SYLLABUS

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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. Knowledge and familiarity with research designs and statistical tools used in clinical outcome studies is highly recommended.

Suggested Textbooks:  

Readings:  
Excerpts from Dialectical Behavior Therapy with Suicidal Adolescents (Miller, Rathus, & Linhean, 2007), and several journal articles posted on Blackboard.

Other material used in the course:  
SCID (BPD module only)  
DIPD interview  
Yale IOP Adult Program Screening Form

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:

- **Exams** – two take-home exams based on the lectures and readings will be used to assess your ability to integrate and understand the material. These are in class exams. 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 the day before class), 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. 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 25% of your total 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. If you do not learn the skills yourself you will not be able to teach them to your client, hence the importance of this part of the class. You will 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. The actual content of the journal will not be graded, but your effort to engage in the skills and try to integrate them in your life and in your practice will. I will randomly collect and review students’ journals at least twice during the semester (but as many as 4 times) so bring the journal with you to class. The average grade you will receive for your journal will count for 15% of your final grade.

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Experiential Training (Exp.)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Jan 19</td>
<td>DBT Theatre</td>
<td>Intro to the Course &amp; Commitment</td>
<td>BPD Intro</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Jan 26</td>
<td>Role Play</td>
<td>BPD Assessment</td>
<td>BPD Diagnosis</td>
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<td>2 Feb 2</td>
<td>Role Play</td>
<td>BPD Assessment (Cont.)</td>
<td>Orientation and Commitment</td>
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<td>3 Feb 9</td>
<td>Role Play</td>
<td>DBT Bio-Psychosocial Model</td>
<td>Coaching Calls</td>
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<td>3 Feb 16</td>
<td>DBT Bio-Psychosocial Model (Cont.)</td>
<td>VIDEO TAPE</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Feb 23</td>
<td>Case Presentation</td>
<td>DBT Introduction</td>
<td>MINDFULNESS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exam # 1</td>
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<td>Video tape exam #1</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Mar 9</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Mar 16</td>
<td>Role Play</td>
<td>Suicidality</td>
<td>VALIDATION</td>
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<td>6 Mar 23</td>
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<td>Acceptance and Validation</td>
<td>CBT vs DBT</td>
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<td>7 Mar 30</td>
<td>Case Presentation</td>
<td>Mindfulness</td>
<td>Distress Tolerance Skills</td>
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<td>8 Apr 6</td>
<td>Case Presentation</td>
<td>Does DBT Work? Part A</td>
<td>Emotion Regulation Skills</td>
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<td>9 Apr 13</td>
<td>Case Presentation</td>
<td>Does DBT Work? Part B</td>
<td>Interpersonal Effect. Skills</td>
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<td>10 Apr 20</td>
<td>Case Presentation</td>
<td>What About DBT Work?</td>
<td>Preventing Burn Out</td>
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<td>11 Apr 27</td>
<td>Case Presentation</td>
<td>Pharmacotherapy and Biology</td>
<td>Video tape</td>
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<td>May 4</td>
<td>(Ale out of town)</td>
<td>Exam # 2</td>
<td>Video tape exam #2</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 to meet to discuss anything related to the class or your professional development.

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**Class Topics**

1. **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. **BPD ASSESSMENT**
   - **LECTURE:** BORDERLINE PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT AND COURSE OF CONDITION
   - **EXP:** BPD DIAGNOSIS
   - **ACTIVITY:** “The diagnosis is right!” – prize game
   - **VIDEOS:** U-TUBE, videos on BPD
   - **READINGS:** McGlashan, Grilo, Sanislow, et al., 2005
     Sanislow, Grilo, McGlashan, 2000
     Zanarini, Frankenburg, Hennen, & Silk, 2003
     Zimmerman & Mattia, 1999
     SCID for BPD & DIB-R interviews

3. **DBT BIOSOCIAL MODEL**
   - **LECTURE:** THE BIOSOCIAL MODEL
   - **EXP:** BPD DIAGNOSIS
   - **ACTIVITY:** “The diagnosis is right!” – prize game
   - **VIDEOS:** U-TUBE, videos on BPD
   - **READINGS:** Linehan, M. M. (1993), CH 1, pp. 3 – 22; CH 2, pp. 37 – 62
     Bray, Barrowclough,Lobban, 2007
     Fruzzetti, Shenk, & Hoffman, 2005
     Glatz, Rosenthal, Tull et al. 2006
     Jacob, Hellstern, Ower et al., 2009
     Kuo & Linehan, 2009.
     Nigg, Silk, Stavaro & Miller, 2005
     Putnam & Silk, 2005
     Selby, Anestis, Bender et al., 2009

4. **DBT INTRODUCTION**
   - **LECTURE:** DBT INTRODUCTION
   - **EXP:** ORIENTATION AND COMMITMENT
5. **Suicidality**  
**Lecture:** Research, Assessment, and DBT Interventions for Acute Suicidality  
**Expert:** Coaching Calls  
**Activity:** Role Play for Chain Analysis  
**Video:** ML – training video  
**Readings:** Linehan ch. 6  
Haynes, Leisen, & Blaine, Behavioral Analysis Handouts  
Suicidal Behavior Strategies Checklist – handout  
Suicide Risk Assessment Worksheet

6. **Acceptance and Validation**  
**Lecture:** What is Validation and How it Works  
**Expert:** Validation  
**Readings:** Linehan, “Validation and Psychotherapy,” 1997  
Lynch, Chapman, Rosenthal, Kuo, Linehan 2006

7. **Mindfulness**  
**Lecture:** The Whats and Hows of Mindfulness  
**Expert:** Similarities and Differences between CBT and Behavioral Approaches  
**Video:** CBT video  

8. **Does DBT Work? Part A**  
**Lecture:** Empirical Evidence for Dialectical Behavior Therapy  
**Expert:** Distress Tolerance Skills  
Turner, 2000  
Van den Bosch, Koeter,Stijen, et al. 2005  
Verheul, van den Bosch, Koeter, 2003

9. **Does DBT Work? Part B**  
**Lecture:** Empirical Evidence for Dialectical Behavior Therapy  
**Expert:** Distress Tolerance Skills
10. **WHAT ABOUT DBT WORKS?**

**LECTURE:** BREAKING DOWN DBT  
**EXP:** EMOTION REGULATION

**READINGS:**  
Bornovalova MA, Daughters SB. (2007). How does dialectical behavior therapy facilitate treatment retention among individuals with comorbid borderline personality disorder and substance use disorders?. Clinical Psychology Review. 27(8):923-43 (get from library).  
Dewe & Krawitz, 2007  
Zanarini, 2009

11. **PHARMACOTHERAPY & BIOLOGY OF BPD**

**LECTURE:** PHARMACOTHERAPY & BIOLOGY OF BPD  
**EXP:** INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

**READINGS:**  
Linehan, M M. Olanzapine plus dialectical behavior therapy for women with high irritability who meet criteria for borderline personality disorder: a double-blind, placebo-controlled pilot study Journal Of Clinical Psychiatry Volume: 69 Issue: 6 (2008-06-01) p. 999-1005. (Get from library.)  
Dimeff, McDavid, Linehan, 1999  
McMain, Links, Gnam et al., 2009  
Schnell, & Herpertz, 2007