

University of Arkansas - Fort Smith
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General Syllabus

SOWK 3523 Social Work in Mental Health

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Laboratory Hours: 0

Prerequisite: Admission to BSW program or SOWK 3043 Human Behavior in the Social Environment, and PSYC 1163 General Psychology, or consent of instructor.

Effective Catalog: 2019-2020

I. Course Information

A. Catalog Description

Introduces methods of rehabilitation, including ways of collaborating with families, community support services, and consumer groups. Reviews the history of mental health services in the United States. Attention will be given to explanations of mental illness and evidence based "best" practices. Models of engagement, interventions, and the impact culture has on help seeking behaviors and healing practices will be examined. Lastly, advocacy skill will be practiced for people with mental illness.

B. Additional Information

Definition of Generalist Practice: Our generalist social work practice model is characterized by culturally sensitive knowledge, skills, values, and ethics based on the following four principles:

1. Theoretical foundations that include systems, ecological, strengths, and empowerment perspectives, which inform various interventions at the micro, mezzo, and macro levels.
2. A planned change process that includes intake and engagement, data collection and assessment, planning and contracting, intervention and monitoring, and final evaluation and termination.
3. The profession's core values that acknowledge the uniqueness of the consumer in an effort to improve the consumer's social functioning and/or enriching the consumer's environment.
4. Evidence-based practice to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of services.

II. Student Learning Outcomes

A. Subject Matter

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

1. Distinguish proposed explanations and causes of mental illness.
2. Demonstrate a working knowledge of commonly used mental health terms.
3. Identify mental illness criteria of DSM V.
4. Evaluate and discuss the limitations of the use of the DSM V diagnostic criteria in relation to:
 - a. Individuals from nonwestern cultures
 - b. Families
 - c. Groups
5. Discuss NASW's policy statement on mental health.
6. Distinguish and apply mental health theories to clients with moderate to severe mental health challenges.
7. Recognize and discuss evidence-based practices and tools developed by SAMHSA.
8. Develop and apply methods of intervention with adults—including older adults with serious mental illness, depression, anxiety, and dual diagnoses.

B. University Learning Outcomes (ULO)

This course enhances student abilities in the following areas:

Analytical Skills

Critical Thinking

Students will examine evidence-based knowledge about mental health concerns in generalist social work practice. Student will reflect upon the distinction between proposed explanations and causes of mental illness, develop working knowledge of common mental health terms and analyze evidence-based interventions from the professional literature.

Communication Skills (written and oral)

Students will prepare papers and oral presentations concerning social work competencies and ways of collaborating with families, community support services, and consumer groups.

Ethics

Students will discern and address ethical dilemmas in mental health care, reflecting on the NASW Code of Ethics. Students will analyze, synthesize and evaluate ethical standards of policies and practices through advocacy skills and evidence-based practice to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of services for people effected by mental illness.

Global and Cultural Perspectives

Students will compare global and cultural perspectives on mental health and wellness, acknowledging the uniqueness of the consumer, focusing on strengths in an effort to improve social functioning and enriching their environments.

III. Major Course Topics

- A. Mental Illness
- B. DSM

- C. Ethical Issues
- D. Psychosocial Assessment
- E. Intervention Principles
- F. Intervention Strategies
- G. Therapeutic Alliance