



Depression Awareness and Advocacy

Number of Credits: 2*

Course Instructors: Miriam Woods, Jordan Mix, and Dana Van Renterghem

Course Description:

In today's intensely competitive and high-pressure society, more and more people feel emotionally numb, isolated or inadequate. As a result, the number of people with depression has increased, including students in the K-12 education system. As schools have become a central point in providing students with safety and wellness, it is imperative that educators and administrators are equipped to help students recognize and process any depression they may be experiencing, and provide them the necessary supports.

In this course, participants will gain a foundational understanding of mental health, depression, and stress in our students. Participants will learn about the signs and symptoms of depressive disorders in elementary, middle school, and high school students, with specific attention to students from marginalized communities. Participants will also understand some of the underlying causes of depression, including Adverse Childhood Experiences, social media, and academic pressures. Later in the course, participants will dive into understanding the signs and symptoms of various depressive disorders (and other commonly related mental health disorders), including Bi-Polar Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, and Eating Disorders. At the end of the course, participants will study some of the warning signs of major depression, self-harm, and suicidal behaviors. Lastly, participants will reflect on the ways educators can support students with depression in the classroom. Special attention will highlight educator mental health and self-care. The course culminates with participants completing an implementation plan to take their new learning back to their schools and classrooms.

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

- Differentiate between mental health and mental illness
- Understand the signs and symptoms of depressive disorders in elementary students, middle school students, high school students, and students who identify with marginalized populations.
- Identify common sources of depressive disorders, including Adverse Childhood Experiences, pressures to perform academically, and social media
- Describe the signs and symptoms of Major Depressive Disorder, Bi-Polar Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Eating Disorders
- Analyze best practices and policies for supporting students with depression in classrooms and schools.
- Develop an implementation plan to address student depression in schools and classrooms.

Resources: No texts are required to purchase in order to complete this course

- The mission of Iowa Safe Schools is to provide safe, supportive and nurturing learning environments for all students. Staff of the Iowa Safe Schools are experts in the fields of bullying prevention and intervention, developing positive school climate, and advocating for underrepresented and marginalized populations. GSAs are shown to be a best practice for increasing awareness of discriminatory school policies, reducing bullying, reducing deaths by suicide, and ensuring students feel safe and support in their schools and communities.
- Kann, L., McManus, T., Harris, W. A., Shanklin, S. L., Flint, K. H., Queen, B., ... & Lim, C. (2018). Youth risk behavior surveillance—United States, 2017. *MMWR Surveillance Summaries*, 67(8), 1.

This report discusses various health-related behaviors that contribute to the leading causes of death and disability among youth and adults, including behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence, sexual behaviors related to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, and unhealthy dietary behaviors.

- Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child development, 82*(1), 405-432.
 - This study shows how SEL interventions that address CASEL's five core competencies increased students' academic performance by 11 percentile points, compared to students who did not participate in such SEL programs. Students participating in SEL programs also showed improved classroom behavior, an increased ability to manage stress and depression, and better attitudes about themselves, others, and school.

***Course Requirements:** To receive full credit for the course, participants must complete ALL assignments and respond to specific questions outlined in each assignment. Failure to complete all assignments will result in a disqualification in the course and a failing grade.

Other Course Information:

Getting Started

- After registering for the course, you will be sent an email with the website address, password and course key you need to access your online course, along with login instructions.
- Access each assignment through the course home page. All assignments will be submitted through the Moodle platform on each respective assignment page.
- Please save a backup copy of all course assignments and completed work.

Participation

- You are not required to be present (i.e. online) specific days or times. You will work at your own pace. The course is structured in 6 Weekly Units, however all assignments will not be due until the final day of the course.
- All responses will be posted online. Large documents, files, photographs or PowerPoint presentations may be attached as part of your response by using the "Submit A File" option.
- You may work collaboratively and submit similar responses on all assignments except for quizzes which must be done individually.

INTASC Standards that are addressed in this course:

- 2. The teacher understands how children learn and develop, and can provide learning opportunities that support their intellectual, social and personal development.
- 3. The teacher understands how students differ in their approaches to learning and creates instructional opportunities that are adapted to diverse learners.
- 4. The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills.
- 5. The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
- 6. The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
- 7. The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.
- 9. The teacher is a reflective practitioner who continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (students, parents, and other professional in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally.

