

Decision Tree Assignments

Please read these instructions VERY carefully...please ask questions if you have any difficulties understanding the information below. My goal is to provide you with very detailed instructions so you understand the assignment instructions.

You will have your first interactive case study assignment (decision tree) in week 2. A case study is included in the reading assignment and you will face three different decision points. There may not be a "right" answer and you are not expected to answer with the "right" answer at each scenario. You will need to describe your answer and provide your rationale and evidence supporting your decision at each decision point. Please review the information below. I feel like it is important to share with you exactly what I am looking for in the assignments.

You will find the case studies listed in the course reading list under "required media" each week you have a decision tree assignment.



Laureate Education (2016e). *Case study: An African American child suffering from depression* [Interactive media file]. Baltimore, MD: Author.

Note: This case study will serve as the foundation for this week's Assignment.



Here is a general framework for what I am looking for on the decision tree assignments.

Provide an **introduction to the disease state** discussed in the case. I am looking for a high-level summary that briefly describes the key aspects of that disease state. I do not want several pages of information related to the diagnosis of the disease state.

Provide a **high-level summary of the important pieces of information from the case-study** that is presented. I do not want the entire case study presented. The goal is that you would be able to give your essay to someone that does not know anything about the assignment and for that individual to be able to understand the purpose of your essay. Again....focus on the important pieces of information that will help you make your decision.

You also want to mention the **purpose of the assignment**. This can be brief.

Decision Point 1, 2, and 3.

At each decision point, **list the options that are presented and describe your rationale for choosing the option you chose.**

I do not want general answers...."I chose sertraline because sertraline is an SSRI and SSRIs are approved for depression/anxiety". I want VERY SPECIFIC reasons you chose the option you chose. These reasons must be backed by good evidence. Feel free to include studies comparing

agents, side effects, dosing, patient considerations, therapeutic practice guidelines, comorbid conditions, etc.... You will also need to **explain your rationale for not choosing the other two options**. This is very important in your learning. Please remember that you will have MANY more medications to choose from than three in clinical practice. When you make your choice, you also need to describe your **goals of treatment**. What do you want to achieve by initiating the therapy you picked. Again....be specific. Defend your choices like you are in a courtroom.

After each decision, you will be presented with the outcome of that decision. You need to **discuss how that outcome was what you expected or if it was different than what you expected and why**.

You will do the above for all three decision points.

You need to use evidence to support your rationale. [Support your rationale with a minimum of three academic resources. While you may use the course text to support your rationale, it will not count toward the resource requirement. Credible reference material only will be accepted. Sites such as WebMD and drugs.com (among others) will not be counted.]

How to move through the case study.....

You will be presented with three options at the bottom of the case for decision point one. You must click on one of these options to move to decision point 2.

The screenshot shows a dark-themed interface for a decision point. At the top, the text "Decision Point One" is displayed in a light font, followed by the instruction "Select what the PMHNP should do:". Below this, there are three rectangular buttons, each containing a small pill icon and a text label. The buttons are arranged vertically and have a subtle gradient.

Decision Point One
Select what the PMHNP should do:

- Begin Zoloft 25 mg orally daily
- Begin Paxil 10 mg orally daily
- Begin Wellbutrin 75 mg orally BID

You will then be presented with the outcome of the decision you chose for decision point 1. The outcome is different for each of the three options (see below).

The screenshot shows a digital interface for a decision-making exercise. At the top, it says "Decision Point One". Below this, there is a pill icon and the text "Begin Zoloft 25 mg orally daily". A white box in the center contains the heading "RESULTS OF DECISION POINT ONE" and two checkboxes: "Client returns to clinic in four weeks" and "No change in depressive symptoms at all". Below the results box, it says "Decision Point Two" and "Select what the PMHNP should do next:". There are three options, each preceded by a pill icon: "Increase dose to 37.5 mg orally daily", "Increase dose to 50 mg orally daily", and "Change to Prozac 10 mg orally daily".

You will then choose the option for decision point 2 which will take you to the outcome of the decision you made for decision point 2. You will then be presented with decision point 3.

Analogy:

Where would you like to go on vacation?

You would want to describe WHY you would want to go to the location of your choosing and NOT the other two. You do not need to describe what the beach, theme park, and mountains are.

Decision 1:

Beach
Theme Park
Mountains

Let's assume you choose beach.....

What will you do at the beach once you get there?

Again....describe why you picked the option you did and NOT the other two.

Decision 2:

Build a sandcastle
Swim in the ocean
Play frisbee

Let's assume you chose to build a sandcastle...

What type of sandcastle will you build?

