SW9210 Theories for Practice and Research with Individuals

Master Syllabus

I COURSE DOMAIN AND BOUNDARIES

This course, offered in conjunction with SW 9220 (Theories for Practice and Research with Groups and Families) and SW9230 (Theories for Practice and Research with Communities and Organizations), is required of all doctoral students, and defines the unique focus of this doctoral program as that of advanced research on the nature and outcome of social work practice. As such, it is designed to offer students an intensive survey of the major theoretical systems currently used in clinical social work practice with individuals. Examining three distinctive theoretical models of clinical practice – psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, and humanistic-existential – the course explores each theoretical framework from six vantage points. These are: (1) Origins of the model; (2) Basic conceptual framework; (3) View of the person and environment; (4) Philosophy of treatment; (5) Effectiveness of the model, and (6) Particular practice controversies. In addition, topics such as the model’s perspective on human development and/or psychopathology may be included.

II SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE AND SKILL OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, students will demonstrate advanced knowledge and skill in their understanding and articulation of the following:

1. Origins of each theoretical model: The history of the theoretical framework and its incorporation into clinical social work instruction and practice;
2. Basic conceptual framework: The most salient principles for practice associated with each model, including ideas that are unique to a particular model of practice;
3. View of the person and environment: The nature of the hypothesized relationship between individuals and the environments of which they are a part; perspectives on human development and psychopathology, and the contribution of biological, social, and psychological factors;
4. Philosophy of treatment: The role of the practitioner using a particular theoretical approach; assumptions about the nature of the client’s
understanding of and participation in the treatment relationship; relative “goodness of fit” with basic social work percepts;

5. Effectiveness of the model: Summary of extent research on both process and outcome; nature of the model’s performance and efficacy in application to specific clinical problems/issues;

6. Practice controversies: Specific areas of resonance/dissonance with social work treatment, philosophy and practice principles.

III PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

Students will be expected to demonstrate their progress in comprehension and integration of the course material through class attendance and participation, and through assigned papers, presentation, and/or examinations. Students are expected to complete three short term papers demonstrating an advanced level of understanding of each theoretical system.

COURSE TEXTS

Several texts are required for this course. These may include:


An edited coursepack is also required (available at Marwil Bookstore, corner of Cass and Warren).

IV. COURSE ORGANIZATION

Several different pedagogical techniques are used in the organization of this course: lecture-discussion; consultation; video and audiotaped clinical material; and possible guest lecture presentation in connection with particular content. Students are encouraged, whenever possible, to research theoretically and/or clinically relevant questions through specific assignments, although a generous portion of class time will also be devoted to the discussion of such issues. Although this is not a clinical course in the narrow sense of the term, clinical case data may be used as a springboard for discussion of relevant theoretical issues involving a particular framework.
V. ROLE OF THE STUDENT AND INSTRUCTOR

The role of the student and instructor will follow the university statement of mutual obligations of students and faculty members in the teaching and learning process, as revised on 7/14/97.

VI. COURSE CONTENT

Session 1: Course Overview and Expectations; Discussion of reading and other assignments.

Session 2-5: Origins of the Psychodynamic System: An Introduction to Classical Psychoanalytic Theory, Ego Psychology, Object Relations, the Psychology of the Self, Intersubjectivity, and other Psychoanalytic Psychologies; The Psychodynamic Framework in Social Work Practice: History and Trends; Basic Conceptual Framework; View of the Person and Environment; Overarching Philosophy of Treatment; Effectiveness of the Model; Practice Controversies.

Required Readings:

I. Origins of the Psychodynamic Practice Model


II. Basic Conceptual Framework


III. View of the Person and Environment


IV. Philosophy of treatment


V. Effectiveness of the Model


VI. Particular Practice Controversies


Sessions 6-9: Origins of the cognitive-behavioral approach and overview of current cognitive-behavioral interventions; basic conceptual framework; view of the person and environment; philosophy of treatment; empirical support; and practice controversies.

Required Readings:

I. Origins of Cognitive-Behavioral Practice Approaches


II. Basic Conceptual Framework


III. View of the Person and Environment


IV. Philosophy of Treatment


V. Empirical Support


cognitive therapy: Theory, research, and practice (pp. 367-388). New York: Guilford Press.


