

Psychology 363
Adult Psychopathology
(aka Abnormal Psychology)
Spring 2011

MWF 10:00 – 10:50
LBC 201

Instructor: Rachael Reavis

Email: reavira@earlham.edu, reavira@gmail.com (you may use gchat to ask a question if you see me online)

Office: LBC 305

Office Hours: drop-in & by appointment (not available on Tuesdays)

Textbooks:

Beidel, D., Bulik, C., & Stanley, M. (2010). *Abnormal psychology*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Gorenstein, E. & Comer, R. (2002). *Case studies in abnormal psychology*. New York: Worth Publishers.

One of the following is also required. They are not available in the bookstore – you can get them online. **Do not purchase your book until you have signed up to present a specific memoir.**

Girl, Interrupted by Susanna Kaysen

Sickened by Julie Gregory

The Flock by Joan Frances Casey

An Unquiet Mind by Kay Redfield Jamison

The Quiet Room by Lori Schiller

Course documents and additional readings (listed on schedule) can be found on Moodle.

Course Description & Objectives:

In this course, we will work towards developing a sophisticated understanding of psychological disorders, their causes, their treatments, and the human suffering they entail, while acknowledging what remains to be known. We will be scientists, practitioners, and regular folk as we seek to understand the science of psychopathology, the experience of psychopathology, and the needs of those who are suffering.

“Although the world is full of suffering, it is full also of the overcoming of it.”
Helen Keller, 1903

Relevant Earlham General Education Goals:

The following general education goals are especially relevant for this course:

1. Gain skills in close and critical reading, thoughtful reflection, ready discussion, and cogent writing.
2. Increased adeptness in thoughtfully considering texts of all sorts, whether singly or in comparison with one another.
3. Practice and discipline in group learning.
4. The ability to gather information from print and electronic sources and critical capacity to evaluate the data gathered and the ideas encountered.

Psychology Department Goals:

The following psychology department goals (based on the APA guidelines) are especially relevant for this course:

1. Knowledge Base of Psychology (specifically in abnormal psychology)
2. Critical Thinking Skills
3. Application of Psychology
4. Values in Psychology
5. Communication Skills
6. Career Planning & Development

Specific Course Goals:

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

1. Critically evaluate assumptions underlying definitions of abnormality/disorder
2. Describe and evaluate current diagnostic criteria for the major groups of disorders
3. Identify and apply major theoretical approaches to understanding and treating disorders
4. Describe and evaluate empirical methodologies relevant to the study of psychopathology
5. Describe and evaluate current knowledge of therapeutic approaches/outcomes
6. Think critically about controversial topics including:
 - Is multiple personality disorder (DID) a real disorder?
 - Will the discovery of the “anorexia gene” unravel the mysteries of this complex disorder?
 - Is alcoholism best thought of as a disease or a problem with self-control?
 - Are psychiatric medications overprescribed?
 - Is electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) ethical?
 - Why are so many women depressed?
 - Is the DSM-IV a useful classification system?
 - Has deinstitutionalization of the chronically mentally ill worked?
7. More fully empathize with individuals suffering from psychological dysfunction

Class Format

My primary goal for this course in adult psychopathology is to introduce you to research, theory, and clinical evidence about the causes and outcomes of disordered thoughts and behavior in adulthood. Although we will discuss childhood occasionally, the main focus of the course will be late adolescence and adulthood.

I firmly believe that learning is fundamentally an *active, collaborative* process. The course will be run in a conference-lecture format. In practice, this means that I will lecture when I feel it is needed to provide the necessary background and foundation for our discussion and when it is useful in answering the questions you raise, but you will learn more if you ask questions, comment, and come to class prepared to engage in discussion. Group/class discussion is a matter of balance; please try to participate frequently and thoughtfully without crowding out others who may want to speak. Also, I anticipate that class discussions may sometimes touch on topics that are personally sensitive for some class members; we will all need to be sensitive to one another, and to be considerate of each others' privacy both in and out of class. You will also be making a few formal presentations throughout the semester so that you have an opportunity to share your thoughts about our research articles and your clinical placements, and get feedback on your conceptualization and presentation skills.

You are expected to attend each meeting of all classes for which you are registered. Thus, absences in this class will affect your grade. If for some reason you need to miss a class, you are responsible for getting class notes and handouts from another student. In terms of etiquette, you are expected to arrive at class on time, refrain from disruptive or disrespectful behaviors, turn off cell phones, and stay for the entire class. My attention is wholly devoted to your learning during the times we are together, and I expect the same from you.

Evaluation:

- 1) Research Article Presentation & Report.** Regardless of whether you are more interested in the research or clinical aspects of abnormal psychology, to be an informed scholar or clinician you need to be able to read and interpret empirical research. To help you develop your skills in this area, once during the semester, you will be asked (along with other group members) to locate a relevant *empirical* article for the unit. You will need to select this article a week prior to the discussion date, so that your classmates and I have time to read it. You and your group will then briefly present the article during class and lead class discussion of the article. ***You are expected to meet with your group to plan the discussion.*** In addition, you will *each* write an analysis (4 pages, double spaced) of the article including its purpose, methods and analyses used, results, and conclusions. ***Most importantly*** it should include your assessment of the paper, including its contributions and limitations, alternative interpretations, and how it fits into the theoretical frameworks we discuss in class. ***You will email your report to me by class time on the day that you present.*** Your reports and discussion will account for 10% of your grade.
- 2) Memoir Presentation & Report.** One of the goals of the course is to better understand how mental illness affects people in their actual lives. One way will address this goal is to read and discuss memoirs of individuals who have lived with various psychological disorders. We will discuss five memoirs (listed above as well as in the schedule) over the course of the semester. ***You only have to read one of them.*** Several students will sign up for the same memoir. On the day the memoir is listed on the schedule, those students will give a synopsis of the book to the rest of the class (most of whom will not have read it, so a longer synopsis will be appropriate). The assigned students will then lead a class discussion of the memoir, connecting back to class material. In addition, you will *each* complete a 3-4 page reaction paper about the memoir. ***An assignment sheet will be distributed for each memoir to guide your reaction paper.*** Your memoir reports and discussion will account for 10% of your grade.

- 3) **Field Placement.** To enhance your understanding of abnormal psychology you will spend *three hours per week* as a volunteer in a local agency serving adults or teenagers. You may want to contact Bonner Center for Service and Vocation (BCSV) to register as a volunteer and to investigate volunteer opportunities in the community. I have attached a list of recommended sites that includes a brief sketch of the placement and a contact person. When you set up your placement, please let the contact person know that you are participating in a class and verify that the placement will include interaction or observation, rather than solely secretarial work. The goals and expectations for the placement are outlined to help facilitate this discussion. You are responsible for making contact and setting up your placement, but I will help in any way that I can. **You need to make first contact by 1/17, and should have your placement finalized by 1/31.** You are expected to make *12 visits of 3 hours each* to your placement over the course of the semester. If you have access to a car, you can arrange your visits at a time that is convenient to both yourself and the agency. *If you do not have access to a car, you will need to use the transportation service of BCSV. Contact them to determine their hours before contacting your placement.* You will be required to keep a journal of your weekly experiences. Journal entries should reflect your reactions to the treatment setting and the patients/clients/individuals you encounter (while preserving confidentiality.) They may be brief (1-2 pages per week, typed), but should demonstrate your *efforts to integrate your field experience with what you have learned in class each week.* You will be asked to *turn in your journals at three points during the semester.* Journals should be emailed by 11:59 pm on the due date. Before handing in your journal, you should review your prior entries and write a *2-page critical reflection* on your experiences to date. (For example: What are you learning in your visits & how does it compare to class? What do you wonder about? What do you think of the program in which you are placed? Are the individuals getting the kind of help they need?) Your field placement and journal writing will account for 15% of your final grade in this course.
- 4) **Assignments/Quizzes/Etc.** You will have at least one additional assigned reaction paper, due on 1/28. I may assign additional small homework assignments periodically. I also reserve the right to give pop quizzes during the semester over your reading. These will be open-note, but not open-book. Pop quizzes will be one or two questions, which will come directly from the “Chapter Objectives” section of your textbook. Assignments and quizzes will account for 10% of your final grade in this course.
- 5) **Exams.** To help you master the material we will be studying in this course, we will have 3 noncumulative exams. The exams will be a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. The exams will account for 30% of your grade (10% for each exam).
- 6) **Class participation & Attendance.** Class discussion and participation will be critical to your enjoyment and mastery of the material, and will be expected from everyone. Your class participation will account for 10% of your final grade.

