



Department of Psychology

Introduction to Abnormal Psychology

Psychology 385 (L01) – H(3-0) – Winter 2008

COURSE OUTLINE

Lectures:	MWF 13:00-13:50	Lecture Room:	Administration 140
Instructor:	Dr. Kristin M. von Ranson Associate Professor Clinical Psychology Program	E-mail:	kvonrans@ucalgary.ca
Office Hours:	W 14:00-15:00 and by appointment (see me before or after class or email me)	Phone:	220-7085
		Office:	Administration 257A
		Teaching Assistant:	Lauren Haubert, M.Sc.
		TA E-mail:	lhaubert@ucalgary.ca
		TA Phone:	220-3697

Course description: This course surveys the field of adult psychopathology. It reviews the history of psychopathology and covers symptoms (what the disorders look like), diagnosis (how we classify disorders), etiology (what causes disorders), assessment (how we measure disorders), treatment (how we intervene), and social implications (the effects that disorders have on the individual, their family and society) of mental disorders. The format of the class includes lectures and online discussion groups, and may include in-class active learning activities such as class discussion, group activities, writing exercises, video clips, and guest speakers.

Course objectives: By the end of this course, students will be able to discuss the characteristic symptoms of each major mental disorder, as well as related psychological theories, research findings, and treatment strategies.

Required text: Oltmanns, Emery & Taylor (2006). *Abnormal Psychology* (2nd Canadian Ed.). Toronto: Pearson/Prentice Hall. This textbook is available in the University Bookstore.

Other resources: Abbreviated outlines of lectures will be available on **Blackboard** (blackboard.ucalgary.ca) by approximately 10:00 PM on the Sunday prior to the associated lecture. The outlines are intended to help facilitate your note taking. They will highlight only the main points of the lectures and will not replace class attendance. The textbook provides basic material for the course, and the lectures are designed to highlight and extend assigned readings.

Evaluation: Performance in the course will be evaluated on the basis of three mid-term examinations, a final examination, and participation in five online discussion forums. The weighting of evaluation components is listed below. Grades will be posted on Blackboard.

<u>Evaluation Component</u>	<u>Percent of Course Grade</u>
Exam 1 (50 min.)	20%
Exam 2 (50 min.)	20%
Exam 3 (50 min.)	20%
Final exam (120 min.)	30%
Online discussions (5 x 2%)	10%
TOTAL	100%

Examinations: The first three exams will each consist of 40 questions, and the final exam will consist of 100 questions. Exams will include factual and applied multiple-choice questions. The exams will include material covered in the textbook, material covered in class (including videos, guest speakers, etc.), and the online discussion summaries. On some topics the lectures will be the only source of information; therefore, regular attendance is important for success in this course. The first three exams are noncumulative; the final exam is cumulative *for class content only*. Any student who fails to complete one or more exams will receive a failing course grade. For some general advice regarding how to prepare for and take multiple-choice tests, see: <http://www.psych.ucalgary.ca/CourseNotes/mcadvice.html>.

Online discussions: The goal of the online discussions is to deepen students' learning of the course material. Each student will be randomly assigned to one of 12 Blackboard discussion groups (blackboard.ucalgary.ca), each composed of approximately 10 students. Students are expected to participate in five scheduled discussion forums held on Blackboard, including an introductory forum; see the Course Schedule for details. Each forum will be open for participation for 7 days, from Sunday morning through Saturday midnight.

In addition, students will either *facilitate* or *summarize* the posts of their group once during the semester. **Facilitators** are expected to encourage and guide discussion, such as by asking thoughtful questions and ensuring discussion stays on track, that week. To moderate successfully, it is important to check the forum frequently (i.e., approximately daily).

Summarizers are expected to prepare a summary of the group's discussion. In your summary, note the major themes of the discussion and a couple of compelling observations made by your group. Make sure to leave enough time to run your summary by the other members of your group for their input before posting the final version before the discussion forum closes Saturday at midnight. The TA will review all the groups' postings regularly and will post a summary for each topic to the course-wide discussion board.

