

2006 Clinical Psychology Comprehensive Exam

Question 2: Classification with Special Reference to DSM-IV

Start a new blue book, on the cover of the blue book or top of the computer page, write: the digits of your student number as listed on the brown envelope, Question 2 Clinical Exam, and Date. Limit blue book answer to sixteen single-sided pages. Computer generated -- no more than five pages (10-point) double-spaced.

ANSWER EITHER QUESTION 2A OR 2B, NOT BOTH

Question 2A: Adult. Beginning with DSM-III (1980), modern nosologies have been multiaxial in format, requiring clinicians to evaluate their patients' status on several dimensions simultaneously. Discuss briefly the history and utility of the 5 diagnostic axes in DSM-IV. An additional diagnostic axis, Axis VI: Recommended Treatments, has occasionally been proposed as a possible refinement of the DSM. Develop an argument either in support of or in opposition to such an Axis VI. Discuss concerns about clinicians being locked into a particular treatment approach; about possible theoretical issues and conflicts, methodological issues, economic issues, etc.

Question 2B: Child. Consider and describe the DSM IV's approach to diagnosing mental disorders in children and adolescents. How is it useful and how is it not useful in considering the developmental changes that all children and adolescents undergo, and the differing environments that they find themselves in over time (e.g. family, school, etc.)? Describe alternative ways of considering disorders and contrast them with the DSM in their utility for understanding diagnosis in general, and children or adolescents in particular. Pick one of the following disorders and use it to illustrate your points: ADHD, ODD/CD, Major Depressive Disorder.