SW 628: Interpersonal Practice with Adult Individuals
Fall 2012

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Course Description
This course will approach work with individual clients from a person-in-environment perspective and build on the content presented in course SW521, the foundation course on interpersonal practice. The stages of the treatment process (i.e. engagement, assessment, planning, evaluation, intervention, and termination) will be presented for work with individual adults. The relevance and limitations of various theoretical approaches will be reviewed as they apply to assessment, planning, and intervention methods. This course will focus on empirically evaluated models of intervention and will teach students how to monitor and evaluate their own practice. Special attention will be given to issues of the key diversity dimensions such as ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation. The course will include identification of one’s own social and cultural identities and group memberships and how these relate to working with clients, colleagues, and other professionals. The course will emphasize time-limited treatment methods and practice with involuntary clients.

Course Content
This course will present several models of intervention designed to prevent and treat psychosocial problems of individual adults. Emphasis will be placed on approaches that enhance social functioning, strengthen problem solving capacities, and support the coping capacities of individual adults. The various models will be time-limited, responsive to the impact of social environments, and supported by empirically based studies. Treatment models that focus on specific psychosocial problems associated with work, relationships, mood, anxiety, and impulse problems will be discussed. Several treatment models will be presented, including Brief Psychodynamic Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, Interpersonal Therapy, Cognitive and Dialectical Behavioral Interventions. These intervention models will also be evaluated for how well they fit the special needs of diverse populations. Each model that is presented will cover all phases of the intervention process: engagement and screening, assessment, planning, evaluation, implementation, and termination. Although evaluation will be discussed in much greater depth in the evaluation course, students will learn how to integrate evaluation techniques and measures into their on-going interventions with individual adults so that they can employ systematic measures of their effectiveness in the field. This course will carefully explore the
issues that influence and determine client motivation because many individual adults come into the
treatment process with varying degrees of willingness and sometimes are coerced to seek help by
authorities or family members. Strategies that workers can employ to engage reluctant or resistant
clients will be presented. Intervention models in this course will be general enough to apply to a wide
range of adult clients in a wide range of adult situations, since other courses will focus more specifically
on special populations and problems. Course content will include ethical issues that relate to
interpersonal practice with individual adults and those elements of the NASW code of ethics that
especially impact on practice with individual adults (e.g., boundary and comportment issues between
worker and client).

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

1) Describe how theory informs and shapes the kinds of intervention strategies that may be employed
when working with individual adults, including the indications and contraindications of various IP
models.

2) Assess the effectiveness of various kinds of intervention models and procedures that may be utilized
with individual adults.

3) Demonstrate advanced social work skills with individual adults in the pre-engagement, engagement,
assessment, intervention, ending and evaluation phases of interpersonal social work practice. Critically
apply in a practice setting a minimum of two empirically supported IP theories.

4) Conduct an assessment of coping resources and strengths; biophysical, emotional, behavioral and
cognitive functioning; intra-personal and environmental systems. Assess life-threatening problems, such
as addictions and violence; and forms of oppression clients’ experience. Identify and assess the effects
of diversity dimensions (including ability, age, class, color, culture, ethnicity, family structure, gender
(including gender identity and gender expression), marital status, national origin, race, religion or
spirituality, sex, and sexual orientation).

5) Demonstrate their ability to form worker-client alliances and collaborations, communicate
empathically, and help enhance motivation for change, cultivate hope, and address ambivalence and
internal and external barriers to change.

6) Identify ways to match or modify intervention methods effectively with [adult] client problems, across
diverse populations, cultural backgrounds, sociopolitical contexts and available resources.

7) Identify one’s own social and cultural identities and group memberships, and how these relate to
working with clients, colleagues, and other professionals.

8) Evaluate the efficacy of interventions used with adult clients including the use of specific evaluation
measures.

9) Apply and articulate social work values, ethical standards, and principles unique to interpersonal
practice interventions with adults involving diverse populations and settings.
Course Design
This course will employ a number of pedagogical strategies to promote skill development such as: lecture, discussion, case presentations, gamed simulations, case analysis, interactive media simulations, exercises in vivo, practice within the classroom through role playing, didactic presentation of theory/models/procedures, modeling with demonstration on video, etc. The instructor also welcomes any innovative ideas from students as to other modalities. Please know that this course syllabus represents a guide for the course and does not preclude changes deemed necessary by the professor or faculty at large. Such changes could include: the introduction of additional content, changes in order of content, changes in assignment and exam due dates, etc. Likewise, students are encouraged to act as critical reviewers of the course content throughout the semester and give comment and suggestions to the professor for consideration.

