

Psychology 4650: Seminar in Clinical Controversies and Case Study Spring 2015

Prof. Emily Fox-Kales

429 Nightingale Hall

Ext. 3072

e-mail: ekales@neu.edu

Voicemail: (781) 643-7977

Office Hours: Mon/Wed. 4:30-5:30 and by appointment

Course Description/Learning Goals:

I. This seminar provides an opportunity to integrate clinical theory and experience—either in your co-op, internship, or counseling/volunteer work (hotline, crisis intervention center, substance abuse program, residential treatment) or research or coursework-- within the larger framework of etiology, diagnosis, and treatment of specific disorders. We will build a structure within which to evaluate, critique, and clarify values around the mental health care delivery systems you encountered, as well as learn how to think about, discuss, and analyze culturally constructed attitudes about mental illness and its treatment. Specifically we will be **researching and debating relevant issues in the field of clinical treatment**, such as controversies in diagnosis, psychopharmacology, and human rights issues in the mental health delivery system.

II. The second focus of the seminar is to apply theoretical understanding of clinical and abnormal psychology in the **development of a “case study”** of a patient being treated for a specific diagnosis. You will work with a partner in developing this case study and then presenting it to the class for discussion and feedback. Along the way we will be debating relevant issues in the field of clinical treatment, such as drugs vs. “talk therapy,” patient/client confidentiality, and diagnosing children.

III. Finally, there is a semester-long **research project** during which you will select a clinical population and disorder of your choice and investigate diagnostic issues, causes, current and historical controversies and treatment modalities and outcome research, after first submitting a **proposal** for review.

Course Requirements and Grading:

The course is structured as a working seminar. All seminar members are thus expected to play an **active** role in class discussions and presentations. *Attendance at all class meetings is therefore essential; unexcused absences will affect your final participation grade.*

Class Participation (30%) Each student will research a selected clinical controversy and lead class discussion in debating its relevant ethical, clinical, and psycho-social issues.

*Clinical Case Development: (30%)*¹² Following course guidelines, you will work in a diad to develop the format, content and presentation of a case assessment to the class.

Final Research Project: (40%) This is a semester-long project during which you will choose a specific clinical population and investigate the major controversies involved in its diagnosis, causal mechanisms, and treatment. In preparation for this project you will first submit a proposal and preliminary bibliography (5 scholarly sources minimum) prior to submitting your final written paper (12-15 pages including references) on the last day of class. Guidelines for both oral and written projects will be provided during the semester.

There is no final exam in this course.

Course Schedule:

January 12	Introduction
January 14	Mental Illness: Myth and Reality
January 21-28	Media and Madness
February 2-4	Violence and Mental Illness
February 9	Diagnostic Dilemmas: The DSM-V
February 11	Diagnosing and Treating Children
February 18	Questions of Gender
February 23	Clinical Case Format/Diag Selection
February 25	Drugs vs. "Talk Therapy"
March 2	Cross Cultural Issues
March 4/16	The Role of Ethics in Psychology
March 18	Campus Mental Health
March 23	Eating Disorders
March 25	Final Paper Proposal & Bibliography due! Clinical Case II: Sample Cases
March 30-April 15	Diad Case Presentations
April 22	Conclusions/FINAL PROJECTS DUE!!