I. Catalog Course Description

Contemporary interventions with clients with severe psychiatric disorders and their families, in institutional and community settings. Topics include: intervention techniques with the more severe and chronic forms of psychiatric disorder as defined in DSM IV; psychotropic medications; case management; the treatment orientations to care; and special issues in work with children and adolescents.

II. Course Overview

This course is designed to prepare students for working with adults with serious mental illness (SMI) in institutional and community settings. It begins by setting a context for contemporary mental health care delivery by describing our current understanding of SMI—both from the objective perspective of the field and from the subjective perspective of persons and their families struggling with SMI. After describing major models of community-based services and the policy environment that shapes them, the course turns its attention to the central tasks of relationship development, ethical decision-making, assessment of client needs and strengths, and treatment planning. The second half of the course focuses on specific types of intervention, such as skills training, vocational rehabilitation, and medication management. Additionally, the course attends to the needs of persons with SMI who also struggle with problematic substance use and/or trauma histories and examines issues of and interventions for families of persons with SMI. Throughout the course, relevant theoretical orientations will be used to examine problems, issues, and interventions, and attention will be paid to maximizing treatment collaboration and client self-determination as well as working with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds.
III. Place of Course in Program

This is an elective in the Advanced Year program. Enrollment in Advanced Direct Practice I (19:910:511) is a pre- or co-requisite. Students will have successfully completed the Professional Foundation year as prerequisite. A psychopathology course is also recommended as a prerequisite.

IV. Course Objectives

This course will enable students to:

1. Apply relevant and effective intervention strategies to their clients with serious mental illness.
2. Recognize the biological, psychological, and social factors linked to the onset of mental disorder.
3. Identify biological, psychological, and social models, which shape prevailing intervention strategies.
4. Demonstrate familiarity with DSM IV TR descriptions of mental disorder.
5. Critically evaluate strengths and limitations of using DSM IV TR criteria.
6. Be cognizant of special intervention issues affecting women, minorities, and homosexuals and lesbians.
7. Understand ethical issues involved in intervention.

V. Required Readings:

Texts: available at the Rutgers Bookstore, Ferren Mall


All other readings are available for download on course site at sakai.rutgers.edu

VI. Assignments

Written and oral assignments are described below. In all assignments it is expected that you will:

- Address each aspect of the assignment.
- Present a thoughtful analysis.
- Present your ideas in a clear and organized manner.
- Submit assignments that are free of spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors.
- Support and substantiate your ideas by outside literature where appropriate.
To document references cited in a paper, please use the guidelines of the American Psychological Association (see Publication Manual of the APA, 5th edition). Please double space, use a 12-point font, 1-inch margins, and follow page guidelines.

Assignments will be graded according to all aspects outlined above. If you are unclear about any part of an assignment, I encourage you to discuss it with me well before the assignment is due. In fairness to all students, assignment deadlines are firm. Please contact the instructor if there are extenuating circumstances that justify an extension.

Please submit papers in hard copy at the beginning of class, and also upload an electronic copy to the sakai course website.

1. **Book Review Essay (5-7 pages), 30% of course grade**

   For this assignment, you are asked to read a memoir written by an individual affected by serious mental illness (either as a consumer or family member) and to write an essay that is both a review and a critical response. The purpose of this assignment is to enhance your understanding of the subjective experience of SMI, and to encourage you to consider the challenges to practice and service delivery exemplified by these narratives.

   Prepare your essay in a style you prefer (you may wish to peruse examples of book reviews or other writings in professional journals), however, keep in mind the following points. Although a summary of the book is necessary to set a context for the reader, you should accomplish this as succinctly as possible so as to move on to a critical response and analysis. Your analysis should a) describe the utility of the text for broadening your knowledge about SMI; and b) explore the ways in which course material and topics intersect with issues raised in the memoir. You may choose to focus on a specific issue (for example, housing or medication adherence) or to highlight several issues that are of importance or particular interest to you. In discussing your chosen issue(s), please include practice implications. What interventions and practice issues are discussed in the book? Are there important practice issues and interventions that are omitted or neglected? If you were a service provider for the person with SMI or his or her family, what would be your focus and how would you intervene?

   A list of possible memoirs to use for this assignment will be provided. Alternative memoirs may be used with permission of instructor.

   **Due date:** October 14

2. **Group Presentation (30% of course grade)**

   In this assignment, you will be assigned to a small group in order to plan a 45 minute class discussion and activity based on an evidence based intervention topic covered in weeks 8-14 of the course. Directions for the presentation are:
a. Please provide an overview of the intervention, an explication of its theorized mechanism of action and a review of the evidence in support of its effectiveness with people who have serious mental illness (including its applicability to different cultural groups).

b) present a case example, exercise, or roleplay that helps demonstrate the use of the intervention for the class. Be sure to discuss how the intervention would be evaluated if used with an individual, group, or family.

Following your presentation, please submit copies of any materials used, a bibliography, and a description of each group member’s role in preparing the presentation, signed by all group members. These materials are due on the day of your scheduled presentation.

3. **Assessment and Treatment Plan** (approx length 12 pages), 30% of course grade

For this assignment, you are asked to choose a client with whom you are currently working or who is described in a case scenario (I will give you some possible suggestions for where to find case scenarios). Please select a problem area (e.g., social isolation, problematic substance use, obesity/weight gain, estrangement from family) that is of importance to the client and represents a substantive topic on which you are interested in learning more. That is, choose a problem area in which you are interested in reading more and exploring in-depth.

