Syllabus: Psychology 539, Spring 2013
Version 1-25-12
Scientific Basis of Psychotherapy & Behavior Change
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9:35-Noon on Mondays, LSII, Room 285D

Course Description and Objectives

This course will: 1) cover methodological and conceptual issues pertinent to scientifically evaluating the efficacy, effectiveness, and process of psychotherapy and behavior change interventions; 2) review evidence concerning empirically supported therapies (ESTs), evidence-based practice (EBP), and empirically supported mechanisms of change (MOC); 3) examine processes and MOC associated with the development of promising new and more efficacious interventions, 4) promote critical thinking about and designing of psychotherapy and behavior change interventions, 5) review statistical and conceptual assessments of therapy and change, and 6) will provide skills and experience in writing and reviewing grants designed to develop and assess to mechanisms (mediators) and moderators of psychotherapy efficacy and behavior change.

Psychotherapy, broadly conceived, typically consists of a complex set of verbal and behavioral interchanges, implemented differently both between- and within- therapists and clients. Owing to this complexity, it is perhaps not surprising that, with a modest number of exceptions, we know relatively little about why, when, or in whom what types of change techniques work or how best to study the effects of different types of therapy. Thus, a great deal more innovative and rigorous research is needed. Each student will be required to become familiar with current and historical issues, theory, and empirical findings concerning therapy outcome and process, mechanisms of change, therapeutic strategies, and client factors. The class format will be discussion based, with the goal of promoting critical, science-based thinking, reading, and knowledge. The material covered in this course is part of a rich intellectual tradition in our field, but many graduate students obtain the doctoral degree without systematic exposure to this tradition. The course will make you a more thoughtful, a savvier consumer of published treatment research, and better prepared to design, conduct, analyze, and interpret psychotherapy and behavior change research.

COURSE DYNAMICS

- Active Student Participation
- Verbal Output in class every class show what you know and contribute
  - Class-assigned and other readings and lit searches
  - Random student questions
- Weekly progress on a behavior change/psychotherapy grant project

Grades

Student grade will be determined by:

1. Reaction Papers and Class participation: .................. 30%
   Questions concerning readings will asked with the expectation that answers will indicate the student’s careful reading and integration. What I am primarily looking for is active participation and learning from everyone. It should be obvious that the student has read and thought carefully about every reading. It is not expected the student to have a complete grasp of every detail mentioned in each article/chapter, but I do expect the student to come to class prepared to discuss each reading in detail and to ask questions indicating serious thinking about the material.
Before each class, e-mail me a reaction paper about the readings for that class. These papers must be e-mailed by 9:30 the evening before each class. The goal of these reaction papers is to promote your thinking about how the readings relate to previous readings and themes discussed in class. For the theoretical readings, I want you to be able to pull out each theory’s key hypotheses, implications, empirical support, and relationships to other theories. For the research readings, I want you to identify which specific hypotheses were tested, the nature and appropriateness of the logical and statistical analyses used, and what the findings imply.

2. NIH R21 Grant Proposal and its Class Presentation…………………………………… 25%
   - Letter of intent deadline March 10.
   - Grant due: April 1 via e-mail 8:00 p.m.
     o E-mail grant to dgilbert@siu.edu and classmates
   - Grant reviews during classes on April 8 and 15.
   - PHS format

3. R34 Grant Proposal and its Class Presentation…………………………………… 25%
   - Letter of intent deadline March 10.
   - Grant due: April 8 via e-mail 8:00 p.m.
     o E-mail grant to dgilbert@siu.edu and classmates
   - Reviews during classes on April 15 and 29
   - PHS format

4. Final exam: two prelim exam-type questions related to……………… 20%
   - 1) Psychotherapy and behavior change mechanisms
   - 2) Psychotherapy and behavior change evidence of treatment efficacy

Attendance

Attendance will be expected unless prior arrangements are made. Missing class will result in decreased points for class participation.

Readings

There is no text book, but there will be from three to six articles per week that should be read carefully before class and evaluated critically by the student in preparation for in-depth class discussions.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1
January 14:
   Introduction and Review of Syllabus
   Overview of course themes/content
   Why apply science to psychotherapy and behavior change research?
   Mechanisms of Change and Problem Development
   Psychotherapy: effectiveness—what, when, how, by whom, and assessed by what criteria?
   PPT presentation and discussion of the two grants course requirement.

January 21: Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday Holiday—But readings for this week will be discussed on Jan 28.
January 28:


February 4:


February 11:


Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 69, 347-357.

February 18:
NBL, 2006 Chapter 2: What Qualifies as Research on Which to Judge Effective Practice?
NBL, 2006 Chapter 3: Does Manualization Improve Therapy Outcomes?

February 25:
NBL, 2006 Chapter 4: Are Research Patients and Clinical Trials Representative of Clinical Practice?
NBL, 2006 Chapter 5: What Should Be Validated?

March 4:
NBL, 2006 Chapter 6: What Else Materially Influences What is Represented and Published as Evidence?
NBL, 2006 Chapter 7: Do Therapies Designated as Empirically Supported Treatments for Specific Disorder Produce Outcomes Superior to Non-Empirically Supported Treatment Therapies?

March 11 Spring vacation:

March 18:

March 25:

April 1:
NBL, 2006 Chapter 8: How Well Do Both Evidence-Based Practices and Treatment as Usual Satisfactorily Address the Various Dimensions of Diversity?
NBL, 2006 Chapter 9: Are Efficacious Laboratory-Validated Treatments Readily Transportable to Clinical Practice?

April 8:

April 15:
R21 Grant reviews.

April 22:
R21/R34 Grant reviews.

April 29:
R34 Grant reviews.

May 6: Final Exam
Class Resources

1. Desire2Learn
3. Clinical Science Links:

The Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration (SEPI) [http://www.SEPIWEB.org/]
Baker, McFall, and Shoham (2009) PSPI monograph on psychological clinical science

Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System (PCSAS)

Academy of Psychological Clinical Science (APCS)

Research-Supported Psychological Treatments (Society of Clinical Psychology, Division 12 of APA)

Evidence-Based Treatment for Children and Adolescents (Division 53 APA)

Practice Guidelines from the American Psychiatric Association

Psychologists Opposed to Prescription Privileges for Psychologists

National Institute of Mental Health

The Scientific Review of Mental Health Practice

Centre for Evidence-Based Mental Health

Psychological Science in the Public Interest (APS journal)

NARSAD, The Mental Health Research Association

Schizophrenia Research Forum
Carl Sagan's Baloney Detection Kit

Skeptical Inquirer ("Magazine for Science and Reason")

Skeptic's Society and Skeptic Magazine

Quackwatch
[http://www.nida.nih.gov/researchtraining/timetable.html]

James Randi Educational Foundation (on paranormal and pseudoscience)


[http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp]

Behavioral Therapies Development Program
Treatment Grant application (R21)
Familiarize yourself with the grant forms (and bring blank ones to class with you). You may also want to review the sample grants I gave you on the disk.

- Grant should propose a treatment outcome study in which a specific theory of psychotherapy is tested
- Primary aim of study should include tests of a mechanism of action proposed by basic or clinical science theories
- Specific sections to include in Research Plan:
  a. Specific Aims
  b. Background and Significance
  c. Research Design and Methods
  d. Literature Cited
  e. Human Subjects Research

Protection of Human Subjects
- Risks to the subjects
- Human Subjects Involvement and Characteristics
- Sources of Materials
- Potential Risks
- Adequacy of Protection Against Risks
- Recruitment and Informed Consent
- Protection against Risks
- Potential Benefits of the Proposed Research to the Subjects and Others
- Importance of Knowledge to be Gained
- Inclusion of Women
- Inclusion of Minorities
- Inclusion of Children

Use NIH forms
- Research Project Evaluation Criteria
  a. Significance: Does this study address an important problem? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will be the effect of these studies on the concepts or methods that drive this field?
  b. Approach: Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?
  c. Innovation: Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?
  d. Investigator: Is the investigator appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the principal investigator and other researchers (if any)?
  e. Environment: Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the probability of success? Do the proposed experiments take advantage of unique features of the scientific environment or employ useful collaborative arrangements? Is there evidence of institutional support?
  f. Human Subjects/Vertebrate Animals: In conducting peer review for scientific and technical merit, SRGs will also evaluate the involvement of human/animal subjects and proposed protections from research risk relating to their participation in the proposed research plan according to the following four review criteria: (1) Risk to Subjects, (2) Adequacy of protection against risks (3) Potential benefits of the proposed research to the subjects and others and (4) Importance of the knowledge to be gained. When human subjects are involved in the proposed clinical research, the SRG will also evaluate the proposed plans for inclusion of minorities and members of both
sexes/genders, as part of the scientific assessment of Approach criterion. The evaluation will be factored into the overall score for scientific and technical merit of the application.

**Other Relevant Readings**

**Methodology & Design Issues-II**


**The Dodo Bird Hypothesis and Evidence of Differential Effectiveness-I**


**Efficacy and Effectiveness**


Clinical Significance


Common and Specific Mechanisms-I


Therapist Effects—A form of specific effect to be discovered


Methodology & Design Issues-III: Specialized Techniques for Measuring Outcomes


The Influence of Client Variables on Psychotherapy

Treatment Matching and Aptitude x Treatment Interactions


**Cross Cultural and Religious Factors in Psychotherapy**


Caro, I. (2004). The way we were, the way we are: Cultural evolution of cognitive therapy. *Behavior Therapist, 27,* 89-98.


**Process Research:**

**Cognitive Therapy**


O’Donohue, W. & L. Krasner Ch. 6 (pp. 145-171): “Two-factor fear theory: Implications for understanding anxiety-based clinical phenomena” (McAllister & McAllister)


**Motivational Interviewing: Theory and Research**


**Exposure and Generalization**


Psychotherapy Integration:

LSII 0285D
PSYC539 001 Experimental Psychotherapy 27950

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