

University of Michigan School of Nursing
Nursing N5Xa: Bio-behavior, Aging and Mental Illness
Course Syllabus

Credit Hours : 3 (didactic)

Prerequisites: Graduate Standing

Faculty: TBD

Course Description: This WWW-based course examines the impact of selected alterations in bio-behavioral processes characteristic of human aging on the expression of mental illness in aging adults. The complexity of the inter-relationship between aging processes, existing chronic physical and/or mental illnesses, and the emergence of new mental illness in late life, will be analyzed. Dimensions of environment as both a precipitating factor in the development of mental illness and as a therapeutic resource will be evaluated. Issues of gender, race, culture and ethnicity that impact both the expression of mental illness, and access and responses to appropriate treatment for aging adults, will be examined. Current bio-behavioral research relating to mental illness in aging adults will be emphasized. Students will be introduced to the assessment of mental status and function in elders with complex physical and mental co-morbidities across the aging trajectory using exemplar cases and seminar discussion.

Topics Covered: Concepts of mental illness and aging; distinguishing mental illness in aging from normal aging transitions; assessment of the aging adult with a chronic mental illness; assessment of the aging adult with cognitive and affective alterations arising from developmental and situational challenges of aging; assessment and differential diagnosis of elders with complex physical and mental co-morbidities, including the use of relevant DSM-IV categories (psychotic disorders, cognitive disorders, mood and anxiety disorders, adjustment and substance abuse disorders); format for the conduct of systematic, comprehensive mental status and functional assessments of the older adult; current research findings regarding, gender, racial, cultural and ethnic determinants of the expression and assessment of mental illness in aging adults.

Course Objectives: At the completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. critically examine issues relevant to the assessment of adults with a chronic mental illness who are experiencing aging.
2. analyze factors contributing to the development of new mental health issues in previously mentally healthy older adults.
3. synthesize knowledge regarding normal aging changes, alterations in bio-behavioral processes and the expression of mental illness in aging, including critical aging-associated differences in presentation of major mental illnesses.
4. analyze the bio-behavioral bases of complex physical and mental co-morbidities seen in older adults.
5. demonstrate skills in the systematic mental status and functional assessment of older adults with single diagnosis mental illness and complex physical and mental co-morbidities.
6. analyze current research findings related to bio-behavioral regulation and control of mental illness.

7. identify and access appropriate information technologies relevant to assessment of mental illness and bio-behavioral regulation of illness to assessment.

Teaching Methods and Course Requirements

The course is taught using both On-Campus meetings (day/time/room) and World Wide Web (WWW) technology.

Four (4) On-Campus Class Sessions (four hours per session) are held with intervening *World Wide Web (WWW) contacts*. In On-Campus classes, faculty will discuss selected points from the assigned readings and conduct seminar work designed to facilitate students learning and understanding of course content.

In addition, between each On-Campus session, a small group E-mail discussion is held addressing assigned readings and issues related to assessment. Course faculty will be part of these discussions and will respond to questions about course material. Students will be assigned to lead the discussion each week.

All assignments must be completed on time and, in all aspects of the course, students are held to the Ethical Conduct Statement set forth in the School of Nursing Student Handbook.

Students are responsible for securing their own personal copies of all their work to insure against loss and computer problems.

Required Texts

J. E. Birren, B. Sloane, & G. D. Cohen (1992) (Eds.), *Handbook of mental health and aging* (2nd ed.). San Diego: Academic Press.

OR

E. W. Busse & D. G. Blazer (1996) (Eds.), *The American Psychiatric Press textbook of geriatric psychiatry* (2nd ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press.

Recommended Texts:

Butler, R., Lewis, M., & Sunderland, T. (1998) *Aging and Mental Health: Positive Psychosocial and Biomedical Approaches*. Allyn & Bacon: Needham Heights, MA.

American Psychiatric Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General (1999) The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) with Dr. D. Satcher. Available on the World Wide Web at www.surgeongeneral.gov

There is no coursepack. Readings are available on UM Coursetools, Resource section, <https://coursetools.ummich.edu/2002/fall/nurs/xxx/001.nsf>

Evaluation Methods

Course grades are based on the following:

1. Two Mental Status Assessment writeups from videotaped patient interviews @ 20% each = 40% of the course grade.

Students will complete two MSA using videotapes of exemplar patient interviews with mentally ill elders. All students will be viewing the same videotapes. The videotapes to be viewed by students for each MSA writeup are available on course tools. Students will be permitted to view each videotape up to three times within a one-week period using their unique name sign in. *The completed MSA must be sent to faculty as an email attachment by the date specified, and will be graded and returned by email.*

2. Case-based synthesis paper = 50% of the course grade.

Students will complete one research-based patient case study using a patient from their area of practice fitting selected criteria. Faculty will assist students with case selection. The case study format will consist of a complete nursing history, two MSAs done at an interval of at least three weeks but no longer than 6 weeks, a functional profile, basic neuropsychological testing where applicable, and social and network assessments. Research literature must be included and discussed as it relates to the findings of the assessment. *The completed paper must be sent to faculty as an email attachment by the date specified, and will be graded and returned by email.*

3. The quality of the student's class and email small group participation, as evaluated by course faculty = 10% of the course grade

The topics to be addressed by weekly email groups will be posted in the announcement section of the class UM Coursetools. Students leading the discussion each week will be asked to 1) post questions relevant to the topic to guide the discussion over the week, and 2) find one relevant web-based resource to share with colleagues.