Relationship of the Course to Four Curricular Themes
• **Multiculturalism and Diversity** will be addressed through careful analysis of how clinical models can be applied and modified to fit the special needs of various groups. Resistance and motivation of adults to interventions will be covered to demonstrate how effective intervention models must be adapted to the fit the needs of various ethnic and racial groups. This course will emphasize that mono-cultural clinical models must be adapted to fit the definitions of “problem” and “treatment” that exist in diverse groups in order for social workers to practice with adults from diverse backgrounds.

• **Social Justice and Social Change** will be addressed by recognizing that, historically, clinical services have excluded poor and oppressed clients from “talking therapies.” Often these clients were given the harshest and most restrictive treatments (e.g. shock, sterilization, medications, and lobotomies), whereas more privileged clients were granted more benign interventions (e.g. outpatient family therapy). This course will examine these differences as well as how socioeconomic exclusion arises in screening criteria that exclude clients because of intelligence, verbal ability, insight, and motivation.

• **Promotion, Prevention, Treatment, and Rehabilitation** will be addressed through a focus on intervention models and intervention procedures that can be used to prevent and treat psychosocial problems of adults.

• **Behavioral and Social Science Research** will be addressed through careful selection of intervention models for which there is empirical evidence on efficacy. Students will learn that although many time-limited models of practice with adults have proliferated over the past two decades, not all of them have generated research that demonstrates their efficacy.

Relationship of the Course to Social Work Ethics and Values
In working with adults, social workers must encourage self-determination and empower adult clients to choose and pursue their own change goals. Ethical issues such as sexual relations between client and worker, involuntary treatment, primacy of client interests, and precipitous withdrawal of services will be considered as they impact individual clients.

Attendance in Class Sessions
As an advanced practice course, it is important that you attend each class session. Participation and class attendance are professional responsibilities. The class sessions involve skill development experiences that go beyond course readings. It is important to be prepared to discuss assigned readings and to share experiential knowledge. To maximize individual and group learning, attendance and participation are expected. It is especially helpful when we share examples from our experiences (field
and others). Also, feel free to draw on current events and literature related to course topics in order to promote our learning. If for any reason you miss more than one session, the grade will be lowered five points for each session or half session over 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.

**Students in Need of Accommodations**

If you have a documented disability or condition that may interfere with your participation in this course, please schedule a private appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss accommodations for your specific needs. This information will be kept strictly confidential. For more information and resources, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office at G664 Haven Hall, (734) 763-3000. Also, if religious observances conflict with class attendance or due dates for assignments, please notify me so we can discuss appropriate arrangements.

**Incomplete and Extensions**

Incompletes and extensions are given only when it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the stated time limits of the course and/or assignment. The student must formally request an incomplete from the instructor prior to the final week of classes, and an extension as soon as the need arises.

**Work Expectation**

The University of Michigan expects a student to put in a minimum of two hours weekly preparation for each credit awarded in a graduate/professional school. Thus, you are expected to spend a minimum of six hours per week of preparation for this class. The assignments in this class have been developed to help the student systematically gain social work knowledge, to develop social work practice skills and values, and to enable the student to achieve successfully the goals and objectives of the course.

**A Note on the Learning Environment**

While all of us come to this course with various experiences, skill sets and values, it is important that we respect diverse opinions and perspectives. The class is designed as a co-learning environment and one where class members are encouraged to try new skills and take risks. Your contribution as a “teacher and a learner” in the class will enhance the learning for all class members.

**Academic Honesty**

Please consult the Student Guide [http://www.ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/](http://www.ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/) [Student Code of Academic and Professional Conduct] to make sure you are not committing plagiarism in your written reports. The ideas of others must be cited correctly and direct quotes must be shown with quotation marks and cited correctly. Plagiarism can be grounds for expulsion from the School. Some useful resources for you include:

1) University Library and CRLT web resources on academic integrity: [http://www.lib.umich.edu/acadintegrity/](http://www.lib.umich.edu/acadintegrity/)
2) A web resource brief guide to APA style: [http://wwwold.ccc.commnet.edu/apa/4](http://wwwold.ccc.commnet.edu/apa/4)

**Writing Assistance**

For assistance with writing, you may go to the Writing Workshop 1139 Angell Hall 764-0429. Also, I am happy to review any drafts of assignments, provided they are given to me no less than one week before they are due.
Technology in the Classroom
Laptops are allowed for note taking purposes only. If you must use your cell phone during class time, please make sure the ringer is silenced, and that **ALL phone activity (texting included) takes place outside the classroom.**

Readings
All readings are available on the CTools site for this class, under the “Resources” section. A few will need to be accessed through Mirlyn, as noted.

