CLINICAL ASSESSMENT AND DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS

I. Standardized Course Description
This course will focus on the incidence, etiology, and assessment of dysfunctional behavior patterns with children, adolescents, adults, and families. Students will learn models of assessment to evaluate human functioning throughout the lifecycle, with emphasis on vulnerable and diverse populations. Major classification systems, such as Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders and the International Classification of Diseases, and other schemes for assessing and understanding human behavior, will be covered.

This course is required of MSSW students in the Clinical concentration.

II. Standardized Course Objectives By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with biological, psychosocial, and cultural theories on the etiology of dysfunctional behavior patterns;
2. Demonstrate the ability to apply multiple methods of assessment, including those developed through classificatory schemes, standardized measures, and qualitative typologies;
3. Describe the relationship between assessment and intervention in social work practice;
4. Demonstrate the ability to adapt assessment models to reflect the needs of persons of diverse social, economic, cultural or ethnic backgrounds, including understanding issues of gender, sexual orientation, and ability;
5. Critically evaluate different theoretical and assessment models as to their efficacy in given situations. This includes: a) the adequacy of the research and knowledge base; b) the range of applicability; c) the value and ethical issues, including the student’s own value system, and d) the policy implications involved in assessment and delivery of services;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of the limitations in using classification schemes in understanding human behavior and the danger of mislabeling people, particularly those from at-risk populations.

III. Teaching Methods
The primary teaching methods will be lectures, discussion, and group exercises. Guest lecturers, group presentations, and audio-visual presentations will also be utilized.

IV. Required and Recommended Texts, and Materials

Required:


Hadden, Mark (2003). The curious incident of the dog in the night-time. Double Day Books. ISBN: 0385512104 (Available at Barnes and Noble or Amazon.com or other online bookstore).


Assigned Readings posted on UT Blackboard Class website.

Optional:

Verghese, Abraham (1999). The Tennis Partner. Perennial. ISBN: 0060931132 (Available at Barnes and Noble or Amazon.com or other online bookstore).


V. **Course Requirements**

The following course requirements will be completed during the semester, with points given for each course requirement. Grading will be based on total points accrued by the end of the course. **Blackboard assigned readings will be posted for each class session and should be considered part of your required reading assignments.**

**Examinations:**

Two examinations will be given during the course of the semester (see course schedule for due dates). All exams will consist of both a take-home (50 pts. per take-home portion) and an in-class portion (50 pts. per in-class portion). Students will receive the take-home exam questions at least one week prior to their due date. This portion may include case materials (for assigning diagnoses), short answer, and/or essay questions. **Take home examinations must be TYPED.** The in-class portions of the exams will be similar to the licensing exam questions and will give the student an opportunity to practice the necessary test-taking skills needed to pass that exam. Combined mid-term in-class and take home exams are worth 100 points, while the combined final in-class and take home exams are worth 100 points. **200 points maximum, exams**

**Two Psychosocial Assessment Papers on the Following Books:**

- **The Quiet Room**
- **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time**

Each student will complete a 5-8 page clinical assessment of the main character in each of these books using the outline provided in “The Clinical Assessment Workbook.” Include a description/assessment of the family situation. In the final section of the paper, write a summary of how this individual and family affected you personally and in your role as a social worker (i.e. what were your initial reactions to this person’s disorder; what were your reactions to the family and/or friends’ ability to handle this illness; what were the most difficult parts of the story for you to deal with emotionally; what kinds of questions did it create for you; how did you feel about this person and those impacting him/her at the conclusion of the story; as a social worker, did you feel there were other things that could’ve been done to assist this person and their family or friends). Each paper is worth 75 pts. **150 points maximum, papers**

**Homework Assignments:**

Case assessments will be assigned on a daily basis and graded on the accuracy and thoroughness of cases. The cases must be turned in on time to be given points. Late homework assignments will not be accepted. **50 points, maximum, homework assignments**
Final grades:
A total of 400 points may be earned for the above activities. Grades will be assigned as follows:

376-400 points = A
360-375 points = A-
348-359 points = B+
336-347 points = B
320-335 points = B-
308-319 points = C+
296-307 points = C
280-295 points = C-
268-279 points = D+
256-267 points = D
240-255 points = D-
239 points or below = F

Graduate students must earn a minimum grade of C in the course for credit; also, graduate students must maintain an overall B average.

VI. Class Policies
1. It is important for social work practitioners to be punctual in both attendance and in meeting deadlines. Therefore, class attendance is expected, as is handing in assignments on time. Students will lose 3 points for each day that an assignment is late. Homework assignments will not be accepted late. Any adjustments in due dates MUST be discussed with the instructor at least 24 hours PRIOR to the regularly scheduled date.

2. Students who fail to attend class on a regular basis (missing more than one class without a valid excuse, e.g., medical documentation) may receive one course grade lower than their final grade when points are totaled. Students who are one point below the cut-off for a letter grade may receive the higher grade at the end of the semester based on attendance/participation.

3. Social work practitioners assume responsibility for themselves. Therefore, it is expected that work handed in will be your own. Scholastic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating during examinations, violates social work values and will result in recommendation for dismissal from the social work program and a referral to the Dean of Student's Office (see MSW Handbook).

