

PSYC 431-L02

Current Issues In Psychopathology

Winter 2016

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|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Instructor: | Shervin Vakili, Ph.D. | Lecture Location: | Use these columns |
| Phone: | 403-836-1967 | Lecture Days/Time: | T 18:00-20:45 |
| Email: | vakilipsychological@gmail.com | | |
| Office: | | | |
| Office Hours: | After Class by appointment | | |

Course Description and Goals

Discussion of current developments and controversies in the assessment, etiology and treatment of psychopathology. Emphasis will be on teaching students how to strengthen their critical thinking skills using controversial issues in the fields of abnormal and clinical psychology as a basis for discussion and debate. Course format will be lectures with a strong expectation for student involvement in class discussions. Students will be expected to engage in a formal presentation/debate for this course

Prerequisites

Psyc 200 and 201 Principles of Psychology I & II
Psyc 312 – Experimental Design and Quantitative Methods for Psychology
Psyc 385- Abnormal Psychology

Required Text

Halgin, R. P. (2014). Taking sides: Clashing views in abnormal psychology (Eight edition). McGraw Hill, Iowa. The text is available for purchase at the U of C bookstore

Attendance

Exam content will be based on the assigned readings from the textbook, and on any topic covered during lecture, this includes class presentations by your peers. This is a very compressed course; it is unlikely that students will be able to do well in this course if they miss lectures. Changes in the syllabus are *probable* at the discretion of the instructor, due to the fact that the schedule typically gets adjusted after students sign up for their debates, and if students miss classes being up-to-date on new deadlines and/or material is entirely their responsibility. If you must be absent, please arrange to get notes from other classmates. Lecture notes will be posted on the blackboard AFTER each lecture. Please obtain permission from me prior to audiotaping any lecture material.

Evaluation

1. 30% of your mark will be based on a mid-term exam scheduled during class time. The exam will consist of short answer, essay, and multiple-choice questions.
2. 35% of your mark is based on a class presentation/debate as follows: A team of 2 people will debate another team of 2 people on a contentious issue in abnormal or clinical psychology. Detailed information on the debate format and expectations will be provided on D2L as a separate document.
A position paper must also be submitted at the time of your presentation and will contribute to the final debate grade. Late papers will result in a loss of 10% on the overall debate grade; late papers will not be accepted after the final exam date and will receive a grade of 0.
3. 35% of your mark is based on a final 2-hour exam scheduled by the Registrar during the final examination period. The exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions from the class presentations and lectures. The final is cumulative, though new material is emphasized more heavily.

Department of Psychology Grade Distribution Policy

The distribution of grades in Psychology courses (the percentage of A grades, B grades, etc.) will be similar to the distribution of grades in other courses in the Faculty of Arts. The Department monitors the grade distributions of 200-, 300-, and 400-level courses in the Faculty to ensure that the grade distributions in Psychology courses are comparable. Based on these reviews, students can expect that 1) up to 30% of grades in 200- and 300-level psychology courses will be "A" grades (A+, A, and A-), and 2) up to 40% of grades 400-level psychology courses will be "A" grades.

Department of Psychology Criteria for Letter Grades

Psychology professors use the following criteria when assigning letter grades:

A+ grade: *Exceptional Performance.* An A+ grade indicates near perfect performance on multiple choice and short answer exams. For research papers/essays/course projects/presentations, an A+ grade is awarded for exceptional work deserving of special recognition and is therefore not a common grade.

A, A- Range: *Excellent Performance.* Superior understanding of course material. Written work is very strong in terms of critical and original thinking, content, organization, and the expression of ideas, and demonstrates student's thorough knowledge of subject matter.

B Range: *Good Performance.* Above average understanding of course material. Written work shows evidence of critical thinking and attention to organization and editing but could be improved in form and/or content.

C Range: *Satisfactory Performance.* Adequate understanding of course material. Knowledge of basic concepts and terminology is demonstrated. Written work is satisfactory and meets essential requirements but could be improved significantly in form and content. Note: All prerequisites for courses offered by the Faculty of Arts must be met with a minimum grade of C-.

D range: *Marginally meets standards*. Minimal understanding of subject matter. Written work is marginally acceptable and meets basic requirements but requires substantial improvements in form and content. Student has not mastered course material at a level sufficient for advancement into more senior courses in the same or related subjects.

F grade: *Course standards not met*. Inadequate understanding of subject matter. Written work does not meet basic requirements. Student has not demonstrated knowledge of course material at a level sufficient for course credit.

Grading Scale

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|----|---------|----|--------|----|--------|----|--------|
| 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.

