



Graduate Course Syllabus

COU 635: Psychopharmacology

Center: Online

Course Prerequisites

COU 530 and COU 540

Course Description

Focus on the knowledge that counselors should possess regarding psychiatric medications. Understand the major classes of medications currently in use, drug interactions, and educating clients to understand their medications. Explore topics that include the impact and use of medications (including efficacy and misuse), the counselor's role in medically prescribed drugs including referring and collaborating with prescribing professionals.

Course Outcomes

- Analyze the physiology and neurochemistry of the brain for its implications to current understandings of mental illness and associated mental health medications
- Interpret various types of mental illness for illustrating the underlying neurobiology driving disordered behavior, emotions, and cognition
- Classify various mental health medications in terms of their benefits and side effects when treating mental illnesses
- Evaluate contemporary psychopharmacological research for its relevance and credibility in informing clinical mental health counseling practices
- Articulate the role of a clinical mental health counselor in ethically supporting psychopharmacological treatments through client advocacy

Required Materials

Using your learning resources is critical to your success in this course. Please purchase directly through the [SNHU Online Bookstore](#) rather than any other vendor. Purchasing directly from the bookstore ensures that you will obtain the correct materials and that the IT Service Desk, your advisor, and the instructor can provide you with support if you have problems.

The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology

JoEllen Patterson, James L. Griffith, and Todd M. Edwards

The Guilford Press

Third Edition

2021

ISBN: 978-1-4625-4795-1

Bongo

The following equipment will be needed to complete the Bongo activities in this course:

- Mac or PC desktop or laptop (not a mobile device or tablet)
- Webcam
- Microphone

For more detailed technical requirements, refer to [this document](#).

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

As indicated in our core values, SNHU is committed to “embrace diversity where we encourage and respect diverse identities, ideas, and perspectives by honoring difference, amplifying belonging, engaging civilly, and breaking down barriers to bring our mission to life.”

This may or will be reflected in SNHU’s curriculum as we embrace and practice diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to provide the most transformative experience for our students, faculty, and staff. Because topics pertaining to DEI can be sensitive, please remember that embodying and practicing diversity, equity, and inclusion is one of our core values that you will encounter throughout the academic experience. In higher education, we are expected to think and engage critically. Use a growth mindset to embrace the diverse readings, course assignments, and experiences of your peers and faculty.

For more information about DEI at SNHU, please visit our website at the [Office of Diversity and Inclusion](#).

Instructor Availability and Response Time

Your class interaction with the instructor and your classmates will take place on a regular, ongoing basis. Your instructor will be actively engaged within the course throughout the week. You will normally communicate with your instructor in the weekly discussions or the General Questions discussion topic so that your questions and the instructor’s answers benefit the entire class. You should feel free, however, to communicate with your instructor via SNHU email at any time, particularly when you want to discuss something of a personal or sensitive nature. Your instructor will generally provide a response within 24 hours. Instructors will post grades and feedback (as applicable) within seven days of an assignment’s due date, or within seven days of a late submission.

Grade Distribution

| Assignment Category | Number of Graded Items | Point Value per Item | Total Points |
|---|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Start Here Assignment | 1 | 5 | 5 |
| Knowledge Check | 1 | 5 | 5 |
| Graphic Organizers | 7 | 20 | 140 |
| Medication Checklists | 6 | 20 | 120 |
| Assignment: Disorder Selection and Introduction | 1 | 30 | 30 |
| Client Advocacy Script Draft One | 1 | 30 | 30 |
| Annotated Bibliography | 1 | 40 | 40 |
| Client Advocacy Script Draft Two | 1 | 40 | 40 |
| Research Paper Draft | 1 | 100 | 100 |
| Client Advocacy Script Draft Three | 1 | 40 | 40 |
| Discussions | 3 | 10 | 30 |
| Final Project One Submission | 1 | 240 | 240 |
| Final Project Two Submission | 1 | 180 | 180 |
| | | | Total Course Points: 1,000 |

This course may also contain practice activities. The purpose of these non-graded activities is to assist you in mastering the learning outcomes in the graded activity items listed above.

University Grading System: Graduate

| Grade | Numerical Equivalent | Points |
|-------|----------------------|--------|
| A | 93–100 | 4.00 |
| A- | 90–92 | 3.67 |
| B+ | 87–89 | 3.33 |
| B | 83–86 | 3.00 |
| B- | 80–82 | 2.67 |
| C+ | 77–79 | 2.33 |
| C | 73–76 | 2.00 |
| F | 0–72 | 0.00 |
| I | Incomplete | |
| IF | Incomplete/Failure * | |
| W | Withdrawn | |

* Please refer to the [policy page](#) for information on the incomplete grade process.

Grading Guides

Specific activity directions, grading guides, posting requirements, and additional deadlines can be found in the Assignment Guidelines and Rubrics section of the course.

Weekly Assignment Schedule

Assignments and discussion posts during the first week of each term are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time. Assignments and discussion posts for the remainder of the term are due by 11:59 p.m. of the student's local time zone.

In addition to the textbook readings that are listed, there may be additional required resources within each week.

For more detailed information, review the [comprehensive syllabus](#).

Concept One: Psychopharmacology for Mental Health Counselors

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| Week One | Neurobiology Reading: <i>The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology</i> , Chapter 1 Start Here Assignment 1-1 Knowledge Check 1-2 Graphic Organizer: Week One |
| Week Two | Pharmacokinetics and Pharmacodynamics Reading: <i>The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology</i> , Chapter 2 and Appendix A 2-1 Assignment: Disorder Selection and Introduction 2-2 Graphic Organizer: Week Two |

Concept Two: Disorders Commonly Occurring in Childhood and Adolescence

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| Week Three | Disorders Commonly Occurring in Childhood and Adolescence Reading: <i>The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology</i> , Chapter 9 3-1 Graphic Organizer: Week Three 3-2 Medication Checklist: Week Three 3-3 Client Advocacy Script Draft One |
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Concept Three: Anxiety, OCD, and PTSD

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| Week Four | Anxiety, OCD, and PTSD Reading: <i>The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology</i> , Chapter 4 4-1 Medication Checklist: Week Four 4-2 Graphic Organizer: Week Four 4-3 Annotated Bibliography |
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Concept Four: Chronic Mental Health Disorders

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| Week Five | Depression Reading: <i>The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology</i> , Chapter 3 5-1 Medication Checklist: Week Five 5-2 Graphic Organizer: Week Five 5-3 Client Advocacy Script Draft Two |
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| Week Six | Bipolar Disorders Reading: <i>The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology</i> , Chapter 3 6-1 Research Paper Draft 6-2 Graphic Organizer: Week Six 6-3 Medication Checklist: Week Six |
| Week Seven | Psychotic and Personality Disorders Reading: <i>The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology</i> , Chapter 5 7-1 Client Advocacy Script Draft Three 7-2 Graphic Organizer: Week Seven 7-3 Medication Checklist: Week Seven |

Concept Five: Lower-Occurrence Disorders and Course Wrap-Up

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| Week Eight | Substance-Related Disorders Reading: <i>The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology</i> , Chapter 7 8-1 Discussion: Graphic Organizer 8-2 Revised Medication Checklist |
| Week Nine | Cognitive and Sleep Disorders, and Final Project One Reading: <i>The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology</i> , Chapter 6 9-1 Final Project One Submission: Research Paper 9-2 Discussion: Cognitive Disorders |
| Week Ten | Course Reflection and Wrap-Up Reading: <i>The Therapist's Guide to Psychopharmacology</i> , Chapter 10 and Appendix C 10-1 Final Project Two Submission: Client Advocacy Script 10-2 Discussion: Course Reflection |

Course Participation

Course participation is required within the first week of the term for all online courses. *Participation* in this context is defined as completing one graded assignment during the first week of the course. Otherwise, students will be administratively removed for nonparticipation. Students who do not participate during the first week may forfeit their rights to be reinstated into the course. Students who stop attending a course after the first week and who do not officially withdraw will receive a grade calculated based on all submitted and missed graded assignments for the course. Missed assignments will earn a grade of zero. See the [course withdrawal policy](#) and the [full attendance policy](#) for further information.

Late Assignments

Students who need extra time may submit assignments (excluding discussion board postings) up to one week after the assignment due date. Discussion board submissions will not be accepted for credit after the deadline except in extenuating circumstances.

- A penalty of 10 percent of the total value of the assignment will be applied to the grade achieved on the late assignment regardless of the day of the week on which the work is submitted.
- Students who submit assignments more than one week late will receive a grade of zero on the assignment unless they have made prior arrangements with the instructor.

Students must submit all assignments no later than 11:59 p.m. (in their own time zone) on the last day of the term. No assignments are accepted after the last day of the term unless an incomplete has been submitted. See the [incomplete grades policy](#).

There may be times an instructor makes an exception to the late assignment policy. Instructors may accept late work, including discussion board posts, with or without prior arrangement.

- Exceptions to the late policy on these grounds are left to the instructor's discretion, including whether the late penalty is applied or waived. Students should not assume that they will be allowed to submit assignments after the due dates.
- If an instructor finds that they are unable to determine whether an exception to the late policy would be appropriate without documentation, the collection and review of student documentation should be handled through the Dispute Resolution team in order to protect the student's privacy. In these cases, students should file a [Student Concern Dispute form](#) to have the circumstances reviewed.

If a student is experiencing (or knows they will experience) a circumstance, including pregnancy, that is protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act or Title IX, they are encouraged to contact the [Online Accessibility Center \(OAC\)](#) as soon as possible to explore what academic accommodations might be offered. Instructors must honor all deadlines established through the OAC.

Student Handbook

Review the [student handbook](#).

ADA/504 Compliance Statement

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is dedicated to providing equal access to individuals with disabilities in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008.

SNHU prohibits unlawful discrimination on the basis of disability and takes action to prevent such discrimination by providing reasonable accommodations to eligible individuals with disabilities. The university has adopted the [ADA/504 Grievances Policy](#) (version 1.2 effective October 16, 2017), providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints regarding any action prohibited by Section 504 or the ADA.

For further information on accessibility support and services, visit the [Disability and Accessibility Services](#) webpage.

Academic Integrity Policy

Southern New Hampshire University requires all students to adhere to high standards of integrity in their academic work. Activities such as plagiarism and cheating are not condoned by the university. Review the [full academic integrity policy](#).

Copyright Policy

Southern New Hampshire University abides by the provisions of United States Copyright Act (Title 17 of the United States Code). Any person who infringes the copyright law is liable. Review the [full copyright policy](#).

Withdrawal Policy

Review the [full withdrawal policy](#).

Southern New Hampshire University Policies

More information about SNHU policies can be found on the [policy page](#).