Course Syllabus

SW636: Mental Health Policies and Service
Winter 2018
Section 003
Tuesday 9am-12pm
3752 SSWB

Professor: Bryan Victor
Office: 2605 SSWB
Office Hours: By appointment
Email: bvictor@umich.edu

Course Description

This course will cover the various mental health services and programs for adults, children, and youth, and the roles that social workers perform. Promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation services to the mentally ill, developmentally disabled, learning disabled, and substance abusing populations will be surveyed. Contemporary policy issues, legislation, ethical issues, controversies, social movements, and trends affecting services to those with mental illness and mental disorders will be discussed. The historical context of services and how the mentally ill have been historically stigmatized and conceptualized will be reviewed, so that students will be able to develop critical thinking about mental health services. The impact of differences in 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 will be examined, as these relate to various mental health policies and services. This course will also survey the various self-help, mutual aid, and natural/informal helping systems.

Course Content

The processes and politics of mental health policy making and program development will be examined from the perspective of historical, contemporary, and future models of the mental health system. Alternative approaches to defining mental health and mental illness, developmental and other disabilities, and substance related disorders will be addressed. Epidemiological findings about the incidence and prevalence of disorders and the utilization of mental health services will be examined. A review of local, state,
and national models for mental health programs and systems, along with consideration of self-help services and advocacy programs, will provide students with an opportunity to understand a range of approaches to promotion, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation services, financing, and service delivery. This course will include consideration of individual rights, especially the rights of populations at risk, rights regarding civil commitment and treatment, professional roles vis-à-vis consumer rights, and consumer advocacy. Attention will be given to persons with mental illness, developmental disabilities, learning disabilities, and substance abuse disorders—or combinations of these conditions—with special focus on individuals with severe and persistent mental conditions. U.S. mental health policy will be examined as it is enacted in programs and services, social entitlements, financing arrangements, and organizational missions. Ethical and value dilemmas connected to these topics will be examined within an American as well as comparative historical and cultural context. The major focus of this course will be on public policies and services, with an ongoing examination of the relationships of this public domain to the non-profit and for-profit sector. Special consideration will be given to how the contemporary mental health system relates to and is experienced by economically disadvantaged persons, women, transgendered, lesbian, bisexual, gay, and queer persons, and persons of color.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to: 1. Demonstrate knowledge of the historical context of mental health policies and services, and apply this knowledge in making a critical analysis of existing and proposed mental health systems. (Practice Behaviors 9.SPE, 9.IP) 2. Identify the social work practitioner’s role in mental health policies and services in relation to: a. Initiating and modifying policy and programs by providing professional activities, such as advocacy, public education, and service coordination. (Practice Behaviors 8.SPE, 8.IP) b. Applying the values and ethics of the social work profession to the mental health field, especially the rights of individuals regarding civil commitment, treatment, and social services. (Practice Behaviors 2.SPE, 2.IP) 3. Explain how public health concepts and epidemiological data are used in developing and changing policies and monitoring mental health programs. (Practice Behaviors 3.SPE, 3.IP) 4. Identify and analyze the effects of oppression, discrimination, stigma, and other negative social influences on consumers of mental health services. (Practice Behaviors 4.SPE, 4.IP) 5. Analyze current mental health policies, legal issues, delivery systems, service settings, target populations, and service approaches in relation to contemporary social work practice in mental health. (Practice Behaviors 6.SPE, 6.IP) 6. Apply knowledge of the etiology of mental illness and other disabilities and the effects of psychiatric labels on the creation of programs for the prevention of illness and promotion of health in keeping with professional goals of social justice. (Practice Behaviors 5.SPE, 5.IP) 7. Discuss typical ethical concerns related to mental health policies and services. (Practice Behaviors 2.SPE, 2.IP) For more information on practice behaviors, see: https://ssw.umich.edu/sites/default/files/documents/msw/competencies-and-practice-behaviors.pdf
Course Design:

The instructor will utilize lectures, guided discussions, and may draw upon exercises, guest speakers, and field visits. References and required readings provide the basis for class discussion, exercises, and written essay assignments.

Theme Relation to Multiculturalism & Diversity:
Multiculturalism and diversity issues will be presented in relation to the various definitions of mental health, mental illness, disabilities, and substance related disorders. Data from epidemiological studies will be examined in order to focus on populations at risk including those defined by 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, in regard to a) incidence and prevalence rates, and b) acceptability, accessibility, availability, and utilization of services.

