Fundamentals of Dialectical Behavior Therapy  
GSAPP, Course # 18:821:612  
Spring 2024

Instructor  
Shireen L. Rizvi, PhD, ABPP  
Office: GSAPP, Room A229  
E-mail: slrizvi@gsapp.rutgers.edu  
Phone: 848-445-3914

Course Assistant  
Rahil Kamath  
E-mail: rk1081@gsapp.rutgers.edu

Course time and location:  
Fridays 9:00am – 11:45am  
GSAPP Room A317

Course Overview  
This course is designed to familiarize students with Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), an evidence based psychosocial treatment initially developed for suicidal individuals with borderline personality disorder (BPD). Students will be taught the primary theories, principles, and strategies that inform DBT. Students will also become familiar with the latest research on DBT for BPD. Lecture, demonstration, multimedia applications, and group discussion will be used as the primary teaching methods. DBT is a complex treatment with multiple facets. It is therefore not expected that a student will have full competence to deliver the treatment as a result of just this one course. However, this course will provide sufficient background and serve as a necessary prerequisite before using DBT in an applied setting.

Profession-Wide Competencies Addressed in the Course: Intervention, Consultation, Individual and Cultural Diversity

Required Readings

a. Skills training handouts and worksheets available online with purchase of manual.

Other required readings, in the form of journal articles or book chapters, will be made available via Canvas course site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Class Attendance and Participation (25%)
- Practice Assignments (15%)
• Group Presentation (30%) (3/1 or 3/8)  
• Final Paper (30%) (due 4/26)

Class Participation and Practice Assignments
Active class participation is essential. It is critical that you come to class, on time, having completed all the reading and ready to actively participate. Your participation ensures that the class will be enriching to all of us and that you will successfully acquire knowledge of DBT. Participation includes in-class and outside-of-class assignments and exercises, including role-plays, as they relate to assessments, strategies, and techniques covered in the course material. It is important that you notify me when you anticipate being absent or as soon as possible after having missed a class.

Group Presentation
As a class, you will break into four groups. Each group will be asked to provide a 45-60 minute presentation on one of the four DBT skills modules (mindfulness, interpersonal effectiveness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance) during the classes on 3/3 and 3/10. In this presentation, you should provide an overview of the module and teach specific skills to the class as a DBT skills trainer might teach to a group. Experiential exercises are required. Group assignments will be determined by early February.

Final Paper
You have considerable latitude as to what the paper may consist of, but it must deepen your knowledge of the science and practice of DBT. An approximate length for the paper is 8-10 pages. The paper must reference at least eight empirical journal articles. The paper should be double spaced and written in APA 7th edition style. Paper topics must be cleared with me by March 29th. The following are just some examples of possible paper topics:
- A critical analysis of the empirical standing of DBT
- A comparison of DBT to one of three other treatments for BPD (schema-focused therapy, transference-focused therapy, mentalization based therapy)
- DBT case conceptualization of a particular client with BPD (or emotion dysregulation)
- A review of the literature supporting (or failing to support) the biosocial theory
- A review of the literature supporting skills training as a primary intervention

The paper is due via email by 4/26 at 5pm. Please send it to me in Microsoft Word format and include your last name in document title. Late papers will have points deducted.

Occasionally, information and announcements will be sent to you via email. It is therefore imperative that you check your email at least once every other day.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS (subject to change)

1/19/24  Course Overview, Introduction to Borderline Personality Disorder & DBT; Research Review

Linehan, M. M. (1993), Chapter 1


The following 3 papers are optional readings for understanding the evidence base:


1/26/24 **Biosocial Theory**

Linehan, M. M. (1993), Chapter 2


2/2/24 **Beginning Treatment: Assumptions, assessment, structure, & targets**

Linehan, M. M. (1993), Chapters 4-6

2/9/24 **Beginning Treatment: Structure and Commitment**

Linehan, M. M. (1993), Chapter 14


2/16/24 **Change Strategies I: Behavioral Principles, Behavioral Assessment**
Linehan, M. M. (1993), Chapter 9


2/23/24 **Change Strategies II: Behavioral Principles, Problem Solving**

Linehan, M. M. (1993), Chapters 10 – 11


3/1/24 **DBT Skills: Mindfulness and Distress Tolerance**

Linehan, M. M. (2015), Chapters 7, 10, and Associated Handouts and Worksheets

3/8/24 **DBT Skills: Interpersonal Effectiveness and Emotion Regulation**

Linehan, M. M. (2015), Chapters 8, 9 and Associated Handouts and Worksheets

3/15/24 **No class – Spring Break**

3/22/24 **DBT Skills Training: Structure, Format, and Research**

Linehan, M. M. (2015), Chapters 2-5 and Chapter 6 (pp. 125-138)


3/29/24 **Acceptance Strategies: Validation & DBT**

Linehan, M. M. (1993), Chapter 8


4/5/24 **Dialectical Strategies**

Linehan, M. M. (1993), Chapter 7

4/12/24 Consultation Team


4/19/24 Stylistic and Case Management Strategies

Linehan, M. M. (1993a), Chapters 12, 13

4/26/24 Crisis Protocols & Issues in Treating Suicidality

Linehan, M. M. (1993a), Chapter 15 (462-495)


5/3/24 DBT Case Examples


Class, Departmental, and University Policies:

Attendance. It is expected that each student attends every scheduled class. If you are unable to attend a class due to illness or will be late, please email me prior to class. Students are excused from class when observing religious holidays, in accordance with Rutgers University policy, however the instructor must be informed of the absence. An excused absence can also occur if the student is ill, and/or the student has been told to quarantine, and/or are experiencing symptoms of any transmittable disease. Please note as per University Policy students must register/report their absence from class Self Reporting Absence System https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ and students may be asked to verify their absences https://studentsupport.rutgers.edu/services/absence-and-verification-notices

Students will be responsible for all material covered during their absence. As psychologists-in-training, it is expected students will schedule activities around their classes, clinical work, supervision and practicum. Please see student handbook: https://gsapp.rutgers.edu/current-students/student-guidelines-employment and https://gsapp.rutgers.edu/current-students/student-handbook-policies-and-procedures
Unless otherwise noted all formal written work should use the Style Sheet of the American Psychological Association. See: http://apastyle.apa.org/ (full access via Login to Rutgers University Libraries home page: http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/)

Disabilities. Students with disabilities who qualify for reasonable accommodations may arrange for these through the Office of Disability Services, Kreeger Learning Center, 151 College Avenue; dfoffice@rci.rutgers.edu

Academic Integrity. Work submitted for this course must be your own. You are responsible for knowing and conforming to all professional and university standards. See http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/students.shtml
Course Bibliography


