PSYCHOTHERAPY RESEARCH (E-2455)
FALL 2005

Professor: Matthew K. Nock, Ph.D.
Office & contact: WJH 1280, nock@wjh.harvard.edu, (617) 496-4484
Office hours: By appointment
Course time: Monday 7:35-9:35
Course location: William James Hall 6

Course description/goals:

This course is designed to provide you with a fundamental understanding of basic concepts in psychotherapy research, including: the history of psychotherapy and psychotherapy research, basic methodological issues in studying psychological interventions (e.g., between-group research designs, single-case research designs, methods for studying mechanisms of change), major theoretical approaches to psychotherapy (e.g., CBT, psychodynamic, experiential), and issues related to the application of psychological interventions with diverse populations. The structure of the class will include weekly lectures/presentations and group discussions of the material covered.

Course requirements and grading:

Participation in class discussion (20 pts).
One of the goals of the course is for you to be able to effectively discuss the course topics; therefore, you are expected to actively participate in class discussions each week.

Weekly readings and thought papers (20 pts).
There will be a short reading assignment each week. After completing the reading for each week, you must write a brief (1-2 pages; quality over quantity) paper in response to some aspect of the reading. The papers should include (a) a brief summary of key points, (b) questions or challenges to some aspect of the reading, and (c) implications or hypotheses generated from the readings. These are not expected to be polished works, but must reflect a clear effort on your part to understand, critique, and synthesize the assigned material. These should be e-mailed to nock@wjh.harvard.edu (or left in my mailbox on the 12th floor of WJH) before each Monday (i.e., received before 12:01 am). This will help organize the class discussion around common points of interest, confusion, or concern.

Presentation (20 pts) & paper (40 pts).
There will be one in-class presentation (approx. 20 minutes) and one final paper (approx. 15-25 pages). These can both cover the same topic or two separate topics. These assignments can be completed in two formats: (1) a research grant proposal for a psychotherapy study (broadly defined), or (2) a critical review of a topic or area written in the form of an article that could be submitted to journals such as: Clinical Psychology:
Course materials:

All readings will be contained within a single course packet.

COURSE MEETINGS DATES, TOPICS, AND READINGS

9/19: Course introduction and description

9/26: Definition and history of psychotherapy

10/3: Overview of questions & methods for psychotherapy research

10/10: No class

10/17: Does psychotherapy work? The role of evidence-based approaches
Weisz, JR, Weersing, VR, & Henggeler, SW (2005). Comment
Westen et al. (2005). Reply

10/24: Treatment equivalence & Common factors approach


10/31: **How does therapy work? Studying mechanisms of change**


11/07: **Overview of cognitive & behavioral approaches to psychotherapy**


11/14: **Overview of psychodynamic & experiential approaches to psychotherapy**


11/21: **When interventions harm: Unsupported and iatrogenic approaches**


**11/28: What factors influence treatment effects and how can research inform practice?**


**12/05: What factors can impede treatment and how to address them?**


**12/12: Psychotherapy with diverse populations: Children/Adolescents & Ethnic minorities**


Sue S (1999). Science, ethics, and bias: Where have we gone wrong? *American


12/19: **Combined treatments and RxP**


12/26 – 1/2: No class

1/9: **Presentations**

1/16: **No class**

1/23: **Presentations; Papers due**