4. Social work practitioners are assertive and function as team members. Therefore, feedback about the course is welcome and the course will be viewed as a joint effort between students and the instructor.

5. Social work practitioners respect others. Therefore, differences in values, opinions, and feelings of class members and guest speakers will be respected.
Special Accommodations for Students with a Disability

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259; 471-4641 TTY. Please notify the professor of any special accommodations that you may need prior to the end of the second week of class.

Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty

Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, the student may refer to the Web Site of the Student Judicial Services, Office of the Dean of Students (http://www.utexas.edu/depts./dos/sjs).
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Assigned Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 15</td>
<td>Introduction&lt;br&gt;Overview of Syllabus&lt;br&gt;Overview of Theory</td>
<td>Begin Reading “Curious Incident” book by Haddon</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 22</td>
<td>Introduction to Assessment and Classification Systems: DSM Multiaxial system &amp; Background for understanding medications&lt;br&gt;Introduction to Evidence-based Practice</td>
<td>DSM-IV (pp. 1-37) DSM-IV (pp. xxii-xxxvii)&lt;br&gt;Guest Speaker: Danielle Parrish</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 29</td>
<td>Disorders usually diagnosed in infancy, childhood or adolescence&lt;br&gt;Medications used with children</td>
<td>DSM-IV (pp. 39-134)&lt;br&gt;<em>Keep reading Haddon book</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>February 5</td>
<td>ADHD &amp; Conduct Disorders</td>
<td>DSM IV—Childhood disorders (con’t.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 12</td>
<td>Childhood and Adolescent Disorders</td>
<td>DSM IV—Childhood disorders (con’t.)</td>
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<td>February 19</td>
<td>Schizophrenia &amp; other psychotic disorders&lt;br&gt;Antipsychotic medications</td>
<td>DSM-IV (pp. 297-343)&lt;br&gt;Buelow et al., Ch. 4, <em>Psychosis and antipsychotics</em></td>
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<td>Due: Psychosocial Assessment for the “The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time”</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 26</td>
<td>Mental Status Examinations</td>
<td>Delirium, Dementia, Amnestic, and other Cognitive Disorders</td>
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<td>Mental Disorders due to a General Medical Condition</td>
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<td><strong>Receive take-home portion of Exam I</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Mental Disorders</strong></td>
<td><strong>DSM-IV (pp. 135-190)</strong></td>
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<td>March 4</td>
<td>Mood Disorders</td>
<td>Antidepressant &amp; Anti-manic medications</td>
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<td><strong>DSM-IV (pp. 345-428)</strong></td>
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<td><em>Buelow et al., Ch. 2, Depression and antidepressants: Bipolar disorder and lithium</em></td>
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<td>March 11</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 18</td>
<td>Anxiety Disorders</td>
<td>Anxiolytic medications</td>
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<td><strong>Take-home portion of Exam I due</strong></td>
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<td>In-class portion of Exam I</td>
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<td><strong>DSM-IV (pp. 429-463; 469-484)</strong></td>
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<td><em>Buelow et al., Ch. 3, Anxiety and the Anxiolytics (pp. 79-93)</em></td>
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<td>March 25</td>
<td>PTSD</td>
<td>Dissociative Disorders</td>
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<td><strong>DSM-IV (pp. 463-468; 519-533)</strong></td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
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<td>April 1</td>
<td>Substance-related Disorders</td>
<td>DSM-IV (pp. 191-296)</td>
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<td>Substance abuse and older adults:</td>
<td>Be sure to read articles on</td>
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<td>Guest Speaker- Dr. Diana Dinitto</td>
<td>Blackboard re: Substance Abuse and older</td>
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<td>adults</td>
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<td>April 8</td>
<td>Eating Disorders</td>
<td>DSM-IV (pp. 583-595)</td>
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<td>Due: <em>Psychosocial Assessment of Lori Schiller,</em> “The Quiet Mind”</td>
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<td>April 15</td>
<td>Personality Disorders</td>
<td>DSM-IV (pp. 685-730; 663-678)</td>
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<td>Impulse control disorders NOS</td>
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<td>April 22</td>
<td>Somatoform Disorders</td>
<td>DSM-IV (pp. 485-512; 513-518; 597-662; 535-582)</td>
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<td>Factitious Disorders</td>
<td><em>Buelow et al., Chps. 3,</em></td>
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<td>Sleep Disorders</td>
<td><em>Sleep disorders and the</em></td>
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<td>Sexual and Gender Identity Disorders</td>
<td><em>hypnotics (pp. 93-102); &amp; 5,</em></td>
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<td><em>Pain and the analgesics</em></td>
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<td>April 29</td>
<td>LAST CLASS DAY:</td>
<td>DSM-IV (pp. 679-684; 743-744)</td>
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<td>Adjustment Disorders</td>
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<td>Other Conditions that may be a Focus of Clinical Attention (V-codes)</td>
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<td>Take-home portion of Exam II due</td>
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<td>In-class portion of Exam II</td>
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VII. Bibliography


