

## CPSY 563-12

### Treatment Issues in MCFT: Psychopharmacology "Psychopharmacology for Therapists"

Credits: 0.50

Date: July 16th

Time: Saturday 09:00AM - 05:30PM,

Location: South Campus Conference Center, Room 101

Instructor: David McWherter, MEd, MN, PMHNP, ARNP, RN, LMFT  
AAMFT Approved Supervisor

#### Course Description

Many clients today are being prescribed psychotropic medications by a nurse practitioner, psychiatrist, primary care physician or pediatrician. To aid the success of treatment therapists must collaborate productively with medical prescribers. This course is designed to help those with limited background in biology and medications to understand and work with clients who are on medications, and the people who prescribe them.

#### Course Goals

1. You will understand how to effectively collaborate with medical providers.
2. Understanding the biological necessity underlying medications interventions.
3. Gaining an understanding of the social and systemic interaction factors influencing medication prescribing.

#### **Course Objectives:**

1. You will have a basic understanding and conceptual framework of the biological/medical perspective underpinning medication interventions for behavioral and psychological/psychiatric issues .
2. You will have a familiarity of the different medications/categories.
3. You will know how to acquire more detailed, reliable information on individual medications and their use.
4. You will have a basic understanding of medication strategies used by prescribers for common presenting problems and diagnoses.

5. You will develop a working model for understanding both the role of medications but also the medical prescriber.
6. You will have a greater understanding of the medical culture and contextual factors influencing prescribing patterns.

### **Teaching Methods/Class Activities**

This course will be a combination of lecture, experiential activities and conversation. This will include some in class writing, teaming with classmates as well as general discussion. Please bring paper and pencil to class.

### **Student Responsibilities**

1. Honor and respect those involved today: your classmates, the teacher, the school and yourself.
2. Nurture that part of you that is curious and excited about learning.
3. Speak up. Share your thoughts, ideas, concerns, confusion, questions, disagreements and insights.
4. Allow others the time to share.
5. Be on time.
6. Listen.
7. Wear something comfortable.
8. Food allowed but nothing that disrupts the class or causes damage to classroom.
9. If you are sick please stay home and take care of yourself. Sharing your cold is not the type of collaboration I want to encourage.

### **Teacher Responsibilities**

1. Honor and respect those involved today: students, the school and myself.
2. Share my excitement and wonder about the "treatment" process and the human condition .
3. Listen.
4. Be prepared for the class.

5. Provide a framework for the class that promotes learning and excitement.
6. Provide structured activities to assist the learning process.
7. Provide necessary information and guidance at appropriate times during the class.
8. Make necessary rule changes or additions to aid the group's efforts to learn and to meet the school's standards.

## **Evaluation**

### **1. Participation**

Students will be graded on their participation in class activities. Keep in mind that quality of participation is just as important as quantity. I am interested in not only "what" you share but also in the "how" of your process. I am also interested in how well you listen and how well you team with each other throughout the course of the day. This means that at minimum you will offer something at least twice during the day. This can take the form of reflections, questions, observations or statements; expression of concerns, worry and doubt; or sharing of experiences, insights or thoughts.

### **2. Action Plan**

You will summarize highlights of what you have learned from the course and how you will utilize it in your practice. This is a non-graded exercise that will be done at the end of the day. (Please see attached "Action Plan" page)

## **Course Outline**

(Subject to Last minute Adjustments)

### **I. Beginnings**

- A. Introductions: Who Am I? Who are You?**
- B. Logistics** (Breaks/Bathroom locations/etc.)
- C. Course Goals**
- D. General Expectations and Questions**

### **II. The Culture of Medications**

- A. Medicine/Nursing**
- B. Society**
- C. Therapist/Professional Community**

### **III. Basics**

- A. The Nervous System: The Command and Control Elements**
- B. Simple Brain Structure for Non-biologically Inclined Thinkers**
- C. Communication: How Neurons (brain cells) Talk to Each Other**
- D. Neurotransmitters: What are they and why do we care**
- E. Pathways (Is that the same as "Stairway to Heaven")**

### **IV. Medications**

- A. Antipsychotics**
- B. Antidepressants**
- C. Anxiolytics**
- D. Mood Stabilizers**
- E. Stimulants**
- F. Sleep Agents**
- G. Addictions**

## **LUNCH (1 hour)**

- V. Inside a Prescriber or "How they think"**
  - A. Essential Clinical Questions**
  - B. Training**
  - C. Medical Culture**
  - D. Personal Background**
  - E. Age/Race/Gender/Ethnic**
  
- VI. Case Study I: ADHD**
  
- VII. Case Study II: PTSD**
  
- VIII. Case Study III: Major Depression**
  
- IX. Case Study IV: Bipolar Adult**
  
- X. Case Study V: Bipolar Pediatric**
  
- XI. Case Study VI: Psychosis/Schizophrenia/Schizoaffective**
  
- XII. Case Study VII: General Anxiety Disorder/Phobias**

**XIII. Comorbidity**

- A. Psychiatric**
- B. Medical**
- C. Environmental/Family/School**

**XIV. Special Issues**

- A. Age**
- B. Race**
- C. Gender**
- D. Polypharmacy/Drug interactions**
- E. OTC/Supplements**
- F. Adverse Effects**
- G. Death**

**XV. Endings**

- A. Summary**
- B. Personal Action Plan**
- C. Feedback**

## References and Resources

### **Textbooks:**

1. Stahl, S. (2008). *Stahl's Essential Psychopharmacology, Neuroscientific Basis and Practical Applications* (3rd ed.). New York, Cambridge University Press.
2. Martini, F. *Fundamentals of Anatomy & Physiology* (7th ed.). San Francisco, Pearson Education, Inc
3. Copstead, L., & Banasik, J. (2005). *Pathophysiology* (3rd ed.). China, Elsevier Saunders

### **Websites:**

1. National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, <http://www.nami.org/>
2. WebMD, <http://www.webmd.com/>
3. Mayo clinic, <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health-information/>
4. Medscape, <http://www.medscape.com/>
5. Epocrates, <http://www.epocrates.com/>
6. The Carlat Psychiatric Report, <http://thecarlatreport.com/>