

Principles of Peer Support
Course Syllabus (Winter 2012)
Kalamazoo Valley Community College
328 Anna Whitten Hall
Kalamazoo, MI 49007¹

Department: Psychology

Course and CRN Number: PSY 282 - 21228

Credit Hours: 3

Class Sessions: Mondays and Wednesdays 3:00 pm to 5:40 pm

Class Room: 328 Anna Whitten Hall

Instructor: Carol Heintz, M.A., L.L.P.

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Office: Part-Time Faculty Lounge (222 Anna Whitten Hall) and 328 Anna Whitten Hall

Office Hours: Monday 2:00 to 3:00 in the Part-Time Faculty Lounge (222 AWH) and Wednesday 2:00 to 3:00pm in 328 AWH or by appointment.

Prerequisites: Current Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) that addresses employment and education strategies; Michigan Rehabilitative Services/Michigan Commission for the Blind Vocational Assessment or COMPASS Score of 65 Reading/70 Writing; High School Diploma or General Education Development (GED).

REQUIRED TEXTS: Ridgeway, P., McDiarmind, D., Davidson, L., Bayes, J., & Ratzlaff, S., (2002). *Pathways to Recovery: A Strengths Recovery Self-Help Workbook*. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas School of Social Welfare. Other sources that are autobiographical, historical and data reports will supplement this core text. These will be offered in a variety of formats such as, video, online interactive and written text.

DESCRIPTION: This course examines the core principles of peer support specialist work, by exploring aspects of the history of psychiatry and social work; history of consumer/peer activism; approaches to healing and recovery; culture of recovery; systems of healing (agency structures and roles); crafting a personal recovery story; overview of the current status of field of peer support in Michigan.

¹ Course is co-sponsored by The Recovery Institute of Southwest Michigan, Inc., and Kalamazoo Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services.

This course resembles an introduction to, or principles of social work or psychology course with regular break-out sessions or role-playing designed to elicit student participation and skill development. It includes written assignments to develop and measure competency, followed by a final and the issuance of a certificate of completion.

Carol Heintz, Limited Licensed Psychologist, provides general oversight and instructional support while peer support specialists facilitate role-play sessions, instruct specific modules and assist with development of wellness plans and recovery stories.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: Compare attitudes towards the mentally ill historically with attitudes in the recovery model, describe recovery and peer support, assess and show examples of stigma towards the mentally ill, evaluate ethics questions, recognize and practice active, reflective listening skills, sketch a history of substance abuse treatments, express, present, employ, and listen to personal recovery stories, devise and implement goal planning worksheets with peer support, compare different models of recovery, examine spiritual approaches in recovery, practice holistic methods for self-care, and record and attend to personal recovery maintenance.

GUIDELINES: This course adheres to the following guidelines established by the Society for Disability Studies:

- It should be interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary. Disability sits at the center of many overlapping disciplines in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences. It encourages a curriculum that allows students, activists, teachers, artists, practitioners, and researchers to engage the subject matter from various disciplinary perspectives.
- It challenges the view of disability as an individual deficit or defect that can be remedied solely through medical intervention or rehabilitation by "experts" and other service providers. Rather, a program in Disability Studies should explore models and theories that examine social, political, cultural, and economic factors that define disability and help determine personal and collective responses to difference. At the same time, DS should work to de-stigmatize disease, illness, and impairment, including those that cannot be measured or explained by biological science. Finally, while acknowledging that medical research and intervention can be useful, Disability Studies should interrogate the connections between medical practices and stigmatizing disability.
- It should study national and international perspectives, policies, literature,

culture, and history with an aim of placing current ideas of disability within their broadest possible context. Since attitudes toward disability have not been the same across times and places, much can be gained by learning from these other experiences.

- It should actively encourage participation by disabled students and faculty, and should ensure physical and intellectual access.
- It should make it a priority to have leadership positions held by disabled people; at the same time it is important to create an environment where contributions from anyone who shares the above goals are welcome.²

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA:

Attendance and Participation:

Students are expected to attend all classes and read the assignments so as to be prepared for class discussion. Experience shows that there is a direct relation between attendance and performance in the course. The first part of each session will generally consist of a discussion of the issues covered in the reading assignment. These discussions will take a variety of formats. For example, students may be asked to prepare two or three questions in writing based upon the upcoming reading assignment. The instructor will collect these questions at the beginning of the following class and then read a sample of them for the class to answer and discuss. Or, the instructor may divide the class into several groups to discuss particular issues presented in the readings or lecture. Each group will then present their position to the class. Other discussions may be more or less structured, but students must, in any case, come prepared to discuss the readings regardless of the format. Each student's level of participation will be evaluated and accounts for 20% the final grade for the course.

