

Course Title: Stigma and Mental Health

Course Number: HBSP 0681

Course Pre- and Co-requisite(s): Recommended Prerequisite: HBSP 0652 Program Planning & Evaluation

Course Location: Remote
<https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/95604156095?pwd=4fJyKgtV4EWISadj0bQTYmo87ctK5q.1>
Password: 154855

Course Date & Time: Mondays 6pm – 8pm

Course Instructor: Kai Kellerman, M.S. (he/him)

Doctoral Candidate, Clinical Psychology
jk1684@psych.rutgers.edu / 209-768-3006

Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9-10am or by appointment (virtual unless discussed ahead of time)
<https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/98553403874?pwd=T3BZeWlyOUlsYWwhHbC9DU2hNSE1aQT09>
Password: 915282

Course Assistant: None

Course Website: <https://canvas.rutgers.edu/>

Required Course Text: See Course Schedule (all readings will be posted and available to download through Canvas). This class does not use a textbook.

Additional/Supplemental Readings/Resources: See Reading List for additional articles. All supplemental readings will also be posted to Canvas.

Course Description: This course will provide an overview of the manner in which stigma, prejudice and discrimination impact mental health, across interlocking levels of our socioecological system, and across groups that vary, at the very least, in identity, age, health status and geographical location. Class content is organized around themes that cut across stigmatized conditions and identities. This course is based on theoretical frameworks around stigma that are supported by empirical evidence, and aims to engage students in conceptualizing stigma as a fundamental cause of mental illness and a principal barrier to treatment. After reviewing conceptual models of stigma, students will examine the multiple mechanisms—structural, interpersonal and individual—through which stigma compromises the mental health of a large proportion of the United States (US) and other global populations. The course will also address intersectional stigma (e.g., the confluence of two or more types of stigma experienced by an individual or groups of individuals) and evidence-based individual- and structural-level interventions that aim to reduce both stigma at its source and its downstream pathways that impact individual mental health. The course will have a global, as well as a lifecourse perspective, and bring forth important implications for research, practice and policy. Students can expect to explain stigma as a predicament that affects nearly all individuals

at some point in the life course, while developing expertise in one or two stigmas that are particularly relevant to their academic and professional interests.

Selected Concentration Competencies Addressed: Each Concentration identifies competencies for each degree offered. The competencies addressed in this course for the MPH in Population Mental Health include:

- A. Examine the relationship between stigma, population mental health, and health inequity.
- B. Identify biological, psychological, socioeconomic, structural or sociocultural correlates of population mental health
- C. Evaluate the impact of population mental health burden
- D. Evaluate interventions that promote population mental health or wellbeing

Please visit the Concentration webpages on the School of Public Health's website at sph.rutgers.edu for more information about the curriculum and competencies for our degrees and concentrations.

Course Objectives: By the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define stigma, bias, discrimination, and intersectional stigma.
2. Explain stigma pathways to poor mental health.
3. Explain the multiple ways in which mental health related-stigma can be measured.
4. Explain the types of stigma that affect the mental health of various groups, including the elements that are shared and distinct.
5. Explain how the upper levels of the socioecological system (e.g., policy/structural, organization/systemic) determine activities and occurrences downstream (healthcare settings, communities, families, and individuals).
6. Identify, synthesize and persuade a scientific audience about the public health importance of your topic or interest and interventions to address mental health stigma.
7. Conceptualize an evidence-based paper based on a student-chosen topic that delves deeper into one or a few concepts within this course.

Course Requirements and Grading:

The following course requirements and assignments will contribute to the overall course grade:

1. Attendance and participation	20%
2. Written summary of chosen topic	20%
3. Intervention outline	15%
4. Final presentation on proposed intervention	20%
5. Final paper on proposed intervention	25%
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100%

Weekly independent readings. In addition to the assigned reading each week, students will find an additional independent reading on a specific topic of interest within that week's broader topic. The definition of "reading" is broad in this case – it could be a journal article, an empirical

study, a lawsuit, a Ted Talk, an opinion piece in a newspaper... anything that helps broaden and deepen your understanding of real-life occurrences of that week's topic. Independent readings should be uploaded to Canvas by the start of that week's class. Students will be expected to integrate what they learned in their independent readings into class discussion and should be prepared each week to give a brief overview of their reading. Uploading readings each week and integrating new learning into course discussions will contribute to the Attendance and Participation grade.

Competencies addressed: Examine the relationship between stigma, population mental health, and health inequity. Evaluate the impact of population mental health burden.

