

Trauma-Focused Approaches to Psychological Intervention I

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Fireside Chats: Wednesdays, 7:00pm-8:00pm
via Zoom in Canvas
Office Hours: By appointment via Zoom

Course Description (from the University Bulletin)

This course covers the etiology, symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment of trauma-related dysfunction, particularly post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), acute stress disorder (ASD), and common comorbid conditions. Students will learn about the range of events associated with trauma, the prevalence, incidence, and developmental impact of trauma-related disorders across the lifespan, the major risk factors for trauma-related dysfunction, cultural factors that impact dysfunction, trauma-focused assessments for identifying trauma-related symptoms, and the major research-supported approaches to treatment and prevention of trauma-related disorders in the aftermath of trauma. Major treatment approaches to be covered include prolonged exposure (PE), trauma-focused cognitive-behavioral therapy (TF-CBT), cognitive processing therapy (CPT), eye-movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR), emotion-focused treatment (EFT), stress management techniques, and psychopharmacological interventions. The recognition, prevention, and treatment of compassion fatigue and vicarious traumatization in the clinician will be emphasized.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Evaluate, critique, and apply the DSM-5 conceptualization and diagnoses of PTSD and trauma-related disorders, and the cultural meaning of trauma-related symptoms.
- Demonstrate an awareness of how gender, race, sexual orientation, and economic and cultural contexts impact experiences and expression of trauma-related symptoms across the lifespan, particularly with respect to the cumulative effects of trauma.
- Empathically appreciate the particular adaptation of any individual to their life circumstances.
- Demonstrate awareness of the strengths and limitations of generalized and specialized assessment measures with trauma-survivor populations.
- Apply empirically supported interventions to trauma-focused cases.
- Conceptualize clinical cases using the relevant trauma-focused theories and clinical frameworks, including etiology and symptomology related to trauma-related dysfunction across the lifespan from a biopsychosocial perspective.
- Develop treatment plans that utilize empirically supported, culturally competent strategies and techniques for persons with trauma-related disorders and dysfunction.

Text (Required):

Forbes, D., Bisson, J.I., Monson, C.M., & Berliner, L. (Eds.). (2020). *Effective treatments for PTSD*. Guilford Publications.

Text (Recommended):

Friedman, M.J., Schnurr, P.P., & Keane, T.M. (Eds.). (2021). *Handbook of PTSD: Science and practice*. Guilford Publications.

Supplementary Readings

Additional handouts, articles, exercises, or other readings may be assigned throughout the semester. Supplementary materials will be posted on CANVAS.

Course Website and Communication Plan

My primary way of communicating with everyone will be through CANVAS. I will post any announcements regarding class or assignments on Canvas. Please check CANVAS each day for any announcements or updates. Additional materials, such as course syllabi, readings, audio recordings, homework, discussion boards, exams, quizzes, and/or other material will be made available on Canvas throughout the semester. In addition, grades will be posted to the Canvas gradebook.

The site address is <http://canvas.psu.edu/>. You will need a valid Penn State Access Account to gain access to the site. You may also call the campus computer consultants at 814-217-4357 or email them at bdiHELP@psu.edu. Helpdesk staff assist with computing questions and computer hardware/software problems.

Contacting Me

Please utilize your Penn State email account when contacting me via email. Make sure the class number and section number, as well as your last name, are in the subject line. If you do not receive a reply message within 24 hours (except for weekends and holidays), please resend your message. Please contact me as soon as possible if you have any concerns regarding the course or personal matters.

Grading

Applied Discussions (20%)

Over the course of the semester, students will be expected to participate in weekly applied discussions. There will be a total of 12 discussion topics, and participation across the semester is worth 20% of the final grade. For each applied discussion, I will post at least one discussion topic with a series of questions or a required activity. Each student will be expected to provide thoughtful, respectful responses that include comments and questions about the topic. Students will also be expected to respond to the comments and questions of fellow classmates. Students will be evaluated on the discussion rubric posted below.

