I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on ethical and effective clinical social work practice with adolescents and young adults.

You will learn specific skills for effectively assessing and treating adolescents. We will discuss the science and the art of effectively treating this population – that is we will focus on both the research and knowledge base developed to date to guide treatment and to establish and cultivate the therapeutic relationship necessary for successful treatment to occur. You will learn what to do with adolescents in treatment, and you will also learn how to do it.

We will examine the biological, psychological, and environmental (biopsychosocial) factors that contribute to deficit conditions and resiliency in adolescents. With this foundation, we will focus on techniques to accurately assess and diagnose adolescent problems appropriate for social work intervention, establish goals for treatment, and develop a treatment plan, with attention paid to approaches and techniques that are effective given the adolescent’s strengths, age, motivation level, support systems, and diagnostic profile.

Specific diagnostic categories, risk issues, and potential challenges of this life stage will be covered in detail, with an ongoing focus on how to provide effective, ethical treatment and methods for the evaluation of outcomes and evaluation of the therapeutic relationship.

II. EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES
1. To understand the importance of the therapeutic alliance with adolescents and young adults of diverse racial, cultural, and economic backgrounds, stressing in particular the issues of confidentiality and mandated status.

2. To develop skill in clinically interviewing adolescents and young adults for the purposes of assessment and intervention.

3. To recognize the impact of human diversity on the development of the adolescent and young adult.

4. To recognize the impact of one's own values, biases, and experiences on the understanding and treatment of adolescents and young adults.

5. Building on foundation knowledge of Human Behavior and the Social Environment, to apply dynamic and learning theories to the process of assessment of a young person’s problems within a familial, school, and/or work environment.

6. To understand the role of developmental tasks and normal stressors of this life stage on human functioning.

7. To balance traditional theories and models used to explain or treat deficit conditions with the strengths perspective and competency-based practice.

8. To translate presenting problems into measurable objectives for treatment.

9. To effectively understand and clinically address resistance in the treatment of adolescents.

10. To develop skills in the differential application of theoretically and scientifically based techniques to address issues of mental illness, violence, substance abuse, intimacy, and identity formation.

11. To produce a theoretically and scientifically based, professionally written psychosocial assessment of an adolescent/young adult client.

12. To conduct a literature review and write an annotated bibliography that draws upon theoretical and empirical social work and related literature to explain or suggest best practice treatment of an issue related to this age group.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required Texts


Course packet of scholarly articles (available through the library) and articles handed out in class and/or posted on Blackboard prior to class.

**Recommended Texts**


**Course Assignments**

Each of these assignments is described in more detail in attachments to this syllabus. These assignments are structured to parallel the clinical progression of working with an adolescent, from engaging, assessing and diagnosing the client to developing a clinical hypotheses connected with theory and research, to formulating, implementing and evaluating the effectiveness of the treatment plan. When possible, please use a case from your field placement to complete the assignments. To preserve client confidentiality, please disguise your case material by using pseudonyms for all family members and altering specific identifying details. If you are not seeing adolescents or young adults this semester, please see me.

**Important:** All your assignments must use APA format exactly. Make sure your references are correctly cited and supported in the reference section. Do not include references that are not cited in the paper and do not cite references that are not in the reference section. Papers should be well written and checked for grammar and spelling errors. If you have trouble with writing, visit the writing center for help. Writing skills are necessary for clinical social work and you must be able to produce a quality written product in this class. When handing in all written assignments, attach the cover page to the back of the paper and attach a blank page to the front. I do not want to be aware of the author of the paper until I finish grading it.

**Proposal for assignment 2: Due Class 4**
This must be approved before proceeding with the assignment.

**Assignment 1: Psychosocial Assessment. Due Class 5**
Write a brief biopsychosocial assessment of an adolescent or young adult client, including treatment goals and outcome measurement, and treatment plan.