Each discussion forum will be worth a maximum of 2 points per student. The TA will give students 0, 1, or 2 points per forum. Please write as clearly as possible. In grading, the TA will look for the following:

- *Critical thinking* (postings are rich in content, thoughtful, insightful, and analytic)
- *Connections* (postings make clear connections between previous units and the current issue, readings, class discussions, and real situations)
- *Uniqueness* (postings consistently show new approaches to an issue and/or evidence of research, with appropriate citation)
- *Contribution to the learning community* (postings attempt to motivate groups, extend other postings, and are concise).

Please note: All discussion posts (including summaries) must be posted by Saturday at midnight (i.e., the end of the discussion forum) in order to receive credit. The week you are facilitating or summarizing, your grade will also consider your efforts to fulfill that role, as described above. In order to ensure that students don't miss one of their group discussions, it is **highly recommended** that students note in their calendars the weeks that they will have group

discussions (once discussion groups are assigned), and when they will be facilitating or summarizing their group discussions.

Exam review sessions: Students have the opportunity to e-mail the instructor questions a review session prior to each exam. Up to approximately 15 minutes will be allotted in the class prior to each exam to cover questions that have been submitted. Review questions must be submitted **before the start of the class preceding the review** (as noted on the class schedule below). Please note “exam review session question” in the subject line of your email message.

Grading scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. In this course there will be no rounding up of final grades. Because students have the opportunity to earn two bonus credits (2%) for research participation (see section below), NO exceptions will be made to the grading system.

Absence from a Test: Make-up exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). You must contact the instructor before the scheduled examination or you will have forfeited any right to make up the exam. At the instructor's discretion, a make-up exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup exam is to be written within two (2) weeks of the missed exam.

A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test for health reasons. The student will be required to pay any cost associated with the Physician/Counselor Statement.

Course Credits for Research Participation: Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally-approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to an individual's final grade. Students can create an account and access the Research Participation System website at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. **The last day to participate in research is Apr. 17, 2008.**

How to succeed in this course: This course is designed for you to learn by 1) reading the required textbook sections *before* class, 2) attending class regularly and taking thoughtful notes, 3) participating in course activities, such as in-class discussion and activities, and 4) seeking help from me during office hours when you have questions or concerns, including if you are not performing well. Often students do not seek assistance early enough during the semester. Please come see me if you are having any problems or questions about the course or the material.

Email policy: Please attend my office hours if you have substantive questions, instead of e-mailing me them. I can do a better job responding to your questions in person. If you cannot attend my office hours, see me before or after class or e-mail me to set up an appointment.

Mental health resources: Some of the topics covered in this course involve problems that are quite common among university students. If you or someone you know may be struggling with an emotional or psychiatric problem, the following organizations on campus are available for assistance: The Counselling and Student Development Centre (Mac Hall 375; 220-5893); University Health Services (Mac Hall 370; 220-5765).

Informal course feedback: I welcome your positive or negative feedback at any point during the course, including suggestions for making the course a better learning experience. Please leave me a note in my Psychology Department mailbox (anonymously, if you wish) or email me if you have any informal feedback you would like to share. I will take your comments under consideration.

University of Calgary Curriculum Objectives

The University of Calgary has identified a number of course objectives that instructors try to meet to produce high quality learning experiences for students.

1) This course addresses the following course competencies:

- Critical and creative thinking
- Analysis of problems
- Effective oral communication
- Gathering and organizing information
- Abstract reasoning and its applications
- Insight and intuition in generating knowledge
- Interpretive and assessment skills

With the following course characteristics:

- Online and class discussion and group activities. Students are encouraged to think critically about the course material, raise questions, and present their opinions.
- Video clips of individuals suffering from psychological disorders. Students are encouraged to identify symptoms and to offer their diagnostic impressions based on their assessment of the symptoms.
- A combination of factual and applied test questions

2) The course addresses the following curriculum redesign features:

- A defined interdisciplinary component
- An international component
- An experiential learning component relevant to the program objectives
- Integration of research

With the following course characteristics:

- Discussion of the biological, psychological, and social determinants of psychopathology (biopsychosocial model), which highlights the interdisciplinary nature of this course
- Discussion of cultural variations in psychopathology, as well as variations across genders
- Discussion and activities allowing students to apply course material
- Discussion of recent research related to the etiology and treatment of psychological disorders

Reappraisal of Grades: A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, test, etc.) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within fifteen days of being notified about the mark or of

the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next fifteen days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same.