Theme Relation to Social Justice:
The study of the mental health service delivery system will provide students the opportunity to assess the system in terms of injustice and the effects of stigma and discrimination on those with psychiatric labels and populations at risk. The objectives of social change and social justice will be explored in relation to legal issues and individual rights that pertain to mental health policy making and program development.

Theme Relation to Promotion, Prevention, Treatment & Rehabilitation:
An examination of the community mental health movement will allow for an emphasis on promotion of mental health and prevention of mental illness and disabilities. Research on risk and protective factors related to mental health prevention programs and how knowledge can be translated into effective interventions will be explored.

Theme Relation to Behavioral and Social Science Research:
Behavioral and social science conceptual frameworks and empirical findings will be presented throughout the course, on such topics as: epidemiology of disorders and disabilities; causes of illness and disability; program evaluations on the effectiveness of community-based mental health programs; financing of mental health services; and services to women, ethnic minorities, and economically disadvantaged populations.
Relationship to SW Ethics and Values: This course will examine current ethical issues and controversies in the field of mental health policies and services. The NASW Code of Ethics will be used to inform practice in this area. Students will analyze ethical issues related to: stigmatization and psychiatric labels; client confidentiality; client rights and prerogatives, especially the rights of populations at risk and those related to civil commitment and treatment; prevention and elimination of discrimination; equal access to resources, services, and opportunities; respect for the diversity of cultures; changes in policy and legislation that promote improvements in social conditions; and informed participation of the public.

Intensive Focus Statement on Privilege, Oppression, Diversity, and Social Justice (PODS): This course integrates PODS content and skills with a special emphasis on the identification of theories, practice, and/or policies that promote social justice, illuminate social injustices and are consistent with scientific and professional knowledge. Through the use of a variety of instructional methods, this course will support students developing a vision of social justice, learn to recognize and reduce mechanisms that support oppression and injustice, work toward social justice processes, apply intersectionality and intercultural frameworks and strengthen critical consciousness, self-knowledge and self-awareness to facilitate PODS learning.

Required Book


Additional Required Readings

All other readings available through the course Canvas site (SW 636 003 W18)

Students are required to complete the assigned readings prior to each week’s class.
Assignments and Grading

A) Midterm take-home exam – The midterm is a take-home exam in essay question format. The exam will be short answer essays, covering material in readings and emphasized in class lectures, handouts and discussion. It will review material related to the history of mental health policy in the United States and there will be choices in which essays you answer. Distributed February 6. Due date: Tuesday, February 13th by 11:59 PM. The midterm exam is worth 25% of the final grade.

B) Policy critiques - Separate handout forthcoming. Various due dates. 15% of final grade.

C) Position paper - separate handout forthcoming, due April 3. 30% of final grade.

D) Final take-home exam - The final is a take-home exam in essay question format. The exam will be short answer essays, covering material in readings and emphasized in class lectures, handouts and discussion. It will review material from the whole semester and there will be choices in which essays you answer. Distributed April 10. Due date: Tuesday, April 17 by 11:59 PM. The final exam is worth 30% of the final grade.

Student attendance is expected at every class session, and attendance will be taken. Students are responsible for securing lecture notes and handouts when circumstances require them to be absent. More than two unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your grade by a third (e.g., an A becomes an A-) for each additional absence.

Summary of Due Dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>February 13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy critiques</td>
<td>February 20; March 6; March 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position paper</td>
<td>April 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>April 17</td>
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Grades

The criteria for each grade are as follows:

- **A+, A, A-** Superlative mastery of subject content, demonstration of critical analysis, creativity and/or complexity in completion of assignment. The difference between A+, A and A- is based on the degree to which excellence in these skills are demonstrated.

- **B+** Mastery of subject content beyond expected competency, but has not demonstrated additional critical analysis, creativity or complexity in the completion of the assignment.

- **B** **Mastery of subject content at level of expected competency – meets course expectations**

- **B-** Less than adequate competency, but demonstrates student learning and potential for mastery of subject content.

- **C or C-** Demonstrates a minimal understanding of subject content. Significant areas needing improvement to meet course requirements.

- **F** Student has failed to demonstrate minimal understanding of subject content.

