COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Eating Disorders Elective class will provide students with a comprehensive overview of eating disorders as biopsychosocial disorders and will focus primarily on methods and approaches to treatment within the confines of therapeutic social work practice. Students will gain an understanding of the etiology of eating disorders and accompanying personality issues from a developmental perspective. Diagnostic criteria will be fully covered and students will be able to identify specific eating disorders in their clinical practice. Students will become familiar with the underlying language of an eating disorder and available treatment options including the benefits of working in a treatment team with this population. Mandatory readings will be assigned as will a suggested reading list for students interested in further study. All aspects of high quality treatment for eating disorders will be addressed and students will leave this class with a solid base for understanding the complexity of eating disorders from a clinical and societal perspective. Class will be interactive and include role-playing and possible guest lecturers from the field.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand eating disorders as complex biopsychosocial disorders
2. Understand the full range of specific eating disorders
3. Identify eating disorders based on diagnostic criteria as well as a deeper understanding of and sensitivity to these disorders
4. Apply differential diagnosis to the full range of eating disorders
5. Develop awareness of societal issues which impact the development of eating disorders across the population
6. Understand eating disorders from a developmental perspective with a beginning foundation of theories of etiology underlying eating disorders
7. Display awareness of treatment options as well as current best practice recommendations
8. Value the benefits and challenges of working within a treatment team
9. Demonstrate awareness of medical issues with eating disorders
10. Demonstrate beginning, solid clinical skills for working with the eating disorder population
REQUIRED TEXTS
There will be one textbook for this course hereafter referred to as “Main Text” with related chapters assigned for each session. There are also three additional books that are required, listed below. Additional articles and readings are also assigned.


COURSE ASSIGNMENTS
There will be one exam and two papers required in this course:

The midterm exam will take place during the 7th course and will test students based on information presented in the class on the material presented and taught until this point.

The first paper will be for students to choose some aspect of the world of eating disorders that they wish to explore in depth. Requirements for this 2-4 page paper include individual discussion with professor for topic approval. The paper is due at the 10th session.

The final paper will be due on the 13th session and be 12-15 pages. This paper will be in response to three case examples provided by the professor. Students will choose one case to develop appropriate clinical response demonstrating a synthesis of course material and learning. Grading will be based on the exam and both papers as well as attendance and course participation. This course will be instructional but will also have an expectation of high level student participation and class discussion.

COURSE OUTLINE SESSION

SESSION 1: Introduction. What are eating disorders according to the DSM and general clinical classification. How do these differentiate in a manner that will inform practice.

REQUIRED:
DSM 5 – Feeding and Eating Disorders (pages 329-354)
DSM IV – Eating Disorder Criteria (Google Search)

SUGGESTED:

SESSION 2: Continuum of Eating Disorders. Why and how do we understand eating disorders as Biopsychosocial disorders? Why social work education is good preparation and fit with this particular population.

REQUIRED:
Main Text, Chapter 1: “A Perfect Biopsychosocial Storm”


SUGGESTED:


SESSION 3: Binge Eating Disorder in-depth. BED as different than compulsive overeating. Beginning clinical understanding including awareness of “Health at Every Size” movement, medical management and treatment standards. Main Text, Chapter 2: “What’s Weight Got To Do With It? Weight Neutrality In The Health At Every Size Paradigm And Its Implications for Clinical Practice”

REQUIRED:

**SUGGESTED:**

**SESSION 4: Bulimia Nervosa in-depth. New DSM-5 diagnostic criteria as well as beginning clinical understanding of this disorder, medical management and treatment standards.**

**REQUIRED:**
Main Text, Chapter 5: “The Assessment Process: Refining the Clinical Evaluation of Patients With Eating Disorders”


**SESSION 5: Anorexia Nervosa in-depth. New DSM-5 diagnostic criteria as well as beginning clinical understanding of this disorder, medical management and treatment standards.**

**REQUIRED:**
Main Text, Chapter 6: “Medical Assessment of Eating Disorders”


**SESSION 6: Family Dynamics and eating disorders. Genetic predisposition and nature v. nurture perspectives in the field.**

**REQUIRED:**
Main Text, Chapter 20: “When Helping Hurts: The Role of the Family and Significant Others in the Treatment of Eating Disorders”


**SUGGESTED:**
Main Text, Chapter 21: “The Most Painful Gaps: Family Perspectives on the Treatment of Eating Disorders”

SESSION 7: In Class Exam, Family Dynamics Part II (Continued from week 6)

SESSION 8: Co-Morbid Conditions, Dual Diagnosis including personality disorders, trauma history, emotional regulation, substance abuse and self injury and the handling of these issues in practice.

REQUIRED:
Main Text, Chapter 13: “Borderline Personality and eating Disorders: A Chaotic Crossroads”

Main Text, Chapter 14: “Managing the Eating Disorder Patient With A Comorbid Substance Use Disorder”

Main text, Chapter 15: “Comorbid Trauma and Eating Disorders: Treatment Considerations and Recommendations for a Vulnerable Population”

SESSION 9: Treatment Team and Levels of Care. In depth exploration of appropriate, available levels of care and assessment of the need for higher care as well as the role of each team member.

REQUIRED:
Main Text, Chapter 11: “Outpatient Treatment of Anorexia Nervosa Following Weight Restoration Practical and Conceptual Issues”


SUGGESTED:

SESSION 10: Assignment Due. 2-5 page research paper on your topic of choice.

SESSION 11: Treatment Options: all current modalities will be presented including, CBT, DBT, FBT, Maudsley and Relational theory. In-patient, outpatient and higher levels of care will be explained. Treatment design integrating different techniques will be thoroughly discussed.
REQUIRED:


SUGGESTED:
Main Text, Chapter 10: “New Pathways: Applying Acceptance and Commitment Therapy to the Treatment of Eating Disorders”


REQUIRED:
Main Text, Chapter 4: “Are Media An Important Medium For Clinicians? Mass Media, Eating Disorders, In The Bolder Model Of Treatment, Prevention, and Advocacy

Main Text, Chapter 18: “Men With Eating Disorders: The Art and Science of Treatment Engagement”

SUGGESTED:

SESSION 13: Final Paper Due
Role of Nutrition in Recovery. Why is the dietitian a key component of recovery? What is the appropriate approach of patient/family/team toward food?
Guest Lecture

REQUIRED:

SUGGESTED:
Main Text, Chapter 8: “Nutritional Impact on the Recovery Process”

SESSION 14: Recovery VS Being Recovered. Stories of recovery, Q & A SESSION. Wrap up of course content. Reiteration and review of most important aspects of high quality diagnosis and treatment will be presented and discussed. Any course content requiring further explanation will be completed.

REQUIRED:

COMPLETE READING LIST

REQUIRED TEXT


ARTICLES


Author Unknown “Wasting Away: The Double Danger of Eating Disorders and Substance Abuse”, Cross Currents. Adapted from Food For Thought: Substance Abuse and Eating Disorders (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, 2003. Pg. 16 Vol 10 No. 3 ISSN: 1706-9548 (Spring 2007)


Davis, William N., “Reflections on Boundaries in the Psychotherapeutic Relationship” From the Center For The Study of Anorexia and Bulimia.


**BOOK CHAPTERS AND EXCERPTS**


Costin, Carolyn 8 Keys To Recovery From An Eating Disorder pps. 36-92