If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within fifteen days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances which warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct: Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation: *It is a student's responsibility to request academic accommodation.* If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation and **have not** registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. If you are seeking academic accommodation, please notify your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the commencement of the course. Note that the lecturer must approve any tape recordings of lectures.

Student Organizations: Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in the Administration building, room 170 or may be contacted at 220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic: Phone: 220-3911 suypaca@ucalgary.ca
Student Union Faculty Rep.: Phone: 220-3913 socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Important Dates: The last day to drop this course and **still receive a fee refund** is January 25, 2008. The last day to withdraw from this course is April 18, 2008.

CLASS SCHEDULE – SUBJECT TO REVISION*

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS	ONLINE DISCUSSIONS
Jan. 14	Introduction; Examples, Definitions of Abnormal Behaviour	Ch. 1	
Jan. 16	Examples, Definitions of Abnormal Behaviour		
Jan. 18	Causes – A Systems Approach	Ch. 2	
Jan. 21	Causes – A Systems Approach		Groups 1-12
Jan. 23	Treatment	Ch. 3	
Jan. 25	Treatment <i>Last day for Winter registration and change of registration. No fee refunds for withdrawals after this date.</i>		
Jan. 28†	Classification & Assessment	Ch. 4	
Jan. 30	Classification & Assessment		
Feb. 1	Midterm 1 (Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4)		
Feb. 4	Mood Disorders & Suicide	Ch. 5	Groups 1-6
Feb. 6	Mood Disorders & Suicide		
Feb. 8	Mood Disorders & Suicide		
Feb. 11	Stress & Physical Health	Ch. 8	Groups 7-12
Feb. 13	Stress & Physical Health		
Feb. 15	Anxiety Disorders	Ch. 6	
Feb. 17 - 24	<i>No classes – Reading Week</i>		
Feb. 25†	Anxiety Disorders		Groups 1-6
Feb. 27	Anxiety Disorders		
Feb. 29	Midterm 2 (Chapters 5, 6, 8)		
Mar. 3	PTSD, Dissociative & Somatic Disorders	Ch. 7	Groups 7-12
Mar. 5	PTSD, Dissociative & Somatic Disorders		
Mar. 7	Personality Disorders	Ch. 9	
Mar. 10	Personality Disorders		Groups 1-6
Mar. 12	Personality Disorders		
Mar. 14	Eating Disorders	Ch. 10	
Mar. 17	Eating Disorders		Groups 7-12
Mar. 19†	Eating Disorders		
Mar. 21	<i>No classes – Good Friday – University Closed</i>		
Mar. 24	Sex & Gender Identity Disorders	Ch. 12	
Mar. 26	Midterm 3 (Chapters 7, 9, 10, 12)		
Mar. 28	Substance Use Disorders	Ch. 11	
Mar. 31	Substance Use Disorders		Groups 1-6
Apr. 2	Schizophrenic Disorders	Ch. 13	
Apr. 4	Schizophrenic Disorders		
Apr. 7	Schizophrenic Disorders		Groups 7-12
Apr. 9	Dementia, Delirium, & Amnesic Disorders	Ch. 14	
Apr. 11	Dementia, Delirium, & Amnesic Disorders		
Apr. 14	Adjustment Disorders & Life-Cycle Transitions	Ch. 17	
Apr. 16†	Adjustment Disorders & Life-Cycle Transitions		
Apr. 17	<i>Last day to allocate Research Credits to Psychology Winter Session half courses and full courses.</i>		
Apr. 18	Mental Health & the Law <i>Last day of lectures for Winter Session. Last day to withdraw from full courses and Winter Session half courses.</i>	pp. 613-630	
Apr. 21-30	<i>Winter Session Final Examinations</i> Final Examination Scheduled by Registrar (Chapters 11, 13, 14, 17; pp. 613-630)		

*See Blackboard for any changes to class schedule.

† Submit questions for exam review session *before* class today.