Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology  
The Graduate Center of the City University of New York

Adult Psychopathology  
Course # 75603.16184  
Fall, 2011

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Day & Time: Wednesday, 9:45 to 11:45  
Office Hours: Tuesday 4-5:30  
Readings can be found online.  
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Course Description:
The aim of this doctoral course is to introduce clinical psychology graduate students to the basic concepts relevant to understanding psychopathology in adult patients from psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioral perspectives. The course examines the clinical, research, and theoretical literature of a range of Axis I and Axis II disorders including personality disorders, affective disorders and psychotic disorder. The course will examine these disorders from several different vantage points including the psychodynamic, neurobiological, familial, cognitive, and environmental/social perspectives. The evolution of current conceptualizations of each disorder will be explored so that students will understand the history of thinking about psychopathology as well as current perspectives. The course will also include selections from the theoretical, clinical and research literature on each disorder, as well as on the intersection between Axis I and Axis II disorders. The first part of the course focuses on Axis II disorders with an emphasis on borderline and narcissistic personality disorders. The second part of the course will focus on Axis I disorders, including unipolar and bipolar disorders, psychotic disorders, dissociative identity disorders (DID), and posttraumatic stress disorders (PTSD and complex PTSD). Students will be introduced to the foundations in object relations theory of contemporary conceptualizations of psychopathology, and will learn how object relations theorists understand the etiology, development, and expression of personality disorders, as well as the underlying psychic structures (i.e., self and object representations) that contribute to psychopathology. The course will cover the major empirical studies on object relations perspectives. Students will also be introduced to the neurobiological correlates of personality and affective disorders and will understand the role of trauma in the development of different forms of psychopathology. Students will be expected to read first person accounts written by those who have suffered from these disorders as well as to bring in clinical examples from their own ongoing therapeutic work. Finally the course will cover some of the socio-cultural, familial and socio-historical factors that may contribute to psychopathology.

Course Objectives:
The major purpose of the course is to introduce students to the theory and research on psychopathology behind major Axis I disorders (unipolar and bipolar disorders, PTSD, psychotic
disorders and DID), and Axis II disorders (borderline and narcissistic personality disorders), as well as issues of co-morbidity between Axis I and Axis II disorders. It is expected that students will develop a critical perspective on the limitations and strengths of the current DSM-IV classification system of the major psychological disorders. Students will also be expected to develop a multifaceted view of psychopathology that includes psychodynamic, neurobiological, familial, cognitive, and environmental/social perspectives. In addition, an understanding of the neurobiological correlates of both Axis I and Axis II disorders will be encouraged. Students will also be expected to understand the developmental underpinnings of major forms of psychopathology as they have been conceptualized in attachment theory and research with particular attention to the contributions of attachment theory in understanding the etiology, development, and expression of personality disorders. Also covered will be the concept of mentalization, and how deficits in mentalization have been linked empirically with psychological disorders and their treatment.

Requirements and Grading:

The requirements for the course include active involvement in class discussions, presentation of readings as assigned, and a research paper on a topic related to the class to be approved by the instructor by November 17 when students will be required to turn in a one page description of their papers with bibliography. The course will be run as a seminar in that there will be a core of required readings for each class and additional readings that will be covered either in the lecture or in students reports. The final paper is expected to be a piece of original thinking and research based on a topic related to psychopathology. The paper is due on December 17. There will be no late papers accepted. Students will be evaluated on the basis of their class participation (20%); their oral presentation of articles in class (30%) and their final research paper (50%).

Required Texts:


**Recommended Texts:**

Buckley, P. (Ed.) *Essential papers on Psychosis.*


A handout package with additional readings will be put on course reserves at the library or will be sent electronically to students.

**Weekly Reading Assignments and Class Topics:**

**Week 1: Borderline Personality Disorder**

**Objective:** Introduction to object relations perspective on Borderline Personality Disorder and to a critique of object relations perspectives on psychopathology.

**Readings:**


**Handouts:**


**Week 2: Borderline Personality Disorder: Basic Theory and History**
Objective: To introduce students to the history of object relations perspectives in psychoanalytic thought. Students will be able to distinguish conceptually among the various object relations theories and their contributions to defining the borderline condition.

Readings:


Fairbairn, R.D. Psychoanalytic Studies of the Personality. (chapters 1: Schizoid Factor in the Personality; Chapter 4: Endopsychic Structure Considered in Terms of Object Relationships; Chapter 5: Object Relationships and Dynamic Structure; Chapter 6: Steps in the Development of an Object Relations Theory of the Personality; Chapter 7: A Synopsis of the Development of the Author’s Views Regarding the Structure of the Personality.