Grading Scale

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>99–100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94–98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90–93.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87–89.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84–86.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81–83.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77–80.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74–76.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70–73.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;73.5</td>
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**Note on Grading:**

I do accept challenges to grades. However, challenges must be in writing (not verbal); must be specific, and must be based on substantive arguments. The instructor reserves the right to re-read, and re-grade, the work in its entirety in the case of a challenge. The grade may be adjusted up or down.
General Expectations for Written Work

Written work will be evaluated in relation to how well it addresses the topic and the clarity of presentation. It is important to follow assignment instructions carefully and to read and re-read work before turning it in. If possible, you should have someone who is unfamiliar with your subject read your paper before you submit it. Ask them to read for clarity of your writing, if you omitted a word or phrase, or if you used the wrong word. Spell checkers and grammar checkers are useful, but not as reliable as a human reader.

Writing Assistance

Social work students can receive individual writing assistance from Betsy Williams, Writing Skills and Study Skills Coordinator, through the U-M SSW Career Services office. Students may schedule an appointment and bring a draft of their paper (at any stage). Email Betsy Williams at betsywil@umich.edu or call 734-763-6259. You can find helpful resources linked from ssw.umich.edu/writing-help

In addition, the Sweetland Writing Center (SWC) is located at 1310 North Quad (corner of W. Washington and State St.). Graduate students are eligible for seven sessions per semester. For help with your paper, please feel free to consult them for writing support. They can help you develop your argument, improve your paper organization, correct grammar, and craft effective prose. You can register with them online and schedule an appointment: Website: http://www.lsa.umich.edu/sweetland/

Finally, another resource is the English Language Institute: http://www.lsa.umich.edu/eli

Plagiarism

Representing someone else’s words, statements, ideas or works as one’s own without proper acknowledgement or citation – is a serious violation of academic integrity and will be grounds for failure on an assignment and other disciplinary action as described under the School’s policies on academic and professional conduct: http://ssw.umich.edu/studentGuide/2012/page.html?section=12&volume=1

Another helpful resource can be found at: http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity/resources-students.
Note that using Web resources increases the risk of “accidental plagiarism.” Do not let that happen.

Students with Disabilities

The School of Social Work has policies and services to provide equitable educational opportunities for students with documented disabilities in all programs and activities. If you have a 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.
To find out more about services, register for services, or volunteer as a reader, note taker, or tutor, contact the University’s Services for Students with Disabilities, G664 Haven Hall, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1045, 734-763-3000. Hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Students with disabilities may also contact Nyshourn Price, LMSW (ndp@umich.edu) at the School of Social Work, 734-936-0961 or Mary Eldridge (hedgem@umich.edu) in the Office Field Instruction for further information.

Health and wellness services

Health and wellness situations or circumstances may impede student success within the program. Students should feel free to contact the School’s Health and Wellness Advocates, Nyshourn Price, listed above.

Safety & Emergency Preparedness

In the event of an emergency, dial 9-1-1 from any cell phone or campus phone.

All University of Michigan students, faculty and staff are required to familiarize themselves with emergency procedures and protocols for both inside and outside of the classroom. In the event of possible building closure (i.e. severe weather conditions, public health notices, etc.) you may contact (734)764-SSWB(7793) for up-to-date School closure information.

Be Prepared. Familiarize yourself with the emergency card posted next to the phone in every classroom/meeting room. Review the information on the emergency evacuation sign (located nearest the door) and locate at least (2) emergency exits nearest the classroom.

If you are concerned about your ability to exit the building in the case of an emergency, contact the Office of Student Services and/or email ssw-ADAcompliance@umich.edu. Office of Student Services
School of Social Work | Room 1748
734-936-0961

For more information view the annual Campus Safety Statement at http://www.dpss.umich.edu/.

Register for UM Emergency Alerts at http://www.dpss.umich.edu/emergency-management/alert/.

Communications Regarding the Course

Students should feel free to email the instructor whenever questions arise. I check my email very frequently and strive to reply promptly, and if I’m going to be away I will let you know in advance.
## Schedule of Class Sessions & Assignments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SESSION</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>REQUIRED READINGS</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4 | 1/30 | HISTORY OF MENTAL HEALTH POLICY IN THE UNITED STATES: PART II | Group-based assignments:  
| 5 | 2/06 | HISTORY OF MENTAL HEALTH POLICY IN THE UNITED STATES: PART III | Group-based assignments:  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Critique Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2/27</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


| 13 | 4/10 | COURSE WRAP-UP REVIEW OF FINAL EXAM | |

| - | 4/17 | SUBMISSION OF FINAL EXAMS | - |