**Assignment 2: Clinical Literature Review. Due Class 10**
Write an annotated bibliography summarizing scholarly social work and related literature of a clinical issue within a particular adolescent population that would be appropriate for
clinical social work intervention. Prepare a handout with key points to be distributed to the class.

**Assignment 3: Clinical interview Assignment.**
This is an in-class assignment, to be given the last day of class. The goal of this assignment will be for you to construct a clinical process dialogue that incorporates at least 5 specific interventions from one or more clinical theoretical perspectives discussed in class. From case scenarios provided, you will be composing a series of clinical interactions that demonstrate engagement of the client(s) and social worker in an active dialogue from a particular clinical perspective.

**Weekly** Students are expected to arrive on time and to be prepared, with the class readings for the week completed. Readings will be discussed in class and this will be factored into your class participation grade. You are also expected to participate in class discussion as you would be expected to participate in a clinical team as a social worker. Ask questions – this is an opportunity to learn and exchange ideas. I will call on you to comment on the readings or material presented in the class from time to time. Your thoughtful contributions and consistent attendance will contribute to a positive learning environment. We jointly share the responsibility for maintaining an appropriate environment for sharing and exploring our values and beliefs, free of judgment, during the semester. Class participation grade will be determined by my evaluation of your preparation for and participation in class discussion, demonstrations, and input on the weekly reading assignments as noted above.

**Please sign in at each class.** We have less than 35 hours of face-to-face time in this course. Every minute counts. Please arrive on time. If you arrive late, please email me to let me know you did arrive, as attendance will be taken when class starts. We will move quickly and you are expected keep up with the readings. Absences will lower the participation grade. Three absences will result in a grade of F for participation. Please plan ahead and submit assignments on the due date. For each day the assignment is submitted late, 3 points will be deducted. Work ahead so you will not be penalized if an unexpected emergency arises.

**Grading Policy**

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<td>Assignment 3</td>
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The grade for this course will be based on the University Grading system. Please refer to CUA Announcements, or Program Handbooks for Academic Requirements that include scholastic and behavioral requirements.

**Course and Instructor Evaluation**

NCSSS requires electronic evaluation of this course and the instructor. At the end of the
semester, the evaluation form may be accessed at evaluations.cua.edu/evaluations using your CUA username and password. Additional formal and informal written or verbal feedback to the instructor during the semester is encouraged and attempts will be made to respond to requests.

IV. CLASS EXPECTATIONS

A. Scholastic Expectations
Please refer to NCSSS Announcements, or appropriate Program Handbook for Academic Requirements, including scholastic and behavioral requirements. All written work should reflect the original thinking of the writer, cite references where material is quoted or adapted from existing sources, adhere to APA format, and should be carefully proofread by the student before submission to the instructor for grading.

B. Academic Honesty
Joining the community of scholars at CUA entails accepting the standards, living by those standards, and upholding them. Please refer to University Policy and appropriate Program Handbooks. Engaging in academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F in this course.

C. Accommodations
Students with physical, learning, psychological or other disabilities wishing to request accommodations must identify with the Disability Support Services (DSS) and submit documentation of a disability. If you have documented such a disability to DSS that requires accommodations or an academic adjustment, please arrange a meeting with the instructor as soon as possible to discuss these accommodations.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Class 1  January 17
Understanding Adolescence
Overview of adolescent neurobiological and biopsychosocial developmental issues; risk and resilience framework.

Required Readings
Wolfe & Mash, Chapters 1 and 2.

Recommended Readings

Class 2  January 24

Connecting: Beginning the Therapeutic Alliance
Conducting the initial interview, building the relationship, developing assessment skills and case conceptualization, issues of confidentiality and mandated status

Required Readings


Class 3  January 31

Clinically Assessing the Adolescent: Integrating Observations and Clinical Data
Assessing adolescent functioning, including biological, environmental factors. Applying theory to case conceptualization.