Written summary of chosen topic. This will be the topic of your final paper and you will receive feedback on this summary to help improve your final paper. Consider the one form of stigma or one stigmatized condition or identity that you will study this semester in relation to mental health.

Write and upload 2 pages (not including references) providing an overview of your topic of interest. This summary should describe the nature of the stigma, the affected populations, the mechanisms through which that form of stigma affects mental health and the mental health outcomes of interest (diagnoses, treatment seeking, treatment efficacy, etc.). Special attention should be paid to how social forces and hierarchies contribute to the manifestation of this stigma and how it affects mental health for a given population. Considerations should be given to both individual and community level impact. The summary should highlight the importance of your topic and be persuasive about the need for a public health intervention to address this mental health issue. Write for an audience who is educated about mental health but who is otherwise ignorant to your specific topic. *This summary is due by October 14th.

Competencies addressed: Examine the relationship between stigma, population mental health, and health inequity. Identify biological, psychological, socioeconomic, structural or sociocultural correlates of population mental health.

Intervention Outline. This course does not require you to develop a full intervention for your chosen topic, but to create and present an initial proposal for a potential intervention.

Write and upload a 1-page outline of your intervention. The intervention should focus on 1) developing a new or applying an existing intervention to reduce the impact of stigma on mental health by improving individual or community level coping skills; 2) reducing health inequities caused by structural stigma; and/or 3) improving community resilience to the mental health impact of stigma. This is a non-exhaustive list – if you have other ideas, please reach out and run them by me! In your outline, briefly describe your ideas for the intervention targets/outcomes, the components of the intervention itself, where and how the intervention will be implemented, and anticipated barriers to and facilitators of the intervenor's success. Feedback will be provided to help improve and guide the final proposed intervention. *This outline is due by October 28th.

Competencies addressed: (A) Examine the relationship between stigma, population mental health, and health inequity. (B) Identify biological, psychological, socioeconomic, structural or

sociocultural correlates of population mental health. (C) Evaluate interventions that promote population mental health or wellbeing.

Final Presentation on your proposed Intervention. 15-minute power point presentation providing an overview of the problem, the need for a public health intervention, the rationale for your specific intervention (drawing on previous literature and successful interventions), and the intervention itself. Presentations will take place during the last 3 class meetings. Feedback on your presentations should be incorporated into your final papers.

Final paper on your proposed Intervention. 5 pages (not including references) proposing an intervention that you will design to address your topic of interest. This is not intended to be a full intervention, but a preliminary proposal. The introduction to the paper should incorporate the written summary of your topic and all of the information included in your intervention outline should be included in the final paper. In addition to the topics discussed in the outline, the paper should include how outcomes will be assessed, timeline, scope of the intervention itself, preliminary logistic considerations, and additional discussion of potential barriers to success. You're not expected to know how to address/resolve these barriers (again, this is a preliminary proposal to help facilitate learning and ideas, not a final pitch of a full intervention), but thought should be given to potential challenges that would arise when implementing your intervention. Additional information about this assignment will be provided during the class.

*The final paper is due by December 20th.

Competencies addressed: (A) Examine the relationship between stigma, population mental health, and health inequity. (B) Identify biological, psychological, socioeconomic, structural or sociocultural correlates of population mental health. (C) Evaluate interventions that promote population mental health or wellbeing.

Notes about assignments:

- Unless otherwise specified, all written assignments should be double spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins. Students may use any reference style they prefer, provided appropriate citations and bibliography are included.
- All assignments, including independent readings, are due by the start of class each Monday.
- More detailed description of the assignments will be provided throughout the class. The syllabus only aims to provide an overview of each assignment.

Absence/attendance policy:

Each student gets two unexcused absences, no questions asked. Absences for medical or other unavoidable reasons are excused and do not count toward the 2 unexcused absence limit. Please communicate with me about these as far ahead as possible.

Attendance and Participation. Students are expected to attend each class session and participate, verbally and in writing, in all discussions, class activities and assignments. If you are unable to attend class, please notify me in advance.

Students must turn on their cameras for the duration of the class.

This class is taught as a seminar, which means that students are expected to read the materials before class and discuss the materials in class. I expect that students will make thoughtful, informed, and productive contributions to class, both during class discussions and in their writings. These contributions should not merely be stating your view but also responding to the views of others; making connections among course texts; proposing specific interpretations of course readings; and offering thoughtful, probing questions that can advance and deepen our discussions. At the same time, dominating conversation is not the same as participating; be aware of the frequency of your contributions and be courteous of others' right to speak. My intention is to create a safe space where each person's point of view is respected, even if we decide to respectfully disagree. That being said, potentially offensive remarks do not belong in this class and will not be tolerated.

