Subject Code: APSS5110

Subject Title: Child and Family Psychopathology: Theory, Practice & Research

Credit Value: 3

Level: 5

Pre-requisite / Co-requisite / Exclusion: Nil

Minimum Pass Grade: D

Assessment Methods:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100% Continuous Assessment</th>
<th>Individual Assessment</th>
<th>Group Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Group Presentations</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Case Studies</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>0% Examination</td>
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Objectives:

Understanding the factors that place an individual at greater risk of developing psychopathology has important implications for family therapy. Of critical relevance in this regard is the exploration of the potential influence of the family Parenting and the family environment are considered to significantly contribute to an individual’s early development and adjustment in later life. Specific mental disorders and contexts will be discussed to illustrate how knowledge of normal development enhances our understanding of deviant development. Another emphasis of this course is to critically examine the influence of an individual’s diagnosis of mental illness upon family development.

This course aims at introducing students to a perspective of developmental psychopathology, which considers mental illness as rooted in mal-adaptation along one or many developmental pathways, and as powerfully influenced by both internal (temperament, biology, affective and cognitive development) and external factors (family relationships, society and culture). Students will posse knowledge of about etiology, prevalence, course and cause of different types of mental illness, particular attention will focus on mood disorders, anxiety disorders, psychotic disorders, and personality disorders.

Contribution to Master of Arts in Social Work Award Outcomes:

1. Contextualized understanding of social work practice in the Hong Kong context.
2. Ability to deal with the competing values and ethical dimensions in decision-making and to address tension, uncertainty or conflict arising from the decision-making process.
3. Ability to integrate knowledge with practice, particularly to synthesize
knowledge from a number of disciplines when addressing complex practice situations.

4. Ability to articulate a coherent personal perspective of and approach to social work practice in the Chinese context.

5. Ability to acquire the learning to learn knowledge in order to ensure continual development as reflective practitioners cum researchers in social work.

6. Ability to contribute to the continuing professional development of personnel in social work or related human service organizations.

7. Development of global outlook, critical and creative thinking, social and national responsibility, cultural appreciation and lifelong learning.

**Contribution to Family-centered Practice and Family Therapy Specialism Outcomes**

1. Acquire knowledge of the current theories and updated research findings relating to family-centered practice and family therapy.

2. Equip with knowledge and competence to position their practice with reference to international and regional outlook of services and intervention approaches for families.

3. Develop flexibility to work with professionals of multidisciplinary team in contexts where services for families are delivered.

4. Equip advanced skills for working competently and reflectively with couples and families facing complex problems.

**Intended Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:

a. To introduce students to a perspective of developmental psychopathology, which considers mental illness as rooted in maladaptation along one or many developmental pathways, and as powerfully influenced by both internal factors (temperament, biology, affective and cognitive development) and external factors (family relationships, society and culture).

b. To develop students an awareness of how co-morbidity and family dynamics frequently complicate clinical presentation and significantly influence treatment outcomes.

c. To expose students to the critical use of DSM-IV-TR in assessing children and adult suffering from different mental disorders, and to place the understanding of these systems within the context of developmental psychopathology.

d. To introduce students to those syndromes most common in children and adults through the presentation of in-depth cases. Attention in this segment will also be given to the squeal of trauma and environmental disruption.

e. To critically review the empirical literature as it pertains to the strengths and weaknesses of the DSM-IV taxonomy of child and adult psychopathology.

f. To familiarize students to various diagnostic assessment and instruments commonly employed by mental health professionals so as to strengthen their cross-discipline collaboration for the promotion of the well being of individuals and families.
Subject Synopsis/Indicative Syllabus

2. Overview Current Theoretical Development in Childhood and Adult Psychopathology and Family Development
3. Family Life Cycle and Psychopathology
4. Family and Childhood Disorder (ADHD, SPLD, Separation anxiety, Pervasive Developmental Disorder)
5. Family and Childhood sexual abuse: Dissociative Identity Disorder
6. Family and Mood Disorders
7. Family and Anxiety Disorders
8. Family and Post-traumatic stress disorder & Hypochondriasis
9. Social Phobia, Internet Addiction
10. Family and Psychotic Disorders
11. Family and Eating Disorders
12. Family and Personality Disorders

Teaching/Learning Methodology

The main pedagogical approach for this subject is based on the action learning approach. Lectures and seminars will be used to facilitate students’ learning of the subject. Through the lectures, instructors introduce students to the major concepts and arguments pertaining to the subject. Through attending the lectures and reading of the relevant materials, students will develop both a conceptual and an experiential understanding on the subject. Students are expected to make effort to organize presentations and small group discussions in seminars on their chosen topics. It is hoped that students can draw insights from the arguments that they have come across in the lectures on developmental psychopathology and family development to illuminate reflections on their professional practices.

Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific assessment methods/tasks</th>
<th>% weighting</th>
<th>Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Group Presentations</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Case studies</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100 %</td>
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</tbody>
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Explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes:

Course requirement:
1) Paper. Select a or b (25%)
   a) Choose any mental disorder of childhood onset and write a 8-page typed APA style paper on the long-term (adult) outcome if the disorder is not treated effectively or remains in a residual form. Write about how the disorder may be behaviorally manifested at later stages in development.
   b) Choose any adult mental disorder and write a 8-page typed APA style paper describing developmental precursors/risk factors/predisposing factors that have been shown to have a role in predicting long-term outcome/prognosis/treatment responsiveness.
2) Class presentation. Give a 40 minute MS Powerpoint presentation on the
chosen topic in 1. (25%)

Some possible topics (this is by no means a comprehensive list):
- Childhood Schizophrenia
- Anxiety and depression in children and adolescents
- Reactive Attachment Disorder
- Math, Reading and Writing Learning Disabilities
- Elimination Disorders
- Reactive Attachment Disorder
- Substance abuse
- Selective Mutism
- ADHD
- Asperger
- Autism

3) Case Studies. (50%)

Students will receive two cases about families with members suffering from mental illness. Students will submit a brief case study report of approximately 8 double-spaced pages for each given case. The emphasis will be on students’ ability to identify the relationship between dysfunctional family dynamics and psychopathology. Students will also need to formulate a treatment plan for the cases.

### Student Study Effort Required

Class contact:

- Lecture 27 Hrs.
- Seminar 15 Hrs.

### Medium of Instruction

English

### Medium of Assessment

English

### Reading List and References

**Readings**


Web links:
http://www.mentalhealth.com/
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Psychopathology
http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/links/
http://www.promoteprevent.org
http://www.nctsnet.org