Recommended:


Weeks 3: Borderline Personality Disorder: Basic Theory and History

Objective: Introduction to the history of the conceptualization of borderline conditions in theory, research and descriptive psychiatry. Introduction to the genetic and etiological thinking on borderline disorders; to develop critical thinking regarding older and newer models of borderline disorders

Readings:


Essential Papers on Borderline Disorders. Chapter 6: M. Schmideberg. The Treatment of Psychopaths and Borderline Patients

Essential Papers on Borderline Disorders. Chapter 8; R. Knight. Borderline States

**Essential Papers on Borderline Disorders.** Chapter 11: E. Erikson. The Problem of Ego Identity.

**Week 4: Borderline Personality Disorder: Basic Theory and History**

**Readings:**


**Handouts:**


**Week 5: Narcissism: Basic Theory and History of Narcissism and its Disorders**

**Objectives:** To introduce students to the diagnosis, treatment and etiology of narcissistic personality disorders; to understand the link between social and psychological perspectives on narcissism and its disorders. Students will understand the socio-cultural, familial and socio-historical factors that may contribute to narcissistic disorders.

**Readings:**

*Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism.* Part 11. Narcissistic Personality
Essential Papers on Narcissism. Chapter 9: Factors in the Psychoanalytic Treatment of Narcissistic Personality Disorders.

Handouts:


Recommended:


Week 6: Narcissism: Basic Theory and History of the Concept of Narcissism and its Disorders

Objectives: To understand the diagnosis, treatment and etiology of narcissistic personality disorders; to gain an understanding of the social psychological research on narcissism and narcissistic disorders.

Readings:


Essential Papers on Narcissism. Chapter 7: The Disorders of the Self and Their Treatment: an Outline.

Narcissistic States and the Therapeutic Process. Parts I and II. The Narcissistic Condition and the Narcissistic Object

Handouts:


Twenge, J.M., Konrath, S., Foster, J.D., Campbell, W.K., and Bushman, B.J. (2008). Egos Inflating over time: A cross-temporal Meta-analysis of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory. Journal of Personality, 76, 876-901.


Week 7: Empirical Perspectives on Object Relations Constructs

**Objective:** To understand the methods and instruments used in empirical studies on object relations perspectives.

**Readings:**

**Handouts:**


Week 8: Trauma and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

**Objectives:** To introduce students to the relationship of trauma to severe psychopathology. To provide a critique of the trauma perspective on psychopathology.

**Readings:**


**Handouts:**


Recommended:


Week 9: Affective Disorders: Unipolar Disorder

Objectives: To provide an overview of theory, research and treatment of depression (unipolar disorder) from a psychodynamic perspective; to review the history of psychodynamic thinking on depression.

Readings:

Experiences of Depression: Theoretical, Clinical and Research Perspectives. (2000). Chapter 1: Two Types of Depression; Chapter 2: Clinical Expression of Anaclitic and
Introjective Depression; Chapter 3: Measurement of Anaclitic and Introjective Depression; Chapter 4: Assessment of Object Representation.

Essential Papers on Depression. Chapter 2: Mourning and Melancholia.

Essential Papers on Depression. Chapter 3: Edward Bibring’s Theory of Depression.

Recommended:


Week 10: Affective Disorders: Unipolar Disorder

Objectives: To provide an overview of theory, research and treatment of depression (unipolar disorders) from a cognitive behavioral perspective; to contrast cognitive behavioral perspectives with dynamic thinking about unipolar disorders; to gain familiarity with the concept of co-morbidity of unipolar disorders and personality disorders; to understand the differences between depression in patients with personality disorders and those without personality disorders; to understand the contributions of gender to affective disorders.

Readings:

Depression: Causes and Treatment. Part 1: Clinical Aspect of Depression; Part III: Theoretical Aspects of Depression; Part IV: Treatment of Depression.

Handouts:


Recommended:

*Essential Papers on Depression.* Chapter 5: Towards A Behavioral Approach to Depression.

*Essential Papers on Depression.* Chapter 6: Learned Helplessness and Depression.

*Essential Papers on Depression.* Chapter 8: Maladaptive Cognitive Structures in Depression.

*Essential Papers on Depression.* Chapter 13: A Three Causal Model of Depression.

**Week 11: Bipolar Disorder**

**Objectives:** To provide an overview of theory, research and treatment of bipolar disorders.

**Readings:**

**Handouts:**


**Recommended:**

*Essential Papers on Depression.* Chapter 1: An Intensive Study of twelve Cases if Manic-Depressive Psychosis.

**Week 12: Bipolar Disorder cont.**

**Objectives:** To provide an overview of theory, research and treatment of bipolar disorders; to review the research on co-morbidity of bipolar disorder and personality disorders

**Readings:**

Handouts:


**Week 13: Psychotic Disorders**

**Objectives:** to introduce the major theories on etiology, symptoms, prognosis, and treatment of the major psychotic disorders (bipolar disorder, schizoaffective disorder and schizophrenia)

**Readings:**


**Handouts:**


**Week 14: Psychotic Disorders cont.**

**Objectives:** To provide an overview of theory, research and treatment of psychotic disorders; to review the symptoms, etiology, prognosis and course of the major psychotic disorders.

**Readings:**

**Handouts:**


Recommended:


**Week 15: Neurobiological Perspectives on BPD and PTSD**

Objectives: To introduce students to the neurobiological correlates of personality disorders and PTSD.

**Readings:**

**Handouts:**


Recommended: