

Global Mental Health

Edwin Fisher, Department of Health Behavior (HBEH 893-007, 3 credits)
Intended audience: MPH, PhD, Other Graduate and Upper Level Undergraduate
Fall, 2017: Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:10-11:40 am

Scope:

Global Fundamentals, Characteristics, Public Health Impacts, Prevention, and Management of Mental Health and Mental Illness* Research issues and methods will be discussed across individual topics.

Class Topics:

Basics

- What is mental health, mental illness, normal, abnormal, pathological?
- Fundamentals: Interplay of biological, psychological, cultural, community, economic, organizational influences in mental illness
- Epidemiology of mental illness worldwide
- Critical theory, concepts of mental illness and mental health (e.g., Foucault, Laing, Szasz, Fanon, Collomb), and the anticolonization of mental health treatments

Varieties and Major Types of Mental Illness

- Schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, including PTSD, substance use disorder, developmental disorders, personality disorders
- Mental health and illness in children and families
- Mental health and chronic disease – public health burden
- Mental health and the criminal justice system

Determinants

- Biology, genetics, epigenetics
- Psychology, development, family, social influences
- Cultural influences
- Economic, organizational, and policy influences

Interventions and Systems of Mental Health Care

- We will cover a range of interventions from medication and psychological approaches to community and policy approaches

Global Examples and Critical Issues

- Regional examples from China, Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and Northern Europe
- Controversy around diagnosing or characterizing the mental health of public figures
- The possibility of an integrative model, and Future directions

Evaluation

- Individual or group term project of student's choice – on a topic of student's choice, a report, intervention plan, policy proposal, or similar practice-oriented document
- Term paper (8 pages); Brief Reactions Papers (3 @ 1-page each)

Key Features and Improvements for 2017

- Return of guest lecturers highly praised by previous students: Professors Jocelyn Chua, Gary Cuddeback, Jim Herrington, Joanna Maselko, Kate Muessig – and *additional guest lecturers*
- Reduced emphasis on complexities of experimental psychopathology and greater emphasis on description and broad understanding of mental health problems
- Increased class time for work on student projects
- Increased use of varied discussion formats and source materials other than text chapters and journal articles

* "Mental illness" and "mental health" are used as summary terms for the broad range of phenomena referred to by a variety of terms such as "psychopathology," "abnormal behavior," "psychiatric disorder," etc. They are not intended to convey or privilege any conceptual model as to the nature, causes, or fundamental characteristics of this broad range of phenomena.