

PSYCHOLOGY 5604H:
ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY (Honors-level)
Spring 2008
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30 – 3:45 PM
Nicholson Hall 110
3 Credits

Instructor:

Todd Wilkinson
Office: N584 Elliott Hall
Email: wilk0159@umn.edu
Office hours: After class or by appointment.

Your instructor is committed to making himself as available as possible to discuss questions and concerns or to provide/accept feedback regarding course content, assignments, or anything else. You are encouraged set up meeting times that fit your schedule (provided those times also fit the schedule of the instructor, obviously). The use of e-mail for such purposes is particularly encouraged.

Course Description:

The course provides an examination of major psychological disorders, including criteria, developmental factors, and treatments. Topics include mood disorders, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, PTSD, dissociative and somatoform disorders, substance use disorders, disorders of personality, schizophrenia, disorders of memory, classification and assessment, and the stigma of disorders. The class format will include lecture, discussion, small and large group activities, multi-media presentations, and guest speakers. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions.

Course Goals:

Upon completion of the course, you should be able to do the following (in no particular order):

1. Understand varying forms and perspectives of psychological disorders and abnormal behavior;
2. Identify diagnoses of particular disorders and be able to describe their associated symptoms;
3. Demonstrate knowledge of the (better or less) understood causes and etiology of particular disorders and abnormal behaviors;
4. Understand the appropriateness and purported efficacy of treatments for particular disorders;
5. Recognize the psycho-social-cultural factors that may influence the development, course and alleviation of psychological disorders and abnormal behaviors.

Course Format:

The format of the course will consist of a mixture of lecture, class discussions, group activities and multimedia presentations. Lectures will supplement the content in the readings and be used to inform class discussions and group activities. Discussions and activities are intended to encourage the active participation of students in service of the above goals. Attendance and participation are essential.

Required Text:

Oltmanns, T. F., & Emery, R. E. (2007). *Abnormal Psychology* (5th Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Additional materials will be distributed in class or made available on the course website.

Evaluation of Student Performance

Your grade for the course will be based on three exams, ten reaction papers, and a final project. You may choose for the final project one of several forms, including a traditional research review paper, research study proposal, an audio/visual project, a critical analysis of the portrayal of abnormal psychology through a film character, or a project of your own design. Active participation is expected. In addition, regular reading assignments are expected to be completed on the date they are due.

Reaction papers. What is your reaction to the reading(s) for the day/week? The specific direction you take each of these papers is up to you, but papers should reflect thoughtful consideration of the readings. Papers should be 1-2 pages in length, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font. Be thoughtful about these papers! This is a simple, yet valuable exercise designed to help you incorporate what you are learning in the class to real-world examples. It is also designed to promote critical thinking on your part, as well as the skills involved in articulating your own point of view. During the semester, 12 reaction papers will be assigned, though only 10 will be counted towards your final grade (i.e. your two lowest scores will be dropped).

Exams. There will be three exams, each of which will contribute 20% toward your final course grade. Exams will test your understanding and knowledge of the material from the readings and *anything* covered in lecture during that unit. Exams may contain multiple choice, short answer, and essay items. The final exam will not be cumulative. Further information will be given about each exam as the exam date approaches.

Final project. You may choose for the final project one of several forms, including a traditional research review paper, research study proposal, an audio/visual project, a critical analysis of the portrayal of abnormal psychology through a film character, or a project of your own design. For each option your topic must be approved by the instructor. The traditional research review option will be on a topic of your choosing related to abnormal psychology. This may include delving in depth into a topic covered during the semester, or selection of a new topic of interest not covered in the course. This should be an 10-12 page paper, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font. The research study proposal will involve a review of relevant research literature and a proposed study design to examine an important issue in abnormal psychology. This should be an 10-12 page paper, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font.

The audio/visual project will involve the design of a poster, musical or multimedia composition that illustrates and educates viewers on an important topic or issue in abnormal psychology. Although great flexibility in design and topic for this option exist, students should consider that this option should reflect the same amount of time and effort involved in the other options. In addition, these compositions will likely be accompanied by brief written summaries. The critical analysis of a character involves a written paper introducing the topic and its importance, and an analysis of the portrayal of a character for its accuracy and issues. Further, students should discuss the implications of this portrayal for the potential impact on the audience with respect to understanding the issue and potential for the promotion of positive assistance with the issue. Films must be approved by your instructor before starting your review and analysis.

