

Abnormal Psychology

PSYC 330-1E
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MW 5:30-9:30
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Textbook:

Nevid, J. S., Rathus, S. A., & Greene, B. (2004). Abnormal Psychology in a Changing World. Prentice Hall.

Additional Readings:

Oltmanns, T. F., Neale, J. M. & Davison, G. C. (2003). Case Studies in Abnormal Psychology. New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc.

Course Description

The purpose of this class is to introduce you to the field of abnormal psychology. Abnormal psychology is an area of psychological study that focuses on the description, classification, diagnosis, explanation, and treatment of psychological disorders. My goal is to introduce you to the challenges involved in our attempt to understand and alleviate psychological suffering. At the end of this class you should be familiar with the most influential theories of psychological functioning and how they inform our understanding of psychopathology. You will also become familiar with the methods and uses of clinical diagnosis and psychotherapy. You will gain insight into the various types of psychological disorders and how our view of mental health has evolved over the centuries. We will tackle such issues as the mind-body connection and genes-environment interaction as they pertain to psychological disorders; we will ask questions such as: What constitutes a mental disorder? Can a mind be sick? Who defines what normal is, and how? Does therapy work, and for whom? My goal is to help you gain an appreciation of both the challenge and the promise in the field of abnormal psychology so that you become a better consumer of information on the issue and perhaps also an active participant in society's struggle to explain, prevent, and heal psychological suffering.

Weekly Quizzes

A multiple choice/true-false/short answer quiz will be given on Tuesday of each week during this quarter (except the first week). Each quiz will consist of 30 multiple questions worth 1 point each, for a total of 90 points.

Short Papers

You will be required to write 2 short (1-2-page) papers for this class, each commenting on aspects of our readings/class discussion and relating the material to your daily life. Your papers should be typed, double-spaced and proofread. Make sure your name and the page number appear on every page. Do not use any plastic covers or fancy binders. A staple in the upper left corner will suffice. Hand written or late papers will not be graded. I will explain each paper assignment further in class (check your syllabus for out and due dates). Each paper will be worth 20 points.

In-Class Group Projects/Discussions

Eight times during the quarter you will be asked to participate in a structured in-class activity, consisting of either a group assignment or a class discussion on pre-selected topics. Each assignment will be worth 5 points, for a total of 40 grade points. Group assignments/discussions may involve solving a conceptual or practical problem, debating and defending a position, or answering questions about issues related to abnormal psychology.

Attendance

You are expected to attend every class. Class discussions and demonstrations will benefit greatly from your active participation, which will in turn facilitate your learning process. Moreover, much of the material covered on weekly quizzes will come directly and only from lecture and class activity. As an additional incentive, you will receive 2 points for every class you attend for a total of 16 possible grade points.

Final Exam Project

The final exam for this course will be a comprehensive in-class test that will include a quiz component (multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blanks) and a written (short answer) component. I will discuss this assignment in detail in class. The final is worth 80 points.

Grading System

Weekly Quizzes	90 points
Short Papers	40 points
In-Class Projects	40 points
Attendance	16 points
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>80 points</u>
Total	266 points

Grading Scale

266-239 = A
238-211 = B
210-183 = C
182-155 = D
154-0 = F

Class Schedule

	Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
Week 1	Introduction		Textbook, Ch. 1, 2,3	Get to know each other
	Research Methods			
	Theoretical Perspectives			
	Classification & Assessment			
Week 2	Methods of Therapy		Textbook Ch. 4, 5, 6,7	Quiz 1
	Stress and Health		Oltmanns et al., ch., 1,2,3,4,5	Short Paper 1 out
	Anxiety Disorders			
	Dissociative Disorders			
Week 3	Mood Disorders		Textbook Ch. 8,9,10	Quiz 2
	Personality Disorders		Oltmanns et al., ch.: 6,7,8, 17, 18, 19	Short Paper 1 due
	Substance Abuse			Short Paper 2 out
Week 4	Gender Disorders and Sexual Dysfunction		Textbook Ch. 11, 12	Quiz 3
	Schizophrenia		Oltmanns et al., ch.: 12,13, 14	Short Paper 2 due
				Final Exam

Note:

This schedule is subject to change. All changes will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to stay current on the schedule and any changes made in it.

And finally:

The issues of abnormal psychology relate to everyone's personal experience, emotions, and behaviors. Thus, the study of abnormal psychology often sparks lively debate among class members. Almost everyone has strong opinions or personal experiences relating to the different topics we will be covering. I often encourage such debate, and at times will do so by arguing the opposite side of that taken by one or all class members. Please realize that this is done in order to provoke thought, reflection, and discussion. The views I express in class may or may not be my own opinion and debating a point is never intended as a personal attack on a student. Related to this, anyone who expresses an opinion during class is to be treated with consideration and respect—whether you agree with what is being said or not. Everyone is entitled to their experience, emotion and opinion, and should be free to express them responsibly. Please remember to treat your class mates in the same way you would like them to treat you. Remember: coming to college is about expanding your horizons, learning new things and learning how to see with new eyes. If you come to class with an open, curious mind, you will learn more and enjoy learning more. If you come with your mind closed, why bother?

Work hard and have fun.

In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is insane.