

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PCPM 643: PSYCHOPHARMACOLOGY
(3 Credit Hours)

Mervin VanderSpuy *BSc(Pharm) ThD.*

February to 2 March, 2007

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE RATIONALE

The increased use of antidepressants (SSRi's), tranquilizers and other psycho-pharmaceuticals by counselees means that all counselors (therapists, pastors, chaplains, social workers) will work with clients who are taking, should or shouldn't be taking, psychotropic medications. Should Christians take antidepressants, or should they just trust God for their healing? Are antidepressants effective or addictive? How do all these drugs work, and why should you condemn or condone them? This necessitates an applicable course in psychopharmacology. Therapists and counselors need to know how these medications affect their clients and they need to be able to practice pharmacologically informed therapy as to effectively assist in client recovery and healing.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course, *Psychopharmacology and the Counselor: Medicine, Counseling, Health and Healing*, explores, from an integrated theology/psychology perspective, the history of healing in the church and the development of modern psycho-pharmaceuticals. Principles of action and categorical analysis of psychoactive-drugs; their physiological, psychological, and societal effects; and the theological and psycho-spiritual implication thereof for the practitioner are explored. The course will equip counselors with a sound working knowledge in the application and limitation of psycho-pharmaceutical interventions in the practice of counseling psychology in therapeutic settings.

OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion the course, the student will:

- Articulate an understanding of the history of healing in the church and the development of modern psycho-pharmaceuticals.
- Be able to oppose religious and social stigmatization of using psychotropic medications because of a developed understanding of religious/spiritual/cultural prejudices and perceptions.

- Because of a better understanding of the basics of clinical pharmacology and an increased knowledge about the underlying biological mechanisms of drug action and metabolism, be able to more affectively advise their clients concerning their use of psychotropic medication.
- Articulate an understanding of the concept of the neural pathway and electrical and chemical conduction.
- Distinguish between neurotransmitters such as acetylcholine, dopamine, norepinephrine, epinephrine, serotonin, GABA, glutamate and endorphins and discuss their respective roles in physiological processes
- Recognize the general categories of psychotropic medications and their utilization, side-effects, drug interactions, and contraindications in mental health treatment.
- Address issues related to increasing treatment compliance within counseling, the timing of appropriate medical referral, and the identification of potential substance misuse.
- Have acquired the critical skills for evaluating the use of psychotropic agents in the treatment of psychological and behavioral disorders and will in therapy be able to distinguish when drug therapy is indicated, helpful and/or necessary, and when not.
- Develop integrative treatment plans, make effective referrals, and collaborate with other mental health professionals because of an acquired understanding of integrating pharmacotherapy and psychological therapies.
- Practice pharmacologically informed therapy, using pharmacotherapy as a therapeutic intervention strategy in counseling.
- Define their personal theoretical approach further from an integrative psychological, pharmacological, and theological perspective.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Kinsley, D. (1996). *Health, Healing, and Religion – a cross-cultural perspective*. Prentice Hall: New Jersey

Preston John D, O'Neal John H, and Talaga Mary C. (2005). *Handbook of Clinical Psychopharmacology for Therapists* (Fourth Edition). New Harbinger: Oakland, CA

E-Book: *The Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy: Section 22. Clinical Pharmacology*

<http://www.merck.com/mrkshared/mmanual/section22/sec22.jsp>

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RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS

Peterson, L. M., & Jongsma, A. E. (2003). *The complete adult psychotherapy treatment planner (3rd ed.)*. New York: John Wiley & Sons

Beitman, Blinder, Thase, Riba, Safer (2003). *Integrating Psychotherapy and Pharmacotherapy – dissolving the mind-brain barrier*. Norton: New York

** Although the two recommended texts will be placed on reserve in the library, it is strongly recommended that you purchase the recommended texts*

METHODOLOGY

This course will be taught in a one-week intensive modular format utilizing a participant-learner methodology. The student will therefore be expected to do extensive reading, independent study and practical work apart from the one week in class.

To benefit optimally from the class time, it is imperative that the prescribed reading is done before the commencement of the course.

