This is the first semester of a two-semester integrated course on the treatment of child and adolescent mental health problems. Both semesters are required for clinical psychology doctoral students. The primary goal of this course is to give students a foundation in the selection, evaluation, and application of empirically supported interventions for children and adolescents. Students will also learn about areas essential to ethical and competent care of children and adolescents (e.g., developmental issues, ethical and cultural considerations, process variables, school and psychiatric consultation, and case management).

This two semester course series is not intended to provide an exhaustive coverage of all interventions available for child and adolescent mental health problems. This course will focus on the application of evidence based cognitive-behavioral interventions. However, it is expected that the skills developed in the course will provide a foundation for future training experiences and skill development. At the conclusion of the two semester course series, it is expected that each student will, when presented with a client with a specific area of concern, be capable of: (1) selecting, administering, and interpreting an evidence based assessment battery for the specific area of concern/difficulty; (2) developing a comprehensive case conceptualization based on the results of the assessment; (3) using this information to select an appropriate cognitive-behavioral evidence based intervention; (4) delivering the selected intervention in an ethical manner with a high degree of competence; and (5) tracking and evaluating the outcome of the intervention employed with each individual client. The first semester will focus on evidence based cognitive-behavioral interventions for internalizing problems (depression, suicidality, anxiety) and the second semester will focus on trauma, externalizing (oppositional behavior, attention problems), weight/eating related, and substance use problems.

Treatment philosophy and overview. The essence of "cognitive-behavioral" therapy is an emphasis on teaching youth and their caretakers the skills needed to overcome youth mental health problems. All of these therapies begin by educating youth and their caretakers about the nature of the problem area and the theoretical principles underlying the treatment techniques for the specified problem in a developmentally appropriate manner. This is necessary as the long-term success of these techniques is dependent on a basic understanding of the processes involved in both the maintenance and reduction of mental health problems. Youth and their parents are then taught specific techniques for overcoming the presenting problem(s).

Treatment evaluation. An objective evaluation of the effectiveness of therapy is vital for making treatment, follow-up, and after-care plans. It is important to evaluate the success of therapy for
each and every client that you treat. Therefore, students will be responsible for evaluating the efficacy of their treatment for each of their clients using the principles of single-case designs.

Organization of Class and Supervision: In the Fall and Spring semesters, the first part of each class will comprise of class discussion of assigned readings and manuals. The rest of the class will include role plays of the assigned manuals, case presentations of new client cases, and group supervision of student cases. Students should video or audiotape all treatment sessions and be prepared to present portions of sessions to the class during group supervision. Students are expected to give a short informal presentation about each new client and treatment plan. The rest of the class will serve as consultants exploring ways to improve the diagnostic impression or refine the treatment plan. Please keep in mind that a case conceptualization is really a “work in progress” that will continue to be revised over the course of therapy. Constructive feedback from the class should help improve the quality of the therapy that you provide to your clients. Additional individual supervision will be arranged as needed.

Case load: The minimum case load students will be expected to carry will consist of two treatment cases. Except for unusual circumstances, you will be expected to accept all clients that are referred to you. Your work may involve individual, family, parent training, and/or group therapy. The provision of clinical services must follow a calendar year, not an academic year. Thus you should plan to meet with your client when school is not in session or arrange for an appropriate transfer to another student or a referral. I will complete a Practicum Student Performance Evaluation Form at the end of each semester to help track your progress.

Clinic Paperwork: Each case opened will require the following paperwork: 1) weekly progress notes documenting treatment goals, plan, and interventions (to be signed by me on a weekly basis); 2) documentation of any contact with clients (e.g., phone contact) or on behalf of clients (e.g., phone calls, meetings with school officials) conducted outside of therapy; 3) an intake report summarizing results of your initial assessment with the family, goals for treatment, and case formulation; and 4) a discharge report, or treatment summary, to be written at termination. More information on the content of each of these reports will follow in class.

Honor code: The Honor Code of George Mason University deals specifically with cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. Students should be familiar with the code and connected policies, set out at http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies. This course will be conducted in accordance with those policies. I reserve the right to enter a failing grade for any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

Official Communications via GMU E-mail: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All accommodations must be arranged through that office, and must be initiated immediately, prior to any anticipated need.

Add/Drop Deadline: Last day to add this course is January 29, 2013.
Last day to drop this course is February 22, 2013.

**Course requirements and grading:**

You will not earn a letter grade in this class, you will simply receive a grade of “Satisfactory” or “No Credit.” To receive a “Satisfactory” grade in this class, you must attend classes, actively participate in class, and provide ethical and competent client care as defined below. If you fail to satisfy any of these requirements, you will not receive credit for this course.

**Attendance and participation in class**

You are expected to attend every class. Please let me know in advance if you are unable to attend. A large portion of the class will be devoted to learning how to critically evaluate and apply empirically supported interventions through class discussions, role play exercises, and brief case presentations. Therefore, class participation is an essential part of the course. You will be evaluated on your degree of participation during discussions, apparent knowledge of assigned readings and skill modules, and preparation for/ability to participate in role-plays.

**Ethical and competent client care**

You are expected to follow best ethical practice with each of your clients. This means that you must study your selected treatment manual/skill module in advance of your client sessions and be prepared to deliver material in a competent manner. You must also remember to tape (audio or video) all of your sessions for supervisory purposes and bring the tapes to class. In addition, you are expected to arrive to appointments on time, contact your clients as far in advance as possible if a session must be cancelled or changed, dress and conduct yourself appropriately, maintain timely and accurate clinical records, and seek supervision when needed (e.g., in a high risk clinical situation). All students are expected to know and follow all policies outlined in the GMU Center for Psychological Services handbook and the American Psychological Association 2002 Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.

**Course Meeting Dates, Topics, and Readings**

In addition to the readings listed below, you will be assigned a skill to review before each class. The skills will be assigned based on the cases seen on team.

1/28: **Trauma: Bullying & Victimization**


(Optional)


2/4: **Trauma / Child Abuse & Domestic Violence Exposure**


(Optional)


2/11: **Trauma / Treatment**


(Optional)


2/18: **Disruptive Behavior Disorders / Cognition & Development (ODD/CD)**


(Optional)


2/25: **Disruptive Behavior Disorders / Cognition and Development (ADHD)**


(Optional)


3/4: **Disruptive Behavior Disorders / Parenting**


(Optional)


**3/11: Spring Break (No Class)**

**3/18: Disruptive Behavior Disorders / Peer Affiliations & Social Functioning**


(optional)


**3/25: Disruptive Behavior Disorders/ Treatment Outcome (ODD/CD)**


(Optional)


**4/1: Disruptive Behavior Disorders/ Treatment Outcome (ADHD)**


(Optional)


4/8: **Eating Disorders / Risk Factors**


(Optional)


4/15: **Eating Disorders / Identification and Treatment Outcome**


(Optional)


4/22: Eating Disorders / Family System Approach and Treatment

Guest Speaker: Dr. Robyn Mehlenbeck


4/29: Substance Abuse: Development and Risk Factors


5/6: Substance Abuse: Overview of Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment


(Optional)


Required Books & Manuals:


Other Recommended Readings & Manuals:


