Course Description

This is a survey course designed to introduce college students to the fascinating world of mental illness. The first part of the course deals with the definition of mental illness. This is a challenging task, in light of the fact that mental illness can take exotically different forms around the world.

The second part of the course centers around the clinical symptoms and theoretical causes of the more common forms of mental illness, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, paranoia, phobia, obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorder, multiple personality disorder, psychopathy, personality disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder and psychosexual disorders.

The third part of the course examines how different types of mental illness vary across sociodemographic groups. Who is most at risk and why? Topics include gender, race, ethnicity, marital status, religion, social class, place of residence, migration, age, and family variables such as sibling position. Cross-cultural differences are regularly emphasized.

The last part of the course deals with what is known as "patienthood." We examine three questions carefully: What happens to people as they become mentally ill? How are the mentally ill treated, particularly in mental hospitals? What problems do ex-patients encounter when they attempt to rejoin society?

The course topics are approached in a variety of ways including lectures, case discussions, state-of-the-art films, and expert guest lecturers on serial murder, homosexuality, psychiatry and the law and the community mental health movement.

This course fulfills the cultural diversity requirement.

Learning Objectives for Students

(1) To learn about the conceptual aspects of mental illness from both an historical and contemporary perspective.

(2) To know the symptoms of some of the more common forms of mental illness in the United States and around the world.

(3) To develop an understanding of the numerous causal theories of mental illness.

(4) To learn about the distribution of mental illness over different sociodemographic groups.
(5) To learn what happens to people (and their families) as they become mentally ill.

(6) To understand the different ways the mentally ill are treated, particularly in mental hospitals.

(7) To learn about the problems ex-patients encounter when they attempt to rejoin society.

Required Books and Readings


(3) You will be provided with readings on current issues in Psychiatric Sociology. All of these are available on WebCT. These include slides for the PowerPoint presentation on schizophrenia. These are to be read by the date noted on the reading list on page 5 of the syllabus.

(4) For those of you who wish to pursue topics of special interest, please note:
* There are over 3,500 different references to secondary sources in the Gallagher book.

Examinations and Grades

The mid-term examination (see Important Dates Sheet) will cover the first 5 chapters of Gallagher plus designated cases in Leon. The final exam will cover Chapters 6-14 of Gallagher plus designated cases in Leon. Each examination is worth approximately 45 percent of the final grade. Your case presentation, questions for the guest speakers and class participation comprise the other 10%. Other material on both exams includes the “outside readings” and information from the guest lecturers. Thus, your final grade is determined by:

1. Mid-Term and Final Exams
2. Case Presentation
3. Essay Questions for the Guest Speakers
4. Class Participation

Case Presentation

Each of you will be assigned a case from Leon. You are expected to know all aspects of the case and be able to discuss it intelligently in class. Your case will be discussed in the order in which it appears on the syllabus. Be prepared ahead of time since there is no way of knowing the precise day of your case presentation. If you end up with a "marginal" grade average on the two examinations (e.g. - between a B and B+), your final grade will be determined by your “performance” on the case (e.g. - a positive performance will result in the higher of the two grades.)
Class Attendance

Attendance is rarely a problem in this class. Most students find the subject matter interesting and want to come. However, sometimes there is a deviant or two. These are the people who do poorly in the course because they did not benefit from the lectures. Consequently, I take attendance so that there will be a record of who these people are. If they complain about failing an exam, I can point to their absences as a likely cause.

Excessive absences significantly reduce student learning. Therefore, unexcused absences in excess of 4 classes will result in a lowering of the course grade by half of a grade (e.g. - B+ reduced to B).

Cultural Diversity

This course fulfills the cultural diversity requirement. Since the mentally ill are a forgotten and misunderstood population, they are the subject of widespread biases common to a minority group. Additionally, much of the course deals with issues of gender, race, ethnicity and cross-cultural variation.

Important Dates
See attached list.

Office Hours
Tuesday and Thursday 1:30 - 2:30 P.M.
These and Other Times by Appointment. (I am more than willing to meet you at any time that is convenient for both of us.)

COURSE OUTLINE

I. MENTAL ILLNESS AND SOCIAL FORCES: AN OVERVIEW
   A. Mental Illness and Society
      Gallagher - Chapter 1
   B. Concepts, Definitions and Types of Mental Illness: A Cross-Cultural Perspective
      Gallagher - Chapter 2
   C. Environmental Theories of Mental Illness: The Influence of Social Stress
      Gallagher - Chapter 3

II. COMMON FORMS OF MENTAL ILLNESS: PREVALENCE, SYMPTOMS AND CAUSES
   A. Schizophrenic and Mood Disorders
      Gallagher - Chapter 4
      Leon - Cases 17, 18 and 19 (schizophrenia)
      Cases 15 and 16 (mood disorder)
B. Anxiety Disorders
   Gallagher - Chapter 5
   Leon - Case 5 (phobic disorder)
   Leon - Case 6 (obsessive compulsive disorder)

C. Personality Disorders
   Gallagher - Chapter 6
   Leon - Case 4 (antisocial personality disorder)

D. Somatoform and Dissociative Disorders
   Leon - Case 9 (conversion disorder)

E. Sexual and Substance-Related Disorders
   Leon - Case 13 (alcoholism)
   Leon - Case 10 (cross-addiction)

III. THE SOCIAL EPIDEMIOLOGY OF MENTAL ILLNESS
   A. Epidemiology: An Overview of Patterns of Mental Illness
      Gallagher - Chapter 7
   
   B. Social Class and Social Mobility
      Gallagher - Chapter 8
   
   C. Gender, Marital Status and Family Relationships
      Gallagher - Chapter 9
   
   D. Religion, Ethnicity and Race
      Gallagher - Chapter 10
   
   E. Migration, Place of Residence and Age
      Gallagher - Chapter 11
   
IV. THE PSYCHOSOCIAL EXPERIENCES OF MENTAL PATIENTS
   A. Becoming a Mental Patient: The Prepatient Process
      Gallagher - Chapter 12
   
   B. Treatment: The Inpatient Experience
      Gallagher - Chapter 13
   
   C. After the Mental Hospital: The Social Role of the Ex-Mental Patient
      Gallagher - Chapter 14
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<th>Read By</th>
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<td>1/24</td>
<td>Psychiatric Terms</td>
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<td>Breaking the Silence of Stigma</td>
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<td>1/26</td>
<td>Defying Psychiatric Wisdom</td>
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<td>Drugs Shaping Psychiatry</td>
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<td>1/31</td>
<td>Schizophrenia Lectures Outline (PowerPoint)</td>
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<td>Schizophrenia and Twins</td>
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<td>Drugs for Schizophrenia</td>
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<td>Keeping Schizophrenics on Meds</td>
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<td>Mentally Ill in the Streets</td>
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<td>Personality Seen in Brain</td>
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<td>OCD and Bacteria</td>
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<td>MPD Article</td>
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<td>Hiring the Mentally Ill</td>
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<td>Anorexia Around the World</td>
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<td>Infection Connections and Mental Illness</td>
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<td>Serial Murder Lecture Outline (+ Articles)</td>
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<td>4/18</td>
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13 - Before Mid-Term
14 - After Mid-Term
27 - Total
IMPORTANT DATES – SPRING 2006 SEMESTER

1/17 Course Organization

2/09 “Bellevue: Inside Out” (Projection Room #3)
2/16 “Broken Minds” (Projection Room #3)
2/28 “Phobia” (Projection Room #3)

3/02 Mid-Term Exam
3/07 SPRING BREAK
3/09 SPRING BREAK

3/23 “Fugue Syndrome” (Projection Room #3)
3/28 “Asylum” (Projection Room #3)
3/30 * Guest Speaker
       Mr. Cory Rogers
       Consumer Advocate
       Mental Health Association of Southeastern Pennsylvania
       Website: www.mhasp.org

4/06 "John Wayne Gacy" (Projection Room #3)
4/11 "The Hillside Strangler" (Projection Room #3)
4/13 EASTER

4/18 * Guest Speaker
       Mr. Michael Engle, Esquire
       Criminal Defense Attorney
       Former Intern, Serial Murder Division of FBI

4/20 * Guest Speaker
       Mr. Arthur T. Donato, Esquire
       Criminal Defense Attorney and Founding President
       of the PA Assoc. of Criminal Defense Lawyers

4/27 * Guest Speakers
       Ms. Elizabeth Schmidt, Nurse, University of PA
       Mr. Michael Gallagher, Grad Student, Temple Univ.
       Mr. David Janke, Recent NOVA Graduate (2003)

5/02 No Class
5/04 Last Class Day