- 10. The teacher fosters relationships with school colleagues, parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.

Check the Iowa Teaching Standards that are addressed in this course:

X	1. Enhance Student Achievement		5. Monitoring Student Learning
	2. Content Knowledge	X	6. Classroom Management
X	3. Planning and Preparation	X	7. Professional Growth
X	4. Instructional Strategies	X	8. Professional Responsibilities

Assignment Checklist

Topic/Activity	In Class	Out of Class
Getting to Know the Class; Additional Readings: Take the time to get to know the class layout, read over the Help section, and review any other materials present in the class to get started. Take your time!		3 hrs
<u>Week 1 – Mental Illness and Depression</u>		
Discussion: Introduction: Participants will introduce themselves and discuss what they would like to get out of the course.	1 hr	2 hrs
Discussion: Mental Health vs. Mental Illness: In this lesson, participants will develop and understanding of what mental health is and what mental illnesses are. They will share their understanding in a discussion post.	2 hrs	4 hrs
Quiz: What Is Depression? In this lesson, participants will develop a definition for depression and analyze the signs and symptoms of major depressive disorder. Participants will be assessed over their understanding in a short quiz.	1 hr	2 hrs
Quiz: Depression and Anxiety – In this lesson, participants will differentiate between the signs and symptoms of depression vs. anxiety. Participants will assess their understanding through a quiz.	1 hr	2 hrs
<u>Week 2 – Depression in K-12 Students</u>		
Discussion: Depressive Disorders in Children – In this lesson, participants will reflect on the current state of depressive disorders in elementary students. Participants will share their reflections in a discussion post.	2 hrs	3 hrs
Discussion: Depressive Disorders in Teenagers – In this lesson, participants will analyze the current state of Depressive Disorders in our middle and high school students. Participants will share their reflections in a discussion post.	2 hrs	3 hrs
Discussion: Depressive Disorders in Special Populations – In this lesson, participants will reflect on the ways depression manifests in students who identify with marginalized populations, including the LGBTQ population. Participants will share their reflections in a discussion post.	2 hrs	3 hrs
<u>Week 3 – Prevalence and Causes of Depression</u>		
Discussion: ACEs and Depressive Disorders - In this lesson, participants will learn about what Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are, take an ACEs assessment, and share their thoughts in a discussion post.	1.5 hrs	3 hrs
Discussion: Depression and Academic Performance – In this lesson, participants will reflect on the correlation between the pressures to get good grades, excessively participating in extracurricular activities, and anxiety levels. Participants will share their understanding in a discussion post.	1.5 hrs	3 hrs
Discussion: Depression, Anxiety, and Social Media – In this lesson, participants will reflect on how the changing landscape of social media influences student mental health and anxiety. Participants will share their understanding in a discussion post.	1.5 hrs	3 hrs
<u>Week 4 – Depression and Mental Health Disorders</u>		

Quiz: Bi-polar Disorder – In this lesson, participants will reflect on what bi-polar disorder is and its signs and symptoms. Participants will be assessed over their understanding through a quiz.	1 hr	2 hrs
Quiz: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder – In this lesson, participants will reflect on what post-traumatic stress disorder is and its signs and symptoms. Participants will be assessed over their understanding through a quiz.	1 hr	2 hrs
Quiz: Anxiety and Eating Disorders - In this lesson, participants will reflect on the intersections between anxiety and eating disorders and the signs and symptoms of eating disorders. Participants will be assessed over their understanding through a quiz.	1 hr	2 hrs
<u>Week 5 – Suicide Prevention</u>		
Discussion: Suicide and Bullying – In this activity, participants will reflect on the intersections between suicide and bullying. In a discussion post, participants will reflect on current data on bullying and cyberbullying and its relation to suicide.	1 hr	2 hrs
Discussion: Stress and Suicide – In this activity, participants will reflect on the intersections between suicide and stress. Participants will reflect on current stress statistics and suicidal behaviors in adolescence.	1 hr	2 hrs
Discussion: Suicide and Substance Abuse – In this activity, participants will reflect on the intersections between suicide and substance abuse. Participants will reflect on current trends in the prevalence of tobacco, alcohol and illegal drug use along with the co-occurring health risk factors.	1 hr	2 hrs
Discussion: Self Harm – Participants will review several resources on what self-harming behaviors are and how they are similar and different to suicidal behaviors. Participants will share their analysis in a discussion post.	1hr	2 hrs
<u>Week 6 – School Mental Health Supports</u>		
Discussion: Classroom Supports: In this lesson, participants will reflect on what they should do when a student is enduring a depressive episode. Participants will communicate their understanding in a discussion post.	2 hrs	4 hrs
Discussion: School Mental Health Supports – In this lesson, participants will reflect on the ways schoolwide protocols can create a positive school climate and culture while also supporting student mental health.	2 hrs	4 hrs
Discussion: Educator Self-Care – In this lesson, participants will examine online resources to evaluate their own mental health and self-care practices and will discuss how they can be improved in a discussion post. Participants will share their reflections in a discussion post.	1.5 hrs	3 hrs
Final Assignment: Participants will develop an implementation plan to take their new learnings back to their schools and classrooms.	2 hrs	4 hrs
Total Class Time	30 hours	60 hours

Coursework: Participants can earn up to 150points total for the course. The following table depicts the breakdown of points possible for the required coursework

Activity	Points
15 Discussion Posts (5 Points Each)	75
5 Quiz (5 Points)	25
Final Implementation Plan/Paper	50
Total	150

Grading Scale – Graduate Credit

100-90% (150 - 135 points)	A
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89-80% (135 - 120 points)	B
79-70% (119 - 105 points)	C
69-60% (104 - 90 points)	D
59%-Below (<90 points)	F

Grading Scale - License Renewal Credit

100-80% (150 - 120 points)	P
79%-Below (<120 points)	NP

Student Requirements Students are required to:

- Participate in **ALL** discussion forums and quizzes
- Complete a final implementation plan

Americans with Disabilities Act: If you are a student with a disability and require any auxiliary aids, services, or other accommodations for this class, please see the instructor to discuss your accommodation needs.

Statement of Plagiarism: Academic dishonesty results in failure of this course. Give credit where credit is due. Use the APA Publication Manual to cite references when needed. Not crediting ideas or words of others is unacceptable scholarship as is submitting work that was done for a previous course or that is not your own origin in design or completion. Submit original assignments. Do not submit work for this course that you have done for other courses.

Grading Rubrics for Individual Activities

15 Discussions (5 points possible) Discussion Forums are asynchronous ways to engage in class discussions. They require you to submit an answer to a question and respond to the posts of other peers. Because they are an integral part of sharing strategies, analyzing research, and sharing ideas, discussion forums in this course comprise a significant percentage of your final grade. It's highly recommended that you read and respond to more than the required two peer postings because greater participation will facilitate a greater depth of understanding. Additionally, it's important to make posts in a timely manner to benefit from peer responses.

Grading Rubric for Discussion Forums		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Makes connections to the other content and real-life that are supported by reference(s) and example(s)	1
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	1
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	1
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	1
Participation (Responses to at least 2 peer posts)	Responds to other posts (when available)	1
Total Points Possible		5

Final Assignment (50 points possible)

The final assignment is a critical part of this course. Participants must complete a two-page final assignment. The paper is meant to be a reflection as well as a chance to state what you will use going forward. The rubric below will be used to grade the final assignment, but additional details will be provided within the course.

Grading Rubric for Implementation Plan		
		Points
Critical Thinking	Highlights any new knowledge gained as a result of course.	10
	Offers new ideas, connections, or applications	10
	Expresses and justifies personal opinion	6
	Discusses Overall Implications	4
Assignment Specific Criteria	Addresses all parts of the assignment, cites sources	4
Mechanics	Writing is clear, well developed, and organized, No or few grammar and spelling errors	4
Implementation	Clearly states ideas to use in the future	4
	States resources to be used	4
	Is realistic in their approach – understands limitations may exist	4
Total Points Possible		50