

NEUROSCIENCE OF MENTAL ILLNESS

Psych 50.1, Winter 2014
110 Moore Hall

MWF 12:30-1:35pm
X-hour: Tues. 1-1:50pm

Contact Information

Professor: Margaret Funnell, Ph.D.
Offices: 204 Parker House
Phone: 646-1196
Office hours: Monday & Tuesday. 2-3pm or by appointment

Pre-requisites

Students must have taken ONE of these three courses in order to enroll in this class: Psych 6, Psych 26, or Bio 34.

Course Goals

The goal of this course is to explore the neuroscience of mental disorders. The ways in which we conceptualize and categorize psychopathology is changing rapidly, particularly as we gain insights into the neurological correlates of mental illness. We will review the characteristics of specific mental disorders and then delve into current neuroscientific research. We will focus in particular on the fundamental processes underlying psychopathology so that we can gain a better understanding of possible relationships between seemingly disparate disorders. Although the class is focused on neuroscience, mental disorders cannot be fully understood without considering the experience of those suffering from these disorders. To better understand the experience of mental illness, we will watch a series of films and read a personal account of mental illness.

Readings

We will be reading sections of an Abnormal Psychology textbook and a personal account of bipolar disorder. The textbook will give you basic background about the disorders, but the primary readings will be journal articles. The tests will be on material covered in the articles and in class, and NOT on material in the textbook. If you have a different Abnormal Psychology textbook, that's fine. Note that if you plan to take the Psychology section of the GRE, it will be important for you to study the textbook (or take the Abnormal Psychology class). The material covered in this class will not prepare you for all of what the psychology GRE covers. For example, we will not be covering Freud, psychoanalysis, behaviorism, etc.

Abnormal Psychology, by Rosenberg & Kosslyn (2011), Worth Publishing.

Madness: A Bipolar Life, by Marya Hornbacher (2008), Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Journal articles: links to articles and/or pdf's of the articles will be posted in Canvas.

****** Note that the textbook is available from Wheelock Bookstore, but you will need to order *Madness* on your own. Please plan ahead so that you have a copy by the start of the term.

Policies

Disabilities: Students requiring disability-related accommodations must register with the Student Accessibility Service office. Once SAS has authorized accommodations, students must show the originally signed SAS Accommodations/Consent Form and/or a letter on SAS letterhead to their professor. As a first step, if students have questions about whether they qualify to receive accommodations, they should contact the SAS office. All inquiries and discussions about accommodations will remain confidential.

Honor code: All written assignments and exams must be your own work with the appropriate and correct citations. For information on how to cite sources correctly, see *Sources, Their Use and Acknowledgment*, which can be found on the web at www.dartmouth.edu/~sources. I encourage you to discuss the topics and issues raised in class with your classmates, but all work handed in for grading must be your own. In terms of the papers, they must be written specifically for this class – you may not submit a paper you have previously submitted for credit in another class.

Deadlines: Extensions will not be granted for any reason. Points will be deducted for each day an assignment is late.

Religious observances: Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. Should you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please come speak with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Canvas: Although I will hand out a paper syllabus the first day of class, the purpose of that is to give you an overview of the class. Throughout the term, you should refer to Canvas rather than the paper syllabus for the most current information on course schedule, readings, and assignments. Be sure to check the course Canvas site regularly!

Course Structure

The first half of the course will cover the basic areas of mental illness, and the second half will explore mental illnesses involving dysfunction that incorporates multiple elements of the basic areas we covered in the first half of the course. Note that we will regularly be using the x-hour for the films, so please do not schedule other activities during this time.

Topics: Regular class meetings (MWF) will be focused on the specific mental disorders listed in the course schedule. You are expected to have done the reading before class so that you are prepared to follow the presentation and can participate with comments and questions. The focus of the class is on the neuroscience of mental disorders, but you need to learn about the mental disorders themselves in order to delve into the neuroscience of the different disorders. The textbook will give you basic background about the disorders, and we will be reading journal

articles to better understand the neuroscience of the disorders. I will generally use powerpoint during these classes, and I will post pdf's of the powerpoints on the Canvas site after class.

Films: I have made an effort to pick films that are interesting and enjoyable to watch. You will not need to take notes nor will you be tested on the material in the films. The purpose of watching them is to give you a better sense of the disorders we will be studying. I suggest that you view the films during the x-hours on Tuesdays, and there will be a sign-in sheet for each film. If you are not able to attend a film during one of the x-hours, all of these films are available to you via video streaming from Jones Media. If you view the film on your own, you will need to submit a two-page (double-spaced) commentary about the film in order to get credit for viewing it. Those commentaries are due by noon on the Friday following the x-hour in the week in which the film was shown. Your commentaries should not be a summary of the film but rather focused on relating the film to some aspect of the neuroscience of the mental disorder covered in the film.