*Applied Discussion Rubric***

Criteria (Points)	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Average (3)	Below Average (2-1)	Poor (0)
Postings	4 postings, well-distributed throughout the week	3 postings, well-distributed throughout the week	2 postings, well-distributed throughout the week	1 posting throughout the week	No postings throughout the week
Description of Contribution	Use of Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation: Very clear that course materials were understood and incorporated well into responses. Asks questions that extend the discussion and makes insightful, critical comments.	Use of Comprehension and Application: Course materials were understood and incorporated into responses. Exhibits good insights and understanding of discussion questions.	Use of Knowledge: Postings are not on tract with course materials. Repeat basic correct information related to discussion.	Seemingly, no evidence that course materials were understood or incorporated into the discussion. Didn't engage with course materials.	No participation.

Case Conceptualizations and Treatment Plans (40%)

Across the semester, students will be given four (4) clinical case examples to apply the material learned in the course to write a comprehensive case conceptualization, a clear description of the current mental health presentation, and provide a comprehensive treatment plan. Each case conceptualization and treatment plan will be worth 10% of the final grade, for a total of 40%.

Midterm and Final Examinations (30%)

There will be two exams in the course. Each exam will cover half of the material we have covered during the semester and consist of short-answer and/or essay questions. You may use your books, notes, etc., but you must cite your sources using APA style. In addition, you must paraphrase the material in your own words to demonstrate your understanding of the material. You will have one week to complete each exam. Since the exams are open-book format, group or peer discussions of the exam prior to the exam deadline are strictly prohibited.

Self-Care Assessments and Activities (10%)

Students will be expected to keep journal entries on Canvas. The goal of these assignments is for the student to gain a better understanding of how course materials and experiential components are influencing the development of their personal and professional lives. All students will write four (4) journals over the course of the semester. The journals should be approximately 2-3 pages in length. The journals should not be a reiteration of information presented, but a reflective response to the information – including your thoughts, feelings, and opinions of the topic. These journals are opportunities to think further about aspects of assigned readings that are of particular interest to you. How you do this is up to you. Examples include but are not limited to a critique of ideas from the reading; writing about how a topic from the reading relates to your experiences in the service-learning practicum; and writing about how a topic from the reading relates to your experiences or the experiences of someone known to you. You are strongly encouraged to use the material in your reaction papers to raise topics, issues, and questions during applied discussions. All journals will be submitted via Canvas. As part of the personal reflection process, students will also complete a compassion fatigue assessment and develop a self-care plan to promote wellness and healthy coping in the presence of the sensitive topics covered in this course.

Course Grading Scale

Criteria	Percentage of Final Grade
Online Class Participation	20%
Case Conceptualizations and Treatment Plans	40%
Midterm Examination	15%
Final Examination	15%
Self-Care Assessments and Activities	10%

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	94%-100%
A-	90%-<94%
B+	87%-<90%
B	84%-<87%
B-	80%-<84%
C+	77%-<80%
C	70%-<77%
D	61%-<70%
F	<61%

General Expectations and Information

This course is paced, which means that there is an established start and end date, and that you will interact with other students throughout the course. The course consists of a textbook, articles, and a course webpage on Canvas that contains the lessons and communications tools, such as a discussion forum and e-mail system. Some of the lessons incorporate links to articles necessary for you to complete assignments or to resource sites that provide more in-depth information on topics.

Our interactions with one another will be "asynchronous"—we'll use tools like e-mail and online discussion forums to exchange our thoughts. These tools will enable us all to participate at a time of day that is convenient to us. Since the discussions will be ongoing, however, you will be expected to log in to the course Web site at least five times per week (and not all on the same day) so that you can keep up with the discussions and participate effectively.

The course is divided into 12 modules of study. You will have one week to work through each unit. Within each unit you will find online "lecture" material, as well as reading assignments and both individual and group activities. The modules are all located on our Canvas course home page.