Detailed information regarding the final project will be distributed in class.

Grading:

The point distribution for each of the course components is listed below. Note that regular attendance is assumed (as specified below).

Ten reaction papers	20%	(10 x 5 points)
Three Exams	60%	(3 x 50 points)
Final project	20%	(1 x 50 points)
TOTAL POSSIBLE	100%	(250 points)

You will be graded on the basis of how many points you earn, not in comparison to other students. Thus, it is possible for all students to earn As in the course, but also possible for all students to earn Fs. The grading scale will not be more stringent than the following:

94 - 100% of total points	A
90 - 93%	A-
87 - 89%	B+
83 - 86%	B
80 - 82%	B-
77 - 79%	C+
73 - 76%	C
70 - 72%	C-
67 - 69%	D+
63 - 66%	D
0 - 62%	F

S/N grading requires a final grade of C- or better and all assignments and exams completed to qualify for an S. An incomplete ("I") grade will be given only in cases of medical or personal emergencies. Incompletes cannot be given if you are receiving a grade of "D+" or below on work already completed for the course. Contact your instructor as soon as you suspect you may need an incomplete.

Course Policies

Diversity of Views:

Some topics in this course will be accompanied by discussion and/or debate. You are expected to be respectful of the opinions and views of others. Enlightened discourse is encouraged, but be aware that not everyone views the world through the same lens. Disagreement is inevitable, but successful communication requires that each individual respects the diversity of views.

Attendance Policy:

Class attendance is crucial to success in this course. Attendance and participation will be strongly considered for students whose final grade falls on the border between two grades. If you must miss a class, it is the responsibility of the student to get all notes, assignments and class content from a classmate.

Late Work Policy:

All assignments are to be turned in at the beginning of class on their due date. If you want to request an extension on an assignment, contact the instructor as soon as possible; extensions will be granted only if you have a legitimate excuse. (Legitimate excuses do *not* include computer or printer problems or procrastination.) If you have not contacted the Instructor within 48 hours of the time the assignment of concern is due, you will forfeit your right to an extension.

You may turn in late work with the penalty that 10% of your total score on the assignment will be deducted for each business day the work is late. HOWEVER, reaction papers must be turned in the day they are due, no late reaction papers will be accepted (you are afforded two drops with these papers, meaning only 10 of the 12 will be graded).

If you miss an exam for any reason, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor preferably days in advance of the exam but at least within 24 hours of the missed exam. If you fail to do so, you will forfeit the opportunity to make up those points. Make-up exams will be administered only to students with written verification of a legitimate excuse from a physician or other professional. Legitimate excuses include family emergencies, serious illness, and similar events. The instructor shall determine the legitimacy of any excuse.

Contacting the Instructor:

As stated on the first page of the syllabus, your instructor is committed to making himself as available as possible to discuss questions and concerns or to provide/accept feedback regarding course content, assignments, or anything else. You are encouraged set up meeting times that fit your schedule (provided those times also fit my schedule). The use of e-mail for such purposes is particularly encouraged.

Please do *not* attempt to discuss questions regarding grades, assignments, etc., with the instructor immediately before class starts *unless* you feel the entire class may benefit (in which case the question could be addressed in class). Such impromptu meetings easily spill into class time and is an inconvenience for other students. Save such questions for after class, e-mail them, or set up another time to meet.

Disputing a Grade:

I attempt to assign grades as fairly as possible, granting points on the basis of criteria set forth during class and delineated on assignments. However, by virtue of my being human, I sometimes make mistakes. Read over each returned assignment carefully. If you think you were unfairly deducted, consult with me. After discussing the points in question, one of two things will occur: (1) the mistake you made will be clear to you and you will accept the deduction with renewed understanding, or (2) I will acknowledge my mistake and make any necessary adjustments. Importantly, requests for regrading will not hurt my lofty opinion of you.

Maintaining Academic Honesty:

You are responsible for handing in work that is your own. Any instances of plagiarizing, inadequate citing, or inappropriate collaborating on writing assignments will be dealt with severely.

In written assignments, if you quote someone (3 or more words identical to those of another author), you must put the quotation in quotation marks and cite the original author. If you paraphrase someone else's ideas, cite the author of those ideas. When paraphrasing, be sure that you actually put the author's ideas into your own words--simply changing a few words in the sentence does not make that sentence a paraphrase. Either directly quote the author or put the idea in your own words. Either way, you must cite the original author.