VI. Practice Controversies


Session 10: Existential-Humanistic Approaches: Origins of the Model; Basic Conceptual Frameworks

Required Readings:


Session 11: **Existential-Humanistic Approaches**: View of the Person and Environment

**Required Readings:**


Session 12: **Existential-Humanistic Approaches**: Philosophy of Treatment

**Required Readings:**

Miller, W. R. & Rollnick, S. (2002). Phase 1: Building motivation for change, Responding to change talk, Responding to resistance, Enhancing confidence, Phase 2: Strengthening commitment to change, A practical case example, Ethical considerations, Learning Motivational Interviewing,


Session 13: **Existential-Humanistic Approaches**: Effectiveness of the Model; Particular Practice Controversies

**Required Readings:**


Session 14: Course Wrap-Up and Conclusion
Assignments

1. Provide an analytical summary of and then lead discussion in class on one of the starred key readings (or two short closely related readings) [20% of grade]

2. Write a 12 to 15 page paper that furnishes an in-depth discussion of a single model using the detailed framework provided [30% of grade]

3. Write a 12 to 15 page paper employing the six point framework used to organize the class as a basis for the comparative analysis of two models covered in class and readings [30% of grade]

4. For the last class meeting, prepare a one-page handout summarizing your comparison of two approaches (assignment #3) and be prepared to discuss in class [10% of grade]

Attendance and participation [10% of grade]

Conceptual Framework for the Analysis of a Particular Theoretical System
(Cognitive-Behavioral, Humanistic-Existential, or Psychodynamic)

I. Philosophical/historical roots

II. Theoretical framework
Discuss
- the fundamental epistemology of the theoretical system (e.g., objectivist or subjectivist)
- methodological basis (experimental/manipulative, hermeneutic/dialectic transformative)
- notions of causality:
  -- assumptions about body/mind, inner/outer, present/past, rational/nonrational
  -- how do people come to grief [what causes problems for people?]
  -- attitude toward change (what constitutes change; how does change takes place?)
- nature of support for/against theory (empirical, practice wisdom); testability of the theory.
- how do theoretical concepts translate into or guide specific practice goals and practice skills?
III. What social work values are embraced?

IV. Target group. Discuss
- populations
- problems
- those for whom this model is contraindicated

V. Nature of the roles and responsibilities assumed by therapist and client
- specificity and detail in the explication of therapist and client roles and responsibilities
- nature and content of client and worker participation-including decision-making
- nature of and importance imputed to the use of relationship

VI. Description of process, including:
- initial phase (e.g., purpose, areas of study and investigation, use of relationship, client-worker interaction, nature and content of client participation; nature of worker authority and expertise)
- assessment (e.g., purpose, limits and range, process of assessment phase, therapist-worker interaction, nature and content of client's participation; emphasis on strengths vs. weaknesses; nature of worker authority and expertise; relationship of assessment to theoretical bases; underpinnings; expected outcomes of assessment phase)
- treatment (e.g., goals [implicit and explicit]; focus of work; strategies and techniques used [empirical support, practice wisdom]); process of treatment phase, including client-therapist interaction, nature and content of client's participation; nature of worker authority and expertise; evaluation of effectiveness [objectivist/subjectivist perspective])
- termination (e.g., how decided, how carried out)
- global: (is the particular practice model formulated in a consistent and coherent manner; is the model theoretical or atheoretical; it useful as a guide to clinical social work practice?)

Additional bibliography for this assignment:


References for Psychodynamic Module:


Freud, S. (1911b). The handling of dream interpretation in psycho-analysis. SE, 12, 89-96.

Freud, S. (1911c). Formulations on the two principles of mental functioning. SE, 12, 213-26.


Freud, S. (1912b). Recommendations to physicians practicing psycho-analysis. SE, 12, 111-120.


Freud, S. (1913). On beginning the treatment, SE, 12, 123-144.


Freud, S. (1914b). Remembering, repeating, and working-through. SE, 12, 147-156.


Freud, S. (1920). Beyond the pleasure principle, SE, 18, 7-64

Freud, S. (1920). The psychogenesis of a case of homosexuality in a woman. SE, 18, 145-72


References for Cognitive-Behavioral Module:


References for Existential-Humanistic Approaches


Schneider, K.J. (1999). Multiple case depth research: Bringing experience near closer. Journal of Clinical Psychology, 55(12), 1531-1540.


