Clinical Practice with Adult Trauma
CP 803
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to provide students with in-depth knowledge of the impact of psychological trauma on brain structure and function, as well as its effects on development, attachment and emotion regulation. We will look at recent research findings on how the mind and body respond to traumatic experiences. Students will become familiar with the range of trauma disorders, from single incident events to complex trauma. Students will become familiar with different theoretical approaches to treatment. Best practices for the treatment of the various trauma disorders will be presented. The course will emphasize acquiring the skills needed for effective treatment. Throughout the semester we will look at the impact of trauma work on the clinician and strategies for self care. The course has two components, first, presenting theoretical material on the impact of trauma, and on the assessment and treatment of trauma survivors, and second, integrating the didactic material with students’ presentations of current treatment cases. The course will present a strengths based approach, incorporating phase oriented treatment and evidence based practice.
THIS COURSE SUPPORTS THE ATTAINMENT OF ADVANCED PRACTICE COMPETENCY IN:

- Competency 2.1.1 Professional Identity
- Competency 2.1.2 Ethical Practice
- Competency 2.1.3 Critical Thinking
- Competency 2.1.4 Diversity in Practice
- Competency 2.1.5 Human Rights and Justice
- Competency 2.1.6 Research Based Practice
- Competency 2.1.7 Human Behavior
- Competency 2.1.8 Policy Practice
- Competency 2.1.9 Practice Contexts
- Competency 2.1.10 Engage, Assess, Intervene, Evaluate

Specific assignments in this course will assess your attainment of this competency.

Information about the specific competencies and related advanced practice behaviors addressed in this course and your other MSW courses can be found at http://www.bu.edu/ssw/students/current/competency-map/

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the influences of childhood trauma on adult memory, affect regulation, and attachments
2. Conduct an assessment of traumatic stress in adults and children
3. Apply the phase-oriented treatment model
4. Demonstrate an understanding of how to treat both single event trauma and complex trauma and dissociation
5. Treat traumatic stress in families living in challenging social environments.
7. Assess and treat returning war veterans.
8. Articulate strategies for self care which address vicarious traumatization in professional caretakers

**TEXT & READINGS**

**Required:**

**The Following Books are Required for the Course:**


**Chapters from the following texts are available on Blackboard**


**Recommended:**

**Additional Recommended Books:**


**Recommended Websites**

American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children  [www.apsac.org](http://www.apsac.org)
Centers for Disease Control Disaster resources:  [www.bt.cdc.gov/mentalhealth](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/mentalhealth)
David Baldwin’s trauma information pages  [www.trauma-pages.com](http://www.trauma-pages.com)
International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies  [www.istss.org](http://www.istss.org)
International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD)  [http://www.isst-d.org](http://www.isst-d.org)
National Child Traumatic Stress Network:  [www.nchtsnet.org](http://www.nchtsnet.org)
National Center for PTSD:  [www.ncptsd.va.gov](http://www.ncptsd.va.gov)
*New England Society for the Treatment of Trauma and Dissociation*  [www.nesttd.org](http://www.nesttd.org)  *Note: This is a local group which has excellent speakers. It is worth getting on their mailing list*

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**CLASS #1: Introduction to Trauma. Overview of the course**


Readings Due:
Cloitre, Cohen & Koenen (2006). Chapter 1
Judith Herman, Chapter 1

**CLASS #2: Making the diagnosis. Single event vs. complex trauma  Continued overview of theoretical framework for trauma treatment.**

Readings Due:
Courtois, Chapter 1, 4
Judith Herman, Chapters. 2-3


**Suggested Readings:**


**Readings Due:**

Courtois, Chapter 2, 10
Judith Herman- Ch. 3-6
Saxe, Ellis & Kaplow Ch. 1-2


**Suggested Readings:**


**CLASS #5- Attachment, emotion regulation and distress tolerance. Phase oriented treatment.**

**Readings:**

Cloitre et. al. Ch. 4
Courtois, Chapter 6, 9, 16,
Herman, J. Ch 7-11


Suggested Readings:


CLASS #6 & 7: Tasks of early stages of treatment: establishing safety, distress tolerance skills, Assessment and treatment planning using a TST lens

Readings:

Cloitre chs.10-13
Courtois, Chapter 5, 12, 14


Suggested Reading:


CLASS #8 & 9: Co morbidity Trauma and Addiction; Challenges in trauma treatment : The need for community-wide healing: Self Harm, dual diagnosis

Readings


Nock (2009), Why do people hurt themselves? Current directions in psychological science, 18(2), 78-83


