



**Psychopharmacology for Social Workers
SW 790, Section 008 Fall 2015**

Instructor: Julie D. Cushman, LMSW, ACSW, CAADC
Office: 2766 SSWB
Home: 734-975-0775
Cell: 734-845-0867
jcushman@umich.edu

Classroom: Room 3753 SSWB
Saturday's Oct 3 & 10 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m

Prerequisite: None
This course presents advanced topics in interpersonal practice.

Course Description:

This course has a clinical focus and practical orientation; therefore, we will examine basic neuropsychopharmacology, neurotransmitter systems, drug metabolism (i.e, absorption, distribution, metabolism, excretion), and the pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of psychotropic medications to only a limited degree. Our emphasis will be primarily on understanding the physiological actions, therapeutic effects, and potential toxicities associated with prescribed pharmacotherapies for major classes of mental disorders affecting youth, adults, and the elderly.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the physiological actions of medications and differentiate among the types of currently available psychotropic medications
2. Identify which medications are clinically indicated for which Mental Health Disorder or Substance Use Disorder
3. Discuss risks vs. benefits of different medications (Therapeutic effects, side effects, adverse reactions, medication management)
4. Understand psychopharmacology with different populations
5. Address legal and other considerations in psychopharmacology for social workers

Class Attendance, Participation and Grading

Attendance at both sessions is a requirement to successfully complete the course. .

*NOTE: Participation does not mean you need to talk a lot in class. It is more about bringing a positive learning attitude to the class and being present for each session. Each of us participates differently, and I will strive to honor that diversity among us.

Grading: Grade will be satisfactory or unsatisfactory for the course.

Class Schedule:

Day One (October 3, 2015)

Morning-

Class Introductions, course parameters

Overview of Pharmacology

Therapeutic effects, risks and benefits & medication management

Afternoon-

Psychopharmacology with different populations

Substance Use Disorders & Medication

Day Two (October 10, 2015)

Morning-

Ethical and Legal Issues in Psychopharmacology

Social Worker Roles in Psychopharmacology

Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Afternoon-

Current Debates presentations- 6 groups: 20 minutes each

Readings-Available on Ctools

Required Assignment: Below are some of the current debates specific to psychopharmacology. You will get into groups of 3-4 (for a total of 6 groups) and choose one of the current debates below.. You will be given time during day 1 to meet with your group and decide how you want to approach the debate and assign responsibilities for the week. On day 2 you will be given time to organize what each of you has worked on during the week and you will present to the class the main issues and link to what you have learned in this class, PODS and recommendations. You will have 20 minutes for the presentation. Feel free to be creative, use PowerPoint, prezi, etc.

- The economic and political forces that promote the wide, damaging and abusive use of psychotropic medication.
- Assess the argument against extensive and excessive use of psychotropic medications.
- The debate of prescription privileges by APRN's and psychologists.
- Social and psychological effects of taking psychotropic medication.
- The link between antidepressants and suicide, violence, and mania.
- Genetic tests that are currently available which may help to identify which medication is the best medication to treat mental health issues.