**COUN 2300**

Mental Health Disparities

***Summer 2024***

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**Department of Special Education, Rehabilitation, and Counseling**

**College of Education**

Instructor Information:

**Brianna Pointer, M.A.**

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Office Hours:

**by appointment via Zoom**



**SYLLABUS**

**1. Course Number: COUN 2300 (3 semester hours)**

**Course Title: Mental Health Disparities**

**University: Auburn University**

**Prerequisites: None**

**Instructor: Brianna Pointer, M.A.**

**Class Meeting: Asynchronous Online via Canvas**

**2. Date Syllabus Prepared:** June 2020, Revised - December 2023

**3. Required Readings:**

**Text**:

Eaton, W.W., & Fallin, M.D. (2019). *Public mental health 2nd edition.* Oxford University Press: New York, NY

Other Readings and/or Videos as Assigned.

4. **Course Description:**

The United States is rapidly becoming more multiracial, multiethnic and multilingual and the world increasingly globalized. Leading mental health providers to become more knowledgeable about mental health disparities among historically marginalized groups within the United States. This course will introduce students to mental health disparities and strategies for addressing the social factors of mental health. Such disparities are intersectional and include a wide array of identities: gender, race/ethnicity, sexual and gender orientation, socioeconomic status, and physical disability. This course will highlight the injustices in the diagnosis and treatment of individuals with psychiatric disorders. Lastly, social factors such as political, economic, cultural, and legal issues will be addressed as they related to mental health disparities.

5. **Course Objectives:**

The assumption in this course is that all students in the College of Education are working to be competent, committed, and reflective professionals.

Upon course completion students will:

1. Demonstrate an awareness and understanding for how stress affects the biological, psychological, and social factors of an individual.
2. Understand the relationship between cultural factors/identities and psychological distress when working with various populations.
3. Demonstrate an understanding for the laws that mental health professionals must abide by, along with the laws that affect the populations served.
4. Gain an understanding of the global perspective of mental health and the organizations that facilitate in the distribution of mental health services and information.
5. Demonstrate the ability to critically think about ways that epidemiology and genetics are linked to the prevention and/or manifestation of mental disorders. Along with the various historical components that have aided in the success of such preventions.
6. Understand the prevalence rates of mental disorders and suicide.
7. Gain knowledge of the mental health impairments and disease burdens
8. Demonstrate an understanding and awareness of the history and comorbidity of mental disorders.

**6. Course Content** **and Schedule:**

This course schedule is tentative and may change at the instructor’s discretion. Any changes to the schedule will be announced in class and/or via email and it is the students’ responsibility to be aware of such announced changes.

THE WEEK ENDS ON SUNDAY AND ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE SUNDAY AT 11:59PM

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date:** | **Topic:** | **Reading:** | **Assignment Due:** |
| Week #1  May 16 | Welcome and Course Overview |  |  |
| Week #2  May 20 | The Burden of Mental Disorders;  Global Mental Health Issues: Culture and Psychopathology | **Chapter 1+3** | **Individual Presentation Topic Due by 11:59pm on May 19** |
| Week #3  May 27 |  | **Watch:**  [**Documenting Our Presence- Multicultural Experience of Mental Illness**](https://youtu.be/dZfeuYWDs0w?si=H5QaOpQ0zSuKfu-g) | **Reflection #1 due into Canvas by 11:59pm on June 2** |
| Week #4  June 3 | Adult Mental Disorders in Association with Socioeconomic Position, Race/Ethnicity, and Sexual and Gender Minority Status;  Suicide as a Public Health Burden | **Chapter 7 + 8** |  |
| Week #5  June 10 |  | **Watch: Pray Away on Netflix** | **Reflection #2 due into Canvas by 11:59pm on June 16** |
| Week #6  June 17 | Genes as a Source of Risk for Mental Disorders  Public Mental Health and the Brain Across the Lifespan | **Chapter 9+10**  **Watch:**  [**'Did I inherit mental illness?' BBC News**](https://youtu.be/iAbAY1Z2mEE?si=titBteRf2v8TRA7D) | **Reflection #3 due into Canvas by 11:59pm on June 23** |
| Week #7  June 24 |  |  | **Individual Video Presentation due into Canvas by 11:59pm on June 30** |
| Week #8  July 1 | Models of Stress and Adapting to Risk  Pathways to Care | **Chapter 11 + 16** | **Video Response due into Canvas by 11:59pm on July 7** |
| Week #9  July 8 |  | **Watch:** [**PBS Facing Suicide**](https://www.pbs.org/video/facing-suicide-l4klwf/) | **Reflection #4 due into Canvas by 11:59pm on July 14** |
| Week #10  July 15 | American Mental Health Services After ACA;  Mental Health Systems around the World | **Chapter 14+ 17**  **Watch:**  [**Mental health for all by involving all**](https://www.ted.com/talks/vikram_patel_mental_health_for_all_by_involving_all?utm_campaign=tedspread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare) | **Reflection #5 due into Canvas by 11:59pm July 21** |
| Week #11  July 22 | The Logic and Practice of the Prevention of Mental Disorders | **Chapter 18 + 19** |  |
| Week #12  July 22 |  | **Watch: 13th Documentary on Netflix** | **Reflection #6 due into Canvas by 11:59pm on July 28** |
| Week #13  July 31- Aug 2 | **FINAL EXAM WEEK** |  | **Documentary/Movie Paper due into Canvas by 11:59pm on Aug 2** |

