

Psych 325 Abnormal Psychology – Summer Session A 2021 Asynchronous, online

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Our Course During Summer 2021

Welcome! We are embarking on this course during an event that has not happened for the last 100 years, a worldwide pandemic. Although things are getting better, I am assuming that people may still be dealing with the effects of this disease. We are also in the midst of increased participation by citizens in a civil rights movement. I am not sure yet what your goals are for this summer course or what disruptions you have experienced due these events. However, I am assuming two things; 1. that you want to learn about psychopathology and 2. that your life has been impacted in some way due to the events of the last 14-15 months. My goal for this course is to provide you with the opportunity to meet the learning objectives (described below) in a manner that is flexible and takes into account the fact that things may be very different for you now than when you first signed up for this course or planned on taking classes over the summer – in short “life happens”.

With these assumptions and goals in mind, here are some facts about the course. Usually, I begin this course with content on ‘what is abnormal? How do psychologists define ‘abnormal’ behavior?’ This summer, I am opening the course with the chapter on stress and health. My hope is that the activities associated with this chapter may be helpful throughout the rest of the course and summer as we all navigate the uncertainty of our current time. I am also not going to penalize assignments that are turned in late or take off points for things that are turned in late. Just turn things in when you can. That being said, it can be stressful to cover a full semester’s worth of material in 4 – 5 weeks, and it will undoubtedly increase your stress to turn things in at the last minute. It may look like there are lots of assignments – each assignment or quiz is specifically designed to help you meet the learning objectives and no one of them will make or break your grade. So, please try to pace yourself. Please contact me along the way or use the ‘ask the professor’ discussion board to ask questions or share concerns. I look forward to getting to know you better!

Communications Statement

*Official Communications via GMU E-mail: 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 e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

*** I have had the experience of students attempting to email me through their GMU accounts to my GMU account, and the email being funneled to junk mail or disappearing. If you email me and I don’t email back within *two business days*, please contact me at my gmail account. ***

Office Hours: By appointment due to telework

Course Runs Monday, May 17th – Wednesday, June 16th 2021 – All assignments and exams must be turned in by 5:00 PM on Wednesday, June 16th.

Last Day to Add Classes: May 25

Last Day to Drop with No Tuition Penalty: May 25

Final Drop Deadline (50% Tuition Penalty): June 8

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...

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.

Course Goals:

This course is designed to provide an overview of the study of psychopathology. This course will be an overview in the sense that 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.

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.

*****Course Logistics***** This course is completely online, which means a great deal of responsibility rests on each student's shoulders. Also, because it is a summer course, the semester is approximately one-third as long as usual, but we still cover the same amount of material. 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 or call with questions, comments, concerns, etc. Throughout the semester, all emails or voice mails 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.

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 is 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 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.

Honor Code Statement

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. It is every student's responsibility to familiarize himself or herself with the Honor Code. The Honor Code is available at: <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/> All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee.

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

Online Course Resources The course will be run through Blackboard 9.1. It is extremely important to access Blackboard 9.1 through the MyMason Portal – please follow these instructions: 1. Go to <http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/> 2. Login using your Mason ID and password (the same one you use for your GMU email account) 3. Click on the 'Courses' tab (toward the top right of the screen) 4. Go to the list of courses entitled "Course List" (in the middle of the screen) 5. Click on the link for Psyc 325-A01 The class website in Blackboard will contain access to videos, assignments, the discussion board, exams, and other course resources. Nearly all course activities will take place in Blackboard, so it is important to login and begin to explore the various components in the first days of the semester.

Disabilities:

If you are a student with disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact me and contact the Disability Resource Services (DRS) at 709-993-2474. 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.

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=BgfpoT79RII&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).

Extra Credit

For extra credit, you may sign up to participate in two hours worth of research participation credit via the psychology department SONA system. Or, you may find something in the news that is relevant to the materials in one of the chapters, and write 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 Tuesday, June 30th.

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

Course Schedule

Wednesday, July 1, 2020 to Wednesday, August 5, 2020

Module 1: Monday, May 17th – Monday, May 24th

Materials/Content:

Chapter 8: Stress and Physical Health

Chapter 1: Examples and Definitions of Abnormal Behavior

Chapter 2 Causes of Abnormal Behavior

Chapter 4 Classification and Assessment of Abnormal Behavior

Assignments:

Due date: May 19th by 10:00 PM. Class introductions – Discussion Board Post

Due date: May 21st by 11:59 PM. Movie Character Discussion Post Part 1

Due date: May 21st by 11:59 PM. Coping Strategies – Written Assignment

Due date: May 24th by 11:59 PM. Definition of Abnormal – Written Assignment

Quizzes or Tests:

Due Date: May 24^h by 11: 59 PM Quiz - Assessment (Chapter 4)

Module 2: Tuesday, May 25th – Monday, May 31st

Materials/Content

Chapter 3 Treatment of Psychological Disorders

Chapter 5 Mood Disorders and Suicide

Chapter 6 Anxiety Disorders and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

Chapter 7 Acute and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Dissociative Disorders, and Somatic Symptom Disorders

Assignments:

Due date: May 31st by 11:59 PM. Exposure Treatment for OCD – Written Assignment

Due date Part 1: May 26th by 11:59 PM; **Due date Part 2:** May 30th by 11:59 PM. Fear Hierarchy - Discussion Board Post

Due Date: May 31st by 11:59 PM Movie Character Discussion Post Part 2 –Assessment and Symptoms

Quizzes or Tests:

Due Date: May 28th by 11:59 PM. Quiz – Conceptualization; Chapter 3

Due date: May 31st by 11:59 PM. Test – Test over Chapters 5 and 7

Module 3 : Tuesday, June 1 – Monday, June 7

Materials/Content

Chapter 9 Personality Disorders

Chapter 10 Feeding and Eating Disorders

Chapter 11 Substance Related and Addictive Disorders

Chapter 12 Sexual Dysfunctions, Paraphilic Disorders, and Gender Dysphoria

Assignments:

Due date Part 1: Thursday, June 3rd by 11:59 PM; **Due date Part 2:** Monday June 7th by 11:59 PM. Personality Assessment – Discussion Board Post

Due date: June 7th by 11:59 PM Gender Dysphoria – Written Assignment

Due date: June 6th by 11:59 PM Coping Strategies – Written Assignment

Due date: June 4th by 11:59 PM Movie Character Discussion Post Part 3 – Diagnosis

Quizzes

Due date: June 4th by 11:59 PM Quiz over Chapter 10

Due date: June 7th by 11:59 PM Quiz over Chapter 11

Module 4: Tuesday, June 8 – Friday, June 11th

Chapter 13 Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders

Assignments:

Due date: Thursday, June 10th by 11:59 PM Discussion Board Post – Pick a topic

Due date: June 11th by 11:59 PM Movie Character Discussion Post Part 4 – Treatment

Quizzes and Tests:

Due date: June 11th by 11:59 PM Test – Chapter 13

Module 5: Saturday, June 12th – Wednesday, June 16th

Chapter 18 – Mental Health and the Law

Assignments:

Due date: Tuesday, June 15th by 11:59 PM Ethics and the Law – Discussion Board Post

Due date: Wednesday, June 16th by 11:59 PM Course Wrap Up – Written Assignment

There is NO final exam for this course