



Identified Competency Focus Areas and Core Courses for National Exit Examination

Program: Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychiatry

BSc in Psychiatry nursing,

BSc in psychiatry professional and post basic psychiatry

Prepared by:

- 1. Jerman Dereje Siyoum (Haramaya University)**
- 2. Goshu Nenko Dukele (University of Gondar)**

December, 2022

Addis Ababa

Ethiopia

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1. Introduction

More than 450 million people suffer from mental and behavioural disorders worldwide. Neuropsychiatric conditions also account for 13% of the total Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALYs) lost due to all diseases and injuries in the world and was estimated to increase to 15% by the year 2020. According to studies, five of the ten leading causes of disability and premature death worldwide are psychiatric conditions. Mental disorders are common in low-income countries.

The National Mental Health Strategy-FMOH of Ethiopia stated that mental illnesses are the leading non-communicable disorders and main contributors for compromising quality of life and productivity. Predominantly, conditions like childhood mental illnesses, mood, substance related, psychotic, neuropsychiatric, anxiety, trauma and related, minor psychiatric and personality disorders comprised 0.5% to 40% of the total burden of disease, with schizophrenia and depression being among the top ten most burdensome conditions.

However, Mental health problems remain extremely neglected because of scarcity of mental health professionals so that care is left to families and local healers due to lack of proper professional care in Ethiopia. Very limited numbers of the mentally ill get treatment from the modern psychiatric services. In order to reach for the need of mental health problems, we must create competent graduates who can understand the complex nature of mental health.

Thus, implementing exit examinations for undergraduate psychiatry program graduates will have a great implication in producing competent professionals in knowledge, skill, and attitude which makes a better understanding of signs and symptoms of psychiatric conditions. So that, there should be an intervention strategy to evaluate whether graduates have attained the required competencies through a comprehensive assessment of learning. Implementing an exit exam as an intervention strategy is one of the best ways to check whether students achieved the desired level of competency or not.

National exit examination is an expected measure to learning outcomes of a program to assess students' overall understanding of their educational experiences. In this regard, the Ministry of Education has been working on a strategy to implement exit examinations for all undergraduate programs beginning from the 2015 E.C (2022/23 G.C).

2. The main objectives of exit examination are as follows:

- To ensure students' achievement and improve the quality of education;
- To improve the relevance of academic programs and institutional performance;
- To assess whether higher education graduates attain the graduate profile or not;
- To produce skilled and competent manpower for local, and international markets;
- To ensure that graduates achieve the required learning outcomes and hence meet the graduate profile of the curriculum;
- To provide a platform as a quality monitoring tool in the form of certification of competence for employment;

3. Significance of Exit Examination for Undergraduate Psychiatry Program

Moreover, it is important to set competency areas of the subject matter in order to measure how much the graduates acquired knowledge, skills and attitude. The significance of setting competencies and identifying core courses of the program can be described as: -

- ✓ To set competencies that helps to assess the basic skills, knowledge and attitude of graduating students of BSc in psychiatry.
- ✓ To systematically identify the core courses which will be included in the exit exam.

4. Expected Profiles of the Graduates

Upon completion of the BSc psychiatry program with successful completion of the expected courses in the curriculum, “No Grade ‘F’”, minimum of grade ‘C’ in modules of core and supportive courses and minimum CGPA of 2.0, the **graduates have to:** -

- Provide health promotion and community mental health services.
- Provide clinical mental health services (collect, analyse relevant patient data, establish priorities, make appropriate decision for implementation and evaluate achievements of the services) and work effectively as a member of mental health-care team.
- Provide basic physical care for mentally ill patients with self-care deficit and altered physiologic functions in psychiatry clinical set up.

- Provide psychiatric rehabilitation services, including psychosocial services for physically disabled and behaviourally disturbed clients based on the need at all health settings.
- Apply professional, ethical and legal principles as well as evidence based practice in providing services to mentally ill clients.
- Communicate effectively with individuals, family and communities, including proper documentation and keeping record, formal and technical writings.
- Exercise leadership and management in the area of mental health services.
- Involve in conducting need based research on the identified mental health problems and utilize the research findings as an evidence to improve the quality of care.
- Apply different methodological skills and teaching aids in the teaching-learning process and use evaluation techniques.

5. Competences and Learning Outcomes

5.1. Competences

Currently, the competency of students will be measured by national exit examination at the end of completion of Psychiatric courses with a great emphasis on students' knowledge, skill, and attitude. The details of the competency are presented here below by categorizing into knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Areas of Competency	Expected Competencies to be achieved
Knowledge	<p>Generally</p> <p>Graduates will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognize community's level of awareness about mental illness. ➤ Identify common mental health problems in the community ➤ Recognize impact of mental illness in the community ➤ Understand the role of community in improving mental health. ➤ Understand principles, approaches and methods to promote mental health and prevent mental illness. ➤ Know the key concepts of psychiatric triage ➤ Know historical background of mental health.

