

IMH Dual-Title Course Learning Goals, Key Assignments, Readings and Ideas for Helping Interns see the Clinical Relevance of Course Material

Infant Mental Health Treatment: SW 7010

The focus of this course is the relationship between theory, assessment and practice in the field of infant mental health. The course focuses specifically on evidence-based practices. This is a variable level course. The first half of the course provides an overview of infant mental health practice and includes students from across campus who may or may not be knowledgeable of or interested in future direct work with infants and families.

The second half of the course is open to IMH-DT students only and provides an in-depth analysis of infant mental health practice and the opportunity to practice assessment and intervention skills. The course builds upon the theoretical and practical frameworks presented in both the ELE 7025 theoretical foundations course and NUR 7890 assessment course.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Identify evidence-based interventions to use with infants, toddlers and families in order to strengthen their early attachment relationship.
 - Class Presentation, Research Paper Assignment, Interaction Guidance
2. Understand the importance and goals of reflective supervision.
 - Interaction Guidance Assignment, In-Class lecture
3. Doctoral students will demonstrate knowledge of connecting evidence-based intervention research with local service needs, service delivery and outcome evaluation.
 - Letter of Intent
4. Connect theory and assessment to treatment planning, intervention strategies and evaluation and outcome measurement.
 - Reflective Paper, Letter of Intent, Research Paper
5. Use recorded interactions between an infant and caregiver as an intervention strategy.
 - Interaction Guidance Assignment
6. Apply their own emotional responses to the context of the working relationship with an infant and family.
 - Reflective Paper, Classroom reflection and discussion

Key Assignments for Clinical IMH-DT students

Reflective Paper:

In this assignment, students reviewed an assigned video clip of an infant/family interaction. This paper requires that the student describe in detail their observations of the baby, adults, and the dyadic interactions on the video. The students are asked to provide their impressions of the interaction, including how this interaction might feel for the baby, the parents, and themselves if they were the home visitor in the case. Also included is an in-depth reflection on the student's response to the interaction, how they might feel if they were present, and how it would be for them to work with this family. This paper also requires that the student apply one of the discussed evidence-based interventions to hypothetical work with this family. Given all that was observed, which intervention would be appropriate, and why.

Interaction Guidance Assignment:

This family requires the student to videotape a family they are working with clinically in their IMH-focused field placement. They are asked to discuss with the family the videotaping exercise and obtain releases as

necessary. The students are required to videotape an interaction between the infant and primary caregiver. The first part of the assignment is to then bring that interaction video to class to present to the class. Discussion among class members and instructor will help to guide the student in using Interaction Guidance techniques with the family. The student is then asked to record themselves watching this interaction video with the family and implementing the strategies discussed in class. This recording is then brought to class and presented with the student reflecting upon their own responses, as well as the implementation of the interaction guidance strategies.

Key Readings

Steele, M., Murphy, A., & Steele, H. (2010). Identifying therapeutic action in an attachment-centered intervention with high risk families. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 38, 61-72.

Beebe, B. (2010). Mother-infant research informs mother-infant treatment. *Clinical Social Work Journal*, 38, 17-36

Ideas to Help Interns see the Clinical Relevance of Course Material

1. Allow the student to videotape their clinical family to complete the interaction guidance assignment. Ask to see the recording of the interaction as well as their implementation of the interaction guidance strategies. Allow time for the student to reflect with you about the experience and completion of the assignment.
2. Ask the student about the evidence-based interventions they are learning in this course. Discuss with them any of the interventions you are using in your program. Provide access for the student to observe experienced staff engaging in evidence-based intervention strategies with their client families.
3. Continue provision of reflective supervision to allow students a safe place to think about their responses to work with vulnerable families.