The written assignment contains several components. First, you will describe the problem you plan to address with the client. Use principles of functional assessment to help you to be as specific as possible in your description (behaviors, context, frequency, duration, etc.), drawing upon multiple sources of information that may be available: client’s perspective, your observations, case records, colleagues’ observations, and the perspective of family members and close friends. In other words, the first component of the written assignment is an in-depth functional assessment of a particular problem area of the client. In addition, you should also assess and describe the client’s strengths. What resources (intrapersonal, interpersonal, social, community) are available to the client that may be of assistance in addressing the described problem?

Second, you are asked to examine possible interventions for this problem area from an evidence-based perspective. This requires that you do a relatively detailed literature search on various appropriate treatments and discuss the empirical basis for each. Is there a particular intervention or treatment modality that is considered most effective or “best practice” for this problem area? To what extent are the interventions based on a behavioral foundation, in contrast to or in conjunction with other theoretical approaches?

Third, discuss the applicability of the interventions you have described for a) your particular client; and b) the particular agency context in which you work with the client. Would your client be accepting of and engage in the treatment? Does he or she experience impairments or difficulties that would impede the success of the intervention? What about environmental barriers (agency culture and philosophy, resource limitations,
etc.)? Balancing the ideal (as depicted by the research literature) and the reality of your situation, which intervention(s) would you recommend?

Finally, conclude with a specific treatment plan, implementing the chosen intervention for the problem area for this client. It should include: a) short-term goals; b) long-term goals; and c) specific methods to be used for attaining these goals. Importantly, your goals and interventions must be written with enough specificity to enable others (for example, co-workers) to be able to implement the interventions and to evaluate their success.

Due date: December 9

VII. Class participation and final grading

This class will meet one time per week and will consist of lectures, discussions, and other learning activities such as videos and role plays. The success and quality of time spent in class is a responsibility shared by all participants. Attendance is required; leaving class early (without negotiating this with the instructor) does not meet the attendance requirement. If circumstances necessitate that a student miss a class or leave before the end of class, he/she must inform the instructor (by email or phone message) prior to that class, and complete a brief response paper on that week’s readings. Students are expected to avoid distractions such as cell phones, instant/text messaging, email, or other electronic media during class time.

Students are expected to complete assigned readings prior to class and to come prepared to actively participate. At times, the instructor may assign brief response papers to enhance class participation. Attendance and participation contribute 10% to the final course grade.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Please note: there may be a few changes to the schedule of topics pending the scheduling of guest speakers. I will notify you well in advance of such changes.

September 2
Unit 1: Introduction to Course
  Overview of classification and etiology of serious mental disorders
  Strengths and limitations of classification and labeling

CMBDS Chapter 1: Who are people with psychiatric disabilities?
CMBDS Chapter 2: Stigma and mental illness


In-class video presentation: Disordered States (Medicine at the Crossroads Series)
September 9
Unit 2: Policy context and orientations to treatment

CMBDS, Chapter 3: Definition of psychiatric rehabilitation
CMBDS, Chapter 20: Cultural competence in psychiatric rehabilitation
CMBDS, Chapter 21: Policy


In-Class Video presentation: West 47th St.

September 16
Psychopharmacology and medication management

CMBDS, Chapter 7: Medications and psychiatric rehabilitation

Diamond, *Instant Psychopharmacology*. Read chapters 1 and 2 carefully and skim the rest (book is a reference guide to medications)

In-Class Video presentation: Out of the Shadow

September 23 and 30
Therapeutic skills; ethical issues


October 7 and 14
Assessment and treatment planning; inpatient treatment; case management; assertive community treatment

CMBDS Chapter 4: Rehabilitation assessment
CMBDS Chapter 6: Case management
CMBDS Chapter 8: Housing
CMBDS Chapter 16: Physical health and medical care


October 21
Family interventions

CMBDS Chapter 11: Family Interventions


Group presentation: Family Psychoeducation

October 28
Psychological interventions: Cognitive rehabilitation, social skills training

CMBDS Chapter 10: Social functioning
CMBDS Chapter 12: Psychosis and cognitive impairment


November 4
Treatment of Co-Occurring Substance Use

CMBDS Chapter 15: Dual diagnosis


Student presentation: Integrated Dual Diagnosis Treatment

November 11
System Interventions; Stigma; Criminal justice

CMBDS Chapter 13: Managing criminal justice involvement
CMBDS Chapter 19: Erasing stigma and promoting empowerment


Video viewing assignment: “The Released”
Please view video prior to class and come prepared to discuss http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/released/view

Student presentation: Critical Time Intervention

November 18
Vocational Rehabilitation

CMBDS Chapter 9: Employment and Education


Student presentation: Individual Placement and Support
**December 2**  
**Violence; Trauma; Inpatient Treatment**

CMBDS Chapter 18: Managing aggressive behavior


CMBDS Chapter 14: Trauma and posttraumatic stress disorder


Student group presentation: Dialectical Behavior Therapy

**December 9**  
**Peer Support; Shared Decision Making; Illness Management and Recovery**  
**Tentative: guest speaker and/or consumer panel**

CMBDS Chapter 5: Illness self-management  
CMBDS Chapter 17: Peer services and supports


**December 16**  
**Course Synthesis and Wrap-Up**