

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

***CLINICAL ASSESSMENT AND
DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS***

SW 393 R1

DINA M. KASSLER, PH.D.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Clinical Assessment and Differential Diagnosis

Course Number:	SW 393 R1	Instructor:	Dina M. Kassler, Ph.D.
Unique Number:	64380	E-mail:	DinaKassler@yahoo.com
Semester:	Spring 2014	Contact #:	512-809-3407
Meeting Time:	Tu, 11:30 am – 2:30 pm	Office Location:	SSW 3.104A
Meeting Place:	SSW 2.132	Office Hours:	By appointment

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on the incidence, etiology, and assessment of health and mental health issues with children, adolescents, adults, and families. The framework of the course is based on social work values and the ethical decision making process, as illuminated by the NASW Code of Ethics. Students will learn models of assessment to evaluate human functioning throughout the lifecycle. A bio-psycho-social-spiritual and cultural emphasis will be applied to the diagnostic categories within the Fifth Edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). Students will develop an advanced understanding of people from diverse backgrounds, while affirming and respecting their strengths and differences. The course is built on the identification, analysis, and implementation of empirically-based assessment tools that have incorporated statistically valid reliability and validity studies. Major classification systems, such as the DSM-5 and the International Classification of Diseases (ICD), and other schemes for assessing and understanding human behavior will be covered.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES – *Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:*

1. Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of biological, psychosocial, and cultural theories on the etiology of mental health and mental illness **(CL/APB 3)**
2. Demonstrate the ability to apply methods of empirically-based assessment tools and techniques, including those developed through classificatory schemes, standardized measures, and qualitative typologies **(CL/APB 10b)**
3. Demonstrate an advanced clinical knowledge of the relationship between assessment and intervention as it relates to the strengths, capacities and resources of individuals and families **(CL/APB 10b)**
4. Demonstrate the ability to adapt assessment models to reflect an understanding of persons from diverse backgrounds, including (but not limited to) race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, physical or mental ability, age, and national origin **(CL/APB 3; CL/APB 5)**
5. Critically evaluate and analyze different theoretical and assessment models as to their efficacy in given situations. This includes: a) the adequacy of the research and knowledge base; b) the range of applicability; c) the value and ethical issues, including the student's own value system, and d) the policy implications involved in assessment and delivery of services **(CL/APB 1; CL/APB 3; CL/APB 5)**
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the limitations in using classification schemes in understanding human behavior and the danger of mislabeling people, particularly those from at-risk populations. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of social work values and the ethical decision making processes as they relate to ethical dilemmas in clinical assessment and practice **(CL/APB 10b)**.

The School of Social Work has been continuously accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) since 1952. In order to maintain our accreditation status, we engage in ongoing curriculum assessment to demonstrate compliance with CSWE's Education Policies and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Several required courses in our curriculum are part of this ongoing assessment, including this course. Below is a list of the specific Educational Policies (EP) and Practice Behaviors (PB) that are assessed in this course. The complete EPAS can be optioned from your Student Handbook.

EP 2.1.1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly

CL/APB 1 Evaluate professional roles and boundaries

Objective 5

Assignment: Class Discussions, Exams

EP 2.1.3. Apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments

CL/APB 3 Utilize multiple perspectives to analyze client's strengths and problems

Objectives 1, 4, 5

Assignment: Class Discussions, Exams, Homework Assignments, Researched Paper

EP 2.1.5. Advance human rights and social and economic justice

CL/APB 5 Determine practice delivery and policies to promote social and economic justice and equity at multiple levels

Objectives 4, 5

Assignment: Class Discussions, Exams, Researched Paper

EP 2.1.10b. Assessment

CL/APB 10b Design and conduct a multi-level case assessment based on a systematic and conceptually driven process

Objectives 2, 3, 6

Assignment: Class Discussion, Researched Paper

III. TEACHING METHODS

This course is designed to include a variety of experiences intended to achieve the student educational outcome of mastering knowledge and skill in this area. Included may be lectures, readings, discussions, presentations, and videos. Students will be asked to engage in informed discussion of the class assigned readings and be asked to apply these readings to in-class exercises and homework assignments. **Teaching and learning will be collaborative and interactive.**

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

First, M.B. (2014). *DSM-5 Handbook of differential diagnosis*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing.

Nevid, J., Rathus, S.A., & Greene, B. (2013). *Abnormal psychology in a changing world* (9th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students are expected to attend class sessions promptly and regularly, and participate in an interactive framework between collegiate students and professor.
2. The professor and students have the ethical responsibility to ensure that the class environment is maintained as a respectful and confidential setting. To this end, please mute cell phones and refrain from texting and other non-class activities during class.
3. Students are expected to **complete the readings prior to class**, and should be well prepared to participate in discussions and learning assignments. Failure to regularly attend class and demonstrate through discussions that one has comprehended the readings will be considered in assigning the final grade.
4. Except in the case of extreme emergencies, **late assignments will not be accepted without penalty**. Students are expected to turn in all required assignments on the due date **at the beginning of class**. Assignments turned in after class starts will be considered late. If the due date is a problem, then the student should see the professor and negotiate another due date well in advance.
5. Students are expected to both learn and demonstrate knowledge of differential diagnosis. This will require extensive diagnostic practice on homework assignments and exams as well as a search of the literature in a defined area (for the researched paper) in order to develop specialized knowledge concerning a specific diagnosis, diagnostic category, and/or assessment measure. Students will also demonstrate their level of applied knowledge of differential diagnosis and assessment on exams.
6. If students are concerned about their class performance, the professor is more than willing to work with students to help them improve their course grades *prior to the end of the semester*. **Final grades assigned in the course are not negotiable.**

VI. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

1. Class Attendance and Contribution

Due to the format and content of this course, both attendance and contribution are imperative. Students are expected to be in class, or in extenuating circumstances, to notify the professor that they will be absent. Because attendance and participation are expected, a lack of these may adversely affect a student's final course grade, i.e., attendance and quality of contribution, as demonstrated by student preparation level, will determine if final course grades will be affected.

Students will be allowed **one (1) absence**. Roll will be taken at the beginning of each class period (*N.B.* once students are known to the professor, this will not be verbal but will continue to be noted every class period). In cases where a student misses more than one class period, the professor reserves the right to lower that student's final grade by **3% points for each class missed** after the first.

2. Exams, 50% (2 @ 25% each)

There will be two (2) exams (**March 4th and April 29th**). Each exam will be worth 25% of the total course grade (for a cumulative worth of 50% of the final grade). The exams will be based on readings, discussions, videos, exercises, and lecture material. The exams will be given in two parts: the first part (worth 20 out of 100 exam points) will be an open-book differential diagnosis which will require accurate diagnosis along with the reasoning that went into your decision (similar to the homework assignments described below); the second part of the exam may consist of fill in the blanks, short answers, matching, and multiple choice questions. Exams will cover the material indicated at the end of this syllabus – they will not be cumulative and there will be no comprehensive final exam.

3. Differential Diagnosis Homework Assignments, 25% (5 @ 5% each)

Students will be assigned five homework assignments across the semester. Clinical case descriptions will be provided by the professor. It is expected that students will utilize the DSM-5 in conjunction with the tree structures and tables presented in the book by First in order to accurately diagnose the case presented. The purpose of these assignments is to help students learn and build on their skills in formulating a comprehensive differential diagnosis. A full “thought process” is expected in these assignments, i.e., students are expected to convey the methods and steps taken to arrive at the diagnosis chosen. This is an extremely valuable and important way for you to explain the reasoning for your answers.

These homework assignments will be distributed at least 2 weeks in advance of their due dates and will also be available on Blackboard. As indicated in the “Course Schedule” at the end of this syllabus, these assignments will be due on **January 28th, February 11th and 25th, March 25th, and April 8th**. Late assignments will be assessed penalties at the rate of **5 points (out of 100 pts) for each calendar day late** (not per scheduled class day) beginning immediately following the start of class time. Late papers will be accepted as e-mail submissions with penalties assessed based on arrival time (*N.B. Please refrain from submitting on-time written assignments as e-mail*). It is expected that these homework assignments will be approximately 2-4 pages in length and typically not exceed 5 pages. DO NOT think “bigger is better.” Concise descriptions are highly preferred over a “throw it all at the wall and see what sticks” approach. Evaluation components of this assignment will include the depth and accuracy of the material presented as well as the clarity with which concepts were conveyed.

4. Researched Diagnosis and Assessment Paper, 25%

This assignment will be due on **April 15th**. Papers should be 8-10 pages in length, in 11-12 pt font, with 1” margins, and written in APA format according to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association – Sixth Edition* (*N.B.* if you use a different font/margin size it is expected that your paper length will be adjusted accordingly). Your paper must be supported with relevant research citations and, as such, **MUST** include a reference list (not to be included as part of the total pages required, i.e., the paper itself should be 8-10 pages, and then the reference list added on to that). You may use reference material from our in-class readings or assignments, but you are also expected to utilize outside referenced materials as well.

Late assignments will be assessed penalties at the rate of **5 points (out of 100 pts) for each calendar day late** (not per scheduled class day) beginning immediately following the start of class time. Late papers will be accepted as e-mail submissions with penalties assessed based on arrival time (*N.B. Please refrain from submitting on-time written assignments as e-mail*). Your paper should include:

- A brief introduction that states the diagnosis you will be presenting
- The historical background of the diagnosis (e.g., when it was first recognized as a diagnosis, what changes it has undergone in terms of criteria required, any relevant social events that may have influenced the development of the disorder’s descriptors)
- Is there any controversy related to this diagnosis or its diagnostic criteria among experts in the field?
- Relevant cultural components, including gender-based and racial or cultural rates of diagnosis

- What assessment tools and methods are currently being used to diagnose this disorder? Are there any measures that were used in the past that are now considered obsolete by practicing clinicians?
- What is the cultural sensitivity vs. bias of current assessment measures?
- What other disorders share symptoms with your chosen one? How do you differentiate your diagnosis from those others? Is this an easy or difficult process?
- An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the diagnosis as a whole as well as a thorough discussion of the strengths and limitations of the currently available research
- Feel free to include one or more examples of how individuals with this diagnosis have been portrayed in popular media sources (e.g., books, movies, TV) and with what accuracy when compared to the DSM-5 criteria (e.g., were certain symptoms exaggerated or inconsistent with the diagnosis?)
- Personal reactions/observations re: what the experience was like for you to explore in depth the disorder you chose and how this may have differed from what you expected (e.g., What were your initial beliefs about this disorder? Any personal difficulties as you became more familiar with the history and etiology of this disorder? What kinds of questions did this process create for you?)
- A list of 5 to 10 relevant, recent (< 5 years), and accurate evidence-based references from peer-reviewed materials. Research **MUST** include journal articles, not just web-based resources. (*N.B. Wikipedia is **NOT** a reference source!!!*)

Evaluation components for this paper will include:

- Thoroughness of the diagnostic description, background, and current views
- Accurate identification of the current assessment tools and methods as well as the history of assessment of this disorder
- Overall critical analysis, thought, clarity, and organization of the paper
- Accurate use of specific instances from research to substantiate any points made throughout the paper
- Structure of the paper, i.e., grammar, spelling, punctuation; **N.B.** Failure to write thoughtfully, carefully, and proofread as evidenced by these errors will result in the loss of points