Academic misconduct in these respects may result in a failing grade and notification to the College of Liberal Arts. If you ever have a question about what constitutes plagiarism, please discuss it with the instructor and/or consult the University Policy on Academic Misconduct at <http://www.fpd.finop.umn.edu/>.

Accommodations for Disabilities:

In cooperation with Disability Services, reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with a documented permanent or temporary disability (e.g., physical, learning, psychological, vision, hearing, etc.). Any student to whom such criteria applies should contact the Instructor and Disability Services (the latter of which is located in University Gateway, Suite 180, 200 Oak Street SE [612-626-1333]) at the beginning of the semester. All discussions will remain confidential.

Additional Resources

If you are having problems with basic study skills, emotional stress, writing skills, or something else, one or more of the following offices may be able to help you. Writing Resources:

Writing Lab, Composition Program: 306 Lind Hall, 612-625-2888

The Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Writing: 227 Lind Hall, 612-626-7579,
<http://CISW.cla.umn.edu>

Minnesota International Student Association (provides free writing tutors for international students): located at 825 Washington Ave SE #105 (but moving soon), 612-625-6119,
<http://www.tc.umn.edu/~misa/>

More writing resources: <http://www.writinghelp.umn.edu>

Other Resources:

University Counseling and Consulting Services: 109 Eddy Hall, 612-624-3323

Learning and Academic Skills Center: 104 Eddy Hall, 612-624-7546

International Students and Scholar Services: 190 Humphrey Center, 612-626-7100

Disability Services: University Gateway, Suite 180, 200 Oak St. S.E., 612-626-1333

Course Schedule

(NOTE: Information below is subject to change as the course demands.)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading (to be read for that day) and assignments due</i>
Tuesday, 1/22	Introductions What is abnormal psychology?	
Thursday, 1/24	What is abnormal behavior?	Oltmanns & Emery Chapter 1 Reaction Paper 1 (RP1)
Tuesday, 1/29	Causes of abnormal behavior	Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 2
Thursday, 1/31	Treatments	Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 3 RP2
Tuesday, 2/5	Classification and assessment	Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 4
Anxiety Disorders		
Thursday, 2/7	Anxiety Disorders	Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 6 RP3
Tuesday, 2/12	Anxiety Disorders (cont.)	Cases 1 & 2
Thursday, 2/14	Acute and PTSD, Dissociative and Somatoform Disorders	Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 7 Case 3 RP4
Mood Disorders		
Tuesday, 2/19	Mood Disorders	Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 5
Thursday, 2/21	Mood Disorders (cont.)	Cases 7 & 8 RP5
Tuesday, 2/26	Exam I	
Schizophrenia		
Thursday, 2/28	Schizophrenia	Oltmanns & Emery, Ch. 13 RP6
Tuesday, 3/4	Schizophrenia (cont.)	Case 10
Eating Disorders		
Thursday, 3/6	Eating Disorders	Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 10 RP7
Tuesday, 3/11	Eating Disorders (cont.)	Cases 16 & 17
Thursday, 3/13	TBD	RP8
Tuesday, 3/18	Spring Break	
Thursday, 3/20	Spring Break	

Substance Use Disorders

Tuesday, 3/25 Substance Use Disorders Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 11

Thursday, 3/27 No class, Society of Behavioral
Medicine conference

Tuesday, 4/1 Substance Use Disorders (cont.) Case 12
TBD

Personality Disorders

Thursday, 4/3 Personality Disorders Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 9

Tuesday, 4/8 Personality Disorders (cont.) **RP9**
Cases 18 – 20

Developmental Disorders

Thursday, 4/10 Autism and Pervasive Developmental
Disorders Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 15
(pp. 507- 523)
Case 21

Tuesday, 4/15 **Exam II**

Thursday, 4/17 Psychological Disorders of Childhood Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 16
RP10

Tuesday, 4/22 Adjustment Disorders and Life-cycle
Transitions Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 17

Thursday, 4/24 Dementia, Delirium, and Amnestic
Disorders Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 14
RP11

Tuesday, 4/29 Sexual and Gender Identity Disorders Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 12
Case 15

Thursday, 5/1 Stress and Physical Health Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 8
RP12

Tuesday, 5/6 Mental Health and the Law Oltmanns & Emery Ch. 18

Thursday, 5/8 Conclusions/wrap-up **Final Project Due**
no reading

Thursday, 5/15 **Final Exam** (10:30 – 12:30)