This small E-mail group process is used only on the eight weeks in which there is not a class on campus. Students are expected to “attend” all email group discussions and to have read all assigned readings so as to be prepared to actively participate.

Grading Criteria: All graded assignments are evaluated on these criteria: Clarity, accuracy, completeness and linkage to course themes. Age, mental illness, gender, race, culture and ethnicity are major course themes.

WWW Wayfinding Tips for Coursetools Sections

You must be able to access and interact with UM Coursetools and E-mail attachments. The following are the descriptions of the UM Coursetools sections which this course uses:

Resources contains the Syllabus plus readings for each week. Students must be able to download the readings to facilitate coverage of class material.

Assignments contains the detailed instructions for each part of the course assessment (2 videotaped MSA reports (2 x 20%), case study synthesis (50%). The video clips for the two MSA reports will be available here.

Discussions contains the themes from each email small group discussion. A summary of weekly lecture comments and new resources from faculty will also be posted here. All students need to read the comments of each group and faculty in order to stay informed of class progress.

Announcements contains all other class announcements as necessary, for example schedule changes.

COURSE CONTENT AND CLASS SCHEDULE

Session 1, On-Campus meeting

The nature of mental illness in aging: Normal aging transitions versus brain pathology.

Session 2, WWW Lecture and Small Group Discussion

Assessing the older adult: Approaches to the assessment of mental status.

Session 3, WWW Lecture and Small Group Discussion

Assessing the older adult: Approaches to functional assessment.

Session 4, WWW Lecture and Small Group Discussion

Assessing the older adult: Excess Disability.

Session 5, On-Campus meeting

Assessing the older adult: Chronic mental illness.

Case Exemplar: The older adult with a history of entrenched psychosis characterized by repeated breakdown and hospitalization. (Schizophrenia or Bipolar Type 1)

Session 6, WWW Lecture and Small Group Discussion

Assessment of the older adult: Developmental and Situational Challenges

Case Exemplar: The older adult with no history of mental illness experiencing a morbid grief reaction following the death of a spouse (Depression and suicidal ideation).

Session 7, WWW Lecture and Small Group Discussion

Assessing the older adult: Emerging Mental Illness

Case Exemplar: The older adult with a new mood disorder characterized by anxiety. (Depression with anxiety)

Session 8, WWW Lecture and Small Group Discussion

Assessing the older adult: Apparent Cognitive Decline

Case exemplar: The older adult with an early memory-disorder.

Session 9, WWW Lecture and Small Group Discussion

Assessing the older adult: The Substance Misuse Trajectory

Exemplar: The older adult with an alcohol and medication misuse problem.

Session 10, On-Campus meeting

Complex Interactions 1: Co-morbid mental illness and chronic physical illness.

Exemplar: The older adult with unstable Type 1 diabetes and history of MI who develops major depression.

Session 11, WWW Lecture and Small Group Discussion

Complex Interactions 11: Co-morbid mental illnesses and acute physical illness

Exemplar: The older adult with history of unstable Bipolar Type 1 and substance misuse who develops pneumonia with emphysema.

Session 12, WWW Lecture and Small Group Discussion

Complex Interactions 111: Co-morbid mental illnesses

Exemplar: The older adult with paranoid personality disorder and probable Alzheimer's Disease.

Session 13, On-Campus meeting

Wrap up

No readings assigned

University of Michigan School of Nursing
Nursing 5xb: Issues in Aging and Mental Illness
Course Syllabus

Credit Hours : 3 (didactic)

Prerequisites: Graduate Standing

Faculty: TBD

Course Description: This WWW-based course examines the impact of specific social, cultural, politico-legal and economic factors on access to, and quality of, mental health care for older Americans. Established and emerging social roles of the elderly, and elder heterogeneity, will be investigated in regard to their impact on the status of mentally ill elders as a marginalized group. Students will analyze policy initiatives in the care of mentally ill elders and critically evaluate current research literature focused on access to care and quality of care. Students will be introduced to appropriate research practices and issues in researching elders with mental illness.

Topics Covered: Demography of mental illness in the aged; interactions between ageism, stereotyping, elder abuse and mental illness; racial, ethnic and gender issues in diagnosing and treating mental illness in elders; unique needs of mentally ill minority elders and chronically mentally ill elders; poverty and access to care; patient and provider barriers to help seeking; the homeless mentally ill elder; issues in care provision and continuity; emerging trends in contexts of care, quality of care and service provision (e.g. acute care, independent living, psychiatric services and group homes, assisted living, nursing home, special care units); issues relating to legal parameters of practice with mentally ill elders (voluntary and involuntary commitment, living wills, power of attorney and guardianship, voting, driving); researching the vulnerable elderly with mental illness (access, eligibility issues, informed consent, retention and attrition); advocacy and activism in psycho-geriatric nursing practice.

Course Objectives: At the completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. analyze the characteristics of current demographic trends in aging and the impact on these on projected future needs of the mentally ill elderly.
2. identify patient and provider barriers to help-seeking within the mental health system.
3. analyze the impact of race, ethnicity and gender as potential barriers to care for mentally ill elders.
4. critique current mental health policy related to the special needs of elders with chronic mental illness and minority elders.
5. compare and contrast available contexts of care for the elderly mentally ill using a range of indices of quality of care.
6. analyze the legal parameters of nursing practice with mentally ill elders, including protections to civil rights.
7. identify issues of access and ethics relating to research with mentally ill elders.
8. debate professional pathways for advocacy and activism for psychogeriatric nurses.
9. identify and access appropriate information technologies relevant to social and political aspects of mental illness in aging.