Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) PSY395  
Fall Semester, 2007

SYLLABUS IN PROGRESS

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Course Description: This graduate course examines the theoretical perspectives, empirical foundations, and treatment strategies of Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT). DBT is a treatment specifically designed for chronic suicidal patients. There is evidence for the efficacy of this treatment when used with individuals with borderline personality disorder (BPD). Therefore, part of the course will be dedicated to learn about the biological, social and psychological characteristics of individuals with BPD and chronic suicidal clients. In addition to a strong emphasis on practicing and learning clinical DBT techniques, this course was designed to help students to develop research questions on issues related to DBT.

Recommendations: This course is likely to be most appropriate for graduate students in clinical psychology who have already learned basic assessment and treatment skills. Also, students who are currently treating trauma survivors may benefit the most from this course. Psychotherapy experience is not necessary but an open mind and interest in learning psychotherapy techniques is.

Required Textbooks:  

Readings:  
Excerpts from *Dialectical Behavior Therapy with Suicidal Adolescents* (Miller, Rathus, & Linhean, 2007), and several journal articles will be distributed in class and can also be found on reserve at the Library.

Learning Objectives: At the completion of the semester, you will be able to:
♦ Describe the theory, principles, and techniques of DBT  
♦ Conceptualize patients according to DBT and identify and assess targets for change  
♦ Discuss and critically review the empirical evidence available for DBT  
♦ Describe the professional and ethical guidelines relevant to treating parasuicidal clients  
♦ Discuss in depth the research application of DBT to a research area of your choice

Class Format: The lecture is divided into two parts: the first part of dedicated to a formal lecture designed to present empirical evidence and theoretical formulations of DBT. During this part of the class we will discuss research questions that look at the application of DBT in areas of your choice. The second part of the class will be used to teach DBT techniques and skills. This section will use role-play exercises, experimental lectures, discussion of DBT videotaped sessions conducted by experts, and discussion of cases presented by class members. In the spirit of DBT, lectures will start with mindfulness exercises and students will learn DBT skills and will be asked to practice these skills in their lives and keep a journal of their personal experiences. A selected number of readings will be assigned before class and students will be expected to intelligently discuss the readings during class.

Requirements and Grading:
♦ Short-essays – two short-essays exams based on the lectures and reading materials will be used to assess your ability to recall the material. The scores on the two tests will account for 40% of your total grade.  
♦ In class participation – because this is an experiential course, the success of the class is based on your participation in class. Each week you are required to either: 1) email me 2 written questions to stimulate class discussion (Note: questions need to be emailed by midnight on Wednesday), 2) present part of a session with a client you have seen recently (case presentation – look at case presentation guidelines), or 3)
participate in role-play in class to help with the illustration of specific DBT core points. Make sure you sign up not later than the week before for the role play and the case presentation because there will be limited positions available. Class participation counts for 20% of your total grade.

♦ **Videotape exams** – Two exams will use videotapes of DBT and CBT experts doing therapy with clients with different diagnoses. The exams are designed to test your ability to identify DBT techniques and to provide a DBT formulation of a case. The two video exams will count for a total of 15% of your total grade.

♦ **Research Project** – You will be asked to write a research project by the end of the course. The research project will explore an aspect of DBT that potentially overlaps with another area of psychology that interests you. The paper will need to include a review of the literature and a methods section that addresses a specific research question. This assignment counts for 25% of your grade.

♦ **Skills Practice** – We will practice mindfulness exercises at the beginning of the class and you will learn DBT skills in class and are expected to practice these skills during the week. You will be asked to keep a journal of your experience as you practice the skills or reflect on how these skills apply to your life or your clients’ situations. By enrolling in this class you commit to complete this journal every week and turn in the journal to me when asked to. The actual content of the journal will not be graded. The journal is an opportunity for you to reflect on what you learn in a setting outside the classroom. I will randomly collect and review students’ journals at least twice during the semester.

**Schedule of Assignments**

Note that assignments and exams are in **Bold**. You will need to sign up for the “Role plays,” “Paper presentations” and the “Case presentations” not later than the week before class. If you are not signed up for either one, you are expected to bring to class 2 written questions that will be used to stimulate class discussion.

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<th>Assignments</th>
<th>LECTURE</th>
<th>EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING (EXP.)</th>
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<td>Aug 30</td>
<td>DBT THEATRE</td>
<td>Intro &amp; Commitment</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Sep 06</td>
<td>ROLE PLAY #1</td>
<td>Evidence for BPD &amp; the Biosocial Model</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Sep 13</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>CBV vs DBT</td>
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<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>CASE PRESENTATION #3</td>
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<td>Nov 01</td>
<td>CASE PRESENTATION #5</td>
<td>DBT with Adolescents, Drug Abuse, &amp;</td>
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<td>Nov 15</td>
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<td>NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING</td>
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<td>Nov 29</td>
<td>CASE PRESENTATION #7</td>
<td>Pharmacotherapy &amp; Biology of BPD</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Dec 06</td>
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<td>Dec 11</td>
<td>Final Exam (8:00 – 11:00)</td>
<td>Research Paper Due</td>
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**Academic Honesty and Professional Conduct:** Plagiarism or dishonest examination behavior will result in the assignment of a grade of F for the course. It is expected that your interpersonal conduct is respectful of and sensitive to the needs of others at all times.