Required Readings

Friedberg & McClure, Chapter 8


(Take the Theoretical Evaluation Self Test online at: http://web.pdx.edu/~dcoleman/test.html)


Recommended Readings


Class 4  February 7
PROPOSAL FOR ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE
Developing a Game Plan: Collaborative Goal Setting and Follow-up

Establishing goals, contracting, and outcome measurement; dealing with issues of boundaries and termination. Practical case conceptualization, synthesizing findings, applying theory and translating it to practice.

Required Readings

Friedberg & McClure, Chapters 4-5 (skip child parts)

Wolfe & Mash, Chapter 3

Bertolino, B. (2003). Ch 2: Creating a culture of respect


Class 5  February 14
ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE
Adolescent Sexuality

Understanding adolescent sexuality, the sexuality spectrum and treatment of LGBT youth. Adolescent pregnancy and parenthood.

Required Readings
Wolfe and Mash, Chapters 16, 17, 18


Recommended Reading
Adolesc. Psychiatry, 51:9, 957-974


Class 6  February 21
Disorders of Attention
ADHD with and without hyperactivity, issues associated with impulsivity, hyperactivity and “inattention”.

**Required Readings**

Anonymous, “I Wrote This Essay on 25mgs of Ritalin”

Friedberg & McClure, Ch 6 & 7 & 10

Wolfe & Mash, Chapter 4

**Recommended Reading**


Class 7  February 28
Learning Disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorders
Learning disabilities, pervasive developmental disabilities, autism
Class 8 March 7
Treatment Models and Techniques with Issues of Anxiety
Evidence based approaches to working with anxiety spectrum conditions, (generalized anxiety disorder, phobias, OCD, and Tourette Syndrome).

Required Readings
Friedberg & McClure, Ch 12
Wolfe & Mash, Chapter 7, 20

Recommended Readings


Class 9 March 21
Treatment Models and Techniques with Self Injury, Trauma, and Emotion Dysregulation
Types of and factors contributing to cutting, eating disorders and other self injurious behavior associated with overwhelming affect. Challenges in diagnosing and treating these behaviors.

Required Readings
Wolfe & Mash, Chapters 13 and 14


**Recommended Readings**


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**Class 10  March 28**

**ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE**

**Treatment Models and Techniques with Affective Disorders**

Explore strategies that include cognitive, behavioral and strengths-based approaches for working with depressed adolescents; assessing and treating suicidality.

**Required Readings**

Friedberg & McClure, Chapter 11

Wolfe & Mash, Chapters 8 and 9

**Recommended Readings**


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**Class 11  April 4**

**Treatment Models and Techniques with Issues of Violence and Offending Behaviors**

Anger management techniques, multi-level interventions in working with oppositional and conduct disordered adolescents

**Required Readings**

Friedberg & McClure, Chapter 13

Wolfe & Mash, Chapters 4 and 5


**Recommended Reading**


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### Class 12 April 11
**Treatment Models and Techniques with Substance Abuse**

**Required Readings**

Wolfe & Mash, Chapter 6


**Recommended Reading**


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### Class 13 April 25
**Working with Parents and Families**

**Required Readings**

Friedberg, Ch 14: Working with Parents

Taffel, Chapter 8 Working With Parents, Chapter 9: How to Conduct a Family-Focused Session.


Class 14  May 2
ASSIGNMENT 3 TO BE COMPLETED IN CLASS

Group Therapy with Adolescents

**Required Readings**


Assignment 1: Outline for Psychosocial Assessment

I. PRESENTATION OF FACTS (the “what”) 2-3 pages. Write this section in a succinct narrative using the following headings

   A. Identifying information
      1. Identified client: name, sex, age, grade/occupation
      2. Immediate family and/or others in the household
      3. Ecomap and genogram (attached, not part of 2-3 pages)

   B. Presenting problem and other identified problems
      1. Referral source
      2. Precipitating event
      3. Presenting problem (state in terms of functioning – what is the impact?)
      4. Other problems subject to treatment