**7. Course Requirements/Evaluation:**

**Readings / Video / Lecture Review**: At the beginning of each week you should have assigned readings completed. The readings are extremely important as they will introduce you to the lecture content and video. After completing the reading, review the lecture video and any additional videos assigned for the week. You will be expected to be knowledgeable about the assigned material as demonstrated in your submitted course assignments.

**Reflection Papers:**

You will write 6 (six), two-page typed (Times New Roman, 12pt., double-spaced) critical reflection on the readings, lectures, and/or assigned videos. The reflection paper assignment will be clearly stated in the assignment module on Canvas. This is a chance for you to ask questions and share your own thoughts and reactions to the readings and video material. Think about what you liked disliked, agreed, disagreed from the material, and 1-2 burning questions. Your reflections will be evaluated based on your 1) demonstration that you read the material, 2) critical analysis of the material, and 3) incorporation of the material into thoughtful questions.

**Individual Video Presentations:**

You will select a topic and research how mental health clinicians might address a mental health disparity for a specific marginalized group. The selection of this topic is a grade assignment outlined on Canvas. The selected topic should have some relationship to mental health or mental illness issue. Each student must submit the presentation topic to the instructor (Canvas) by the date specified on the schedule. You will upload a 10-15 minute recording outlining the following:

* History of the mental health disparity
* Groups differentially impacted
* Reasons disparity might exist
* Ways in which mental health clinicians, policy makers, and others might improve the mental health disparity.

**Video Responses:**

You will select a Student Video Presentation produced by one of your classmates (it must be on a topic that is different from your presentation). You will write a 2-3 paragraph discussion response and post it on Canvas below the video.

**Documentary/Movie Reflection**

You will select a movie from one of the documentaries we have watched during the semester and write a 5-6 page (Times New Roman, 12pt., double-spaced) reflection on the movie/documentary, including the following:

1. a synopsis of the movie
2. lessons your learned about mental health or mental health treatment
3. The ways in which the movie did or did not display mental health disparities
4. Based on your knowledge gained from this course on mental health disparities, what would you include if you wrote the script to include mental health disparities in the film
5. Current literature surrounding the population
6. Citation page

**Assignment Grading System**

**Requirements: Points:**

Reflections (6 total): 90 (15pts. each)

Presentation Topic Selection 5pts.

Individual Video Presentation 25pts.

Peer Video Response 10pts.

Documentary Paper 20pts

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Total: 150 Possible Points

**Grade Criteria** (grades will be rounded to nearest whole number)**:**

A 90 - 100 points

B 80 – 89 points

C 70 – 79 points

D 60 – 69 points

F < 60 points

**8. Class Policy Statements:**

**Respect for Diversity:**It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

I will attempt to foster an environment in which each class member is able to hear and respect each other. It is critical that each class member show respect for all worldviews expressed in class. It is expected that some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions, please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let me know if something said or done throughout the course, by either myself or other students, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense. While our intention may not be to cause discomfort or offense, the impact of what happens throughout the course is not to be ignored and is something that I consider to be very important and deserving of attention. If, and when, this occurs, there are several ways to alleviate some of the discomfort or hurt you may experience:

1. Discuss the situation privately with me. I am always open to listening to students' experiences and want to work with students to find acceptable ways to process and address the issue.
2. Discuss the situation with the class. Chances are there is at least one other student in the class who had a similar response to the material. Discussion enhances the ability for all class participants to have a fuller understanding of context and impact of course material and class discussions.
3. Notify me of the issue through another source such as your advisor, a trusted faculty member, or a peer. If you do not feel comfortable discussing the issue directly with me, I encourage you to seek out another, more comfortable avenue to address the issue.

*Diversity Statement Adapted from Lynn Hernandez, Behavioral and Social Sciences, School of Public Health, Brown University*

**Participation Policy:** Participation is required, necessary, and expected. Students are expected to watch all asynchronous lectures (which constitute online class attendance). For asynchronous lectures, it is important to watch the lecture prior to completing any assignments. All lectures will be available on Canvas after they are recorded. If you are unable to attend an asynchronous lecture or turn in an assignment on time due to an excused absence please contact your instructor immediately.

