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Course Syllabus

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Mental Health Policy and Services

Indiana University
School of Social Work

S631 Social Policy and Services II: Mental Health

Instructor's Name: Rita Akins, MSW, LCSW Semester: Summer II
2000

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I. Course Rationale and Description

The purpose of this course is to provide intensive study of a specific field of service delivery and to provide an opportunity for synthesis and application of learning in the specific policy area in which the second year student has their practicum, whether with an interpersonal or macro practice emphasis. This course is one of the curricular offerings directed toward the development of a specialization in a specific field of practice. The content of the specialized policy course will build on the history, mission and philosophy of the social work profession towards practice in this service delivery field. The focus of the course will be placed upon: the analysis of the current patterns in the provision of social services and the role of the "social policy practitioner" in helping or deterring people in the maintenance or attainment of optimal health and well-being.

Opportunity for students will be encouraged for direct involvement in the political and organizational processes used to influence policy, the process of policy formulation, and the frameworks for analyzing social policies in light of the principles of social and economic justice.

The study of the specific service delivery system will be focused on two levels of inquiry: (1) the theoretical concepts and skills of social policy analysis explicated in previous courses, namely, the interrelationships inherent in social need and problem definition, formulation of social policy goals and objectives, program design strategies, and evaluation of social service delivery systems; and (2) the critical thinking and political realities involved in being a social policy practitioner on social policy issues of a specific service delivery system structured on the model explicated in previous courses; namely, problem definition, social policy goals, program design and service delivery.

II. General Course Objectives

The student will be expected to demonstrate an ability to :

1. Develop specialized knowledge in one field of service delivery with specific focus on :
 - a. The dimension of the problem affecting the population served;
 - b. The structure, organization, and funding of services, and intergovernmental relationships involved in dealing with the problems;
 - c. The legal framework which influences and governs services;
 - d. Trends and issues which effect service delivery in the specific field;
 - e. Differential social work roles and interventions;
 - f. Effects of the service delivery system upon social and economically oppressed populations.
2. Critically analyze the adequacy, effectiveness, and cost efficiency of social policies that address problems and needs of vulnerable populations and social service delivery systems within a specific field of practice.
3. Analyze the impact of oppression and discrimination, and understand and apply strategies and skills of change in social policy practice that advances social and economic justice.
4. Choose appropriate strategies of communication and change tactics with a variety of client populations and colleagues in society, including those from interdisciplinary settings, service delivery systems synthesizing and application of knowledge relevant to the field of study.
5. Analyze the impact of social policies on client systems, workers, and agencies and focus professional skills in the influence of policy formulation and change.
6. Understand and evaluate relevant research studies and apply findings to social policy issues.
7. Apply critical thinking skills within professional contexts, including synthesizing and applying appropriate theories and knowledge to social policy practice.

III. Specific Objectives

The student will be expected to:

1. Examine the incidence and prevalence of "mental illness".
2. Develop an understanding of the major issues and trends underlying mental

health policy development in the United States.

3. Develop an understanding of the major issues and trends in providing care and services to people with mental illness.
4. Develop an understanding of the historical background of community mental health centers, specific legislation and social policy changes in the postwar eras.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the political, economic, and social constraints on mental health agencies in the 1990's and into the twenty-first century.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the structure, organization, and funding arrangements of mental health delivery systems.
7. Demonstrate an awareness of the impact of mental health programs and policies on people of color, women, lesbian and gay people and other populations at risk as well as those groups distinguished by age, ethnicity, culture, class, religion, and physical and mental ability.
8. Demonstrate an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of policies and programs developed to meet the mental health needs of society.
9. Acquire an understanding of the social worker's role in the formation and implementation of mental health policies.
10. Understand the importance of consumer's rights and participation in the delivery of mental health programs.
11. Enhance the student's ability to participate in the planning and evaluation of mental health programs.
12. Enhance the student's awareness of other fields of thought and influences about mental health services.

IV. Required Text

There is no required text for this class although much of the class lecture material will be taken from:

Mechanic, David (1999). *Mental health and social policy: the emergence of managed care* (4th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

All readings will be assigned and made available through Oncourse. Many of

Course Syllabus

these are articles and many are links to on-line documents.

Course Outline

6 - 26 Orientation, Introductions and Overview

6 - 28 What is Mental Illness and how has America responded to it as a social problem?

7 - 3 America's current response to mental illness.
Read: Introduction and Chapter 1 of Surgeon General's Report.

7 - 5 Diagnostic Criteria and Overview of DSM history

7 - 10 Mental Health Policy related to Special Populations

7 - 12 The cultural context and other factors affecting the definition of mental illness

7 - 17 The financing and delivery of mental health services

7 - 19 Managed Mental Health Care

7 - 24 Presentation

7 - 26 Presentation

7 - 31 Presentation
Overview and Evaluation

8 - 2 Presentation
Conclusion

Readings for each week will be posted on the Oncourse Schedule and will be added to the syllabus as determined appropriate.

The last half of each class from July 5th through July 19th will be devoted to small group meetings for presentation planning.

VI. Assignments

1. Policy Paper

Choose one of the following topics in which there has been much recent debate over policies effecting the delivery of mental health services. Identify the key issues and provide supported commentary on proposed solutions to problem(s).