   C. Pertinent history
      1. Development
         a. Relevant early history
         b. Milestones, physical and emotional development
         c. Temperament
      2. Medical
      3. School
      4. Social
      5. Family (history of caregivers, substance abuse, violence, mental illness)
      6. History of presenting problem

   D. Present functioning
      1. Mental status exam
      2. School functioning: behavioral, academic
         a. Attitudes about achievement
      3. Social functioning
      4. Family issues
         a. Attitudes about autonomy
      5. Strengths and coping mechanisms
      6. Connection to community

II. Assessment and analysis (the “why”) 1-1.5 pages

   A. Social worker’s assessment of the problem (1-3 sentences, summarize and explain problem development)
   B. Five axis DSM-IV diagnosis
   C. Assessment of the problem using a theory (explain the development of the problem using theoretical concepts, using ONE of the following individual change theories – psychodynamic, cognitive/behavioral or attachment.
III. Treatment goals and outcome measurement >1 page
   A. State clear and measurable goals; indicate who articulated the goals, and how
      you will know if the goals are being met.

IV. INTERVENTION PLAN >1 page
   A. General modality or modalities (Who is to be seen directly? How will
      parents, teachers, others, be engaged in the change effort?)
   B. Specific interventive techniques – relate directly to goals
   C. Referrals
   D. Plan for evaluation and termination.

Do not add anything subjective in section I. It should simply recount the relevant
information and facts. Make sure you have included factual information in section I to
support your diagnosis and assessment in section II – IV.

The total paper should not exceed 6.5 pages, but does not need to be 6.5 pages. Your
goal is to list the relevant information, wrap it up in an assessment with goals and
treatment. This is a tool for you formulate a case, and to document it for others and for
medical records. Cut the fat! Make every word count. Please use APA format, double
spaced.
ASSIGNMENT 2: CLINICAL REVIEW OF LITERATURE

ASSIGNMENT OBJECTIVES

• Enhance skill in writing a clear, cogent problem statement appropriate for a research proposal, scholarly paper, etc.
• Deepen understanding of the process of literature review.
• Deepen knowledge about a problem relevant to social work, this course, and of interest to you.
• Increase familiarity with social work and other mental health disciplines’ scholarly literature.
• Increase ability to determine and understand evidence-based and clinically substantiated treatments for the adolescent/young adult population
• Enhance skill in tightly summarizing literature and articulating it in writing.

Assignment Instructions:

1. Choose an issue or problem for social workers that is of interest to you and relevant to the clinical assessment and/or treatment of adolescents and young adults. Further, select one or more clinical theories (such as psychodynamic, cognitive, behavioral) that reflect the understanding, assessment or treatment of the issue at hand. Begin by generating a short list of possible issues or questions you have about social work practice with adolescents and young adults, and the theory bases that may best describe them. It is strongly recommended that you have your topic approved by your instructor.

2. Write a clinical question in a paragraph reflecting your chosen issue. This should be a tightly crafted paragraph of 4 to 6 sentences that lays out the problem. Discuss what practice knowledge you are expecting to gain through the literature. Add one sentence explaining how and why you organized your bibliography to provide reader clarity (see below).

3. Conduct a search of the recent literature on your topic (within 10 years), comprising scholarly articles. These include peer reviewed theoretical or empirical articles. They do not include book chapters, newsletter summaries, mass media, or internet articles (unless they are from peer reviewed on-line journals). You may use search engines such as Social Work Abstracts or PsychInfo.

4. Identify at least 12 articles that seem relevant to your topic using social work and related journals.

5. Locate the whole-text articles. Copy them. Read them.

6. Organize your articles into related groups (perhaps three or four). Label them with a heading. Some ways to organize your literature include: theory base, similar treatment techniques, comparing and contrasting different treatment approaches, etc. The articles should be organized in such a way that they show how you arrive at your conclusion. Your grade will be based in part on the way the articles are organized. They should progress in a logical order that leads the reader to the conclusion.

