

PSY 5310 ADVANCED ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

Fall 2019 Syllabus

Where: UAC 206

When: Wednesdays 12:30 pm – 03:20 pm

Professor: Dr. Amitai Abramovitch

Office: UAC 253C

Office Hours: By appointment

Campus Telephone: (512) 245-2236

Email: abramovitch@txstate.edu

Abramovitch Lab: www.neuropsychopathology.com

Course Website: <http://tracs.txstate.edu>

Prerequisite: Abnormal Psychology (or equivalent)

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK & RESOURCES:

Oxford textbook of Psychopathology, Third Edition. Paul H. Blaney, Robert F. Krueger & Theodore Millon (Eds.) New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015. ISBN 978-0-19-981177-9

Additional resources including mandatory (see Table) and suggested readings are on the TRACS website under 'Resources'.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The primary aim of this graduate level course is twofold: On one hand students will conduct critical analysis of the definition and classification of psychopathology and experience and an in-depth study of theories and research on causes, treatment, and assessment. At the same time, this course will utilize multiple critical perspectives regarding the definitions of psychopathology, myths, and common misunderstanding, using evidence-based science and best practices. The emphasis on this critical perspective will be emphasized throughout the course, and students are expected to take an active part in criticizing information, using critical scientific thinking and examination of scientific work. Thus, this course will equip students with in-depth knowledge about psychopathology as well as provide tools to critically evaluate information in the context of psychopathology, and more broadly. This include examination of concepts such as “chemical imbalance”, psychopathology as a form of medical illness, the nature of inferences from imaging studies, and correlation versus causation in neuroscience, to name a few. Students should expect to dispel prevailing myths and to challenge their own perceptions.

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A Note About Reading Materials

The field of psychopathology is vast, and it will be difficult to cover in one semester. Thus, this course requires substantial reading prior to classes. The course is structured in a way that assumes you have read the requested materials which allows us to focus on the most important issues and on critically examining the information you read. I am sure you will read all that is required for every class. To do that I have reduces your assignment load. I do not expect you to memorize the required readings, but rather to come to class knowing the concepts contained in the readings and being ready to discuss them articulately and/or ask intelligent questions about ideas which are interesting, unfamiliar, or confusing to you.

Please note that I reserve the right to give occasional unannounced pop quizzes on the reading assignments (which can be avoided by showing me that you are reading the assigned material and coming to class prepared). Your score on these quizzes will count toward the class participation grade.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Students will be familiar and be able to critically evaluate the definitions of psychopathology.
2. Students will assess and differentiate between classification methods, assessment techniques, and research methods pertaining to psychopathology.
3. Students will identify major psychiatric conditions, and recognize their etiology, epidemiology, clinical course, symptoms, treatment, and prognosis.
4. Students will strengthen their critical thinking regarding psychopathology through class discussions and assignments. Students will independently evaluate and disentangle myths from evidence-based scientific knowledge.
5. Students will improve their presentation skills, and their ability to identify, discuss, and disseminate pseudo-science, versus evidence-based science.
5. At the end of the course students will gain knowledge regarding the state of the field, and the historical evolution of psychopathology, as well as be equipped with critical thinking tools that would facilitate rigor in future research, clinical work and training.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

The Department of Psychology has adopted expected student learning outcomes for the undergraduate major, the graduate major, and for PSY 1300, a general education course meeting a requirement for the social and behavioral science component. These expected student learning outcomes are available for your review at the following website: <http://www.psych.txstate.edu/assessment/>

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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Texas State University Policy: "Violation of the 'Honor Code' includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion and the abuse of resource materials." (UPPS 07.10.01 <http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01.html>)

Psychology Department Policy: The study of psychology is done best in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Academic dishonesty, in any form, destroys this atmosphere. Academic dishonesty consists of any of a number of things that spoil a good student-teacher relationship. A list of academically dishonest behaviors include: (1) passing off others' work as one's own, (2) copying off of another person during an examination, (3) signing another person's name on an attendance sheet, (4) in written papers, paraphrasing from an outside source while failing to credit the source or copying more than four words in sequence without quotation marks and appropriate citation.

LAPTOPS/CELLPHONES:

You may use a laptop to take class notes, and ONLY for notes (and not internet browsing or anything else) **Any use of cell phones is never allowed during class! Please keep your phone DARK, SILENT, and OUT OF SIGHT!**

DISABILITY POLICY

If you are a student with a disability who will require an accommodation(s) to participate in this course, please contact me as soon as possible. You will be asked to provide documentation from the Office of Disability Services. Failure to contact me in a timely manner may delay your accommodations.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF MATERIALS

The Power Point slides I use in this course are my intellectual property and are protected by copyright laws. Please feel free to use those in order to assist you in the learning process. However, please do not share these slides with anyone outside the class, and please do not post them on any website and other media. I do not allow to use audio or video recordings. Thank you.