Discuss how this most impacts society at large from both an economic and social standpoint. Identify advocacy resources related to the problem and give an overview of efforts being made to address it. Provide your own analysis of factors contributing to the problem and what should be done to address it.

Topics include:

1. Fair housing for people with psychiatric disabilities;
2. Regulation concerning privacy of medical records;
3. Medicaid regulations as it affects access to high-cost mental health medications;
4. Outpatient commitment statutes as solution to people with mental illness in jail or homeless on streets;
5. Custody relinquishment as means of obtaining treatment for children;

This paper is due July 26 and is worth 150 points. It is to be 7 - 10 pages in length and written according to APA manuscript preparation guidelines. There are to be a minimum of 15 outside sources used in the development of the paper. These should be identified appropriately both within the text of the paper and on the document reference page.

2. Mini-conference

There will be eight workshop committees, each responsible for an one hour presentation in which they will present a major overview of issues related to a specific mental disorder.

Each presentation should cover:

1. Prevalence of illness
2. Possible causes of illness.
3. Diagnostic criteria according to DSM IV.
4. Available treatment options including overview of preferred psychotherapeutic models.
5. Case example(s).
6. History of the U.S. response to problem.
7. A look at how de-institutionalization has impacted it.
8. Current efforts to address.

The presentation MAY also include:

Course Syllabus

1. An outside speaker considered expert in the particular area being discussed
2. Videos or other audio-visual materials
3. Role plays

This presentation will be worth 200 points. These will be given during the first half of each class on July 24, 26, 31 and August 2. Peer assessment by members of each group will constitute a portion of these points. (25 of the 200)

3. Quiz

There will be a 100 point objective exam given on July 19. This will include true/false and multiple choice questions taken from the assigned readings.

4. Classroom attendance and participation

One un-excused absence will be allowed. Anything more than that may be subject to a reduction in points unless given special clearance by the instructor. Classroom participation is also encouraged as this leads to a greater learning experience.

50 points will be assigned for attendance and classroom participation.

VII. Grading Scale

475 - 500 A
450 - 474 A-
438 - 449 B+
415 - 437 B
400 - 414 B-
388 - 399 C+
365 - 387 C
350 - 364 C-
335 - 349 D+
315 - 334 D
300 - 314 D-
0 - 299 F

VIII. Course Policies

1. Attendance at and preparation for every class is expected.

Course Syllabus

2. All material is expected to be typed, double spaced and inAPA format. Please see grading criteria for papers below.

3. Academic dishonesty (including cheating on exams and plagiarism in papers) is not consistent with ethical conduct in social work practice and is unacceptable in social work classes. In cases of academic dishonesty, university guidelines will be followed. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing (offering the work of someone else as one's own) will fail the course. Failure of a required social work course will result in automatic dismissal from the social work program. A student's right to appeal such dismissal is outlined in materials distributed at student orientation meetings.

To avoid plagiarism, credit sources whenever you use someone else's language or ideas. Such crediting must be detailed and specific. Normally, simply including a work in your list of references is insufficient. Rather, you must specifically acknowledge a source each time you use that source, paragraph by paragraph, even sentence by sentence, as necessary. See theAPA Manual for guidelines for in-text references.

4. Students are expected to respect the opinions and feelings of other students, instructor, and guest speakers, even though they differ from their own.

5. A formal evaluation of the course and its instructor will be completed at the end of the course, consistent with the School's academic policy.

6. As a matter of confidentiality, I do not give grades over the phone nor will I post grades.

7. In accordance with the Indiana University School of Social Work grading policy, students must earn at least a AC@ to pass this course.

In an attempt to maintain an adult climate in which ideas can be openly explored, children do not belong in lectures or exam situations.

In addition, and as a courtesy to other students and the instructor, if you must bring a pager to class, please set it to vibration and, if you need to bring a cellula phone, please turn it off during lecture.

IX. Grading Criteria for Papers

Effective social work practice requires good writing skills to communicate information accurately and concisely to others involved in helping client systems. For this reason, formal writing assignments in social work courses will be evaluated both for the content and ideas presented and for the clarity of that presentation. The grade for a paper will be based on the following criteria:

I. Presentation and Appearance

- A. Neatness
- B. Correct grammar (noun-verb agreement, sentence structure, proper and consistent verb tense, etc.)
- C. Spelling
- D. Punctuation

E. Correct usage of APA style

II. Organization

- A. Structure and format of the paper
- B. Logical sequencing and continuity of ideas
- C. Clarity of expression
- D. Conciseness

III. Content as indicated by specific paper assignment.

All formal papers will be typed, double-spaced, and paginated. APA style is to be used, including in-text references and the bibliography. APA manuals are available at the bookstore and would be a valuable resource in your library.

Students experiencing writing difficulties are advised to seek assistance at the University Writing Center in Room 427 of Cavanaugh Hall. Please call 274-2049 to schedule an appointment or drop by to pick up some available written handouts. If you really get in a pinch, call the Grammar Hotline at 274-3000.

X. Students with Special Needs

Any special needs related to a student's ability to complete the course successfully should be discussed with the instructor within the first three (3) weeks of classes. The office of Adaptive Educational Services provides assistance for students with special learning needs and may be contacted at 274-3241.

XI. Appointments, Office Location and Telephone Numbers:

My Office is ES4113 and my telephone number is 274-6722. I am available for consultation by appointment or on a walk-in basis as time allows.

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