**Personal Comfort:** Your personal comfort during the learning process is important. Please do not hesitate to inform me of your training needs and preferences. Your feedback will allow me to try to better tailor the course to meet students’ preferences. You are free to excuse yourself from a technique demonstration or role-play should you become too uncomfortable. If you excuse yourself, please make certain to speak with me about your experience before the next class meeting. It is permissible to bring food and beverages to class. All cases discussed in class need to be treated with the same confidentiality limits of other clinical cases you are seeing. If a student presents a case of someone that you know at a personal level, you are expected to excuse yourself from the room as soon as you recognize the individual.

**Office Hours:** I will be available and in my office Mondays from 4:00 to 5:00. If the time I reserved for class office hours is impossible for you to make, send me an email indicating your availability.

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Class Overview

1. Aug 30: **Introduction To The Course & Commitment**
   LECTURE: BPD And DBT Principles & Assumptions
   EXP: What is BPD? Stereotypes About BPD
   ACTIVITY: DBT Theatre: Developing empathy for BPD clients

2. Sept 06: **BPD Assessment**
   LECTURE: Empirical Evidence for BPD & The Biosocial Model
   EXP: BPD Diagnosis
   ACTIVITY: “The diagnosis is right!” – prize game
   VIDEOS: U-TUBE, videos on BPD
   Links, Heslegrave, & van Reekum, 1998
   Grilo, Sanislow, Shea et al., 2004
   McGlashan, Grilo, Sanislow, et al., 2005
   Zanarini, Frankenburg, Hennen, & Silk, 2003
   Zimmerman & Mattia, 1999
   SCID for BPD & DIB-R interviews

   LECTURE: DBT Introduction
   EXP: Orientation and Commitment
   VIDEO: ML role-Play, the first session.
   READINGS: Linehan Chapter
   Miller, Rathus, & Linehan, 2007, pp. 130-150 (ch. 7).
   Brown, 2006, 91-117.

4. Sept 20 **Suicidality**
   LECTURE: Research, Assessment, and DBT Interventions for Acute Suicidality
   EXP: Coaching Calls
   ACTIVITY: Role Play for Chain Analysis
   VIDEO: ML – training video
   READINGS: Miller, Rathus, & Linehan Ch.1, pp. 7-27
   Ben-Porath & Koons, 2005
   Haynes, Leisen, & Blaine,
   Behavioral Analysis Handouts
   Suicidal Behavior Strategies Checklist – handout
   Suicide Risk Assessment Worksheet
   Miller, Rathus, Linehan, 2007 pp. 175-185
5. Sept 27: **ACCEPTANCE AND VALIDATION**

**LECTURE:** WHAT IS VALIDATION AND HOW IT WORKS  
**EXP:** VALIDATION  

**READINGS:** Linahen, “Validation and Psychotherapy,” 1997  
Blackledge & Hayes, 2001  

6. Oct 04: **MIDFULNESS**

**LECTURE:** THE WHATS AND HOWS OF MINDFULNESS  
**EXP:** SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CBT AND BEHAVIORAL APPROACHES  
**VIDEO:** CBT video  

**READINGS:**

EXAM Oct 11

7. Oct 18: **DOES DBT WORK?**

**LECTURE:** EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FOR DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY  
**EXP:** DISTRESS TOLERANCE SKILLS  

**READINGS:** Koons et al. 2001  
Turner, 2000  
Van den Bosch et al. 2005  
Brown, 2006  
Linehan, Comtois, Murray, Brown, Gallop, Heard, et al., 2006  
Hayes, Masuda, Bissett, Luoma, Guerrero, in press


**LECTURE:** DO NOT SHOOT THE DOG  
**EXP:** EMOTION REGULATION  

**READINGS:**

9. Nov 01: **SPECIAL GROUPS**

**LECTURE:** DBT WITH ADOLESCENTS, DRUG ABUSE, AND INPATIENTS  
**EXP:** INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS  

**READINGS:** Linehan (1993a) Ch. 10 (pp. 292-328)

10. Nov 08: **USING DBT IN THE “REAL WORLD”**

**-** PAPER PRESENTATIONS  
**EXP:** PREVENTING BURN OUT: LIMITS AND SUPPORT  

**READINGS:** Miller, Rathus, & Linehan, 2007, pp. 168-170
EXAM Nov 08

NO CLASS. Nov 22: THANKSGIVING

11. Nov 29: PHARMACOTHERAPY & BIOLOGY OF BPD
   LECTURE: PHARMACOTHERAPY & BIOLOGY OF BPD
   - PAPER PRESENTATIONS
   READINGS: Fertuck, Lenzenweger, Clarkin, Hoermann, & Stanley, 2006
              Skodol, Siever, Livesley, Gunderson, Pfhol, & Widiger, 2002
              Brendel, Stern, & Silbersweig, 2005
              Fertuck, Lenzenweger, & Clarkin, 2002
              Crowell, Beauchaine, McCauley et al., 2005
              Bruijn, Grootens, Verkes, et al., 2006

12. Dec 06: Wrap Up – Class Review
   - PAPER PRESENTATIONS
   EXP: CLASS REVIEW

FINAL Dec 11: FINAL EXAM 8:00 – 11:00am
Research Paper Due at 11:00am
References (to be completed)


Other material used in the course

SCID (BPD module only)
DIPD interview
Yale IOP Adult Program Screening Form
DBT Manual – MM Linehan