**New Georgia Licensure Rule** ([**Board Rule 135-12 Testing and Assessments**](http://sos.ga.gov/PLB/acrobat/Forms/41%20Reference%20-%20Board%20Rule%20135-12%20Testing%20and%20Assessment.pdf))

According to the New Georgia Licensure rule {135-12-.02(2)}, individual seeking licensure or renewal must complete a “graduate level course, such as psychopathology, DSM or other course with similar content, by a regionally accredited university or an organized training program recognized and/or approved by the Board in mental disorders and diagnosing mental disorders consisting of a minimum of three semester hours or five quarter hours (forty-five clock hours) may satisfy this requirement.”

Any of the following three courses offered by the Department of Social Work at Savannah State University meet the new licensure rule.

(1) Advanced Clinical Practice I

(2) Advanced Clinical Practice II

(3) Mental Health Issues with Adults

**Course Descriptions**

**Advanced Clinical Practice I and II**

Psychopathology is the central theme for the Advanced Clinical Practice I and Advanced Clinical Practice II courses offered in the Master of Social Work program at Savannah State University. Emphasis is placed on assessment of mental disorders, diagnosing mental disorders and treating clients suffering from mental disorders exclusively outlined in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Advanced Clinical Practice I is a three credit hour course, and Advanced Clinical Practice II is a three credit hour course. Both courses are required for students who pursue the Clinical Concentration track, and meet legislative requirement as graduate level courses in psychopathology. To learn more about the legislation please visit the following website: <http://sos.ga.gov/index.php/licensing/plb/43>

**Course Description: Advanced Clinical Practice I.**

This is the first course in a two-course sequence of Advanced Clinical Practice. Psychopathology is the central theme for this course. Students are expected to: (1) assess clients for mental disorders outlined exclusively in the most recent addition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, (2) demonstrate the ability to diagnose mental disorders, (3) autonomously and discriminately apply clinical interventions or treatment approaches in response to mental disorders, (4) quantify a reduction in symptomology following clinical intervention, (5) demonstrate an ability to use and document clinical terminology relating to symptoms of mental disorders, (6) develop an understanding of psychotropic medications relating to mental disorders, and (7) develop knowledge of alternative treatments for various mental disorders such as Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation, Electroconvulsive therapy, Neurosurgical treatments, Vagal Nerve Stimulation and Deep Brain Stimulation.

A central assumption of this course is that students will integrate direct practice skills to assess, diagnose and treat clients suffering from mental disorders outlined in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. Students will develop a personal treatment philosophy from an ecosystemic perspective, and use a strengths-based approach when intervening with individuals, families and groups.

Students are expected to understand a number of social work treatment models and theories (e.g., Psychodynamic Theory, Psychodynamic Therapies [Adlerian, Object Relations Theory, Ego Psychology, Brief Psychodynamic], Gestalt Therapy, Narrative Therapy, Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy, Psychosocial Assessment, Mental Health Summary). Students are also expected to develop a foundation in psychopharmacology.

Throughout the course, emphasis is placed on understanding how social work values and ethics are integrated into direct practice in such a way as to challenge social work students to clarify their own values, particularly when working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups and populations. Practice content with African-Americans and the African American legacy is emphasized.

Students must be able to:

1. Use the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders as an Assessment Tool.
2. Describe symptomology and criteria that must be met for diagnosing mental disorders.
3. Identify a theoretical approach or practice perspective when assessing an individual for mental disorders in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.
4. Provide an overview of the disorder(s) to include the age of onset, the percentage of individuals that may suffer from the disorder, the rate of this disorder in men and women and other key factors.
5. Select and describe an evidenced-based, therapeutic model(s) that can be used to treat mental disorders.
6. Explain the theory of psychopathology that corresponds with the therapeutic model.
7. Describe how the intervention is evaluated to determine its effectiveness.
8. Students must explain at least three techniques from the model that is used when conducting therapy.
9. Identify any cultural factors, interpersonal dynamics or contextual factors that may influence the therapeutic relationship; strengthen and/or threaten therapeutic alliance.
10. Describe the efficacy of the model based on current research.
11. Select and describe psychotropic medications that may be used to treat the mental disorder(s). List the potential side effects of the medication(s).
12. Describe a treatment(s), if any, that may serve as an alternative to talk-therapy.