7. List the 3-4 articles, alphabetically within that small grouping, in APA bibliography format.

8. Describe what you have learned. Create headings for each group and compose your own summary relating it to your problem. Address in 1 to 2 paragraphs what you have learned. I also want to know how the articles relate to one another (for
example they may support or contradict each other in terms of treatment technique or approach). You should also include, when possible, the size of the study, use of controls, specificity of the treatment description, or other comments that lets the reader understand the usefulness of this study to the larger understanding of the problem. The summary should be written in the third person in appropriate, formal language.

9. **Write a brief conclusion** (4 to 6 sentences) that summarizes what you’ve learned from your literature review about the topic. You may consider competing or complimentary assessments of the problem, treatment concepts, and/or applications of theory. Specifically address the implications for social work practice with adolescents and young adults.

10. **Write an abstract of your paper** briefly summarizing what you learned. This will be distributed to the class. Be sure your name is on this abstract.

**THE PRODUCT**

Hand in:

- A title page, using APA format, that indicates the topic, the course, your name and the date (attach to the back of the assignment)
- The clinical question paragraph
- 3-4 headings with 3-4 articles listed in bibliographical format
- under each heading include 1-2 paragraphs describing what you have learned
- The conclusion
- The first page of each of the articles summarized
- An abstract with key points to be distributed to the class.

**ASSIGNMENT 3: CLINICAL INTERVIEW**
Clinical social workers engage in various clinical interventions with adolescent clients – these can consist of questions, statements, advisements, reflections, interpretations, or silences. Clinical techniques, as understood in this class, are those actions of a social worker with a client that are intended to move the client forward in his or her psychosocial functioning.

This class examines interventions with adolescents from several different theoretical orientations or perspectives. Some of these perspectives include:

- Cognitive / Behavioral Therapy
- Psychodynamic / Ego Psychology
- Motivational Interviewing
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
- Solution-Focused / Narrative Therapies
- Trauma Informed Interventions

This assignment is intended to enhance your skill at clinical engagement with clients through the composition of a series of thoughtful interventions from a specific clinical perspective. Such interventions, regardless of theoretical orientation, are based on encouraging a client to engage in the therapeutic process. Interventions can be targeted to increase development of therapeutic alliance, increase level of client insight into problematic behavior, increase client understanding of particular strengths or abilities, increase occurrence of positive change behaviors, or all of the above.

The goal of this assignment will be for you to construct a clinical process dialogue that incorporates at least 5 specific interventions from one of the theoretical perspectives listed above.

Review the two accompanying case scenarios and choose one. Then, compose a series of clinical interactions that demonstrates engagement of the client(s) and social worker in an active dialogue from a particular clinical perspective. You are free to define who the specific client is in the context of the clinical interview. Using the attached form, set up your assignment in two columns. In the left column, write the dialogue between you and the client just as you would in a process recording. That is, the social worker offers a question/statement, and then the client responds. In the right column, opposite each specific intervention, analyze the intervention by identifying the type of intervention, the objective and rationale of the intervention, and any other brief discussion you find to be important.

Your assignment should include a minimum of five (clearly labeled) substantive clinical interventions appropriate for adolescent clients. There may be “non-substantive” follow-up questions or comments that keep the flow of the interview going. I am interested in five clearly labeled interventions that represent one of the perspectives listed above. Within the dialogue, the functions of the interventions should be evident (i.e. increase client insight, increase motivation for change). The client responses can be
crafted to take the social worker smoothly along the path desired, or they may shift the social worker’s direction. That is, you can indicate a gap in time and take a different direction. Be creative, but allow the client to move forward. It will not be helpful for the purpose of this assignment for you to make the clients particularly “resistant.”

We will spend approximately 60 minutes writing. You may consult books, notes, or the instructor. This is not an exercise in demonstrating memorization of names of techniques. Rather, it is an attempt to help you apply what we have been learning. I will evaluate student work based on formulation of questions and interventions as well as the depth and thoughtfulness of analysis.