PSYC 414/001 Behavior Disorders of Childhood

Spring 2021

Instructor: Lucia Stillerova

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Office Hours: by appointment

Mailbox: located on the second floor of David King Hall, down the hall from the Undergrad Office

**Textbook:** Abnormal Child Psychology, 7th Edition. Eric J. Mash; David A. Wolfe ISBN-13: 978-1337624268. ISBN-10: 1337624268

**Course Description**

The main goal of this course is to provide students with the opportunity to apply and expand their knowledge of clinical science within the context of childhood psychopathology. This course draws on past coursework in developmental, child, abnormal, and biopsychology in order to build a framework for the evaluation of current research and practice within the field of clinical psychology as it applies to children. Specifically, we will explore the symptoms commonly displayed by children diagnosed with disorders that impair their cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral functioning. We will also examine the potential etiological explanations and various treatment options associated with these conditions.

By the end of this course, students should have a more comprehensive understanding of child mental health, the characteristics of the major disorders covered, and the issues that surround diagnosis and treatment. We will discover together that mental illness is, by nature, a spectrum, with individual children exhibiting to varying degrees different symptoms that may or may not lead to a diagnosis.

**Class Format**

This class will be held entirely online. Information will be presented in PowerPoint lectures and assigned textbook readings. Students are responsible for understanding all of the information presented in both their textbook and PowerPoint lectures. For each of the chapters, students must complete discussion responses and other writing assignments. These discussion responses, assignments are designed to ensure that students both have an understanding of the core course content and apply them. These assignments will be due at specific dates throughout the semester (see Course Schedule at bottom of syllabus for a list of due dates).

This course will deliver content via PowerPoint slides. These slides will all be available on Blackboard, and will include key terminology, important concepts, and more detailed explanations of difficult topics. Students are responsible for understanding all of the information presented in these slides as well as the notes sections of these slides (below each slide). Students should use the textbook to supplement their knowledge and understanding of the information presented in these slides. If students are unsure about a specific concept, they should first consult their textbook for more information regarding this topic. If they are still unsure about a topic, they should email the instructor.

**Course Requirements and Assignments**

Exams – 50 points

You have two exams worth 25 points each. These exams will primarily consist of multiple choice. *These exams will rely heavily on material covered in class.* *No make-up exams will be given*, except under extraordinary circumstances beyond the student's control. Exams are not cumulative! Exams will be an open note and will take place on Blackboard.

Discussion Posts – 30 points (10 posts, 3 points each)

For each week, students must respond to a post on the Blackboard Discussion board that I post as the instructor. The post will be a question related to the chapter content, interesting article, or video/podcast related to class material. These posts can either be responses to other students’ comments or a direct response to the overall question. There will be a total of 10 discussion posts and **you must respond to all 10 posts.** Each response will be graded out of 3 points for a total of 30 points during the semester. **Note:** You will be communicating with one another via the discussion board. It is likely that you will not always agree with the opinions of your fellow classmates. Disagreement is fine but you will need to respect others’ views. Thus, personal attacks and derogatory comments will not be tolerated.

Article Critique – 20 points

You will critique a scholarly article. This will be worth 20 points, and should be 1.5-2 pages in length, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font. *Late submissions will NOT be accepted.* You will review/summarize key points of the article, reflect on the findings, and relate it to your own experiences. See Blackboard for a list of possible articles to choose from, all of which will be available to download from Blackboard. A rubric and clear description of expectations can also be found on Blackboard. Electronic submissions will be accepted through Blackboard.

Points for the course

**Assignment**  **Possible Points**

Exams – 25 points each 50

Discussion Posts – 3 points each 30

Article Critique – 20 points 20

**Total points 100**

Grading Scale

Grades will be calculated as follows: 100% > 93% = A, 90 – 92 = A-, 87 – 89 = B+, 83 – 86 = B, 80 – 82 = B-, 77 – 79 = C+, 73 – 76 = C, 70 – 72 = C-, 60 – 69 = D, < 60 = F

**Class Cancellation Policy:** In the event that class is cancelled, I will notify students via email with information about making up the missed class.

**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 is the student’s. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

**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.

**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 your G-number and the course section in the subject of the email in all email correspondences with all instructors. Recording of classroom lectures is not allowed without explicit permission by the instructor.

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.

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 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 orally and in writing.

**Tentative course schedule**

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| **Day** | **Chapter** | **What’s due?** |
| Week 1 (1/25 - 1/31) | Chapter 1 | Discussion post due on 1/31 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 2 (2/01 - 2/07) | Chapter 2  Chapter 3 | Discussion post due on 2/07 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 3 (2/08 - 2/14) | Chapter 4 | Discussion post due on 2/14 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 4 (2/15 - 2/21) | Chapter 5 | Discussion post due on 2/21 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 5 (2/22 - 2/28) | Chapter 6 | Discussion post due on 2/28 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 6 (3/01 - 3/07) | Chapter 7 | Discussion post due on 3/07 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 7 (3/08 - 3/14) | **Exam 1** | **Exam 1 (chapter 1-7) due on 3/14**at 11:59 pm |
| Week 8 (3/15 – 3/21) | Chapter 8 | Discussion post due on 3/21 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 9 (3/22 – 3/28) | Chapter 09  Chapter 10 | Discussion post due on 3/28 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 10 (3/29 – 4/04) | Chapter 11 | Discussion post due on 4/04 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 11 (4/05 – 4/11) | Chapter 12 | Discussion post due on 4/11 at 11:59 pm |
| Week 12 (4/12 – 4/18) | Chapter 13 | **Article Critique Assignment Due on 4/25 at** 11:59 pm |
| Week 13 (4/19 – 4/25) | Chapter 14 |  |
| Week 14 (4/26 – 5/02) | **Exam 2** | **Exam 2 (chapter 8-14) due on 5/02** at 11:59 pm |

**Add/Drop Deadlines**:

Last day to add: February 1st 2021

Last day to drop: February 12th 2021

Selective withdrawal period: March 2th to April 1st 2021