**Course Description: Advanced Clinical Practice II.**

This is the second course in the two-semester sequence of Advanced Clinical Practice. Psychopathology is the central theme for this course with emphasis placed on expanding assessment, diagnostic and treatment skills when intervening with clients suffering from mental disorders. Students are expected to: (1) extensively expand their ability to assess clients for mental disorders outlined exclusively in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders by using an array of advanced assessment instruments or tools, (2) demonstrate the ability to distinguish between mental disorders with similar symptoms, (3) demonstrate the ability to diagnose mental disorders with consideration of differential diagnoses and comorbidity or co-occurring mental disorders, (4) autonomously and discriminately apply multiple treatment approaches in response to mental disorders, (5) use gender affirmative approaches when providing treatment to the LGBT population suffering from mental disorders, (6) quantify a reduction in symptomology following clinical intervention, (7) expand understanding of psychotropic medications used to treat mental disorders, and (8) develop knowledge of exogenous factors that may lead to mental disorders.

Students in this course will continue to build on the knowledge gained during the foundation year, and integrate skills from Advanced Clinical Practice I to improve their ability to assess, diagnose and treat mental disorders outlined in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders when intervening with individuals, families and groups while maintaining a strengths-based approach.

Students are expected to increase their knowledge foundation about social work treatment models and theories (e.g., Systemic Therapies [Bowenian Family Systems Therapy, Communication Theory, Strategic Therapy, and Structural Therapy], Solution-focused therapy,Domestic Violence Assessment, Substance Abuse Assessment, Trauma Assessment, Risk Assessment, Functional Age Assessment and Psychosexual Evaluation). Students are also expected to demonstrate advanced knowledge regarding psychopharmacology.

Advanced Clinical Practice II is a continuum of Advanced Clinical Practice I in which emphasis is placed on understanding how social work values and ethics are integrated into direct practice in such a way as to challenge social work students to clarify their own values, particularly when working with culturally and ethnically diverse groups and populations. Practice content with African-Americans and the African American legacy is emphasized.

Students must be able to:

1. Identify a population(s) in need of clinical intervention. Specifically, a population whose problems may lead to a mental disorder(s) outlined in the most recent edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.
2. Identify the scope of the problem and demographic information about the population suffering from mental disorders.
3. Identify a theoretical approach or practice perspective when assessing this population.
4. Identify an assessment tool or instrument that may inform your ability to diagnose clients with mental disorders, and explain how the assessment tool(s) is used.
5. Select and describe an evidenced-based, therapeutic model(s) that can be used to treat various mental disorders.
6. Explain the theory of psychopathology that corresponds with the therapeutic model.
7. Students must explain at least three techniques from the model(s) that is used when conducting therapy.
8. Select and describe psychotropic medications that may be used to treat the mental disorder(s). List the potential side effects of the medication(s).
9. Determine if there is a history of oppression, discrimination or historical trauma with this population.
10. Identify any ethical concerns that may emerge when working with this population.
11. Identify any cultural factors, interpersonal dynamics or contextual factors that may influence the therapeutic relationship; strengthen and/or threaten therapeutic alliance.
12. Identify and discuss additional treatment concerns that may emerge when working with specific populations.
13. Describe evidence-based treatment approaches with specific populations, and how the intervention is evaluated to determine its effectiveness.

**Course Description: Mental Health Issues with Adults**

This course begins by reviewing the use of the latest edition of the DSM in strengths-based psychosocial assessment and treatment planning. It addresses diversity issues, the impact of managed care, influence of poverty and welfare reform, and ethical concerns in assessing and treating psychopathologies. It then focuses on the most common psychopathologies of adulthood:  schizophrenia; mood disorders; anxiety, adjustment and dissociative disorders; substance-related disorders; personality disorders with special attention to borderline, narcissistic, and antisocial personality disorders; and health conditions impacting mental health including HIV/AIDS and dementia.  Emphasized are criteria for differential diagnosis of these psychopathologies; major theories and research on etiology and dynamics of each and research on efficacy of different models.  Implications for social work interventions, service provision, and community supports with an urban population are also considered.  Brief attention is given to assessment and intervention in situations of family violence.