Like an in-person course, it will be important to keep up with the coursework, as you will be required to participate in class discussions and activities that have specific time frames associated with them. For a more detailed look at what each unit will entail, as well as due dates for our assignments and activities, please refer to the "Course Schedule" section of this syllabus. Please note that no late work will be accepted.

Please expect that some topics covered in the course will invoke new or difficult thoughts and/or feelings. Remember to be respectful of others' thoughts, opinions, and experiences. It is expected that students do not engage in the perpetuation of stereotypes, discrimination, prejudice, or other forms of bias and intolerance. Please see your instructor if you have further questions or concerns regarding this expectation.

The Learning Environment

Please cooperate with me and your fellow students to create an environment that fosters learning and communication. We all should be respectful in our behavior and comments and should eliminate disruptions that might be distractions.

Academic Dishonesty

This course will strictly adhere to the University policies regarding individual academic integrity. Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University's Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights, and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

Academic integrity includes a commitment by all members of the University community not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others. The University defines academic integrity very clearly at: <https://behrend.psu.edu/for-faculty-staff/faculty-resources/academic-integrity>

All students are expected to visit, review, and know the contents of this important University site. Dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. Any violation of academic integrity will receive academic and possibly disciplinary sanctions, including the possible awarding of an XF grade which is recorded on the transcript and states that failure of the course was due to an act of academic dishonesty. All acts of academic dishonesty are recorded so repeat offenders can be sanctioned accordingly.

Additionally, students are expected to abide by the Penn State Principles, to act appropriately, and to be considerate of other students always. This means behaving in ways that are non-disruptive and are conducive to a vibrant learning environment. Failure to observe these policies or violation of any section of University Policy is punishable by receiving a failing grade, suspension from class, or other actions as outlined in University policies.

Disability Accommodation

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. Student Disability Resources (SDR) website provides contact information for every Penn State campus (814-898-7101). For further information, please visit Student Disability Resources website (<http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/>).

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: See documentation guidelines (<http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/guidelines>). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus disability services office will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodation.

Educational Equity/Report Bias

Penn State takes great pride in fostering a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin,

race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through Educational Equity via the Report Bias webpage (<http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/>).

Mental Health and Counseling Assistance

There may be times when personal stress interferes with your academic performance and/or negatively impacts your daily life. If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health challenges at Behrend, please contact the Personal Counseling Office located in Reed 1 or call 814-898-6504. Services are free and confidential. Students may also contact the Penn State Crisis Line (24/7) at 1-877-229-6400, or use the Crisis Text Line (24/7) Text “Lions” to 741741

I Stand for State.

Because I know reducing the number of people on this campus who get hurt by interpersonal violence requires everyone to do their part, I pledge to be an active bystander, support survivors of violence and proactively reinforce campus prevention activities. Ask me how you can get involved too. My classroom and office are safe places. Please know you will be supported and heard if you have experienced any form of violence. If you or someone you know experience stalking, partner violence, sexual assault, or other forms of power-based violence, please know you are not alone. There are resources that can help:

- Health and Wellness: 814-898-6217
- Personal Counseling: 814-898-6504
- Student Affairs and Residence Life: 814-898-6111
- Police Services: 814-898-6101 (non-emergency)
- Crime Victim Center: 814-455-9414
- SafeNet: 814-455-1774

Emergency Procedures

Faculty, staff, and students may need to evacuate campus buildings for several reasons (fire or alarm activation, discovery of a suspicious object, etc.). The following points provide guidance on emergency evacuations:

- Be familiar with evacuation maps posted within the building. Know the location of at least two exits and the corresponding evacuation routes from the classroom.
- Exit the building as quickly and calmly as possible using the nearest safe exit if prompted to do so. Do not use any elevators.
- Move to the building’s “Designated Meeting Site”, or another safe location outside the building.
- Do not re-enter the building until you have been instructed to do so by public safety officials. The silencing of alarms does not necessarily mean that the emergency is over.
- You are strongly encouraged to watch the “StaySAFE” video located at <http://StaySAFE.psu.edu>

Any student who may require assistance when evacuating the building should notify the instructor so that arrangements can be made to ensure their safety during an emergency.

