

Psychology 210: Adult Psychopathology Spring 2003

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introduction to the study of maladaptive behavior. Etiology and definition of disorders in the DSM IV will be reviewed. The course will also look at various methods of treatment related to the disorders covered. This course is designed to present a comprehensive overview of familiar behavior patterns considered to be “abnormal” by the individual or those in the social network around the person. Emphasis will be placed upon your developing a working conceptual model of psychopathology including theoretical, etiological, and symptomatic considerations. The nosological system incorporated by the revised fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Association (DSM-IV) will be critically reviewed. The course will also make a concerted effort to apply the above to the “real world” of mental health professionals by examining treatment and assessment considerations

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

In accordance with the National Guidelines and Suggested Learning Outcomes for the Undergraduate Psychology Major (APA 2001) this course is designed to help develop and improve your critical thinking skills. You should leave this course with cognitive tools that can provide you with specific strategies for inquiry and well reasoned thought.

COURSE OBJECTIVES *(What you will learn if you successfully complete this course)*

1. To become more knowledgeable about criteria used to classify behavior as abnormal as well as diagnostic criteria for various psychological disorders.
2. To understand how multiple factors interact to influence the development of psychological disorders.
3. To develop a basic understanding of the methods used and the kinds of information gathered in clinical assessments.
4. To increase awareness of cultural and personal biases toward individuals diagnosed with psychological disorders and how these biases can influence diagnoses, treatments, and outcomes.
5. To acquire basic knowledge related to prevention strategies and current treatment options for various psychological disorders.
6. To develop an understanding of some of the legal and ethical issues involved in providing mental health services.

REQUIREMENTS:

Course Syllabus (cont.)

There are three regularly scheduled exams and one case analysis in this class. The assignments are discussed below in greater detail.

TESTS There will be three exams (all cumulative). The test items will be taken primarily from class material, but you can expect some test questions on reading material, films, or any class activity. If you feel that the answer you chose for a test question is better than the correct answer, submit your case in WRITING to me (after a 24 hour “cool down” period). Make up exams (all essay) will be allowed ONLY for officially excused absences when notice has been provided to me in advance of the exam.

<u>Exam I 40 points</u> February 20	<u>Exam II 60 points</u> March 20	<u>Test III (Final) 100 points</u> During Finals
Psychopathology History and Systems Dynamic Theories Cognitive/Behavioral Theories Biological Theories The DSM Anxiety Disorders	Previous Topics and Mood Disorders Suicide Somatoform Disorders Factitious Disorders	Previous Topics and Dissociative Disorders Personality Disorders Thought Disorders Sexual Disorders

CASE ANALYSIS (100 points)

The paper is due in class on Thursday March 6th. Your assignment is to examine the way an autobiography portrays psychopathology. You are to analyze the specific symptoms and diagnose the individual. Specific requirements are described in a separate part of the syllabus.

DIAGNOSTIC QUIZ: (30 points)

Diagnostic quizzes (5 points each) will test your ability to diagnose a case example in class. They come without warning, but I will only count your best 6 quizzes. Please be diligent about your attendance as you cannot “make-up” a diagnostic quiz.

EVALUATION: (170 points)

The final grade will be based on EXAM I (30 points), EXAM II (40 points), EXAM III, and the Case Analysis (100 points) for a total of 300 points. A letter grade will be assigned to the TOTAL points accumulated during the semester. I will NOT use plus/minus in this class.

COURSE POLICIES

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

The class outline on the following page should be considered very fluid. Any and all of the dates, topics, values, and assignments listed are subject to change by the instructor. In fact, some changes are very typical for my courses as circumstances warrant. Some topics may take longer to cover than anticipated while others may require less time; each class is different. Every effort will be made to follow the outline and policies on this syllabus. However, if the class is particularly interested in a given topic, I may decide to spend more time on it, or if the class is interested in a topic not assigned, I may decide to include it. You will be notified of any changes that become necessary due to unforeseen circumstances.

EMAIL (*I reserve the right not to answer emails that do not follow this policy.*)

For most of us, sending and receiving email is simple and fun. We use it to communicate with friends and family in an informal manner. But while we may be unguarded in our tone when we email friends, a professional tone should be maintained when communicating with your professors. Many professors receive up to 100 emails a day and email has become the primary and preferred way of contacting professors. If you follow these simple guidelines you will communicate and you will shine. Use it improperly, however, and you might accidentally communicate immaturity. Apply the following guidelines to your emails:

1. Use a meaningful subject header for your email—one that is appropriate to the topic. Emails with these headers get attention first
2. Always be professional and business-like in your correspondence
3. Be sure to proofread and spell-check your email before sending it.
4. Don't ask questions you can easily find yourself like "When is the next test" or "When is the paper due?" You might consider the 'crossing the quad' rule. If you wouldn't cross the quad to ask me this question why email it to me?

STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity includes a commitment to not engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Violation of academic integrity in this course includes plagiarizing (submitting the work of another person as your own) and tampering with the work of another student. All students are expected to act with civility, personal integrity; respect other students' dignity, rights and property; and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their own efforts. An environment of academic integrity is requisite to respect for self and others and a civil community.

All work done in this class is subject to the Oxford College Honor Code. Work produced through academic misconduct (e.g., cheating on exams, plagiarism) will be dealt with according to the policies of the Honor Code and will result *in a failing grade for the entire course*. Unless I tell you otherwise, all work in the course should be done on your own. Please note that exams may not be removed from the exam room or copied at any time. Cheating is a very serious matter and will not be taken lightly. The College imposes serious penalties for breaches of academic honesty and all cases of suspected breaches of honesty will be reported. Please <http://www.emory.edu/OXFORD/CampusLife/honor.html> for more details on the honor code.

Case analysis

This paper should be done with a literary or historical figure with one or more identifiable Axis I or Axis II disorders. The attached bibliography is one place to start looking for a figure. Your paper will be approximately five pages in length.

Be careful about accepting the diagnosis of the character that is included in your book. Some books on your lists were written during DSM-II, a very different typology. Others are simply poorly diagnosed.

Your paper must consist of five sections. These are:

- **a brief biography.** You do not have to fully describe your "client," however you should include demographic variables such as age, race, ethnicity, and religious orientation; number of siblings and rank in sibling order; relationship, work, and health status; the nature of relationships with parents, partners, children, and friends; hobbies, wishes, and goals; and the nature of crises, trauma, or stressors.
- **strengths and weaknesses.** While your "client" may not recognize strengths, identification of both strengths (e.g., verbal, insightful, and strong family supports) and weaknesses (e.g., uneven job history, poor coping skills including history of self-mutilation) will allow you to work more effectively in treatment.
- **nature of functioning.** What symptoms brought your client in for an "intake"? In addition to things like suicidal ideation and hopelessness, discuss mood, range of affect, eye contact, and cognitive functioning. Be specific. What else would you want to assess that was not described in your source?
- **diagnosis.** A DSM-IV diagnosis or diagnoses (all five axes) should be provided and defended. Why did you reject other possible diagnoses?
- **a reference section.** This section should document those sources where I could go to learn more about your "client," as well as those you went to in order to increase your understanding of diagnostic issues. You should have approximately three to five references. This text or others can not count as one of these.

Book Club Journal

For extra credit, start a "book club" with several other members of the class who are reading the same autobiography. You are to keep a journal of your reading and make 3 columns like this. You should try to meet at least 3 times, but it might vary on the length of the book you choose.

Something from the book	My reaction	Club's reaction

When you are done, simply submit your hand written journal with your case analysis. These journal entries can add up to 10 points to your final case analysis grade.

Case Analysis

Case History (20 pts.) _____

(18 and up)	Detailed history -- both strengths & weaknesses. Observations are reported in strength-based rather than judgmental manner.
(15 - 17)	History is cursory, although central to the issues raised. Observations are often judgmental rather than descriptive.
(14 & down)	Paper takes the form of a book report, with it being unclear why descriptions are made -- except that they were interesting in the book.

Nature of functioning (25 pts.) _____

(23 and up)	Complete description of symptoms is given, both ones supporting and countering your diagnosis. Mental status (cognitive, affective, behavioral functioning) is well-described.
(19 - 22)	Symptoms relevant to your diagnosis may be described later in your paper, but symptoms are not collected systematically in one place in your paper.
(18 & down)	Major symptoms are missed. All realms of functioning (cognitive, affective, behavioral functioning) are not described.

Diagnosis (30 pts.) _____

(27 and up)	An appropriate diagnosis is given and defended. Alternative diagnoses are considered.
(24 - 26)	A single diagnosis is proposed and the "fit" is described well. Alternative diagnoses are not considered or considered in only a cursory fashion.
(21 - 23)	The diagnosis proposed is superficially a good fit for the problem, but does not work (e.g., conduct disorder for an adult).

Technical Style (25 pts.) _____

(23 and up)	APA style is used appropriately. Paper is logical, clear, and nicely written. Spelling, grammar, etc. has been proofed. Uses good references -- recent and at least 3 (other than the text). Citations and references are complete and accurate.
(19 - 22)	Paper is well organized and logical, but could use a second proofing. Three good references are used. APA style is generally used appropriately.
(18 & down)	Paper is illogical or poorly organized. No references beyond your book and text are used. APA style is not used well.

Total Points: /100