of focus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Employ diverse strategies based on knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to engage with clients and constituencies in the area of focus.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Autonomously use empathy, reflection and advanced level interpersonal skills to effectively engage diverse clients and constituencies in the area of focus.</td>
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<th>7. Assess Individuals, Families, Groups, Organization and Communities</th>
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<td>• Independently collect and organize data, and effectively apply critical thinking to interpret information from clients and constituencies in the area of focus;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Employ knowledge of human behavior and the social environment, person-in-environment, and other multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to critically analyze assessment data from clients and constituencies in the area of focus;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Demonstrate the ability to collaborate in developing mutually agreed-on intervention goals and objectives based on the critical assessment of strengths, needs and challenges within clients and constituencies in the area of focus;</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Effectively utilize the assessment, research knowledge, and values and preferences of clients and constituencies to determine a range of potentially effective and appropriate intervention strategies to improve practice outcomes in the area of focus.</td>
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### Course Materials

#### Required Text


#### Optional Texts and Readings


(Note: UW students have access to the on-line version of the DSM 5, which is accessible through the following link: [http://psychiatryonline.org.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/](http://psychiatryonline.org.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/))


Additional Readings, both required and optional, will be made available on the Learn@UW webpage
Course Outline and Topics

ORIENTATION: Information, including a recorded power point lecture, is in Learn@UW in the Module titled “Orientation”. This is for your review during some point in the first few weeks of the course. I hope you find the material interesting and thought provoking. It is a good primer to start the course.

- Video Clip: Thomas Szasz: Myth of Mental Illness

MODULE ONE: Foundational Concepts

September 6 - Session One - Etiology
September 13 - Session Two - Classification of Disorders
September 20 - Session Three - Assessment Methodology

REQUIRED READINGS:

OPTIONAL READINGS:

MODULE TWO: Distress with Mood

September 27 - Session Four - Assessment and Diagnosis
October 4 - Session Five – Differential Diagnosis and Intervention Strategies

REQUIRED READINGS:
OPTIONAL READINGS:


**MODULE THREE:** Anxiety, Stress, and Trauma

- October 11 - Session Six - Assessment and Diagnosis
- October 18 - Session Seven – Differential Diagnosis and Intervention Strategies

REQUIRED READINGS:


OPTIONAL READINGS:


**MODULE FOUR:** Substance Use and Personality Disorders

- October 25 - Session Eight - Assessment and Diagnosis
- November 1 - Session Nine – Differential Diagnosis and Intervention Strategies

REQUIRED READINGS:


**OPTIONAL READINGS:**


**MODULE FIVE:** Psychotic and Cognitive Disorders

- November 8 - Session Ten - Assessment and Diagnosis
- November 15 - Session Eleven – Differential Diagnosis and Intervention Strategies

**REQUIRED READINGS:**


OPTIONAL READINGS:


MODULE SIX: Challenges in Childhood and Adolescence
November 22 - Session Twelve - Assessment and Diagnosis
November 29 - Session Thirteen – Differential Diagnosis and Intervention Strategies

REQUIRED READINGS:


OPTIONAL READINGS:

MODULE SEVEN: Conditions related to the body
December 6 - Session Fourteen - Assessment and Diagnosis
December 13 - Session Fifteen – Differential Diagnosis and Intervention Strategies

REQUIRED READINGS:

OPTIONAL READINGS:


Course Assignments and Grading

Journal Assignment(s)

Instructions: Journal Assignment

There are five (5) Journal Assignments that are a significant portion of your final grade. These assignments have multiple components and draw from the content and subsequent critical thinking tasks associated with Module Two through Module Six. You should read the assignment and type your answer in a 12 pt. font, double-spaced document that will then be uploaded to the appropriate Dropbox folder. Journal entries will vary in length from 1-3 pages depending on the types of questions asked. You should be less concerned about the length of the document, and more concerned about answering the specific questions that are being asked. If you are not sure about the question, feel free to contact me for further clarification. Each Journal assignment is presented in the Module Assignment Folder under each Module Entry in Learn@UW.

Rationale for the Assignment: The rationale for the Journal assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to practice the skills acquired in the Module. The work we do involves the soft science (e.g., often flexible and hard to measure) of human behavior and system interaction. Therefore you can expect to have different points of view and, at times, there may be multiple correct responses.

Final Biopsychosocial Report with Intervention Recommendation

For this assignment, you are being asked to write a biopsychosocial assessment that includes recommendations for interventions to address identified concerns for a client you are seeing in the course of your field placement, obtained access to through your work setting or volunteer position, or recruited to role play using a vignette provided by the instructor. More detailed instructions for this assignment, as well as sample assignments, are posted under the Final Assignment Folder on Learn@UW.
Assignments List & Point Allocations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Assignment Due Date/Time</th>
<th>Point Allocation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module Two Journal</td>
<td>10/11 – 4pm</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module Three Journal</td>
<td>10/25 – 4pm</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module Four Journal</td>
<td>11/08 – 4pm</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module Five Journal</td>
<td>11/22 – 4pm</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Module Six Journal</td>
<td>12/06 – 4pm</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Report</td>
<td>12/20 – 11:30pm</td>
<td>100</td>
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Late Assignments

Due dates are hard deadlines, and it is the student's responsibility to initiate communication if extension is needed. Extension requests are only granted under certain circumstances and at the discretion of the instructor. Late assignments are marked down 10% for each day they are late.

Grading Scale

Assignment of letter grades is based on percentage of points earned out of points possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94</td>
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<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>93.9 – 87.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86.9 – 80.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>79.9 – 75.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74.9 – 70.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>69.9 – 60.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt; 60.0</td>
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Course Policies

Code of Ethics, Student Rights and Responsibilities & Plagiarism

BSW and incoming MSW students read and signed electronic forms of the NASW Code of Ethics, the School of Social Work Plagiarism Policy and the Student Rights and Responsibilities. In doing so, they agreed that while in the BSW or MSW Program they would honor the NASW Code of Ethics and Student’s Rights and Responsibilities, as well as adhere to the Plagiarism Policy and that should they not do so, sanctions would be imposed. BSW and MSW students are expected to adhere to these policies in the classroom, in the field and in the preparation of course assignments.

Subject to Change Notice

All material, assignments, and deadlines are subject to change. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of all course timelines, announcements, and communications from her or his instructor pertaining to changes in course assignments and due dates. The instructor will communicate any changes to students well in advance.