Decision 3:

- A large sculpture
- A small sandcastle with a moat
- A detailed sand castle decorated with seashells

Note about providing evidence.....

Please note that you need to be VERY SPECIFIC when describing the reason you chose the decision you made for each decision point. I cannot stress this enough.

Here are some examples of what I do NOT want:

- I chose sertraline (ZOLOFT) because it is an SSRI that treats depression.
- Paroxetine (PAXIL) was chosen because paroxetine increases the levels of serotonin in the brain.
- I decided to prescribe bupropion (Wellbutrin) because data supports the use of bupropion in.....
- Think about the patient you are treating. I have had students discuss concerns with erectile dysfunction in pediatric patients and female patients on multiple occasions. You want to consider the patient you are treating.

Here are some examples of what I DO want:

- "As the PMHNP caring for this client, Zoloft 25 mg daily would be the first choice of therapy for this patient. Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) are known to be the first line of treatment for children with depression (DeFilippis & Wagner, 2014). While sertraline and paroxetine are both SSRIs, sertraline is FDA approved when treating children whereas paroxetine has been found to be effective when treating children with depression, it is not specifically approved by the FDA at this point in time (Stahl, 2014b)."
- "Paroxetine is not recommended in use for children due to its short half-life which can lead to withdrawal when the medication is stopped abruptly (Nathan & Gorman, 2015)."
- Evidence supporting the effectiveness of one agent over another. How did one agent perform when compared to another medication in clinical trials. I really like seeing these types of comparisons.

- What do the guidelines recommend? You can typically find the reason for their recommendation in the body of the guidelines.
- What side effects are the most concerning for the patient case study? For example: you wouldn't want to prescribe a medication that causes excessive sedation in a patient that operates heavy machinery or drives transport trucks across the country.
- Consider genetics and the role genetics have in drug metabolism.
- Evaluate for the potential for drug-drug interactions.

The main point is to be very specific regarding the reason you made your choice. I have posted the essay requirements as a checklist. I would strongly recommend using the checklist prior to submitting your decision tree assignments to make sure you included the required information.

Don't forget to include information related to the **ethical considerations** and how they might impact your treatment plan and communication with your clients.

In summary: What needs to be in your essay. Use **this as a checklist** prior to submitting each decision tree essay.

Introduction regarding disease state

High-level summary of patient case

Purpose of the essay statement

Decision 1

- What options were listed
- What option did you choose?
- Why did you select that option?
- Why didn't you select the other two options?
- What was your goal of treatment
- Was the outcome what you expected? Why?

Decision 2

- What options were listed
- What option did you choose?
- Why did you select that option?
- Why didn't you select the other two options?
- What was your goal of treatment
- Was the outcome what you expected? Why?

Decision 3

- What options were listed
- What option did you choose?
- Why did you select that option?

- **Why didn't you select the other two options?**
- **What was your goal of treatment**
- **Was the outcome what you expected? Why?**

Conclusion with Ethical considerations

***Do not use the start over button and complete several different times. That is not the point. If you do use the START OVER button, I do not want your paper to reflect this. I have had students do it multiple times and address incorrect outcomes in their paper. I have also had students submit a paper that defends using all three options presented at decision point number one. You will need to click the option to move to the next screen which will provide you with the outcome and the options for the next decision point. You will receive a ZERO on the assignment if you do not follow the instructions correctly. I had a handful of students last semester complete the assignment incorrectly. Please ask questions if you do not understand.

*** Plagiarism and cheating***

It will not be tolerated. As soon as I discover it, I will send you an email requesting an explanation and will copy Academic Integrity, the PMHNP program coordinator, and the Dean of Nursing. It places all the patients you may someday see in harm's way and I will not allow that to happen. As an FYI, I read the SafeAssign documents very carefully. I pull all papers that match your paper and read each. I also run your paper through all the assistive websites (such as Course hero, etc) and cross reference all former students in my sections along with the other professors for this course. As you can probably gather, I take these matters very seriously. I am here to make sure you learn the material and not copy it from some other student. Do not use other papers for your research (I had a handful of students try that in the past). This is also considered plagiarism.

Do not upload your papers, once written, to "assistive sites". If I discover it, I will turn it in to Walden.

I hope I am being crystal clear on my thoughts of plagiarism and my reactions to any that is discovered. You should be reading your SafeAssign report and making adjustments to your papers before turning it in to me. Remember, if you turn it in to SafeAssign after you make adjustments, it will match at near 100% because your prior paper will match against the new submission. That is OK.

In summary, I want to see your original, genuine work and not some other person's work.

The information I provided above were things that arose during other semesters of teaching this class.

I think you will enjoy the interactive case studies!

Please let me know if you have any questions!

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