City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Social and Behavioural Sciences
with effect from Semester A 2024/25

Part I   Course Overview

Course Title: Psychopathology and Diagnosis of Mental Disorder

Course Code: SS5782

Course Duration: One Semester

Credit Units: 3

Level: P5

Medium of Instruction: English

Medium of Assessment: English

Prerequisites: SS5757 Personality Theories and Assessment and
(Course Code and Title)

Precursors: Nil
(Course Code and Title)

Equivalent Courses: Nil
(Course Code and Title)

Exclusive Courses:
(Course Code and Title) SS5803 Psychopathology

Part II   Course Details

1.   **Abstract**

   This course aims to provide students with a comprehensive and advanced understanding of psychopathology and psychiatric diagnosis. First, common assessment methods including the mental status examination, psychological inventories, and clinical structured interview will be introduced. Second, legal and ethical standards, and etiologies of psychological disorders will be covered. Third, the DSM-5 as a system of classification of psychiatric disorders will be introduced. Fourth, the majority of the course will focus on in-depth discussion of common psychiatric disorders using the DSM system as framework so that students can develop differential diagnosis skills as well as understand appropriate evidence-based treatments of each psychiatric disorder. Finally, cultural factors, theoretical controversies, and professional issues are explored.

2.   **Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)**
(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs[#]	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	*A2*	*A3*
1.	Understand the complexity of psychological disorders and to identify the characteristics of major psychiatric disorders with current classification system.	40%		√	
2.	Conceptualize development of and clinical work with major mental disorders through integration of theoretical models, clinical practice and research findings.	30%	√	√	
3.	Apply knowledge to identify needs of assessment and appropriate handling in clinical practitioners.	30%		√	√
		100%			

   A1:   Attitude
      Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.
   A2:   Ability
      Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to self-life problems.
   A3:   *Accomplishments*
      Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

(LTAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

LTA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4			
Lectures	Concepts and theories that relate to maladaptive behaviour and psychological disorders will be introduced. Students will be guided to apply the theories in order to explain psychopathology.	√	√					
In-class case illustration and discussion	Real-life clinical cases of various mental disorders will be discussed in class to enhance students' understanding of case formulation and assessment.	√	√	√				

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4				
Continuous Assessment: 100 %								
Individual term essay	√	√	√				60%	
Case study	√	√	√				40%	
Examination: ____ % (duration: , if applicable)								
							100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics

(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. **Individual term essay**. Each student will be required to write a critical review and discussion on a mental disorder covered in the course	The following evaluation criteria will apply: (1) diagnostic criteria (5%); (2) conceptualization based on established theoretical perspective(s) (5%); (3) special concerns from the legal/ethical issues (5%); (4) assessment and treatment issues (10%); (5) current research related to diagnosis and assessment of the disorder (10%); and (6) future trend (5%). [References: 8%; APA format: 4%; Overall writing style: 8%]	Student demonstrates a deep and thorough knowledge of the selected disorders and provide a critical evaluation on the diagnosis, conceptualization, and issues based on current scientific research and evidences	Student demonstrates an adequate knowledge of the selected disorder and provides a good evaluation on the diagnosis, conceptualization, and issues based on current scientific research and evidences.	Student demonstrates an adequate knowledge of the selected disorder but cannot provide an evaluation on the diagnosis, conceptualization, and issues based on current scientific research and evidences.	Student demonstrates minimal knowledge of the selected disorder and cannot provide an evaluation on the diagnosis, conceptualization, and issues based on current scientific research and evidences.	Student demonstrates inadequate or no knowledge of the selected disorder.
2. **Case Study**. Each student will be required to conduct a clinical analysis of a case provided by the course leader.	The following evaluation criteria will apply: (1) Describe the primary symptoms of the case (9%); (2) Discuss possible diagnoses with reasons (10%); (3) Identify special or controversial issues related to the diagnosis and treatment of the case (9%); (4) Explore possible underlying causes (6%) [References (3%); APA format and writing style (3%)]	Student demonstrates a deep and thorough knowledge on diagnostic criteria and differential diagnoses based on DSM, and provides a critical discussion on the controversial issues related to the diagnosis and treatment of the case.	Student demonstrates an adequate knowledge on diagnostic criteria and differential diagnoses based on DSM, and provides a discussion on the controversial issues related to the diagnosis and treatment of the case.	Student demonstrates an adequate knowledge on diagnostic criteria and differential diagnoses based on DSM, but cannot provide a good discussion on the controversial issues related to the diagnosis and treatment of the case.	Student demonstrates minimal knowledge on the diagnostic criteria based on DSM, and provide minimal discussion on possible alternative diagnoses of the case.	Student demonstrates little or no knowledge on the diagnostic criteria based on DSM, and lack awareness on the possible alternative diagnoses.

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
1. Individual term essay. Each student will be required to write a critical review and discussion on a mental disorder covered in the course	The following evaluation criteria will apply: (1) diagnostic criteria (5%); (2) conceptualization based on established theoretical perspective(s) (5%); (3)special concerns from the legal/ethical issues (5%); (4) assessment and treatment issues (10%); (5) current research related to diagnosis and assessment of the disorder (10%); and (6) future trend (5%). [References: 8%; APA format: 4%; Overall writing style: 8%]	Student demonstrates a deep and thorough knowledge of the selected disorders and provide a critical evaluation on the diagnosis, conceptualization, and issues based on current scientific research and evidences	Student demonstrates an adequate knowledge of the selected disorder and provides a good evaluation on the diagnosis, conceptualization, and issues based on current scientific research and evidences.	Student demonstrates an adequate knowledge of the selected disorder but cannot provide an evaluation on the diagnosis, conceptualization, and issues based on current scientific research and evidences.	Student demonstrates inadequate or no knowledge of the selected disorder.
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Part III   Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1.   **Keyword Syllabus**
     (An indication of the key topics of the course.)

     psychiatric diagnosis, conceptualization of psychiatric disorders, differential diagnosis, Diagnosis and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM), culture issues, abnormal psychology.

2.   **Reading List**
2.1 **Compulsory Readings**
     (Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Durand, V.M. & Barlow, D.H. (2019) (8thed). *Essentials of abnormal psychology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

2.2 **Additional Readings**
     (Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Fifth Edition. Text Revision*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association.
2.	Barlow, D.H., Duran, V.M. (2018). Abnormal psychology. An integrative approach. (8th edition). Australia; Belmont, Calif. : Wadsworth Cengage Learning.