The Use of Generative AI

According to Penn State policy G-9: Academic Integrity, an academic integrity violation is “an intentional, unintentional, or attempted violation of course or assessment policies to gain an academic advantage or to advantage or disadvantage another student academically.” Unless your instructor tells you otherwise, you must complete all course work entirely on your own, using only sources that have been permitted by your instructor, and you may not assist other students with papers, quizzes, exams, or other assessments. If your instructor allows you to use ideas, images, or word phrases created by another person (e.g., from Course Hero or Chegg) or by generative technology, such as ChatGPT, you must identify their source. You may not submit false or fabricated information, use the same academic work for credit in multiple courses, or share instructional content. Students with questions about academic integrity should ask their instructor before submitting work.

Students facing allegations of academic misconduct may not drop/withdraw from the affected course unless they are cleared of wrongdoing (see G-9: Academic Integrity). Attempted drops will be prevented or reversed, and students will be expected to complete course work and meet course deadlines. Students who are found responsible for academic integrity violations face academic outcomes, which can be severe, and put themselves at jeopardy for other outcomes which may include ineligibility for Dean’s List, pass/fail elections, and grade forgiveness. Students may also face consequences from their home/major program and/or The Schreyer Honors College.

LionHELP

LionHELP is a smartphone application, available for both iOS and Android, that you can download if you or someone you know may be facing a mental health emergency. This app provides information about the signs of a mental health crisis, how to talk to someone who may be in crisis, a guide to help refer someone to the appropriate resource, and a full list of resources available on campus. The app can be downloaded free of charge, and there is absolutely no tracking of any information. Please note that LionHELP is not a diagnostic tool and should not take the place of services provided by a licensed mental health professional.

PSYCH 843 Tentative Schedule (05/13/2024 Version)

Date	Topic	Reading/Assignment
Week 1: 5/13-5/19	Introduction to Class; The History of Traumatic Stress	Chapter 1; Selected Articles Discussion Board 1
Week 2: 5/20-5/26	Assessment of Traumatic Stress Disorders	Chapters 2-3 Discussion Board 2 Journal Reflection 1
Week 3: 5/27-6/2	Diagnosis of Traumatic Stress Disorders	Chapters 4-5 Discussion Board 3
Week 4: 6/3-6/9	Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	Chapters 10, 21 Discussion Board 4 Journal Reflection 2
Week 5: 6/10-6/16	Cognitive Processing Therapy	Chapter 13; Selected Articles Discussion Board 5 Case Conceptualization 1
Week 6: 6/17-6/23	Prolonged Exposure	Chapter 12; Selected Articles Discussion Board 6 Case Conceptualization 2
Week 7: 6/24-6/30	Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR)	Chapter 14; Selected Articles Discussion Board 7 Midterm Examination Journal Reflection 3
Week 8: 7/1-7/7	Emotion-Focused Treatments	Chapters 19-20 Discussion Board 8 Case Conceptualization 3
Week 9: 7/8-7/14	Stress Management Techniques	Chapter 10; Selected Articles Discussion Board 9
Week 10: 7/15-7/21	Psychopharmacological Treatments	Chapter 16; Selected Articles Discussion Board 10 Journal Reflection 4
Week 11: 7/22-7/28	Resolution of Ethical Dilemmas and Competence	Selected Articles Discussion Board 11 Case Conceptualization 4
Week 12: 7/29-8/4	Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Traumatization	Selected Articles Discussion Board 12 Compassion Fatigue Assessment Self-Care Plan
Week 13: 8/5-8/9	N/A	Final Examination