Course Description

Diagnosis refers to an evaluative process that intends to discern and understand dysfunctional relationship patterns in persons, couples, families, and groups, including those in which mental disorders are involved. Effective assessment leads to the selection of appropriate and helpful treatment plans. Pastoral diagnosis places this process of discernment in a theological context and is an exercise in practical theological reflection. In this course students will become familiar with current psychiatric diagnostic categories through the use of the DSM-IV-TR. We will address differential treatment strategies as well as systemic approaches to assessing dysfunctions in family relationships. The diagnostic process will be critically and theologically examined as it applies to marriage and family therapy and pastoral counseling in a variety of contexts.

Use of Inclusive Language

Learning is fundamentally concerned with communication, self-expression, and personal and social transformation. Learning respects individuals, their feelings, their value and worth, and their particular potential for contribution to common knowledge and community virtue.

Learning is fundamentally and intentionally inclusive. Since all learning is inherently ethical and political, and theological discourse has been traditionally patriarchal and gender exclusive, the Seminary has established a policy, in the interest of constructing an inclusive and egalitarian community, that the language (symbols, metaphors) used in our class discussions and written work shall be gender inclusive and respectful of all persons and groups as valued human creatures of God.

Racism also permeates our society and is detrimental to any learning environment. We need to use language, symbols, and metaphors that honor our commitment to racial inclusiveness.

Academic Honesty

Be careful to fully document any information included in your papers that is not original. Also be aware when you summarize information, even when you give the complete documentation information, your summaries should be in your own words and not retain too much of the original author’s style. Presenting the ideas or writing of someone else as if they were your own is considered plagiarism. Seminary and MFT Program policies on academic honesty will be followed. Academic Support Center handouts will be distributed in class for your guidance. The Library may also be of assistance in this area.
Evaluation of Written Assignments

LPTS has adopted the APA Style for all written work. This includes clear organization, correct grammar, careful proofreading and proper citation of sources. Using the Times New Roman 12-pitch font, double-spacing and one inch margins are considered standard in this class unless otherwise specified. Grading of all written material will be affected by careless writing. The Academic Support Center provides instruction in all of these matters.

The ASC (Academic Support Center) is available Monday & Wednesday, 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Tuesday & Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m., and Friday, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Please call or stop by to make an appointment, or visit their website at http://lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/Online_Writing_Lab.asp

Attendance

In line with seminary policy, attendance at class sessions is expected out of respect for your fellow classmates as well as the instructor. Missing more than six class periods will result in a failing course grade.

20% - Class participation evaluated by

1. The thoughtful use of material assigned
2. Attention to and ability to engage contributions of classmates
3. Openness to reflect critically on the implications of ideas discussed from readings and presentations.
4. Prompt, regular attendance; absences and/or tardiness will seriously impact your participation grade.
5. Quizzes as assigned.

30% - Two reflection papers using assigned texts. (15% each)

1. Write a 3-4 page theological reflection paper on assigned Chapter readings from Women Out of Order . . . (The professor will assign Chapters.) Prepare and submit your papers as assigned, review the readings for the class, and lead the class in discussion regarding pastoral diagnosis.

2. Develop a community genogram of a client system or your own family of origin. Should you choose your own family of origin, you may select any time from the past as a focus for this assignment. Write a 3-4 page narrative reflection paper describing your community genogram using the Rigazio-DiGilio, et. al. text. (On library reserve.) Structure your reflection on insights gained from the exercises in Chapters 2-3 and incorporate class resources. Prepare and submit your paper as assigned, present your work, and lead the class in a discussion regarding a contextual approach to pastoral diagnosis.

25% - In-class presentation on a DSM-IV-TM diagnostic category and a 5-7 page case write-up of your research findings that includes a critical analysis. Consult recent (within the last ten years) literature on the selected diagnostic category. (What Works for Whom,
Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy, & MFT Research resources) Develop a community genogram and pastoral theological assessment highlighting significant issues related to diagnosis and note controversies involved in assessment. Address how your theological commitments relate to diagnostic categories and inform your counseling relationship with a client.

25% - Take home final exam due in my office on May 14 no later than 11:00 a.m.

Professional clinicians in training, using the resources and skills you’ve learned in this course, write a case presentation from your current clinical caseload that could be presented in Interdisciplinary Case Conference as your graduation final case. Pastoral counselors, using the resources and skills you’ve learned in this course, write a case presentation from your ministry and demonstrate an interdisciplinary approach to pastoral care and counseling. This is to be an integrative paper and should reflect your insights about the DSM-IV, systemic, relational and pastoral theological assessments. (NOTE: Use texts required in this course and the case presentation guidelines.)

Th.M. and D. Min. students taking this course are expected to complete 250 pages of additional reading, and write a 10-12 page paper. The student will select a focus for the paper in collaboration with the professor by the second class session of the semester.

Grading
- A 93-100
- A- 90-92
- B+ 87-89
- B 83-86
- B- 80-82
- C+ 77-79
- C 73-76
- C- 70-72
- D 60-69
- F Below 60

Required Texts

Recommended Text

Selected Reserve Readings on Library Reserve
Bibliography


You may select movie clips to focus in class presentations to demonstrate your topic from the following:

Ordinary People
Good Will Hunting
Pay it Forward
As Good As It Gets
A Beautiful Mind
The Unque Mind
I’m Dancing as Fast as I Can
Breakdown
Addendum

AAMFT Core Competencies Addressed

Domain 2: Clinical Assessment and Diagnosis

Domain 3: Treatment Planning and Case Management

3.1.1 Conceptual  Know models, modalities, and/or techniques that are most effective for presenting problem.
3.2.1 Perceptual   Integrate client feedback, assessment, contextual information, and diagnosis with treatment goals and plans.
3.3.5 Executive   Measure progression of therapy toward treatment goals.
3.3.1 Executive   Develop measurable outcomes.
3.3.8 Executive   Assist clients to obtain needed care in complex systems.
3.4.5 Executive   Monitor personal reactions to clients and treatment processes, especially in terms of therapeutic behavior, relationship to clients process for explaining procedures, and outcomes.

Domain 4: Therapeutic Interventions

4.1.2 Conceptual  Recognize strengths, limitations, and contraindications of specific therapy models, including risk of harm associated [with some models].
4.3.1 Executive   Match treatment modalities and technique to clients needs, goals, and values.
4.3.2 Executive   Deliver interventions in a way that is sensitive to special needs of clients.
4.5.3 Professional Articulate rationales for interventions related to treatment, goals and plans, assessment information, and systemic understanding of clients context and dynamics.

Domain 5: Legal Issues, Ethics, and Standards

5.3.5 Executive   Take appropriate action when ethical and legal dilemmas emerge.

Domain 6: Research and Program Evaluation

6.3.1 Executive   Read current MFT and other professional literature.
6.3.2 Executive   Use current MFT and other research to inform clinical practice.