

## **EPIDEMIOLOGY OF MENTAL DISORDERS**

*Professor: Holly Hills, Ph.D.*

Hi, I'm Holly Hills. I'm the instructor for epidemiology of mental disorders. I'm happy that you've been able to join us. I am a clinical psychologist by training. And I've been on the faculty here at USF for the last 25 years. My background is in the intersection between mental health and substance use disorders and also the involvement of the criminal justice system with mental health disorders. And so we'll talk a lot about that during the course of this class.

When we look at the major epidemiological studies this semester, we're obviously focused on the ones that are looking at mental health or substance use disorders. And we're really looking at population prevalence issues around the United States and internationally. We're going to really use that information to look at how people are treated, what are the rates of the populations coming in for care, prevalence issues, onset issues. And we'll also examine differential populations, populations found in adolescent, and children, and also adult population. So we're going to look at the population level statistics around this, and then look at their applied use of that information.

We're going to talk about the major mental illnesses. If you're unfamiliar with them, we're going to cover the criteria that are produced in the DSM-- what's the DSM-IV now. A lot of the major epidemiological studies that have come out over the past 30 years will help you. Whether you're going to be a policy analyst or a data analyst, find out where to locate this information and how to use in the work that you do every day.

We're going to talk about gender and cultural issues as they relate to epidemiological findings. We're going to talk some about interventions and the status of the use of this information in public sector settings primarily. This is really important, because mental health disorders and substance use disorders are categories of illness that are really underrecognized, and yet, there's a lot of disability associated to them.

So we'll be focusing on those measures of disability, how that relates to physical health disorders, and why it's important to recognize that. As you know, there's a lot of stigma still around mental health disorders, so a lot of individuals are underdiagnosed. And we want to look at true population prevalence rates, so you can have an idea about the impact of mental health disorders and why it's important in public health and public mental health populations.

This will be really relevant information for you as you move forward professionally. I know I use this information every day in the work that I do, and individuals that I work with, and populations and the agencies and settings that I work in. So I hope you'll find that information valuable going forward. Thanks.