**Abnormal Psychology**

George Mason University

PSYC 325 – 002 (3 Credits)

Fall 2021 (8/23 – 12/15)

Monday and Wednesdays, 03:00 PM to 04:15 PM

Buchanan D005

Instructor Information

Instructor: Tahani Chaudhry, M.A. Email: tchaudh@gmu.edu Pronouns: She/Her/Hers

What you can call me: “Tahani”

Office Hours: Virtual via Zoom by appointment

*I believe my role as a teacher is not only to impart knowledge of the course material but also to learn from you. I strive to create a classroom environment that is open, comfortable, and conducive to shared learning. My aim is to make this course as accessible and flexible for students in order to support everyone in achieving their learning goals. My hope is for students to walk away with both knowledge of the course material and the ability to apply this knowledge to real-life contexts outside of the classroom. I will do this by guiding you through this course content, sharing resources and providing feedback for students to expand their knowledge and skill sets. I encourage students to take ownership of this learning process by asking questions, reflecting on course content and providing feedback to me to improve this course and my teaching. My teaching style is informal, and I want my students to feel comfortable asking me questions, asking for help, and offering suggestions.*

Textbook Requirement

The following access is required. You must purchase the LaunchPad to complete assignments for this course. E-text is included in that purchase.

LaunchPad Access: [Comer, R. J., & Comer, J. S. (2018). *Abnormal Psychology.* (10th Edition). Macmillan Learning.](https://www.macmillanlearning.com/college/us/product/Abnormal-Psychology/p/1319066941)

* **Six Month Access ISBN:**9781319067236

Course Description and Objectives

*Recommended Prerequisite: PSYC 100 and either PSYC 211, 231, or 324 or permission of instructor*

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. By the end of the course, it is expected that you will be able to:

1. Differentiate between abnormal and normal behavior
2. Describe different assessment tools and what information they can provide.
3. Define diagnoses and differentiate between diagnosis and assessment.
4. Describe the similarities and differences between different orientations to conceptualization and treatment.
5. Identify symptoms of common mental disorders and describe empirical support for a treatment that is determined.

Course Format

This is an in-person course. We will cover most disorders over the course of two class periods. Each class will include review of the important elements from the text, power point presentations, group discussions and activities. You are expected to read the textbook chapter(s) assigned prior to class time in order to fully participate in class. All materials presented in class can also be found on Blackboard. Additional articles, videos and other resources will be provided on Blackboard.

Grading and Assignments

Final grades are entered according to the following scale.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A+  | A  | A-  | B+  | B  | B-  | C+  | C  | C-  | D  | F  |
| >96  | 93-96  | 90-92  | 87-89  | 83-86  | 80-82  | 77-79  | 73-76  | 90-72  | 60-69  | <60  |

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%.

**Quizzes = 15% Class Discussions and Activities = 25%**

**Clinical Choices = 35% Applied Infographic Project = 25%**

***Quizzes (15%)***

Students are assigned a quiz during class every Wednesday covering the course material. Quizzes are designed to test your knowledge and understanding of key points in the readings, lectures, and other assigned supplements. Each quiz will largely focus on the content of its respective week, but it is possible you will see some questions from previous topics that you have already learned in the course. Quizzes will be assigned during class every Wednesday and students will have the first 15 minutes of class time to complete them. If you arrive late to class, you will have less time to complete the quiz. You are welcome to use any resources during the quiz, including your notes and the textbook but you MAY NOT use other individuals, notes/resources that belong to other individuals.

The sharing of quiz content in any form is unacceptable. This includes but is not limited, verbal discussion, screen shots (unless sending me a technology issue), copying/pasting questions, posting them to platforms such as Quizlet (that one is copyright infringement), etc. Partaking in this practice counts as an honor violation and will be dealt with accordingly even if discovered after the fact.

**No make-up and Late quizzes will be permitted for any reasons. However, the lowest two quiz grades will be dropped and not counted against your grade to accommodate any unforeseen circumstances.**

***Class Discussions and Activities (25%)***

You are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings and should come to class prepared to discuss and apply the material. If you know you will be absent, please contact me via email at tchaudh@gmu.edu as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to obtain notes from a classmate for a missed class. Class discussion and group activities will be a part of your course grade. These will include activities such as small group discussions, watching videos in-class and submitting short one-paragraph reflection papers to summarize.

**Unless prior arrangements have been made with me, class activities cannot be made up. Class attendance will not be taken; however, class participation will be graded using these different small class activities. Please be punctual and attend regularly!**

***Clinical Choices Assignments (35%)***

You have the opportunity to apply the material critically and practically by completing the clinical choices assignments. Clinical choice assignments ***must be completed in the LaunchPad*** where you have access to the e- textbook. They can take anywhere from 30 minutes to 90 minutes depending on the content and your pace in answering the questions, so make sure you set aside time to complete. The assignments consist of multiple choice and multiple response components as well as short-answer response questions. Some questions will allow you to reattempt when you get it wrong, but not all of them. **Please input an answer for EACH item to receive credit. You are required to answer all questions/prompts. It will not let me grade it or show me your attempt unless everything is answered. If you choose to not answer a question (which you’ll lose credit for), put “n/a” so the system will still submit it for grading.** These assignments are due by 11:59pm on the day they are due (see course schedule). Finally, know that the LaunchPad gradebook is NOT accurate. It assigns grades based on completion until I go in and do grading, which I will post in the BlackBoard gradebook.

**You may not submit a clinical choice assignment late or make it up, however, I will drop the lowest two.**

***Applied Infographic Project (25%)***

You will embark in a semester long individual project that focuses on a particular topic/issue, evaluates relevant research and developmental implications, suggest evidenced based solutions. This topic requires you to critically think, apply, and synthesize the course material. Additional and specific details are available in Canvas.

There are three phases to this project (see course calendar for due dates):

1. A half to full page (double spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt font) proposal indicating the issue you would like to investigate and why it is relevant to developmental psychology. You will be given feedback and suggestions on this.
2. Submission of a preliminary fact sheet with some references. This is nowhere near a finished draft. Rather, it is a check to make sure the appropriate work and effort is being put into it and gives me the opportunity to make sure you are going in the right direction. This focuses on summarizing what the research says about the issue. This is submitted as a Word or PDF document. Double spaced, Times New Roman 12, APA format.
3. A final infographic and an updated fact sheet and references. An infographic is a visually appealing document that summarizes and concisely synthesizes data and information. You could think of it like a poster, but it is an electronic document. The infographic must be submitted as either one single Word document or one single PowerPoint Slide (I’ll accept PDF versions as well, but it must be 1 page/slide). Revised fact sheet and references are submitted in the same manner as Phase 2.

**Phase 1 and 2 have some late acceptance parameters with point deduction. For each day past the due date, 5% will be deducted from your grade. Phase 3 cannot be turned in late due to the quick grading turn around for final grades.**

***\*\*\*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 Dec 4th.

**Course and Institution Policies**

***Respect and Open Dialogue During Class***

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 discussing about eating disorders, suicide, PTSD, child abuse, depression, and several other things that some of you may have experienced. I encourage everyone to share thoughts and ask questions throughout the class. Disagreement is completely acceptable when engaging in discussions with both the instructor and your classmates. However, as you make comments and ask questions, please be mindful of other’s potential situations and respectful of their beliefs/values/choices. I challenge everyone to keep in mind both their hardships and privilege and practice perspective taking when reflecting and engaging in discussions. Discriminatory or hateful comments will not be tolerated. Failure to comply with this policy may result in a significant grade penalty or other actions as deemed appropriate.

***Cell Phones and Laptops***

The use of cell phones, including text messaging, is unacceptable during class time. If there is an emergent reason that you have to be contacted during class, please step out of the classroom. The use of laptops is limited to note taking and access to Blackboard. I reserve the right to dismiss a student from class if the use of devices significantly disrupts the lecture and fellow classmates.