Discussions: Many of the topics we will cover in class, in the readings, and in the films are conducive to discussion. You are all encouraged to ask questions, raise issues, and introduce discussions during class time. With 35 students, however, it is difficult to involve everyone in discussions during class. For this reason, there will also be other discussion elements for the class (see below). Everyone is expected to participate in some way, but this will only work if you do the readings on time and put some thought into the material.

1. Pre-class questions and comments: in the first half of the course, there are 8 opportunities to submit questions and comments about the material prior to class, and you are expected to do this 4 times. You may submit questions and comments about the material we just covered in class or about the material we will be covering in the next class. There is no set format for these, but here are some suggestions:

- something you found particularly interesting
- something you didn't understand
- an idea or insight you had about how the concepts apply to another disorder, to how the brain works, or to "real life"

2. Group discussions: in the second half of the course, three of the Friday classes will be devoted to group discussions. You will be assigned to groups, and each group member will be assigned a different article. During class, group members will share the concepts and content of their article with the rest of the group, and then the group will discuss how the articles relate to the given topic or theme. For the last 15 minutes of class, the groups will come together to have a class discussion of overall conclusions and questions resulting from small group discussions.

3. Canvas discussions: this allows you to carry on discussions outside of class. Postings can be on anything related to what we are covering in class or mental illness in general, and they should show some level of thought and engagement. The format is open-ended -- you can introduce topics or respond to the postings of others. For example, you can pose a question on something you didn't understand in the reading, suggest an experiment that might reveal something new about a disorder, comment on similarities and differences between disorders, reflect on the impact of a disorder on the patient or family, suggest an idea for how a disorder might be managed or treated, or post an article or video clip that is relevant to the topic (along with a

comment about why it is relevant). In order to generate some class interaction, some of your postings should be responses to the postings of others.

Grading

Exams: There will be two exams, one in the middle of the term during class time and the other during final exam period. The final exam will not be cumulative in terms of specific topics, but you will find that many of the concepts we discuss in the first half of the course will also come up again in the second half of the course. The tests will include a variety of question types to give students multiple formats in which to convey their knowledge and understanding.

Papers: There will be two short papers on topics of your choice, although the topics must be primarily based on neuroscience. You may choose to explore one mental disorder in depth or you may choose to compare and contrast two or more mental disorders. If you do the latter, be sure that you don't sacrifice depth for breadth. Papers are expected to be 4-6 double-spaced pages (your list of references are not included in the page count). Specific guidelines for the papers as well as a grading rubric are posted on Blackboard, and papers will be submitted via Blackboard.

Paper feedback: Students will be assigned to groups and will provide feedback to group members on their papers. It is important to take this assignment seriously, as each of you will be making revisions based on your classmates' feedback and will submit the revised version to me for grading. Specific guidelines for how to provide feedback will be posted on Canvas.

Participation: Participation points will be assigned based on your participation in class, the Canvas discussion, and the Friday group discussions.

Grading:

Percent Points

Midterm exam	20%	100
Final exam	20%	100
Paper 1	16%	80
Paper 2	16%	80
Paper feedback 1	4%	20
Paper feedback 2	4%	20
Film attendance or commentaries	6%	30
Participation	14%	70

Course Schedule

This is a tentative outline of topics (films are in gray font). Canvas will have the most current schedule and will list readings for each topic.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Friday
Jan. 6-10	Intro		Etiology & categorization	Autism
Jan. 13-17	Autism	Children of the Stars	Schizophrenia	Schizophrenia
Jan. 20-24	NO CLASS: MLK day	A Brilliant Madness	Depressive disorders	Bipolar disorders
Jan. 27-31	Anxiety disorders	Obsessed	Obsessive compulsive disorder	Dissociative disorders
Feb. 3-7	Review		TEST 1	NO CLASS: Winter Carnival
Feb. 10-14	OC spectrum disorders	Hoarders	OC spectrum disorders	Discussion
Feb. 17-21	Addiction	Intervention	PTSD	Discussion
Feb. 24-28	Eating disorders	Thin	Suicide	Discussion
March 3-7	Borderline PD		Psychopathy	Wrap-up & final review