**Psych 325 Abnormal Psychology**

Fall 2020

Asynchronous Online

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**Instructor:** Naomi Pak, M.A.

**Email:** [kpak2@gmu.edu](mailto:kpak2@gmu.edu)

**Virtual Office Hours:** Monday 10:30-11:30am, email me to schedule a WebEx appointment during this time

**Course Description**

This course is designed to provide an overview of the study of psychopathology. We will discuss the theoretical concepts behind mental illness, diagnosis, classification, and treatment. You should leave the course with a basic understanding of these concepts as well as the symptoms of major forms of psychopathology.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Students will be able to describe the factors used to differentiate between abnormal and normal behavior.
2. Students will be able to develop stress management plans for themselves.
3. Students will be able to describe different assessment tools and what information they can provide
4. Students will be able to define the term ‘diagnosis.’
5. Students will be able to differentiate a diagnosis from assessment
6. Students will be able to describe the similarities and differences between different orientations to conceptualization and treatment.
7. Students will be able to describe the symptoms of different mental disorders.
8. Students will be able to describe how empirical support for a particular treatment is determined
9. Students will be able to use their knowledge about conceptualization, orientation, and research to form a treatment plan.

**Required Text:**

Revel Abnormal Psychology, 9e

By: Thomas F. Oltmanns, Robert E. Emery

ISBN-13 9780134531830

**A note about the text…**You will need the textbook to read the chapters. However, all of the other elements you need for the course are in our Blackboard for the course. So, you can buy the textbook in any format that best meets your needs. I have a link to the text in our blackboard course; to use this link you will need to purchase the text with the access code through the bookstore. If you prefer you may rent a text, use a used hardcopy or pdf, etc…

**Class Format**

This course is **completely** online, which means a great deal of responsibility rests on each student’s shoulders. To succeed in this class, you will need to work hard to keep yourself on a timeline that allows you to complete material in a timely fashion. Almost all assignments and exams will be available at the beginning of the semester, so students who want to work ahead can do so. On the other hand, assignments and exams will have due dates. Thus, if you fall behind, it will be hard to do well in the class. You will need to familiarize yourself with the online content associated with this course. Part of this will require reading all of the handouts and instructions provided. The instructor, ITU at George Mason, and online support at Pearson are available for assistance, but if you have difficulty with any of the resources, please be sure to read the associated instructions and handouts prior to requesting assistance. The instructor is available by email or phone throughout the entire session. You may email with questions, comments, concerns, etc. Throughout the semester, all emails will be answered within 2 business (i.e., M-F) days – although responses will usually come within 1 business day, please allow 2 business days.

***Course Content:*** There are several tools (flashcards, e-text, audio text, etc…) available to you through the Pearson account to use throughout this course. These should all be available to you through the course once you complete the necessary steps with Pearson.

I have also created several written assignments, discussion board assignments, and quizzes and tests for the course. Please see the course schedule at the bottom of the syllabus.

*If something comes up, please don’t panic. I realize that it may be difficult to get started during the first week, and I will be understanding and flexible regarding difficulties that occur during the first week of class.*

**\*\*\*Ask the Professor Discussion Board\*\*\*** It is likely several of you will have some of the same questions about accessing course materials, etc… as we get started. There will be a question board/ question forum available each day. When you have a question about course logistics, (e.g. when this the exam due, how do I access the exam, how do I access the course, etc…) please post your question on this board. I commit to responding to questions on this board at least once per day M-F, if not more. I would like the whole class to be able to see my responses to these types of questions in case several people have the same question.

**Course Assignments, Quizzes, and Tests**

\*Detailed descriptions of each assignment can be found in the course modules. All assignments will be submitted through Blackboard using Safe Assign. There will be a link for you to submit each assignment associated with the description of the assignment. All quizzes and tests will be submitted through the Blackboard for the course.

**Written Assignments:** There are 6 written assignments, worth 10 points each (60 points total)

**Discussion Board Posts:** There are 5 discussion board posts, worth 20 points each (100 points total)

**Movie Character Diagnosis and Treatment Plan Group Work:** The goal of this assignment is to use the knowledge that you are gaining throughout the course to describe a person’s behavior, make assessment decisions, assign a diagnosis, and develop a brief treatment plan. You will need to select one character to work on throughout the entire course, and each one of your discussion posts will build on the previous post for this particular assignment. There are 4 discussion board posts for this assignment. Pick one character for this assignment; you will use the same character throughout the entire session. Each is worth 20 points (80 points total). The following options are available for this assignment:

Elsa – *Frozen*

Charlie – *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*

Maggie (played by Jennifer Hudson) - *Call me Crazy* - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=4&v=BgfpoT79RlI&feature=emb_title>

Amir – *The Kite Runner*

**Quizzes:** There are 4 quizzes, worth 5 points each (20 points).

**Tests:** There are 2 tests, worth 20 points each (40 points).

You do not need to complete the tests and quizzes on a specific date, you just need to complete it by 11:59pm on the Sunday of that week as detailed in the schedule below.

**Extra Credit:**

For extra credit, you may sign up to participate in two hours of research participation credit via the psychology department SONA system. If you choose to do this, you will need to create a new participant account on SONA for the new semester. The other extra credit option involves finding something in the news that is relevant to the materials in one of the chapters and writing a one-page description about how this news item relates to a concept discussed in the textbook. Either option is worth five points. Extra credit, if you choose to do it, needs to be turned in to me by Saturday, December 5, which is the last day for students to participate in Sona studies

**Grades**

Your grade will be based on points earned through several activities. Each graded activity is described below. Your grade is calculated out of a total of 300 points. **Please note:** **In order to maintain a consistent and fair grading policy for everyone enrolled in the course, I will *not* make changes to any of the grading policies outlined below.** I will round up if your average is XX.5 or above. For example, if your points average out to be 89.5, I will round that up to a 90%.

A+ 97%-100%: 291 – 300 points

A 93%-96%: 279 - 290.4 points

A- 90%-92%: 270 – 278.4 points

B+ 87%-89%: 261 – 269.4 points

B 83%-86%: 249 – 260.4 points

B- 80%-82%: 240 – 248.4 points

C+ 77%-79%: 231 – 239.4 points

C 73%-76%: 219 – 230.4 points

C- 70%-72%: 210 – 218.4 points

D 60%-69%: 180 – 209.4 points

F < 60%: less than 179.4 points

**The Honor Code**

Students in this course are expected to behave at all times in a manner consistent with the GMU Honor System and Code. (<http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>). Students are encouraged to study together as much as possible throughout the course, however, no assistance, sharing of information, or discussion of exam items or answers between students may take place. For all work, the name that appears on the paper must be the author. Violations of the Honor Code will not be tolerated in this course and will be immediately reported according to GMU procedures. The instructor reserves the right to use software to determine the extent to which the work belongs to the student. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

**\*\*\*Please contact me if you have questions about what is or is not plagiarism before you turn in an assignment. \*\*\***

**Disability Help**: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resources Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Please note that accommodations MUST BE MADE BEFORE grades are assigned. I cannot adjust your grade after the fact.

**Miscellaneous:**

Official Communications via GMU Email: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason email account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. As a tip, please include the course section in the subject of the email in all email correspondences with all instructors.

Students may not reproduce (including uploading to the Internet) any portion of the exam. Students who attempt to photograph or in any way capture information about the exam for others’ use will be reported for an honor violation.

***Respect and Open Dialogue:***

Most people have had some sort of experience with psychopathology or trauma by the time that they have started college. In this class, you will be reading and posting about eating disorders, suicide, PTSD, child abuse, depression, and a number of other things that some of you may have experienced. I encourage everyone to share thoughts and ask questions throughout the class and express your disagreement with me and with each other as it comes up in discussion posts. As you make comments and ask questions, please keep in mind that someone in the class has likely experienced the issue that we are talking about. So, please do not make sarcastic or disparaging comments about mental illness.

Life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact Counseling & Psychological Services (3129 Student Union Building I, http://caps.gmu.edu/) at 703-993-2380 for assistance with any kind of psychological/life problem or crisis situation. I can help with referrals for students with particular counseling needs so please feel free to talk with me for help with anything.

**Disclaimer**

The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus and its content. Any changes will be announced in writing. If you are confused about a deadline, please let me know.

**Tentative course schedule**

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| **Day** | **Readings/Chapter** | **What’s due?** |
| MODULE 1  Week 1 (8/24-8/30) | Chapter 8: Stress and Physical Health | Class introductions-Discussion Board Post due by 11:59pm on 8/28  Coping Strategies-Written Assignment due by 11:59pm on 8/30 |
| MODULE 1  Week 2 (8/31-9/6) | Chapter 1: Examples and Definitions of Abnormal Behavior | Definition of Abnormal-Written Assignment due by 11:59pm on 9/6 |
| MODULE 1  Week 3 (9/7-9/13) | Chapter 2: Causes of Abnormal Behavior | Movie character discussion post due by 11:59pm on 9/13 |
| MODULE 1  Week 4 (9/14-9/20) | Chapter 4: Classification and Assessment of Abnormal Behavior | **Quiz 1 (Chapter 4) by 11:59pm on 9/20** |
| MODULE 2  Week 5 (9/21-9/27) | Chapter 3: Treatment of Psychological Disorders | Creating a Fear Hierarchy (Part 1)-Discussion Board Post due by 11:59pm on 9/23  Creating a Fear Hierarchy (Part 2)-Discussion Board Post due by 11:59pm on 9/25 |
| MODULE 2  Week 6 (9/28-10/4) | Chapter 6: Anxiety Disorders and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder | **Quiz 2 (Chapter 3) by 11:59pm on 9/28**  Exposure Treatment for OCD-Written Assignment due by 11:59pm on 10/4 |
| MODULE 2  Week 7 (10/5-10/11) | Chapter 5: Mood Disorders and Suicide | Movie Character Discussion Post Part 2 –Assessment and Symptoms due by 11:59pm on 10/11 |
| MODULE 2  Week 8 (10/12-10/18) | Chapter 7: Acute and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Dissociative Disorders, and Somatic Symptom Disorders | **Test 1 (Chapters 5 & 7) by 11:59pm on 10/18** |
| MODULE 3  Week 9 (10/19-10/25) | Chapter 9: Personality Disorders | Personality Assessment (Part 1)- Discussion Board Post due by 11:59pm on 10/21  Personality Assessment (Part 2)-Discussion Board Post due by 11:59pm on 10/23 |
| MODULE 3  Week 10 (10/25-11/1) | Chapter 10: Feeding and Eating Disorders | **Quiz 3 (Chapter 10) by 11:59pm on 11/1** |
| MODULE 3  Week 11 (11/2-11/8) | Chapter 11: Substance Related and Addictive Disorders | Coping Strategies-Written Assignment due by 11:59pm on 11/8  **Quiz 4 (Chapter 11) by 11:59pm on 11/8** |
| MODULE 3  Week 12 (11/9-11/15) | Chapter 12: Sexual Dysfunctions, Paraphilic Disorders, and Gender Dysphoria | Gender Dysphoria-Written Assignment due by 11:59pm on 11/15  Movie Character Discussion Post Part 3 -Diagnosis due by 11:59pm on 11/15 |
| MODULE 4  Week 13 (11/16-11/22) | Chapter 13: Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders | Pick a Topic-Discussion Board Post due by 11:59pm on 11/18  Movie Character Discussion Post Part 4-Treatment due by 11:59pm on 11/20 |
| Week 14 (11/23-11/29) | **THANKSGIVING BREAK**  **11/25-11/29** | **Test 2 (Chapter 13) due by 11:59pm on 11/24** |
| MODULE 5  Week 15 (11/30-12/5) | Chapter 18: Mental Health and the Law | Ethics and the Law-Discussion Board Post due by 11:59pm on 12/2  Course Wrap Up-Written Assignment due by 11:59pm on 12/4 |

**There is NO final exam for this course**

Last Day to Add Classes: August 31

Last Day to Drop with No Tuition Penalty: September 8

Final Drop Deadline (50% Tuition Penalty): September 15

Unrestricted Withdrawal Period: September 16-28