***Cancelation Policy***

In the event of inclement weather or an unexpected class cancellation, I will notify students by email ASAP and post an announcement on Blackboard. I will include the makeup plan for the material.

***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.

***Technology and Email***

Students will be expected to access and use Blackboard on a regular basis. Important information, such as the syllabus and class materials, will be posted here. To access Blackboard log in at: https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/ then click on the Courses tab on the left and locate your course link in the Course List.

Students should check their GMU email account regularly (at least once per day) and use it when communicating with me about course-related matters. I do not send course information or updates to any email address other than those supported by GMU. If you have any questions, please post them on the Ask the Professor Forum on Blackboard. For any personal questions, email is the best way to get in contact with me. I usually answer all emails within a day or two. I do not reply to emails on weekends. Make sure to include a subject line in your email mentioning your course/section. (e.g., PSYC 325 – 002) and sign your first and last name.

**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.

***Trigger Warning***

Some topics in the field of psychology can facilitate undesired emotions or feelings. This could include, but is not limited to, anxiety, sadness, discomfort, or symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Be sure that you have looked over the course objectives, topics, and schedule to make sure you understand what information this course covers and consider how it may or may not affect you. Students should be mindful of themselves and their experiences when navigating through the course topics and be sure they are practicing self-care and utilizing necessary resources, such as reaching out to a mental health professional, when needed.

***Blackboard Policy and Grading***

It is expected that you check the Blackboard regularly for possible announcements, the most up-too-date documents, and to see your grades on individual assignments. The instructor will make an effort to post individual grades. However, note that the Blackboard gradebook may not always be completely accurate/up to date. Students are encouraged to calculate their grades on their own or contact the instructor if they are uncertain of its accuracy. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the instructor if they notice an error in the Blackboard gradebook.

In the event that assignments require students to challenge their thoughts and consider positions and viewpoints that may be different from that of the instructor’s, students should not feel discouraged in offending the instructor for simply having a differing viewpoint, as this will not influence grading. Grading will always be based on the quality of the content, supporting evidence when necessary, and the alignment of the submission with the assignment’s requirements. However, adherence to the respect policy is ALWAYS required.

*BlackBoard Login.* Online materials for this class can be accessed through Blackboard. You must check our course webpage frequently for course content, assignments, and discussions. Blackboard can also serve as your access to the LaunchPad site. Access to [MyMason](http://mymason.gmu.edu) and GMU email are required to participate successfully in this course. Check [the IT Support Center](http://itservices.gmu.edu/) website. Navigate to [the Student Support page](https://coursessupport.gmu.edu/Students/) for help and information about Blackboard. In the menu bar to the left you will find all the tools you need to become familiar with for this course. Take time to learn each. Make sure you run a system check a few days before class. Become familiar with the attributes of Blackboard and online learning.

***Honor Code***

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://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. 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 that of the students. The instructor for this course reserves the right to enter a failing grade to any student found guilty of an honor code violation. Additionally, 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 or other graded materials for others’ use will be reported for an honor violation.

***Students with Disabilities***

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students by upholding the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please first visit http://ds.gmu.edu/ for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then please discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474”

***Student Privacy and Additional Resources***

Information about Student Privacy and Student Rights under FERPA can be found at: <http://registrar.gmu.edu/ferpa/>

A variety of student services are available:

* Distance Education Services, University Libraries (http://library.gmu.edu/distance )
* Writing Center (http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/ )
* Learning Services (<https://learningservices.gmu.edu>)
* Counseling and Psychological Services (http://caps.gmu.edu/)

***University Counseling Services***

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.

**Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking.**

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Responsible Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-993-2380) or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 207-993-8730 or emailing cde@gmu.edu.

***Cultural/Religious Holidays***

Students may receive accommodations on an individual basis for observing religious and cultural holidays of special importance and the activities of said observation interferes with completing a course assignment on time. Accommodations could include extensions, make-ups, or early takes. **If a student wishes to invoke this accommodation**, please communicate this to the instructor in advance via email. The following link will take you to GMUs religious holiday calendar (<https://ulife.gmu.edu/religious-holiday-calendar/>).