ATTENDANCE

Please note that attendance is mandatory.

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GRADING*

Each person's grade will be determined by his/her performance on **a midterm exam, a final exam, class participation and attendance, and class presentation.**

Course Grading

Midterm exam = 35%

Final Exam = 35%

Presentation: 20%

Active Participation and attendance: 10%

Exams

The midterm exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions that will cover the materials up to the exam. This may be rescheduled only in cases of medical illness or family emergency and is not rescheduled for travel convenience. The final exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions and will comprise the materials covered after the Midterm. Our final exam is scheduled for Wednesday, December 11th, at 11:00 am. **DO NOT MAKE TRAVEL PLANS THAT INVOLVE LEAVING BEFORE FINISHING THE EXAM.**

Presentations

The primary goal of this task is to independently explore central issues concerning or related to abnormal psychology from a critical perspective. Students' ability to weigh evidence and to arrive to an informed position on a matter will be at the core of this assignment, as well as the ability to communicate critical thinking, and to handle question by informed audience. In the final 2 classes of the semester each student will deliver a presentation and a short Q&A discussion on a preselected subject. Detailed guidelines are provided under 'Resources' in the course' TRACS website. You should be informed as to the guidelines prior to the first day of classes. Note that I will be more than happy to provide feedback on the initial bulletpoint plan for the presentation, as well as the presentation itself if submitted to me according to the guidelines. In addition, please feel free to set up a time to meet and to discuss the issue you have selected.

STUDENT ABSENCE AND LATENESS POLICIES

In cases where a test must be made up or other work turned in late, full credit will be given when missed deadlines were due to one of the following reasons:

- a. Injury or illness requiring treatment at home or in a hospital including any temporary medical condition (e.g., pregnancy)

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- b. Death of a family member
- c. Required participation in a University-sponsored activity (See [UPPS 02.06.03](#))
- d. A field trip or off-campus activity required for a non-elective course essential to the student's degree program.
- e. Required participation in active military service (See [UPPS 02.06.03](#))
- f. Official religious Holy Days (See [UPPS 02.06.01](#))

Documentation (e.g., doctor's note) must be provided to receive full credit for the late work. Please make every effort to inform me in advance if work will be missed due to emergency.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE*

* Subject to changes

Date	Topic	Assigned Reading
August 28	Course overview; definition of abnormality; history of abnormality	Lilienfeld et al (2015) 50 <i>psychological and psychiatric terms to avoid</i> ; Textbook, Chapter 1
September 4	Biological versus Psychological perspectives; Assessment and Diagnosis	Read the two chapters from Whittaker, R (2010) <i>Anatomy of an Epidemic</i> . Textbook, Chapter 2 (optional)
September 11, 18	Antipsychiatry; Trauma Related Disorders, Anxiety Disorders	Rosenhan D. (1973) <i>On being Sane in Insane Places</i> Szasz T, (1960) <i>The Myth of Mental Illness</i>
September 25	Anxiety Disorders (continued), OCD and related disorders	Textbook, Chapter 5 (Chapter 7, optional); Textbook, Chapter 6
October 2, 9	Mood Disorders	Textbook, Chapter 8 (chapter 9 optional)
October 16	Midterm Exam	
October 23	Personality Disorders	Textbook, Chapters 23, 24,25,26,27,28,29,30 (optional)

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October 30	Schizophrenia; Substance Use Disorders	Satel & Lilienfeld <i>Addiction and the Brain Disease Fallacy</i>
November 6	ADHD; ADHD – A different perception	Textbook, Chapter 18
November 13	Developmental Disorders: Autism, Conduct, Impulse Control and Disruptive Disorders; Eating Disorders	Textbook, Chapter 19; Textbook, Chapter 16
November 20	Student presentations	
November 27	NO CLASS	THANKSGIVING BREAK
December 4	Student presentations	
December 11	FINAL EXAM Wednesday, December 11th, at 11 am	All materials covered since the midterm exam

Please note that immediately following an exam, students' cognitive status is not ideal in terms of the ability learn effectively. This is why I strive not to have a class on exam days. However, this is subject to changes, depending on our progress.