This course is an introduction to the field of mental health and the role of social work within the field. Issues to be explored include: the social construction of mental illness, stigmatization of the individual and a critique of the medical model. Influence of factors such as gender, age, race and culture on the definition and treatment of persons with a mental illness will also be explored. The roles and contributions of various mental health professional practitioners will be discussed. Current policy and practice issues in mental health in Canada and their implications for practice will be examined.

Admission into the BSW program, PSYC 101, and either PSYC 250 or SOWK 225. (Students in other degree programs, with a minimum of 45 credits, may be able to obtain instructor's permission at the first class. However, they should check with their Program head to see whether they can apply this course to their degree).
LEARNING OBJECTIVES / GOALS / OUTCOMES / LEARNING OUTCOMES:
1. Understand the historical perspectives (definitions and treatments) of mental health/mental illness.
2. Understand various definitions of mental health/mental illness and the social definitions of each.
3. Engage in a critique of the medical model of mental health/mental illness and the social work response.
4. Develop a critical perspective on several interpretations of mental health and mental illness.
5. Distinguish between various models of service delivery and the uses of each and develop a critique of each model (institutional, community-based, self-help groups, etc.).
6. Describe the impact of various factors such as gender, age, sexism, and culture on the definition and treatment of mental health/mental illness.
7. Understand the continuum of mental health/mental illness settings from a client’s perspective.
8. Describe the role of the social worker in various mental health settings and the importance of collaboration as part of a mental health team.
9. Explain the roles and contributions of various mental health professionals and practitioners.

METHODS:
Lectures, written assignments, class discussion, guest speakers, films/overheads.

PRIOR LEARNING ASSESSMENT RECOGNITION (PLAR):
Credit can be awarded for this course through PLAR

METHODS OF OBTAINING PLAR:
This course is open for PLAR through portfolio and interview.

TEXTBOOKS, REFERENCES, MATERIALS:
[Textbook selection varies by instructor. An example of texts for this course might be:]

Recommended Texts:

www.canadian-health-network.ca; www.vcn.bc.ca/rmdcmha/; www.psychosisucks.ca

SUPPLIES / MATERIALS:
STUDENT EVALUATION:
[An example of student evaluation for this course might be:]  
Critical Analysis of Current Mental Health Issues 30%  
Social Work Theory Paper and Application to Mental Health 40%  
Final Exam 30%  
TOTAL 100%  

COURSE CONTENT:
[Course content varies by instructor. An example of course content might be:]  
Week:  
1. Introduction and Overview  
2. Historical Perspective on Mental Health/Mental Illness  
3. Social Definitions of Mental Health/Mental Illness  
4. Critique of Medical Model and the Social Work Response  
5. Interdisciplinary Collaboration  
6. Models of Service Delivery: Institutional, Community-Based, Self-Advocacy  
7. The Client's Perspective of Service Delivery Models  
8. Issues for Adults  
9. Issues for Children  
10. Issues of Gender, Culture, Age, Sexism  
11. Issues for Older Persons  
12. Current Mental Health Issues and the Social Work Response  
13. Challenges and Future Directions in Mental Health: Implications for Social Work Practice