Grading Policy:

94 – 100	A
90 – <94	A-
87 – <90	B+
84 – <87	B
80 – <84	B-
77 – <80	C+
70 – <77	C
<70	F

Special thanks to Drs. Kirsty Clark and Corina Lelutiu-Weinberger, who provided examples from their courses that contributed greatly to the development of this syllabus.

Course Schedule:

Week	Date	Topics	Readings/Assignments
1	9/9/24	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review course syllabus, requirements, and goals. • Discuss student reasons for interest in this course. • Identify 1-2 stigmatized conditions or identities in which each student is particularly interested and share any relevant professional experience with that group. • Community guidelines/agreements. <p>Overview of stigma and prejudice</p>	Review course syllabus
2	9/16/24	Stigma and Mental Health	Assignment: Find and skim one meta-analysis or systematic review on a potential topic of interest (type of stigma, type of MH outcome, population of interest) + upload to Canvas

			<p>Readings: Hatzenbuehler, M. L., Phelan, J. C., & Link, B. G. (2013). Stigma as a fundamental cause of population health inequalities. <i>American journal of public health</i>, 103(5), 813–821. https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2012.301069</p> <p>Phelan, J. C., Link, B. G., & Dovidio, J. F. (2008). Stigma and prejudice: one animal or two?. <i>Social science & medicine</i> (1982), 67(3), 358–367. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscim.ed.2008.03.022</p>
3	9/23/24	Intersectionality	Bauer, G. R. (2014). Incorporating intersectionality theory into population health research methodology: challenges and the potential to advance health equity. <i>Social science & medicine</i> , 110, 10-17.
4	9/30/24	Coping with Stigma// Substance Use	Berjot, S., & Gillet, N. (2011). Stress and coping with discrimination and stigmatization. <i>Frontiers in psychology</i> , 2, 33. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2011.00033
5	10/7/24	Individual and Structural Interventions	Thornicro, G., Mehta, N., Clement, S., Evans- Lacko, S., Doherty, M., Rose, D., ... & Henderson, C. (2016). Evidence for effective interventions to reduce mental health-related stigma and discrimination. <i>The Lancet</i> , 387(10023), 1123- 1132.
	10/14/24	Indigenous Peoples' Day – No Class	Assignment: Written summary of chosen topic due

6	10/21/24	Sexism and Mental Health	Mizock, L., & Brubaker, M. (2021). Treatment experiences with gender and discrimination among women with serious mental illness. <i>Psychological services</i> , 18(1), 64–72. https://doi.org/10.1037/ser0000346
7	10/28/24	Stigma and mental health in primary care settings	Assignment: Intervention outline due Reading: Corrigan, P. W., Mittal, D., Reaves, C. M., Haynes, T. F., Han, X., Morris, S., & Sullivan, G. (2014). Mental health stigma and primary health care decisions. <i>Psychiatry Research</i> , 218(1-2), 35-38.
8	11/4/24	Racism and Mental Health	Jones, S. C. T., & Neblett, E. W., Jr. (2019). The impact of racism on the mental health of people of color. In M. T. Williams, D. C. Rosen, & J. W. Kanter (Eds.), <i>Eliminating race-based mental health disparities: Promoting equity and culturally responsive care across settings</i> (p. 79–97).
9	11/11/24	Homophobia, Transphobia, and Mental Health	Pachankis, J. E., Williams, S. L., Behari, K., Job, S., McConocha, E. M., & Chaudoir, S. R. (2020). Brief online interventions for LGBTQ young adult mental and behavioral health: A randomized controlled trial in a high-stigma, low-resource context. <i>Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology</i> , 88(5), 429. Forthcoming preprint on anti-queer policies and suicide risk among LGBTQIA+ young adults in Tennessee.
10/11	11/18/23 11/25/23	Open classes (current topics) Possible topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ableism • Policy + stigma in the justice and prison systems • Stigma and mental health across the lifespan • Religion • Immigration and language • Many additional 	Readings TBD

		topics (frustratingly, the world isn't short on sources and targets of stigma)	
13	12/2/24	Presentations	
14	12/9/24	Presentations	
15	12/16/24	Presentations	
	12/20/24	No Class	Assignment: Final papers due

Learning Management System: Canvas will be used extensively throughout the semester for course syllabus, assignments, announcements, communication and/or other course-related activities. It is the student's responsibility to familiarize themselves with Canvas and check it regularly. If you have difficulties accessing Canvas, please inform the instructor and Canvas Support (help@oit.rutgers.edu). Canvas is accessible at canvas.rutgers.edu.

School of Public Health Honor Code: The School of Public Health Honor Code is found in the School Catalog (sph.rutgers.edu/academics/catalog.html). Each student bears a fundamental responsibility for maintaining academic integrity and intellectual honesty in his or her graduate work. For example, all students are expected to observe the generally accepted principles of scholarly work, to submit their own rather than another's work, to refrain from falsifying data, and to refrain from receiving and/or giving aid on examinations or other assigned work requiring independent effort. In submitting written material, the writer takes full responsibility for the work as a whole and implies that, except as properly noted by use of quotation marks, footnotes, etc., both the ideas and the works used are his or her own. In addition to maintaining personal academic integrity, each student is expected to contribute to the academic integrity of the School community by not facilitating inappropriate use of her/his own work by others and by reporting acts of academic dishonesty by others to an appropriate school authority. It should be clearly understood that plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can lead to sanctions up to and including separation from the Rutgers School of Public Health.

Students with Disabilities: Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student must apply for Services by first completing a Registration Form with the Rutgers Office of Disability Services (ODS) at ods.rutgers.edu. The student will also be required to participate in an ODS intake interview and provide documentation. If reasonable accommodations are granted, ODS will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations which should be shared with your instructors as early in your courses as possible.

Commitment to Safe Learning Environment: The Rutgers School of Public Health is committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the School as a whole. Free expression in an academic community is essential to the mission of providing the highest caliber of education possible. The School encourages civil discourse, reasoned thought, sustained discussion, and constructive engagement. Provocative ideas respectfully presented are an expected result. An enlightened academic community, however, connects freedom with

responsibility. The School encourages all students to disclose any situations where you may feel unsafe, discriminated against, or harassed. Harassment or discrimination of any kind will be not tolerated and violations may lead to disciplinary actions.

Student Well-Being: The School of Public Health recognizes that students may experience stressors or challenges that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. If the source of your stressors or challenges is academic, students are encouraged to discuss these challenges and circumstances with their instructor, if they feel they may need additional support or temporary accommodations at the beginning or during this course. The course instructor may consider making reasonable temporary adjustments depending on the student's situation. For personal concerns or if additional support is needed, students may reach out to the [Office of Student Services and Alumni Affairs](#) or any of the appropriate referral resources listed on the [SPH Student Connect](#) Canvas page.

Reporting Discrimination or Harassment: If you experience any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. You may report such incidents to the [RBHS Title IX Office](#) or to the School of Public Health's [Office of Student Services and Alumni Affairs](#). Rutgers University has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. If you experience any other form of discrimination or harassment, including racial, ethnic, religious, political, or academic, please report any such incidents to the School's [Office of Student Services and Alumni Affairs](#). The School strongly encourages all students to report any incidents of discrimination or harassment to the School. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendices A and B to [Policy 60.1.33](#)) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the School and potentially the University. For example, if you tell a faculty or staff member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty or staff member must share that information with the [RBHS Title IX Coordinator](#). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of resources in Appendices A and B to University [Policy 60.1.33](#). For more information about your options at Rutgers, please visit [Rutgers Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance](#).

Overview of School Policies: Academic and non-academic policies and procedures, such as Auditing a Course, Retaking Courses, Grade Grievance and others that cover registration, courses and grading, academic standing and progress, student rights and responsibilities, graduation and more may be found under [Policies](#) on the School of Public Health website. Below are select specific policies; however, students are responsible for keeping informed about academic and non-academic policies and procedures beyond those noted on this syllabus.

Graduate Student Computer Policy: Students are required to possess a personal laptop, no older than approximately two years, that must meet minimum requirements which may be found online ([Computing Requirements](#)).

Policy Concerning Use of Recording Devices and Other Electronic Communications Systems: When personally owned communication/recording devices are used by students to record lectures and/or classroom lessons, such use must be authorized by the faculty member or instructor who must give either oral or written permission prior to the start of the semester and identify restrictions, if any, on the use of mobile communications or recording devices.

Policy Concerning Use of Turnitin: Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com (directly or via learning management system, i.e. Canvas) for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site. Students who do not agree should contact the course instructor immediately.

Withdrawal/Refund Schedule: Students who stop attending their course(s) without submitting a completed [Add/Drop Course](#) form will receive a failing grade. Furthermore, students dropping to zero credits for the semester are considered withdrawn and must submit a completed [Leave of Absence](#) form from the School of Public Health's Office of Student Affairs. The School of Public Health refunds tuition only. Administrative and technology fees are non-refundable. You may find the Withdrawal/Refund Schedule on the School of Public Health website at: sph.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-calendar.html.