Exams: One Final Exam 20%

Written Assignments:

1. Personal Wellness and Education Support Goal Plan 15%

² Society for Disability Studies, Guidelines For Disability Studies.
http://www.disstudies.org/guidelines_for_disability_studies_programs. March 13, 2009.

2. Personal Recovery Story (3-5 pages) 15%
3. Personal Wellness Plan Progress Report (3-5 pages) 15%
4. Peer Support Feedback Report (3-5 pages) 15%

Computer Skills Assessment: Each student may take a computer skills assessment. The Recovery Institute can issue a certificate indicating the results of this assessment upon completion of the course. Students wishing to improve their skills may do so at the Recovery Institute Computer Lab and are eligible to retake the assessment at any time.

Late or Missed Assignments: All assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the date they are due. Ten (10) points will be deducted from the assignment grade for each class session that passes (starting with the due date) until the assignment is turned in. Under certain circumstances, an alternative plan may be developed, but only if students contact the instructor to negotiate one at least one day prior to the assignment's due date.

Instructors Note on Accommodations: My objective is to foster an environment in which students are able to exchange ideas freely on a level playing field. I welcome any suggestions (small or large) on ways to make sure this happens. I am always available to hear students' concerns about their ability to learn and to share information due to the nature of the classroom's physical environment or anything else. If you have a disability that the classroom is not accommodating, please discuss it with me as soon as possible or contact the Special Services Office at: Voice: (269) 488-4397 - TTD: (269) 488-4358. From this office, Kalamazoo Valley Community College provides many services to students including note takers, readers, transcribers, and tutors.

CLASS SCHEDULE and READING ASSIGNMENTS

- Class meets Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 to 5:40 pm. -

WEEK I

Monday (3/12)

Module 1.1
Overview of syllabus and course objectives.

Module 1.2
What is peer support? - the personal, historical and contemporary. What is recovery? Stigma?

Handouts for next class: Handouts on Empathic Listening

View "The Long Strange Trip".

Wednesday (3/14)

Module 1.3
Supportive Communication Skills – Lecture

Reading Requirements: be prepared to discuss selections on empathic listening techniques,

Module 1.4
Practice empathic listening in small groups with role plays

Handouts for next class: Goal setting

WEEK II

Monday (3/19)

Module 2.1
How to set goals - Lecture

Reading requirement: *Pathways to Recovery*, pages 55-70 (motivation and turnaround).

Module 2.2

Establishment of partnerships to develop personal wellness and education support plans. Use supportive listening skills while helping partner define a goal.

Handout: Personal Wellness and Education Support Goal planning worksheets, Personal Wellness and Education Goal Plan

Handouts for next class: Statement on Mortality Rate, The Eight Dimensions of Wellness

Wednesday (3/21) *Co-Instructor: Tina Lauer*

Module 2.3

Keeping Recovery First: Introduction to holistic health and recovery.

Reading Requirement: *Pathways to Recovery*, pages iii-ix & 172-179 (health and wellness). Be prepared to discuss report on health conditions of people diagnosed with mental illness and Personal Action Toward Health (PATH) overview.

Module 2.4

Introduction to PATH

Class time spent with partner continuing work on Personal Wellness Goal sheets

Handouts for next class: Girl, Interrupted, Nineteenth Century Moral Treatment, Kraeplin: A Textbook for Students, Ragins: Recovery

WEEK III

Monday (3/26) *Co-Instructor: Mike Spicketts*

Module 3.1

Principle Definitions of Recovery - the personal, historical and clinical.

Reading Requirement: Be prepared to discuss: the historical overview of treatment expectations; treatise on "moral treatment;" excerpt from

contemporary memoir on recovery; & clinical treatment model excerpt
(handouts from 3/21)

Module 3.2

Real-play sessions: Students break into groups to discuss their personal views of recovery and recovery stories. Use supportive listening skills. Role play the medical model vs. the recovery model.

