

BLOOMSBURG UNIVERSITY
Department of Psychology
Course Syllabus

Course: Introduction to Abnormal Psychology (3 credit hrs.)

Catalog # 48.235.01

Spring 2009

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Course Schedule: M W F 8-8:50am

Office hours: MWF 11:20-1pm

Description: An introduction to the nature, diagnosis, etiology, epidemiology, prevention and treatment of cognitive, affective, behavioral and personality disorders. Also covers relevant theoretical perspectives and research findings. This course does NOT count toward the Psychology major.

Course Objectives: After successfully completing this course, the student should have:

- a historical perspective on the distinctions between normal and abnormal behavior
- an understanding of the various types of mental disorders, their etiologies and current prevention and treatment approaches
- the ability to apply criteria from the current psychiatric Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) to the diagnosis of psychological disorders
- an understanding of the shortcomings of the DSM classification system
- an awareness of the current empirical research on major psychiatric conditions
- an appreciation of the ethical and legal issues involved in mental health treatment
- the ability to interact effectively with mental health professionals they may encounter in their future professional setting

Required Materials:

1. Comer, R. J. (2008). Fundamentals of Abnormal Psychology. New York: Worth.
2. Turning Point Response Card XR Classroom Response Device a.k.a. "Clicker" – must be registered in blackboard. Go to <http://ot.bloomu.edu/Turningpoint/index.php> for help with registering.

Course Requirements:

1. Class Participation – While attendance is strongly encouraged, it is not required. However, 15% of your final grade will be based on class attendance and participation. Active, thoughtful participation in class, demonstrating an understanding of the material is expected. You can miss up to three class meetings without any penalty. After the third absence, each additional absence results in a 1 point deduction from the attendance/participation grade. Participation is also an important part of your attendance/participation grade, I track classroom participation and sitting silently in class throughout the semester will result in a minimal grade in this area.

2. Oral Presentation - Students, working in pairs, will choose a topic from the list provided by the professor to research, prepare, and present in class. Each team will distribute a brief outline or summary of their presentation and key references related to their topic at the time of their presentation. **Each student team will submit three multiple-choice questions, with four response options based on their presentation.** A sampling of these questions will be included on the exams, so it will be to your advantage to be present and attentive. The presentations should be 10-15 minutes, with 15 minutes being the absolute maximum (failure to reach the 10 minute minimum, not including discussion or review of your questions, will impact negatively on your grade). Time for discussion will be allowed following each presentation. Presentations will begin by about the fifth week of class (following the first exam). At least one of the sources utilized in preparing the oral presentation must be from a psychology (or related field) professional journal. All sources should be scholarly and web resources kept to a minimum. If you have any uncertainty about the appropriateness of your source(s) or what constitutes a professional journal, please see me. Be sure to consult the checklist I have made available for this assignment (can be accessed at the course web page) to be sure you are meeting all requirements.

3. Examinations - There will be three examinations during the course of the semester and a comprehensive final exam, given during finals week. The exams will cover all assigned readings, class discussion, lecture, videos we watch in class and DSM-IV criteria for disorders. Format will be objective test items and short answer/case diagnosis. If you miss an exam due to an illness or serious family emergency you must contact me to arrange to take the exam prior to the next regular class meeting. Failure to follow this procedure will result in a grade of zero for that exam, it is your responsibility to contact me to arrange to take the exam.

4. Quiz Questions - At the beginning of the coverage of most chapters, we will start things off with three quiz questions. You will need to be sure that you have your response card xr with you in order to respond to these questions. There will usually be a total of about five questions per chapter, the other two will be interspersed

throughout our coverage of the chapter. I anticipate giving at least 50 quiz questions, possibly more during the course of the semester. Students can earn the full ten points, by answering 80% or more of the total number of these questions correctly, students answering less than 80% of the questions correctly will receive a prorated portion of the 10 points. Absolutely no make ups of the reading checks will be given for any reason. If you arrive late for class and a question is in progress you will not have "extra time" to answer. These questions will be discussed immediately. If you do not have your response card with you, you will be unable to answer the questions. It is your responsibility to have your response card with you for every class meeting. We will most likely have the first quiz questions on the last day of the first week of class. You will need to have completed the registration process for your clicker by the previous afternoon.

Evaluation/grading

Attendance/participation	15 points	Final Exam	20 points
Exam #1	10 points	Oral presentation	15 points
Exam #2	15 points	Quiz questions	10 points
Exam #3	15 points		

Grade Ranges

A = 90-100 B = 80-89.99 C = 70-79.99 D = 60-69.99 E = <60

Course Schedule (any changes will be discussed in class):

Date	Topic	Reading
1-12	Course introduction/overview Introductions History of psychopathology/research methodology	Ch. 1
1-19	Models of Abnormality 1-23 Class meeting- in library – 2nd floor Classroom-Computer Lab – rm. 243 Presentation by Mr. David Magolis, Social Sciences Reference Librarian	Ch. 2
1-26	DSM-IV medical model Assessment, diagnosis, and treatment	Ch. 3
2-2	Continue Ch 3 – Discuss Rosenhan/Spitzer articles (see below)	
2-9	Exam #1 this week (exact date TBA)	
2-16	Anxiety Disorders	Ch. 4 & 5
2-23	Mood Disorders Suicide	Ch. 7 & 8
3-2	Spring Break – no classes this week	
3-9	Exam #2 this week (exact date TBA) Factitious Disorders Somatoform Disorders Dissociative Disorders	Ch. 6
3-16	Personality Disorders (Film-Mind of a Murderer)	Ch. 13
3-23	Personality Disorders (cont.) Substance-Related Disorders	Ch. 10
3-30	Finish Ch. 10 No class Wednesday April 1 or Friday April 3, in Denver at conference	
4-6	Exam #3 this week (exact date TBA) Psychotic Disorders (Carson article, see below)	Ch. 12
4-13	Disorders of Aging and Cognition	Ch. 15
4-20	Law, Society, and the Mental Health Professions (Szasz article, see below)	Ch. 16

Final Exam: Friday, May 1, 8:00 am

Additional Readings (can be accessed at course page):

Carson, R. C. (1996). Aristotle, Galileo, and the DSM taxonomy: The case of schizophrenia. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 64, 1133-1139.

Rosenhan, D. L. (1973). On being sane in insane places. *Science*, 179, 250-258.

Spitzer, R. L. (1975). On pseudoscience in science, logic in remission, and psychiatric diagnosis: A critique of Rosenhan's "On being sane in insane places". *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 84, 442-452.

Szasz, T. S. (1969). Interview: Thomas S. Szasz, M.D. *The New Physician*, 18, 453-476.