COURSE OUTLINE

Syllabus Statement
This course introduces students to critical perspectives in mental health practice.

Course Description
A significant number of social workers practice in hospital- or community-based mental health programs and utilize the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). Despite the heavy reliance on the DSM in practice social workers are often not familiar with the growing and substantial body of scholarly literature that criticizes the DSM. They may be similarly unfamiliar with the literature that critiques other aspects of the dominant paradigm in mental health practice. Students will be introduced to critical perspectives in mental health practice including the development, reliability and validity of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM); the influence of pharmaceutical companies in mental health care; dramatically increased prevalence rates for mental illness, particularly amongst children and adolescents; culture, gender and diagnosis; and strategies for re/shaping social work practice in mental health. Students will be required to evaluate current mental health practice in light of the growing and sustained critique of current mental health practice.

Learning Objectives
This course will encourage students to:
1. Examine the structure and assumptions of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manuals of Mental Disorders (DSM).
2. Examine current critiques of the DSM.
3. Consider the social, historical, and cultural context of mental health practice.
4. Examine general, current criticisms of social work and other professional practice in mental health.
5. Examine current mental health practice in one particular area of practice or interest.
6. Critique current mental health practice in the selected area of interest.

Relationship to Other Courses
This course is one of three social work options courses in the MSW Clinical Specialization program offered in Edmonton and one of two focusing on advanced clinical practice with families and in mental health. As an advanced clinical course in social work practice and mental health this course requires students to develop and articulate critical analyses of dominant and alternative models of practice.

Required text
Course schedule

January 2

Introduction to course
Organization
Assumptions and objectives

“But he [the emperor] has nothing on at all”: The DSM and social work practice

Required Reading

Supplementary Readings

January 3

“Donuts for the doctors”: Pharmaceuticals and the pharmaceutical industry

Supplementary Readings

“[They] do so well over there and so badly here” or “Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain, Dorothy!”: Rethinking diagnosis and treatment

Supplementary Readings

January 4
“We hold these truths to be self-evident:” Accepted diagnoses and other convenient “truths”

Supplementary Readings

January 6
“We are extremely cross with the medical profession. It’s about time they got their act together”: Situating disorders in children
Required Reading

Supplementary Readings

January 7
“Contested landscape[s]”: Incorporating critical perspectives in mental health

Required Reading

Supplementary Readings
Assignments and grading
The weighting, due dates, and expectations for assignments and activities are described below. Groups will negotiate the focus and format of the group activities with the instructor and time will be provided in class for group work and meetings with the instructor. Assignments 1 and 3 listed below are to be submitted directly to the instructor at renns@ucalgary.ca and students should save an electronic or paper copy of all assignment admitted by email. The instructor will confirm that the email submission has been received. Late assignments will not be accepted unless emergency circumstances arise and an extension has been granted.

1. Journal Assignments: 40%
Two journal assignments of 3 to 5 double-spaced pages (12-point, Times New Roman font) are required. The first is due on January 5 at midnight and the second is due on January 8 at midnight. Each assignment is worth 20%.

Journal assignment 1: Themes developed over the first three days of the course include the development of the DSM, the reliability and validity of psychiatric diagnosis, the release of the DSM 5, the influence of pharmaceutical companies on the delivery of mental health services, cultural limitations of diagnosis and mental health practice, and the medicalization of experience and distress. Select one or more of these themes and reflect on the significance for social work practice.

Journal assignment 2: Discussions over the last two days of the course will focus on the impact of current mental health practice on children and identifying models or strategies for critical practice. Select one or more of the themes that were discussed over the last two days of class and reflect on the significance for social work practice.

2. Working group presentations: 20%
Students will meet in working groups to discuss themes emerging from classroom discussions and material and to explore specific themes that will be considered over the last two days of classes. Each group will present their emerging findings as assigned over the last two days of classes. More information will be provided in class. Ten percent of the marks allocated for this assignment will be assigned by the instructor, and 10% will be assigned through self-evaluation.

3. Individual paper: 40%
Utilizing readings and materials from class, each student will complete an individual essay reflecting on critical mental health practice in social work. More details will be provided in class. Format: double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, 1” margins, APA format (6th ed.) Length: maximum 15 pages, including title page and references
Due: January 16, 2014, may be submitted via email to instructor at renns@ucalgary.ca.
**Course Evaluation**
Student feedback will be sought at the end of the term through the standard university and Faculty of Social Work course evaluation forms and at least once during the term through a formative evaluation midway through the class.

"If a student is interested in undertaking an assignment that will involve collecting information from members of the public, he or she should speak with the course instructor and consult the CFREB ethics website ([http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb](http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/ethics/cfreb)) before beginning the assignment."

**WRITING EXPECTATIONS**
It is expected that all work submitted in assignments should be the student’s own work, written expressly by the student for this particular course. Students are referred to the section on plagiarism in the University Calendar ([www.ucalgary.ca/honesty/plagiarism](http://www.ucalgary.ca/honesty/plagiarism)) and are reminded that plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence.
U of C Calendar, 2013-14
The online Graduate Calendar is the official University Calendar. You can view the Graduate Calendar at http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/index.htm. The Faculty of Social Work uses the University of Calgary grading system, as shown above. The official grading system must be used to report final grades to the Registrar but need not be used for individual assignments, quizzes, etc. An instructor electing not to use the official system for a particular component(s) of a course must provide the class, in the same format as was used for the course outline, with an interpretation of the system being used. It is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. The University grading system can be viewed online.

Normally, a student who displays poor academic standing will be required to withdraw from the program unless the program recommends otherwise, and said recommendation is approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Poor academic standing is defined by any one, or combination, of the following: a student who receives a "C+" or lower in any one course; thesis-based students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies, who do not maintain a GPA within the last 12 months of at least 3.00 at the May reviewing period; and course-based students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies who do not maintain an annual GPA of at least 3.00 (the GPA for course-based students will be calculated each year at the time of their registration anniversary). When any instance of poor academic standing arises, the Program must submit a notice informing the Dean of Graduate Studies of its recommendation. If the program permits the student to retake a failed course, the second grade will replace the initial grade in the calculation of the GPA, and both grades will appear on the transcript. A student must have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.00 in order to graduate.

Withdrawal
The last day to withdraw with permission from Winter session block courses is Tuesday, January 7, 2014. No refund for withdrawal from Winter session half-courses after Friday, January 17, 2014. The last day to withdraw with permission from Winter session half-courses is Monday, April 14, 2014. The Graduate Studies Academic Schedule for 2013/2014 can be viewed at http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/academic-schedule.html.

Examinations
Exams are the property of the instructor and the University of Calgary and may not be reproduced in any fashion without express written consent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade point value</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Faculty of Social Work Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>4.0 Outstanding</td>
<td>95 - 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent: superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject</td>
<td>90 - 94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7 Very good performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3 Good performance</td>
<td>85 - 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0 Satisfactory performance</td>
<td>80 - 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7 Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies.</td>
<td>75 - 79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3 All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted towards Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. Individual programs may require a higher passing grade.</td>
<td>70 - 74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Academic Accommodation
It is a student's responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. If you are seeking academic accommodation, please notify your instructor no later than 14 days after the commencement of this course. See http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/node/93
Reference List

The following list is neither comprehensive nor representative. It is provided to assist with classroom discussions and course assignments. Students are encouraged to consult this list for course assignments, but are also expected to utilize academic journals and academic databases.


Flouri, E. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): What we have learned and what we still have not found out. (2005). *Journal of Interpersonal Violence,* 20, 373-379.


Washburn, M. (2013). Five things social workers should know about the DSM-5. Social Work, (58)4,