Handouts for next class: Models of Recovery Guide

Wednesday (3/28)

Co-Instructor: Tina Lauer

Module 3.3

Exploring Recovery Models: The Appalachian Group - The Five Stages of Recovery, Mary Ellen Copeland - Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP), Priscilla Ridgway - Pathways to Recovery, Recovery Innovations - Recovery Pathways

Reading Requirements: Be prepared to discuss, "Key Concepts" section from your WRAP Workbook, and *Pathways to Recovery*, pages 1-23 (Strengths Recovery Approach).

Assignment Due: Personal Wellness and Education Goal Plan

Module 3.4

Break-out session: Students evaluate models and identify preferences. Role plays using supportive listening skills.

Handouts for next class: Filmography, Stigma

Handouts for 4/4: Personal Recovery Story Outline guide

WEEK IV

Monday (4/2) *Co-Instructor: Bill Jones*

Module 4.1

Building a Community of Recovery: Representations of Psychiatric Disability

Reading Requirement: *Pathways to Recovery*, pages 25-54 (attitudes, behavior, cognitions).

Module 4.2

Building a Community of Recovery: Class discussion. Discussion group breakout - Where would I start? How supportive is my community? How have I experienced support or lack of it in my community? Use supportive listening skills.

Practice: Students pair off, alternating between telling their recovery story and experiences with stigma and practicing supportive communication skills.

Wednesday (4/4) PoWeR Group Presentation

Module 4.3

What is a personal recovery story? Recovery Institute PoWeR Group Presentation

Assignment Due: Two page Personal Recovery Outline (this assignment is not graded, but counts towards participation grade).

Reading Requirement: *Pathways to Recovery*, pages 373-393 (recovery stories).

Module 4.4

Writing a personal recovery story: discussion group breakout - PoWeR Group members facilitate small group discussion on how to craft a personal recovery story.

Handouts for 4/16: Guide to writing personal recovery story, *How to Write a Recovery Story*

WEEK V

Monday (4/9) Co-Instructor: Rebecca Linihan

Module 5.1

Sharing your personal recovery story: how is this important for individual recovery; how can it support another person's recovery; how do you know when to share it and finally how much of your recovery story to share in any given situation?

Reading Requirement: *Pathways to Recovery*, pages 71-101 (strengths based

inventory).

Module 5.2

Students present their personal recovery stories to classmates

Handouts for next class: review of various meditation techniques and some examples and *Pathways to Recovery*, pages 355-364 (meditation).

Wednesday (4/11)

Co-Instructor: Rebecca Linihan

Module 5.3

Students present their personal recovery stories to classmates

Module 5.4

Students present their personal recovery stories to classmates, followed by meditation exercise

Reading Requirement: *Pathways to Recovery*, pages 103-124 (long term and short term goals).

Handouts for next class: *National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and Michigan Peer Support Code of Ethics.*

WEEK VI

Monday (4/16) *Co-Instructor: Mike Spicketts*

Module 6.1

How to establish intentional relationships that support recovery

Reading Requirement: National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and Michigan Peer Support Code of Ethics.

Assignment Due: Personal Recovery Story (3-5 pages)

Module 6.2

Break out in role-play sessions where participants give and receive peer support on various topics and issues of concern. Use supportive listening skills.

Wednesday (4/18) *Co-Instructor: Tina Lauer*

Module 6.3

Presentations on Personal Wellness and Education Support Plans

Reading Requirement: selections on the correlation between mental and physical health; lifestyle practices that promote wellness and *Pathways to Recovery*, 311-334 (stress techniques).

Module 6.4

Presentations continued

WEEK VII

Monday (4/23) *Co-Instructor: Bill Jones*

Module 7.1

How to support spiritual life when offering peer support

Reading Requirement: Select one text from spirituality bibliography, *Pathways to Recovery*, 191-205 (spirituality).

Assignment Due: Personal Wellness Plan Progress Report (3-5 pages) and personal statement on the role of spirituality in your recovery (1-2 pages). This spirituality assignment is not graded, but counts toward your participation grade.

Module 7.2

Role play in front of class and Peer Support Feedback on index cards. Information from these role plays will be used for your Peer Support Feedback Report. Use supportive listening skills.

Wednesday (4/25)

Module 7.3

Keeping hope alive: peer-activism and leadership in the Recovery Movement
Presentation by Peer Movement Activists

Module 7.4

Kalamazoo's array of services and community supports.

Assignment Due: Peer Support Feedback Report (3-5 pages)

Handout for next class: Final Exam Review Guide

WEEK VIII

Monday (4/30)

Final Exam