**Suggested Readings:**


**CLASS #10 & 11: Cultural Lenses, Diverse groups, Immigrants and Refugees**

Courtois, Chapter 8


**Suggested Readings:**


**CLASS #12: Overview of the assessment and treatment of the dissociative disorders**

**Required Readings:**

Courtios, Chapter 7

1) Chapter 6: Riding the therapeutic roller coaster: Stage-oriented treatment for survivors of childhood abuse (pp. 73-91)
2) Chapter 7: The paradox of self-care (pp. 92-107)
3) Chapter 8: Controlling post-traumatic and dissociative symptoms (pp. 108-117)


**Suggested Readings:**


**CLASS #13 & 14 Special populations, Resiliency, Stress resistance, spiritual practice.**

*Where do we go from here?*

**Readings:**


Courtios, Chapter 15


Saxe, et al. (2007). Chapter 16: Meaning-making skills: How to help children make meaning out of their traumatic experiences and move on with their lives (pp. 278-300)

**Suggested Reading:**


**COURSE EXPECTATIONS**

**CLASS PARTICIPATION**
Students are expected to attend all classes. If you are unable to attend for any reason, please call or email me in advance. I expect you to do the readings and be prepared to discuss them in class. One of the goals of the course is to create a safe and supportive space in class for participants to discuss clinical and theoretical material and to learn from each other.

**ASSIGNMENTS**
There are four assignments for this course:

**Assignment #1:**

**PREPARATION FOR TRAUMA PRACTICE & SELF-CARE**
The purpose of this assignment is to relate your own personal experiences to the issues discussed in class. Most of us have been affected by trauma in some way, whether as a result of very personal experiences within relationships, or in our
families, either directly, as a result of intergenerational transmission of trauma, or by some event out in the world. In this paper, you are asked to reflect on, and discuss your own experiences of trauma and the effects this exposure has had on you, your life, and/or loved ones. The assignment asks you to consider the personal challenges you will encounter as you treat trauma survivors.

Part 1: Because an important theme of the course is preparing clinicians to practice in the area of trauma, this paper is a place where you may begin (or continue) an honest appraisal of your "competencies" related to issues of trauma, traumatic impact, and violence, and to explore how your personal beliefs and experiences interact with your professional practice. Because this is very personal reflection, and can be painful, this piece of the work is private and will not be turned in to me. However, it is necessary for you to undergo some level of self-analysis in order to complete the next piece of the assignment, which will be turned in to me.

Part 2: In the second, "public" aspect of the assignment, you will create a personal and professional self-care plan for yourself. The purpose of this component of the assignment is to consider seriously how you may be affected by working with people who have experienced trauma, how clients' stories may interact with your own history and experiences, and how you will actively pursue self-care in this context. Be as intellectual, emotional or practical as you wish while producing a readable, coherent essay. Self report of care practices will take place in most class sessions.

SOCIAL WORK COMPETENCY

This assignment will provide the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge, values and skills in your application of Professional Identity (Competency 2.1.1)

SUGGESTED LENGTH: FOUR PAGES.
DUE DATE: Class #4

Assignment #2

IN-CLASS CASE CONSULTATION
During Session 1, students will be organized into consultation groups. In the following weeks, each student will present a case to the group as described below. Each presenter should email a case description to all members of the group and to me by the day before class. The case description should be no more than two (2) pages, and can be in outline form.

We will use about 25 minutes each week to work with student cases. Each presenter should be prepared to discuss his or her case for 10-15 minutes, with 10-15 minutes for discussion and feedback. Consultants should save questions for after the presentation, unless clarification is needed. Each presenter should have several questions in mind to discuss with consultants. Below are guidelines for presenting although not all of you will have the same amount or depth of information in each area.
Guidelines for In-Class Case Consultation

1. Give a brief description of your client’s presenting concerns and your concerns. How was the client referred to your program?

2. Give a brief social and family history. Briefly Describe what is known about the client’s trauma experiences. If there isn’t specific information regarding trauma, discuss whether and why a trauma framework makes sense for this client.

3. Describe the client’s adaptations to trauma using a trauma framework. Consider all areas of the client’s life. Specifically, how does the client regulate affect? Interpersonal (attachment) relationships? Behavior? What are the client’s symptoms? How would you characterize the ability of the client’s environment to support regulation (e.g., Saxe et al., 2007)?

4. Discuss your approach to treatment or raise this as a question for your peer consultation. Discuss how you would proceed within a phase oriented treatment framework.