*\*\*By being enrolled in this class, you understand that you are agreeing to adhere to the policies and actions required of you by both me and the institution. You are agreeing to the content and regulations of the most recent student/institution handbook.*

Course Calendar

Here you will find the tentative schedule for the semester and other important dates. You should be familiar with this information to complete your assignments on time and be successful.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Dates** | **Main Topics**  | **Readings/Assignments** |
| Mon 8/23  | Syllabus; Introduction to Class | Syllabus; Launchpad Access  |
| Wed 8/25 | Abnormal Psychology: Past and Present | Chapters 1-2**In-class Quiz** |
| Mon 8/30 | Models of Abnormality | Chapter 3 |
| Wed 9/1 | Clinical Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment | Chapter 4**In-class Quiz** |
| Mon 9/6 | LABOR DAY |  |
| Wed 9/8 | Clinical Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment | **In-class Quiz** |
| Mon 9/13 | Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive, and Related Disorders | Chapter 5 |
| Wed 9/15 | Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive, and Related Disorders | **In-class Quiz****Clinical Choices:** Priya’s Case |
| Mon 9/20 | Disorders of Trauma and Stress | Chapter 6**Infographic Project:** Proposal |
| Wed 9/22 | Disorders of Trauma and Stress | **In-class Quiz** |
| Mon 9/27 | Depressive and Bipolar Disorders; Suicide | Chapter 7-9 |
| Wed 9/29 | Depressive and Bipolar Disorders; Suicide | **In-class Quiz****Clinical Choices:** John’s Case |
| Mon 10/4 | Schizophrenic and Related Disorders | Chapter 14-15 |
| Wed 10/6 | Schizophrenic and Related Disorders | **In-class Quiz** |
| Tues 10/12 | FALL BREAK; CLASS ON TUESDAYDisorders Featuring Somatic Symptoms | Chapter 10 |
| Wed 10/13 | Disorders Featuring Somatic Symptoms | **In-class Quiz****Clinical Choices:** Joanne’s Case |
| Mon 10/18 | Eating Disorders | Chapter 11 |
| Wed 10/20 | Eating Disorders | **In-class Quiz****Clinical Choices:** Jenny’s Case |
| Mon 10/25 | Substance Use and Addictive Disorders | Chapter 12**Infographic Project:** Preliminary Factsheet and Reference List |
| Wed 10/27 | Substance Use and Addictive Disorders | **In-class Quiz** |
| Mon 11/1 | Sexual Disorders and Gender Variations | Chapter 13 |
| Wed 11/3 | Sexual Disorders and Gender Variations | **In-class Quiz****Clinical Choices:** Cheryl’s Case  |
| Mon 11/8 | Personality Disorders | Chapter 16 |
| Wed 11/10 | Personality Disorders | **In-class Quiz****Clinical Choices:** Alicia’s Case |
| Mon 11/15 | Disorders Common Among Children | Chapter 17 |
| Wed 11/17 | Disorders Common Among Children | **In-class Quiz** |
| Mon 11/22 | Infographic Project |  |
| Wed 11/24 | THANKSGIVING BREAK |  |
| Mon 11/29 | Disorders of Aging and Cognition | Chapter 18 |
| Wed 12/1 | Disorders of Aging and Cognition | **In-class Quiz****Clinical Choices:** Fred’s Case 11:59PM |
| 12/8 – 12/15 | Exam Period: Work on Final Project | Final Project Deliverables 12/13 |

Important Dates:

8/23: First Day of Classes

8/30: Last Day to Add Classes

9/6: Labor Day – University Closed

9/15 – 9/27: Unrestricted Withdrawal Period

9/28 – 10/27: Selective Withdrawal Period

11/24 – 11/28: Thanksgiving – University Closed; No Classes/Office Hours\*\*NO MODULES THIS WEEK

12/4: Last Class Day

12/8 – 12/15: Exam Period

[Please utilize the institution’s Academic Calendars for the most up-to-date information on withdrawal dates.](https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars)