

Mad, Bad and Sad: Defining, Preventing and Treating Mental Disorders in Children
Fall 2007 Syllabus

Tuesday and Thursday 3-4:30PM
Williams Hall, Room 320

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OFFICE HOURS: Monday from 9am to 11am (except Oct. 1 and Nov. 5) and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The idea that mental disorders affect children is relatively new. Over the last 100 years, public and professional groups have taken very different approaches to determining what constitutes psychopathology in children and what to do about it. By current thinking, as many as 1 in ten children experiences psychopathology impairing enough that it requires treatment. This class attempts to impart to students an understanding of the epidemiology, presentation and treatment of common mental disorders affecting children and the systems in which these children receive care. By the end of this course, it is expected that students will:

- Be familiar with the epidemiology, presentation and treatment of autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, depression and eating disorders;
- Understand the organization, financing and delivery of mental health services to children in the United States;
- Be able to critically evaluate related research;
- Make specific, practical suggestions for ways to improve care to children with mental disorders.

FORMAT:

The goal of this class is for students to answer the question, "How would you improve mental health services for children with a specific mental disorder in Philadelphia?" Lectures and class discussions, as well as readings and assignments are all geared towards this purpose. You will use this information and your own research to develop a report addressed to the Director of the Philadelphia Department of Behavioral Health on concrete steps Philadelphia should take to improve mental health care for its children.

The primary means of communication for the course will be via **Blackboard**, an interactive online classroom. You can access your information for this class at the Blackboard site <https://courseweb.library.upenn.edu/>. You can review a brief tutorial for Blackboard at http://www.library.upenn.edu/courseware/usingbb_students.html. All readings for the class will be posted on Blackboard in the "Course Documents" section and Blackboard should be used to submit all assignments through the "Digital Dropbox" in the "Tools" option. Please note that readings for classes may change up to 1 week before the class so check back frequently. The "Course Calendar" section in Blackboard outlines due dates, changes in class schedule or location and other important reminders. If you need help using Blackboard, information on support services can be found by clicking on this link: http://www.library.upenn.edu/courseware/usingbb_students.html.

GROUP REPORT:

These reports will be developed using a small group format. The class will divide into 4 groups, with each group focusing on one disorder. Each report should consist of 4 sections:

1. Clinical presentation and epidemiology of the disorder;
2. What constitutes our best understanding of effective care for children who have or are at risk of having this disorder (prevention, early identification, treatment and rehabilitation);
3. What we know about how children with this disorder are cared for currently;
4. Changes you would suggest to the current system of care and how should they be implemented.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND POINT ASSIGNMENTS:

Group presentation (30%): Each group will present to the class twice during the course of the semester. The first presentation will be on sections 1 and 2 of the above-referenced report. The second presentation will be on sections 3 and 4. Each presentation should last 40 minutes.

Group report (30%): This report, described above, should be between 15 and 20 pages, with pages divided roughly evenly between the 4 sections. The first half of the report (sections 1 and 2) are due on October 18th at the beginning of class. The complete report, with revisions as necessary to the first half, is due on December 4th. Group reports should be submitted via Blackboard by one member of the group. The group name should be clearly stated in the title of each report.

Class Participation (30%): Each student is expected to participate in class discussions and presentations. Credit is given especially for comments and questions that show familiarity with the readings.

Communication Within the Curriculum Participation (10%): A student speaking advisor is assigned to this course to assist you with oral presentations. Your advisor will not tutor you in the subject area; rather, your advisor will help you to clarify your message. Your advisor may focus on your thesis statement, organization, visual aids, and delivery, for example, as warranted. You will be required to meet with your advisor for two one-hour sessions prior to your first oral presentation and one one-hour session prior to the second, but your advisor will meet with you more often if you like. The more prepared you are for the rehearsal, the better. Our CWiC advisor will attend class on 9/11 to introduce herself, explain what to expect from advising meetings, and share contact information. To schedule an advising session, follow the affiliate course advising link at the CWiC website – <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/cwic/>.

POLICY ON ASSIGNMENTS:

All assignments and due dates are indicated on the syllabus. All written assignments should be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word in Time New Roman 12-point font, have one-inch margins and be double spaced. References should be presented in American Medical Association format. You will learn more about the American Medical Association format at your library tour and you can contact the library for further assistance. Assignments are due by the beginning of class on the due date. If your assignment will be late for any reason, you must let me know ahead of time. Barring extenuating circumstances, assignments turn in after the due date will receive 3.3-point reduction (on a 100 point scale) for each day they are late.

POLICY ON PLAGIARISM:

All of you have received training and information on recognizing plagiarism, which is the presentation of others' ideas without crediting the source. Plagiarism consists of quoting or paraphrasing research, ideas or text without appropriate citation. Information about plagiarism can be found at <http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/guides/engineering/ee/plagiarize.html>. If you have any questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me beforehand. Any instances of plagiarism of which I am aware will be immediately brought to the attention of the office of student conduct.

TOPICS, SPEAKERS AND READINGS

09/06/07 - Review of the course; discussion of what constitutes a mental disorder

09/11/07 - Child Development and the DSM

Readings:

1. The Dictionary of Disorder
2. Disordered Behavior: The Developmental Psychopathology Perspective

09/13/07 - Library visit (Goldstein Electronic classroom in Van Pelt Library)

09/18/07 - What causes mental disorders in children? & Introduction to CWiC advisor, Adam Fachler

Readings:

1. Vignette of Philadelphia's system for children's mental health
2. Risk Factors for Mental Disorders

09/20/07 - How common are mental disorders in children?

Readings:

1. Prevalence of Psychiatric Disorders in Youths Across Five Sectors of Care

09/25/07 - How do we treat children with mental disorders (behavioral and talk therapies)

Speaker: Suzanne Levy, PhD, Project Coordinator for the Center for Family Intervention Science at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

Readings:

1. Psychotherapy: Improve your mental health through talk therapy

09/27/07 - How do we treat children with mental disorders (pharmacology)

Readings:

1. Research in child and adolescent psychopharmacology: Recent accomplishments and new challenges

10/02/07 - Problems currently facing children served in these systems: parent perspective

Speakers: Barbara Altenburger and Becky Espagnol, Family Advocates, Parents Involved Network, Mental Health Association of Southern Pennsylvania

Readings:

1. James' Story
2. "Autism Everyday" video which can be found at:
http://www.autismspeaks.org/sponsorevents/autism_every_day.php

10/04/07 - Problems currently facing children served in these systems: payer perspective

Speaker: Marc Forman, MD

Readings:

1. Financing mental health services for adolescents: a background paper

10/09/07 – Problems currently facing children served in these systems: clinician perspective

Readings:

1. The Provider System for Children's Mental Health: Workforce Capacity and Effective Treatment

10/11/07 – Synthesis of different perspectives regarding system challenges

No Readings

10/16/07 – Fall Break

10/18/07 – Class Presentations

No Readings

10/23/07 – Class Presentations

No Readings

10/25/07 – What are the systems in which children with mental disorders are cared for?

Readings:

1. Alliance Anxious About Children's Mental Health
2. Executive Summary: The Mental Health System for Low-Income Children

10/30/07 – Improving care for children with mental disorders: can mental disorders be prevented?

Readings:

1. How We Prevent: the Prevention of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders

11/01/07 – Improving care for children with mental disorders: the logistics of prevention

Readings:

1. Evidence-Based Prevention Practice in Mental Health: What Is It and How do We Get There?

11/06/07 – No Class

11/08/07 – Improving care for children with mental disorders: training of professionals

Readings:

1. A Model for Training Pediatricians to Expand Mental Health Services in the Community Practice Setting

11/13/07 – Improving care for children with mental disorders: fidelity vs. adaptation

Readings:

1. Child and adolescent psychotherapy outcomes in experiments versus clinics: why the disparity?

11/15/07 – Improving care for children with mental disorders: financing

Readings:

1. Financing Mental Health Services for Adolescents: A Background Paper

11/20/07 -Improving care for children with mental disorders: system coordination

Readings:

1. Pathways Into and Through Mental Health Services for Children and Adolescents

11/22/07 - Thanksgiving

11/27/07 - Review of presentation outlines

No Readings

11/29/07 - Stigma

Readings:

1. Stigma and Mental Disorder: Conceptions of Illness, Public Attitudes, Personal Disclosure, and Social Policy

12/04/07 - Class presentations

No Readings

12/06/07 - Class presentations

No Readings