To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

Tentative Lecture Schedule

This schedule typically changes based on number of students enrolled and number of debate groups.

| Date | Topic/Activity/Readings/Due Date |
|----------|---|
| T Jan 12 | Winter term lectures begin. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course overview. • Discussion of debate topics and format. Choosing debate teams. • Should the next DSM include video game addiction as a new category (lecture, Read Halgin: Issue 11). |
| T Jan 19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro to APA format (lecture) • Debate teams announce and get approval for debate topics (come prepared with two topics) • Presentation tips (lecture) • Is Alcoholism a disease (lecture; Halgin Issue 9; Class handouts) |
| F Jan 22 | Last day to drop Winter Term half-courses. |
| M Jan 25 | Last day to add or swap Winter Term half courses. Last day for change of registration from audit to credit or credit to audit. |
| T Jan 26 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should individuals with Anorexia have the right to refuse life sustaining Treatment? (lecture) |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are blocked and recovered memories valid? (lecture) |
| F Jan 29 | Fee payment deadline for Winter Term fees. |
| T Feb 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is ADHD a real disorder and is it overdiagnosed/treated? (lecture, Halgin: Issue 2) • Are Projective Tests valid and can they be used to assess personality? (Lecture, reading: http://www.psychologicalscience.org/newsresearch/publications/journals/sa1_2.pdf) |
| T Feb 9 | *** Midterm Exam **** |
| Feb 14-21 | Reading Week. No lectures. University open (except Family Day). |
| T Mar 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are Prozac and other Antidepressants Safe and Effective? (lecture) • <u>Debate 1</u> |
| T Mar 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is forced treatment of mentally ill individuals justifiable? (lecture) • <u>Debate 2</u> |
| T Mar 15 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is abnormal behavior? How good is our current classification system? (lecture) • <u>Debate 3</u> |
| T Mar 22 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) ethical? (lecture) • <u>Debate 4</u> |
| T Mar 29 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is Pornography harmful to society (lecture; Halgin Issue 19) • <u>Debate 5</u> |
| T Apr 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Debate 6</u> • <u>Debate 7</u> |
| T Apr 12 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Debate 8</u> • <u>Debate 9</u> |
| W Apr 13 | Winter Term Lectures End. Last day to withdraw from full courses and Winter Term half courses. |
| Apr 16-27 | Winter Term Final Examinations. |

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class; no reappraisal of term work is permitted after the 15 days. 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 15 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 15 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 that 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

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services ; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy_0.pdf.

Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Absence From A Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are **NOT** an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed **Physician/Counselor Statement will be required** to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have up to 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. Makeup test/exam will differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam date, during exam make-up hours provided by the department <http://psychology.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate/exam-and-course-information#mues>. If a student cannot write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred_final. Under no circumstances will this be accommodated by the department.

Travel During Exams

Consistent with University regulations, students are expected to be available to write scheduled exams at any time during the official December and April examination periods. Requests to write a make-up exam because of conflicting travel plans (e.g., flight bookings) will **NOT** be considered by the department. Students are advised to wait until the final examination schedule is posted before making any travel arrangements. If a student cannot write their final exam on the date assigned by the Registrar's Office, they need to apply for a deferred exam http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred_final. Under no circumstances will this be accommodated by the department.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act

The FOIP legislation disallows the practice of having student's retrieve tests and assignments from a public place. Therefore, tests and assignments may be returned to students during class/lab, or during office hours, or via the Department Office (Admin 255), or will be made available only for viewing during exam review sessions scheduled by the Department. Tests and assignments will be shredded after one year. Instructors should take care to not link students' names with their grades, UCIDs, or other FOIP-sensitive information.

Course Credits for Research Participation (Max 2% of final grade)

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 the student's final grade. Students earn 0.5% (0.5 credits) for each full 30 minutes of participation.** The demand for timeslots may exceed the supply in a given term. Thus, students are not guaranteed that there will be enough studies available to them to meet their credit requirements. Students should seek studies early in the term and should frequently check for open timeslots. Students can create an account and participate in Departmentally approved research studies at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. The last day to participate in studies and to assign or reassign earned credits to courses is **April 13, 2016**.

Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic: Phone: 403-220-3911

suvpaca@ucalgary.ca

Student Union Faculty Rep.: Phone: 403-220-3913

socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Student Ombudsman's Office

The Office of the Student Ombudsmen provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. The office can be reached at 403-220-6420 or ombuds@ucalgary.ca

(<http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>)

Safewalk

The safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus. This service is free and available 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year.

Call 403-220-5333.

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course with no "W" notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund** is **January 22, 2016**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **January 25, 2016**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **April 13, 2016**.