As this is primarily a treatment class, very little time will be spent on diagnostics. The following are superb (optional) resources for information related to mental health diagnoses, as well as treatment, culture, and overall mental health themes. Specific relevant chapters are noted, and are posted on CTools. The reports are available online in their entirety.

**Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General**
- Chapter 2: The Fundamentals of Mental Health and Mental Illness
- Chapter 4: Adults and Mental Health

**Mental Health: Culture, Race and Ethnicity (A Supplement to Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General)**
- Chapter 2: Culture Counts: The Influence of Culture and Society on Mental Health

Assignments
Assignments will be marked down by 5% for every day late. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date, either as a hard copy or via the Drop Box on CTools; anything turned in later than this will be considered one day late. In order to be fair to all class members, this policy needs to be uniform. If you are unhappy with your feedback and/or grade on a paper, the paper may be rewritten and turned in no later than 1 week after it has been returned to you. The average of the two grades will then be your grade for the actual paper. The second paper should be turned in with the changes highlighted and any deletions crossed out.

Details of specific assignments are found at the end of this document.

Course Outline

**September 10**
Introduction to Course
Theories of Psychosocial Intervention/Treatment

**Intervention:** Biopsychosocial Assessment

**Clinical Issue:** Evidence-Based Interventions
- Building the Therapeutic Alliance

Readings:


September 17
Rosh Hashanah – No Class

September 24
Intervention: Assessment, cont’d
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) – the Basics
CBT – Depression
Clinical Issue: Building the Therapeutic Alliance, cont’d
Ethics

Readings:

Chapter 11: Cognitive-Behavioral Theory and Techniques

Chapter 2 - Depression

Chapter 1: You Can Change the Way You Feel
Chapter 5: How to Change the Way You Feel: The Four Steps to Happiness


NASW Code of Ethics

October 1
Intervention: CBT – Depression, cont’d
CBT – Bipolar Disorder
Clinical Issue: Diversity in Treatment

Readings:

Chapter 7: Cognitive Therapy

Entire book is available online through Mirlyn.


October 8
Intervention: CBT – Anxiety Disorders
Clinical Issue: Diversity in Treatment, cont’d

Readings:

Chapter 1 – Overview and History of Exposure Therapy for Anxiety.

Chapter 4 – The disability experience: Affect and everyday experiences

Additional readings TBD – will be posted on CTools

October 15
Fall Study Break – No Class
October 22
Intervention: CBT – Anxiety Disorders, cont’d
Clinical Issue: Boundaries
Self-Disclosure

Readings:

Chapter 8 – Clinical Perspectives on Therapist Disclosure
Entire book available online through Mirlyn.

Other readings TBD

October 29
Intervention: Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)
Clinical Issue: Difficult clients

Readings:

Chapter 1 – Overview of Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Chapter 3 – Dialectical Behavior Therapy: Treatment Stages, Primary Targets, and Strategies
Entire book available online through Mirlyn

Chapter 5 – Patients Who Test Our Patience


November 5
Intervention: DBT, cont’d, and other Mindfulness-Based Therapies
Self-Injury
Suicidality

Readings:

Chapter 6 – Mindfulness-and Acceptance-based Strategies
*Optional - Chapter 5 – Offering the Client an Acceptance-Based Behavioral Model of Human Functioning*

Chapter 6 – Initial Therapeutic Responses
Chapter 15 – Managing the Reactions of Therapists and Other Caregivers to Self-Injury
*Optional - Chapter 1 – Definition, Differentiation from Suicide, and Classification*

Chapter 1 – You Have Only Moments to Live
Chapter 2 – The Foundations of Mindfulness Practice: Attitudes and Commitment

   Entire book available online through Mirlyn.

**November 12**
**Intervention:** Interpersonal Psychotherapy (IP)
**Clinical Issue:** Spirituality

**Readings:**


Chapter 7 – Ethical Issues

**November 19**
**Intervention:** Brief Psychodynamic Therapy
**Clinical Issue:** Transference and Countertransference

**Readings:**

Chapter 6 – Psychodynamic Theory and Techniques

Chapter 12 – Our Patients’ Feelings about Us and Our Feelings about Our Patients
Chapter 18 – Learning to Intervene
Chapter 21 – Transference
Chapter 22 - Countertransference
   Entire book available online through Mirlyn.