The process of integrating the theory into practice in this course will occur through the following structures:

- Class lectures, videos, and class discussions (see outline)
- Completion of assigned research, reading and projects as scheduled (see course requirements)
- The learning of psychopharmacological case conceptualization through demonstration, practice and participation in role plays (and/or triad participation) in a lab setting in class.

BASIC COURSE OUTLINE

- Pre-course reading
- Course lectures and active class participation
- Post-course reading and research

- The completion of assignments
- Evaluation, feedback and grade

Tentative Class Lecture/Discussion Outline:

Session 1	Introduction to the Course - The History of Spiritual Healing
Session 2	Understanding Psychopharmacology - The development of psychopharmacology
Session 3	Neurobiology and Pharmacology
Session 4	Utilizing Pharmacotherapy as a therapeutic intervention in Counseling
Session 5	Diagnostic Consideration
Session 6	Depressive and Bipolar Disorders - Antidepressant Medications and Mood Stabilizers
Session 7	Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders - Anti-anxiety Medication
Session 8	Psychotic Disorders - Antipsychotic Medication
Session 9	Borderline Personality Disorders Child and Adolescent Psychopharmacology
Session 10	Substance Related and Other Disorders Alternative Medication and Treatment
Session 11	Drug Interactions
Session 12	Red Flags: When to Re-evaluate

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class Attendance and Participation

Each student must attend all class sessions. Students must pre-read and study the applicable chapters and actively participate in class discussions.
(Class attendance and participation: 10%)

2. Reading Requirements

2.1 Pre-Course Reading

You must read the required text book (Kinsley 1996) in its entirety. Additionally read applicable self-selected books and journal articles of the healing tradition (healing prayer, miracles, attitude to the use of medication, etc.) of your own denomination or denomination of your choice. Be prepared to shortly share some of your research in class.

2.2 *Reading Schedule*

You must read the required text books (Kinsley 1996 and Preston et al 2002) in their entirety and the applicable sections in the recommended books. Additionally read applicable self-selected books and journal articles. Submit a summary of your reading schedule. Additional texts and articles read for the course must also be listed in the reading schedule.

2.3 *Reading Reflection*

Write a short (one or two paragraphs) personal reflection on the impact that each of the books and journal articles that you read, had on you. Shortly describe the areas reinforced and/or changed in your own belief system.

(Value for the reading requirements: 15% - Due: April 13, 2007)

3. **Written Requirements**

3.1 *Paper One*

Research the healing tradition (healing prayer, miracles, attitude to the use of medication, etc.) of your own denomination (or denomination of your choice) and appraise it from a Biblical and Theological perspective (2000 words).

(Value: 25% - Due: March 16, 2007)

3.2 *Paper Two*

Choose **one** of the major Axis I disorders (Anxiety, Mood, Psychotic etc) and prepare a paper on integrating psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy (2500 words). Make an integrated theological, psychopharmacological appraisal of the etiology, therapeutic counseling intervention, and integrated pharmacological treatment of the disorder. Give special attention to counseling techniques specific to clients taking psychotropic medications.

(Value: 30% - Due: March 30, 2007)

1. **Seminar Presentation**

Prepare and submit a Power Point Seminar Presentation on Medicine, Health and Healing for presentation in your local church or community. Topics will be discussed and allocated in class.

(Value: 20% - Due: April 13, 2007)

GRADING SCALE

Work is Publishable =	A+
94% - 100% =	A Excellent
90% - 93% =	A- Excellent (but)
87% - 89% =	B+ Very Good
84% - 86% =	B Good Work
80% - 83% =	B- Good (but)
77% - 79% =	C+ Fair but almost good enough
74% - 76% =	C Fair
70% - 73% =	C- Just Passable
67% - 69% =	D+ Poor but almost made it
64% - 66% =	D Poor
60% - 63% =	D- Highly questionable

SPECIFIC DATA

- All assignments are due on the dates as indicated
- All papers are to follow the **APA format** (latest APA style manual), should be free of grammatical and spelling errors and should reflect Masters-level scholarship
- Assignments must be e-Mailed to in MS-Word (.doc) Power Point, Word Perfect (.wpd), or Rich Text Format (.rtf) - Microsoft Works documents will not be accepted.

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