VII. COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

<u>Course Requirement</u>	<u>% of Grade</u>	<u>Grading Scale</u>
Exams (2 @ 25% each)	50%	A = 94.0 – 100%
DDx Homework Assignments (5 @ 5% each)	25%	A- = 90.0 – 93.999%
Researched Paper (1 @ 25%)	25%	B+ = 87.0 – 89.999%
		B = 84.0 – 86.999%
TOTAL	100%	B- = 80.0 – 83.999%
		C+ = 77.0 – 79.999%
		C = 74.0 – 76.999%
		C- = 70.0 – 73.999%
		D+ = 67.0 – 69.999%
		D = 64.0 – 66.999%
		D- = 60.0 – 63.999%
		F = Below 60.0

VIII. ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

1. The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

2. Professional Conduct in Class

The professor expects students to act like professionals in class. This means students should arrive on time for class, be prepared to participate in the class discussion, and show respect for one another's opinions. We will not, nor should we, always agree with one another. In this environment we should be exposed to diverse ideas and opinions, and sometimes we will not agree with the ideas expressed by others. However, the professor does require that students engage one another with respect and professionalism.

3. Policy on Social Media and Professional Communication

Public social networks are not private. Even when open only to approved or invited members, users cannot be certain that privacy will exist among the general membership of sites. If social work students choose to participate in such forums, please assume that anything posted can be seen, read, and critiqued. What is said, posted, linked to, commented on, uploaded, subscribed to, etc., can be accessed and archived, posing potential harm to professional reputations and prospective careers.

Social work students who use social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.) and other forms of electronic communication (e.g., blogs, etc.) must be mindful of how their communication may be perceived by clients, colleagues, faculty, and others. Social work students are expected to make every effort to minimize material which could be considered inappropriate for a professional social worker in training. Because of this, social work students are advised to manage security settings at their most private levels and avoid posting information/photos or using any language that could jeopardize their professional image. Students are asked to consider the amount of personal information posted on these sites and are obliged to block any client access to involvement in the students' social networks. Client material should not be referred to in any form of electronic media, including any information that might lead to the identification of a client or compromise client confidentiality in any way. Additionally, students must critically evaluate any material that is posted regarding community agencies and professional relationships, as certain material could violate the standards set by the School of Social Work, the Texas Code of Conduct for Social Workers, and/or the NASW Code of Ethics.

Social work students should consider that they will be representing professional social work practice as well as the University of Texas at Austin School of Social Work program while in the classroom, the university community, and the broader area communities.

4. Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (<http://www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs/>).

5. Documented Disability Statement

Any student who requires special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). Present the letter to the professor at the beginning of the semester so that needed accommodations can be discussed. The student should remind the professor of any testing accommodations no later than five business days before exams. For more information, visit <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>.

6. Religious Holidays

By UT Austin policy, students must notify the professor of a pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If the student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the professor will give the student an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

7. Use of E-Mail for Official Correspondence to Students

E-mail is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence; therefore, students are responsible for reading their e-mail for university and course-related information and announcements. Students are responsible to keep the university informed about changes to their e-mail address. Students should check their e-mail regularly and frequently — daily, but at minimum twice a week — to stay current with university-related communications, some of which may be time-sensitive. Students can find UT Austin's policies and instructions for updating their e-mail address at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.php>.

8. Safety

As part of professional social work education, students may have assignments that involve working in agency settings and/or the community. As such, these assignments may present some risks. Sound choices and caution may lower risks inherent to the profession. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to policies and practices related to agency and/or community safety. Students should notify the professor regarding any safety concerns.

9. Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL)

If students are worried about someone who is acting differently, they may use the Behavior Concerns Advice Line to discuss by phone their concerns about another individual's behavior. This service is provided through a partnership among the Office of the Dean of Students, the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC), the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and The University of Texas Police Department (UTPD). Call 512-232-5050 or visit <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal>.