**Late Assignment Policy:** Late assignments are not acceptable. All assignments are due at 11:59PM on Canvas on the date listed on the syllabus unless otherwise noted in the syllabus. Canvas is considered the official timestamp for assignments. Those assignments turned in after the indicated time on Canvas are subject to point deduction. If you are unable to submit to Canvas, you must email the assignment directly to the instructor. Failure to turn an assignment in on time or missing a presentation will result in unsatisfactory completion of that course requirement, and in many instances, would mean an inability to pass the class. It is therefore imperative that students complete all course requirements on time.

I reserve the right to allow exceptions to this policy, for example, in the event of an emergency. Students are granted late assignment allowance for the following reasons: illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student’s immediate family, death of a member of the student’s immediate family, trips for student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for university classes, trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events, subpoena for a court appearance, and religious holidays. Appropriate documentation for all late assignments is required. Please see the *Student Policy eHandbook* at [www.auburn.edu/studentpolicies](https://cas.auburn.edu/owa/redir.aspx?C=ef2eb0b81d90495098a27dc4053361aa&URL=http%3a%2f%2fwww.auburn.edu%2fstudentpolicies) for more information on excuse policies.

**Email and Communication**: Due to the asynchronous nature of this course, I will communicate primarily through email. Therefore, all students are expected to regularly check their Auburn email for class updates and announcements. Additionally, if you have any questions regarding class material, feel free to email me using your official Auburn email. If you do not receive a response from me within 24 to 48 hours of sending an email, please be sure to follow-up with me.

**Accommodations:** Students who need accommodations are asked to electronically submit their approved accommodations through AU Access and to arrange a meeting with me during the first week of classes, or as soon as possible if accommodations are needed immediately. If you have not established accommodations through the Office of Accessibility, but need accommodations, make an appointment with the Office of Accessibility, 1228 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT).

**Honesty Code:** All portions of the Auburn University student academic honesty code (Title XII) found in the Student Policy eHandbook (http://www.auburn.edu/student\_info/student\_policies/) will apply to this class. All academic honesty violations or alleged violations of the SGA Code of Laws will be reported to the Office of the Provost, which will then refer the case to the Academic Honesty Committee.

Much plagiarism occurs as a result of missteps in regard to reading, note taking, and citation practices, or from procrastination, and/or panic. Care, timeliness, and communication will eliminate most of the risk. If you have questions about whether or not you should give credit to a source in your work, you may clarify it with me. In general, though, I recommend always the citing sources you have consulted as well as those you borrow from directly. If you are having difficulty with a paper or assignment, please contact me right away!

**Office Hours:** The instructor and GTA are available by appointment. Campus email is the only way to schedule an appointment. I encourage you to make an appointment if you have any questions or concerns about the course or your performance in it.

**Student Mental Health and Well-Being**:If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact **Student** **Counseling and Psychological Services (SCPS)** at **(334) 844-5123and** <http://wp.auburn.edu/scs> during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or through its counselors physically located in the Medical Clinical and Haley Center. The East Alabama Mental Health Center has a toll-free number that may be called 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for emergencies at **800-815-0630**. The clinician on-call will assist you as needed.

**Professionalism**: As faculty, staff, and students interact in professional settings, they are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors as defined in the College’s conceptual framework. These professional commitments or dispositions are listed below:

a. Engage in responsible and ethical professional practices

b. Contribute to collaborative learning communities

c. Demonstrate a commitment to diversity

d. Model and nurture intellectual vitality

**Title IX:** Auburn University is committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment based on protected class. If you believe you have been the victim of harassment or discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age, or sex (including sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression), we encourage you to report it. If you report sexual assault or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, the faculty member is obligated to notify the University’s Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident. For more information about your Title IX reporting and resource options at Auburn University, please go to: [www.auburn.edu/titleix](http://www.auburn.edu/titleix)

*Course Policies Adapted for Use from CRLT, University of Michigan.*

**Health and Well-Being Resources:** These are difficult times, and academic and personal stress is a natural result. Everyone is encouraged to take care of themselves and their peers. If you need additional support, there are several resources on campus to assist you:

* COVID Response Team ([www.ahealthieru.edu](http://www.ahealthieru.edu))
* Student Counseling and Psychological Services (<http://wp.auburn.edu/scs/>)
* AU Medical Clinic (<https://cws.auburn.edu/aumc/>)
* If you or someone you know are experiencing food, housing or financial insecurity, please visit the Auburn Cares Office (<http://aucares.auburn.edu/>)