Areas of Competency	Expected Competencies to be achieved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Understand the basic psychopathology. ➤ Know bio-psycho-social and spiritual models of mental illnesses. ➤ Understand mental illness in special population (like patients with chronic communicable and non-communicable medical diseases, infants, vulnerable children and adolescents, traumatized, pregnant and lactating mothers, elderly). ➤ Know the range of interventions and therapies that can contribute to recovery, including biological, psychological & social approaches. ➤ Understand common misconceptions toward mental illness. ➤ Understand the burden of recovery process.
Knowledge	<p>Specifically Graduates will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Know cultural context of mental health responses to disaster. ➤ Know common mental health problems in the community ➤ Understand symptoms of mental disorders, substance related and addictive disorders, and patients at risk of suicide and/ or homicide. ➤ Recognize common effects of routine neuroleptic medications. ➤ Understand individuals with primary and/ or secondary gain seeking professional services. ➤ Understand components of comprehensive psychiatric history taking, and management. ➤ Know components of physical and neurological examinations. <p>Understand diagnostic and statistical manual of mental illnesses (DSM) and international classification of diseases (ICD) diagnostic criteria of each psychiatric disorder.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify mental illness in special population (like patients with chronic communicable and non-communicable medical diseases, infants, vulnerable children and adolescents, traumatized, pregnant and lactating mothers, elderly). ➤ Understand individuals with psychiatric emergencies. ➤ Recognize individuals with primary and / or secondary gain.

Areas of Competency	Expected Competencies to be achieved
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify treatment modalities for patients with psychiatric disorders. ➤ Know the range of interventions and therapies that can contribute to recovery, including biological, psychological & social approaches. ➤ Identify individual needs and subjective experiences. ➤ Identify pros and cons of different treatment options. ➤ Know techniques to be used to reduce stigma and discrimination. ➤ Understand the accountability, legal/ethical aspects of psychiatry. ➤ Recognize the responsibility and accountability for own actions or omissions during service delivery. ➤ Understand the implication of documenting relevant client's data. ➤ Know the significance of patients and collaterals in ethical decision. ➤ Understand the concept of informed consent
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Apply relevant community assessment and work to strengthen the health system targeted to mental health problems. ➤ Design and engage in mental health programs at school, prison, camps, work place...etc. ➤ Apply principle of effective communication ➤ Advocate culturally suitable mental health service and function effectively as a member of community health-care team. ➤ Assess the impact of mental illnesses in the community. ➤ Develop research proposal skills and writing research reports and professional articles; ➤ Apply critical socio-economic phenomenon observation and data analysis skills; ➤ Apply psychiatric principles in public emergency and disaster management. ➤ Decide on prioritization of psychiatric cases. ➤ Direct the patients to the case team it has to be treated. ➤ Involve in the provision of individualized rehabilitation service (pharmacological, psychological, social therapies). ➤ Support clients to explore, express their aspirations for recovery and work towards achievement. ➤ Enable clients, families and significant others to make informed decision.

Areas of Competency	Expected Competencies to be achieved
Attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Respect community’s dignity, culture, values, and norms. ➤ Reflect respectful, interactive and companionate behaviour. ➤ Respect diversity. ➤ Empower people and value their perspectives ➤ Adhere to norms of the society. ➤ Respect opinions and views of the community ➤ Obey principles of effective communication. ➤ Exercise empathy in screening patients. ➤ Demonstrate compassionate, respectful and caring behaviour ➤ Respect for the right and belief of others. ➤ Acknowledge the importance of cultural influences on life style and mental health practices. ➤ Apply compassionate, respectful, caring behaviour, inclusiveness, and impartiality in clinical practices. ➤ Acknowledge the autonomy and right of clients. ➤ Show empathy towards clients. ➤ Accept the complexity of needs and aspirations across diversity.

5.2. Learning Outcomes

After completing those courses presented on the mentioned themes, graduating students will be able to:

- ✓ Describe the main mental health problems and applications of psychiatry services in Ethiopia.
- ✓ Understand the basic concepts, theoretical and philosophical foundations and objectives of mental Health Education and promotion.
- ✓ Prepare and use various types of teaching aids in undergraduate mental health programs.
- ✓ Identify the predisposing, precipitating, perpetuating and protective factors of mental health problems and human health behaviours.
- ✓ Realize the practical techniques in planning, organization, evaluation, development and maintenance of common mental health care.

- ✓ Apply the basic principles involved in management of resources in mental health care.
- ✓ Apply knowledge of basic nursing practices in accordance with psychiatry services.
- ✓ Describe signs and symptoms of main psychiatric disorders (psychotic disorders, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, trauma and related psychiatric disorders, obsessive compulsive and related disorders, substance related and addictive disorders, child and adolescent psychiatric disorders, organic psychiatric disorders, common neuropsychiatric disorders, late onset old age psychiatric disorders, personality disorders, emergency psychiatric disorders, somatic symptoms and related mental disorders, and minor psychiatric disorders (such as: sleep disorders, eating disorders, sexual disorders, impulse control disorders, dissociative disorders)).
- ✓ Conduct psychiatric interview (history), mental state, mini-mental state and physical examinations, recommend for basic investigations and ancillary examinations based on principles of mental health care and components of psychiatric assessments.
- ✓ Implement treatment plan (decide for Diagnosis, Differential diagnosis, treatment setting, formulate (Bio-Psycho-Social Model), prescribe and administer proper psychiatric medications, psycho-education and psychotherapy for further investigations and managements when necessary, for patients with various types of mental disorders.

6. Categorizing Courses of the Program in to Themes

National Exit Examination in psychiatry program for undergraduate students', competency has four themes. These are promotion/ prevention, curative, rehabilitation and professional, ethical/ legal practice.

Under the promotion/ prevention theme, **three** courses (**Health promotion and disease prevention, community psychiatry, and Research Methodology**) would be considered. Under curative theme, **four** core modules and two courses, **foundation of Psychiatry I & II** (contents like:- mental health and psychiatry theory, fundamentals of nursing I & II, health assessment), **Major psychiatry module I & II** (neuroscience, psychopathology, schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, mood disorders, neurocognitive/ organic psychiatric disorders, anxiety disorders, obsessive-compulsive and related disorders, trauma and stress related disorders, clinical neuropsychiatry, psychopharmacology, psychotherapy, geriatric psychiatry, emergency psychiatry, **Minor psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry** have to be accomplished.

While, the theme '**Rehabilitation**' has courses such as **Substance related and Addictive disorders**, and **consultation liaison psychiatry**, the professional, ethical/ legal practice theme has the content of 'Ethics and Forensic psychiatry topics under Major psychiatry module II.

S.N	List of Themes in undergraduate psychiatry Program	ECTS	Shares in %
1	Promotion/ prevention	14 ECTS	25.5%
2	Curative	27 ECTS	49.1%
3	Psychiatric Rehabilitation	13 ECTS	23.6%
4	Professional, ethical/ legal practice	1 ECTS	1.8%
Total ECTS		55 ECTS	100%

6.1. Courses to be Included in the Exit Examination

This document has been compiled with **four themes** consisting of **four modules and seven courses** for exit examination for achieving the competencies level of BSc psychiatry graduates that are expected to acquire. According to the direction suggested by the head of quality and competency improvement desk (at MoE), during the preparation of this document, there was a general consensus that a specific program should consider a total of **10-15 lists of courses**.

In BSc psychiatry program, there are numbers of courses that were provided in sequences like Common Courses, Medical Surgical, Maternal and Child Health; but the core modules and courses are clearly presented and have been selected in this document. Accordingly, this exit examination document has identified **four core modules and seven courses** delivered at different semesters and academic calendars.

S.N	List of themes	List of modules/Courses	Module/ course code	ECTS
1	Promotion/ prevention	Health promotion & disease prevention	SPH 2042	5
		Community psychiatry	Psyc 3043	5
		Research Methodology	SPH 4032	5
2	Curative	Foundation of Psychiatry I	Psyc 2053	2
		Foundation of Psychiatry II	Psyc 2063	2
		Major Psychiatry I	Psyc 3023	6
		Major Psychiatry II	Psyc 3033	7
		Minor Psychiatry	Psyc 3063	6
		Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	Psyc 3073	5
3	Psychiatric Rehabilitation	Substance related and Addictive disorders	Psyc 3053	6
		consultation liaison psychiatry	Psyc 4053	5
4	Professional, ethical/ legal practice	Ethics and Forensic psychiatry	Psyc 3033	1

7. Conclusion

Having a competent base exit examination guide in undergraduate psychiatry program enables our graduates to have a solid understanding of promotion/ prevention, curative, rehabilitation and professional, ethical/ legal practice of mental health that improves the quality, relevance, and output of graduates in the field of psychiatry in Ethiopia.

It also shows students how mental health science evolved at present and future vision of the field and make them up-to-date with the dynamism of the field and the basic aim of the national exit examination is to produce high-level and qualified professionals in psychiatry that will benefit the country's sustainable development. The national exit examination offers a comprehensive basis for graduates' careers and further education in the field of mental health on the identified course lists and themes.

Graduates will be equipped with a solid knowledge of preventive/ promotion, curative and rehabilitative mental health care. And also, the academia, students, and concerned higher officials are expected to be responsible for the successfulness of the new intervention coup up mechanism the so-called **National Exit Examination**.

Validated by:

1. **Yadeta Alemayehu (Mattu University, Department of Psychiatry)**
2. **Berhanu Yeshanew (Dire Dawa University, Department of Psychiatry)**

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