5. Describe the treatment relationship. Has a therapeutic relationship been established? What are some of the relationship dynamics? What gets in the way of being empathic with this client?

6. Discuss vicarious traumatization concerns or issues. How does work with this client affect you?

Discussion

1) What questions do you have about the case?

2) What would you like help with?

3) What has been the most challenging aspect of the case for you?

4) What questions and constructive feedback do consultants have for the presenter?

SOCIAL WORK COMPETENCY

This assignment will provide the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge, values and skills in your application of Professional Identity (Competency 2.1.1), Critical Thinking (Competency 2.1.3), and your ability
to apply the specific skills of Engagement, Assessment, Intervention, and Evaluation (Competency 2.1.10)

DUE DATE: To be arranged in class

Assignment #3:

AN ANALYSIS OF:

A) THE NOVEL PUSH: A Study of Individual and Community Trauma or the film adaptation, Precious.

-or-

B) Any other novel, film, or personal narrative addressing the topic of trauma. This must be discussed with me and approved in advance. The questions below may need to be adapted to fit your choice of topic.

Write a 4-6 page paper addressing the following questions related to assessment and diagnosis. Include at least 3 references to support your position.

Questions:

1) Analysis of the character's symptoms including: evidence of affective and behavioral dysregulation, neurobehavioral components and dissociation.

2) Give a diagnosis of your character
   What is your rationale?
   What co-morbidity can be observed?
   How well does the diagnosis of PTSD fit your character?
   Comment on complex or developmental trauma disorder

3) Discuss your thoughts and observations about how racism and other oppressions, including sex/gender, social class/socio-economic status and the environmental context factor into this story. How do you think racism and other oppressions may contribute to the kinds of traumatic experiences your character has, how the character is able to cope with trauma, and how systems respond to her needs?

4) Closing summary and thoughts

SOCIAL WORK COMPETENCY

This assignment will provide the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge, values and skills in your application of Critical Thinking (Competency 2.1.3), and your ability to apply the specific skills of
ASSIGNMENT #4:

Final Assignment:  
You will complete an individual final research paper on a topic of your choice. You must present me with a one page copy of your proposal by the 10th class in order that I may give you feedback and approval for your project. Individual Research Papers will be due by our final class session. The paper will be a maximum of 12 pages in length in APA format with a bibliography of at least 10 references, 6 of which must be from outside of the class readings.

SOCIAL WORK COMPETENCY

This assignment will provide the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge, values and skills in your application of Critical Thinking (Competency 2.1.3), and your ability to apply the specific skills of Engagement, Assessment, Intervention, and Evaluation (Competency 2.1.10)

DUE DATE: FINAL CLASS

COURSE GRADING CRITERIA

Final grades will be determined in the following proportions

- Class participation: 15%
- Assignment #1/Self Care: 15%
- Assignment #2/Case Consultation: 15%
- Assignment #3/Case Analysis: 15%
- Assignment $4/Research Paper: 40%

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance:  
Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to inform the instructor in advance of any absences. Failure to attend class sessions is likely to have a negative effect on your course grade.

Academic honesty:  
Papers and presentations in the School of Social Work must meet standards of academic honesty and integrity, avoiding any possibility of plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. For specific information about the BUSSW policy

**Writing style and references:**

**Students with disabilities:**
If you have a disability and want to request reasonable accommodation, the University requires that you consult with Boston University’s Office of Disability Services for information regarding this process (http://www.bu.edu/disability/).

**Academic writing assistance:**
If you would like academic writing assistance, information can be found at http://www.bu.edu/ssw/current/academic/assistance/index.shtml or contact the BUSSW Office of Student Services.

**Electronic devices in the classroom:**
Computers may be used to support the learning activities in the classroom, with permission of your instructor. These include such activities as taking notes and accessing course readings under discussion. However, non-academic use of laptops and other devices are distracting and seriously disrupt the learning process for everyone. Neither computers nor other electronic devices are to be used in the classroom for non-academic reasons. This includes e-mailing, texting, social networking, and use of the Internet. The use of cell phones during class time is prohibited. Please turn off cell phones and refrain from taking calls unless you are “on call” and have cleared this with the instructor prior to class. Under such circumstances, please put your phone on vibrate, sit close to a door, and step out of the room to take the call.

**Religious holidays:**
The school, in scheduling classes on religious holiday, intends that students observing those holidays be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for canceled classes to be reschedule

**Other course policies:** (*optional – delete item heading if you don’t use it.*)