10. Emergency Evacuation Policy

Occupants of buildings on the UT Austin campus are required to evacuate and assemble outside when a fire alarm is activated or an announcement is made. Please be aware of the following policies regarding evacuation:

- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of the classroom and the building. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when you entered the building.
- If you require assistance to evacuate, inform the professor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the professor's instructions.
- Do not re-enter a building unless you are given instructions by the Austin Fire Department, the UT Austin Police Department, or the Fire Prevention Services office.

11. Use of Blackboard in Class

In this class the professor uses Blackboard — a Web-based course management system with password-protected access at <http://courses.utexas.edu> — to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, and to post grades. Blackboard is used to provide access to PowerPoint presentations of lecture materials and pre-exam review materials. Students can find support in using Blackboard at the ITS Help Desk by calling 475-9400, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Please plan accordingly.

IX. COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is intended only as a guide. Students should complete the readings as they are outlined, in order to space them evenly throughout the semester. This is especially important since the exams will cover the required readings for that period of time. The student is responsible for all readings whether or not the material is covered in lectures.

WEEK	DATE	DESCRIPTION/TOPIC	READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
1	1/14	Introduction & Overview of Course	Syllabus
		Intro to Mental Health Diagnosis and the DSM-5; Highlights of Changes from DSM-IV to DSM-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid, Rathus, and Greene (Chapter 3) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. xiii; xli-xliv; 5-25; 809-816) ▪ First (pp. 1-21; 157-163)
2	1/21	Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders, Trauma-Related Disorders, and Stressor-Related Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid et al. (Ch. 4 & 5) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 189-290) ▪ First (pp. 75-90, 198-228)
3	1/28	Dissociative Disorders, Somatic Symptom and Related Disorders, and Psychological Factors Affecting Physical Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid et al. (Chapter 6) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 291-327) ▪ First (pp. 91-93, 229-243)
			Homework #1 Due
4	2/4	Mood Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid et al. (Chapter 7) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 123-188) ▪ First (pp. 52-74, 182-197)
5	2/11	Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid et al. (Chapter 11) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 87-122) ▪ First (pp. 38-51, 175-181)
			Homework #2 due
6	2/18	Feeding, Eating, Elimination, and Sleep-Wake Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid et al. (Ch. 9 & pp. 517-521) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 329-422) ▪ First (pp. 94-108, 244-257)
7	2/25	Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders <i>(N.B. This material is for Exam #2, and will NOT be covered on Exam #1)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid et al. (Chapter 8) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 481-589) ▪ First (pp. 129-134, 268-270)
		“Jeopardy” for Exam #1	Homework #3 due

WEEK	DATE		READINGS/ASSIGNMENTS
8	3/4	Exam #1	Covers all Readings, Lectures, Discussions, Activities, and Videos from 1/14/14-2/18/14
9	3/11	Spring Break	
10	3/18	Sexual Dysfunctions, Gender Dysphoria, and Paraphilic Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid et al. (Chapter 10) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 423-459, 685-705) ▪ First (pp. 109-115, 258-261)
11	3/25	Personality Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid et al. (Ch. 12 only up to p. 469) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 645-684) ▪ First (pp. 276-287)
			Homework #4 due
12	4/1	Disruptive, Impulse-Control, Conduct, and Neurodevelopmental Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid et al. (pp. 472-476 and Ch. 13) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 31-85, 461-480) ▪ First (pp. 22-37, 116-128, 162-174, 262-267)
13	4/8	Neurocognitive Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nevid et al. (Chapter 14) ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 591-643) ▪ First (pp. 135-148, 271-275)
			Homework #5 due
14	4/15	Other Mental Disorders Medication-Induced Movement Disorders and Other Adverse Effects of Medication Other Conditions That May Be a Focus of Clinical Attention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DSM-5 (pp. 707-727)
			Papers due
15	4/22	“Jeopardy” for Exam #2	
16	4/29	Exam #2	Covers all Readings, Lectures, Discussions, Activities, and Videos from 2/25/14-4/15/14