

## Global Mental Health – HBEH 893-007

Edwin Fisher, Department of Health Behavior

3 credits

Intended audience: MPH, PhD and  
upper level undergraduate (latter with permission of instructor)

No prerequisites

**Fall Semester, 2016:** Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:10-11:40 am; Stone Center - Rm 0209

**Scope:** Global Fundamentals, Characteristics, Public Health Impacts, Prevention, and Management of Mental Health and Mental Illness<sup>1</sup>

**Key Concepts/Learning objectives: At the end of the course, students will understand the following concepts:**

- I. Multidimensional Nature of Mental Health – Biological, psychological, cultural, economic, community, and organizational dimensions are central to understanding and addressing mental health and mental illness
- II. Major individual, clinical, community and population approaches to preventing, treating and managing mental illness
- III. Mental Health is **always** cultural – there is no mental illness without cultural influence on its expression (e.g., paranoia is not expressed through delusions of “being Jesus Christ” in Muslim and Buddhist societies). Thus, understanding cultural difference is a key part of understanding mental health.
- IV. Global perspective is central to understanding mental health

### **CLASS TOPICS:**

#### **Basics**

- Pre-Read: Before the first class on August 24, please read, review, or watch **ONE** of:
  - *King Lear* by Shakespeare
  - Jamison, K.R. *An Unquiet Mind*. New York: Knopf, 1995. A memoir of bipolar disorder by a Johns Hopkins psychiatrist.
  - *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* – either the book by Ken Kesey (New American Library, 1965) or the movie directed by Milos Forman, starring Jack Nicholson (1975).
  - *The Soloist* (2009 movie about a Julliard-trained violinist who develops schizophrenia, directed by Joe Wright, starring Jamie Foxx, Robert Downey Jr., and Catherine Keener)
- What is mental health, mental illness, “craziness”? Discussion of students’ reactions to pre-read materials.
- 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**

- “Serious mental illness” – schizophrenia, depression, bipolar disorder
- Anxiety disorders, including PTSD
- Substance use disorder
- Developmental disorders; Mental health and illness in children and families
- Personality disorders, Narcissism and leadership and evil
- Mental health and chronic disease – public health burden
- Mental health and the criminal justice system

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<sup>1</sup> “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.

## **Determinants**

- Biology, genetics, epigenetics
- Psychology, development, family, social influences
- Cultural influences
- Economic, organizational, and policy influences
- Methodology in diagnosis and research on mental illness and interventions

## **Interventions and Systems of Mental Health Care**

- Biological approaches in psychiatry
- Psychotherapy and its descendants
- Community mental health
- Peer support, Community Health Workers
- Advocacy in mental health and among/for those with mental illness
- Health in All Policies and mental health
- Ethics in mental health care
- Prevention

## **Global Examples**

- Regional examples: Mental health in China
- Regional examples: Mental health in Sub-Saharan Africa; Collomb and “healing villages” in Senegal
- Model systems of care: Mental health in northern Europe
- The possibility of an integrative model?? Future directions

## **EVALUATION**

**Term Project:** Work groups develop reports, recommendations around key topics of their choosing, e.g., PTSD among Iraq/Afghanistan veterans, post-partum depression, mental health and homelessness, chronic disease among those with serious mental illness, suicide, etc. Class time will be allocated weekly for work groups to discuss their projects.

**Term Paper:** Individual critical reflections on key concepts in the course and how they were illustrated by or important in developing the Term Project on which the student worked. Max = 8 pages, double spaced.

**Brief Reaction Papers:** At a specific date of the student’s choosing during each of August 29 – September 21, September 26 – October 24, and October 26 – November 30, students will submit a brief paper describing their reaction to a paper, finding, or issue raised in or suggested by the readings and class discussion. Papers will address the following questions: 1) What is the paper, finding, or issue on which the Brief Reaction Paper focuses (max = 100 words), 2) What are the implications of the paper, finding, or issue for our understanding of mental health (max = 150 words), and 3) What are the implications of the paper, finding, or issue for our interventions or public health approaches to prevention, management, or care of mental illness or enhancement of mental health (max = 150 words).

**Course Grade:** Term Paper – 40%; Aggregate of Brief Reaction Papers – 30% (10% each); Term Project – 15%; Class Participation – 15%