**November 26**
**Intervention:** Substance Abuse Treatment
**Intervention:** Motivation Interviewing (MI)
**Clinical Issue:** Boundaries & Self-Disclosure
Readings:

Chapter 4: What is Motivational Interviewing?
Chapter 5: Change and Resistance
Chapter 6: Phase 1 – Building Motivation for Change

Chapter 1

December 3
Intervention: Substance Abuse Treatment, cont’d
Intervention: Dual Diagnosis
Clinical Issue: Involuntary Clients
Managed Care

Readings:


Chapter 1 – Dual Disorders: An Overview
Chapter 2 – Chemical Dependency: Treatment and Recovery

December 10
Intervention: Crisis Intervention
Intervention: Trauma Treatment
Clinical Issue: Self-care
Termination

Class Party!

Readings:

Chapter 1 – Overview of Crisis and Trauma Intervention
Chapter 2 – Basic Principles of Crisis Intervention
Chapter 5 – Common Crisis Intervention Strategies

Chapter 8 – Alternative Therapies for Therapists
Chapter 1 – Valuing the Person of the Psychotherapist
   Entire book available online through Mirlyn.

Chapter 1 – Types of Endings
Chapter 2 – The Importance of Closure
Chapter 3 – Tasks for Ending

Optional - Wilson, J.P. The lens of culture: Theoretical and conceptual perspectives in the assessment of psychological trauma and PTSD.
Assignment Details

This course will employ 4 grading mechanisms:

Biopsychosocial Assessment 30%
Memoir Paper 30%
Take-Home Final Exam 30%
Active engagement/participation in class 10%

Late papers will be marked down by 5% for every day they are late.

Letter grades in the course will be assigned on the following basis: 100=A+, 95-99=A, 90-94=A-, 87-89=B+, 83-86=B, 80-82=B-, 77-79=C+ etc.

A. Biopsychosocial Assessment
30% of grade
Due October 8

Conduct a clinical interview with a classmate, and complete the following:

1. Write up a Biopsychosocial Assessment (an outline and example will be handed out in class).

2. Describe your thoughts and feelings about being interviewed. (2 pages) Consider the following:
   - what was the experience like?
   - how did your interviewer try to build rapport with you?
   - did you gain any new insights about what it may be like for clients undergoing a biopsychosocial assessment?

3. Share your thoughts and feelings about being the interviewer. (2 pages) Consider the following:
   - what was the experience like?
   - culturally, how similar are you to the interviewee? Did this impact the interview in any way?
   - how did you try to build rapport with the interviewee?
   - what do you perceive are your strengths as an interviewer? What skills do you need to work on?

4. Obtain feedback from your partner regarding their experience of you as interviewer. Reflect on their perceptions (1 page).

B. Memoir paper
30% of grade
Due November 19

Read a memoir written by a therapist, or by someone who focuses on time spent in therapy. Address your reactions to the memoir(s) and consider the following questions (2-3 pages each; max 10 pages total):
a. Why did you pick this memoir? What are your personal responses to this story and the author’s construction of their experience (either as a therapist or as a client in therapy)?

b. Do the descriptions of the therapy and therapeutic environment “fit” with your idea of therapy, and how therapy is conducted? Discuss any components that you liked, and any that felt uncomfortable or disingenuous, and explain your reactions.

c. How do issues of culture (age, race, gender, sexual orientation, SES, religion, etc) affect the overall experience of therapy, the therapeutic alliance, and the outcome of the therapy? If not explicitly addressed in the memoir, how do you imagine that culture played a role in the treatment?

d. How would you have felt as the therapist, working with her or his client(s)? Conversely, how would you have felt as the client, working with this therapist? Speak to issues related to the therapeutic alliance, treatment modality, as well as boundaries and self-disclosure.

II. Final Exam
The majority of the final exam will be take-home, and will consist of short answer and short essay questions. It will be due on Dec. 14. A small portion will be given the last day of class (Dec. 7), and will involve responses to brief video clips. More detail and study guide information will be provided before the test date.

C. Final Exam (Take-Home)
30% of grade
Due December 17

The final exam will be take-home, and will consist of short answer and short essay questions. It will be handed out in class on December 3, and due via Dropbox on CTools on December 17. More information will be provided before the test date.

D. Active Engagement
10% of grade

Class attendance is required. If you are unable to come to class on a specific day, please contact me (via email to create a written record) with the reason for the absence. If for any reason you miss more than one session, your final grade will be lowered five points for each session over 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.

Active participation in class is expected. Active participation can be demonstrated in several ways, some examples are: participation in discussion, volunteering for in-class exercises, bringing experiences or problems from clinical practice to class discussion, sharing clinical activities or techniques with class members, thoughtfully processing classroom experiences, taking risks in sustaining dialogue on difficult issues that arise in class, and posing suggestions for additional readings and learning activities for classmates.