- 7) **Final Project.** To integrate your fieldwork and your coursework, you will be asked to make a final presentation that is based on both. You will work in groups of 2-6 (ideally people working in the same or similar settings, but this is not essential) and develop a 20-minute presentation that applies one or more theoretical frameworks discussed in class to some aspect of your fieldwork and prepare for 10 minutes of discussion with the class. **(Please note: the time allotment may change based on enrollment in the course.)** You could present a case that illustrates concepts/models/pathways we discussed in class; you could critically evaluate the treatment program you observed; you could propose an ideal treatment or prevention program that would suit the needs of the individuals you observed; or you could develop a social policy proposal addressing needs or problems you encountered in your fieldwork. This presentation should include reference to class materials, your placement, and additional research on your chosen topic. **Keep in mind that your final project is serving as your final exam, and should clearly demonstrate that you have accomplished the goals set forth in the course.** You should inform me with whom you will be working and what your topic will be by 3/2 – this will allow me to make a schedule for the three presentation dates: 4/25, 4/27, 4/29. Detailed outlines for your presentations are due to me by 4/11 to allow time for feedback and revisions. Your grade will be based on feedback from me, your group members, and your classmates. Your final project/presentation will account for 15% of your grade.
- 8) **Extra Credit.** You may earn *1 point on your lowest test score for each of the first five studies* in which you participate, and *½ point for each study thereafter.* (We can negotiate about studies that take longer than 20 minutes.) I will ask student researchers who recruit in my class to keep a record of your participation. However, I would like you to keep a record as well. There is a sheet on Moodle that you can ask your experimenter to sign after you participate.

Late/Makeup Policy.

Reports/Journals: If you do not turn in your reports and journals on time, you will lose a letter grade for the first 24 hours that it is late, and another letter grade for each part of 12 hours thereafter. Thus, the best grade that can be received on a paper turned in 2 hours late is a B, a C for a paper turned in 25 hours late, and a D for a paper turned in 37 hours late. You will have ample time to complete your written assignments. If you choose to wait until the last minute you run the risk that your computer dies, you catch the flu, or you have a death in the family. **These will not be excuses for late assignments and you will be penalized, so do not procrastinate.** All assignments are due via email, and the times and dates are listed on the syllabus. (Some are due by class time, others due by 11:59 pm.) **Failure to attach files or attaching corrupted files is not an excuse for late work.** I recommend that you email yourself a copy when you email me, and verify on a different computer that the file is attached and readable. You are responsible for backing up your work.

Quizzes/In-Class Assignments: These cannot be made up for any reason.

Exams: Only in extreme circumstances will a make-up be allowed, such as the death of a family member that requires an absence from campus or a *serious* illness. You **must** contact me no later than the day before the exam to arrange a make-up time. Be aware that the make-up test will be different and may be more difficult than the original. Exams may also be made up for Earlham activities, such as a sports game. **Athletes must take their exams before the exam date.**

Grading:

Your final grade will be calculated according to the following formula.

10% Research report & presentation
10% Memoir report & presentation
15% Field placement & journals
10% Quizzes & assignments
30% Exams (10% x3)
10% Participation
15% Final project presentation

A: 93%+; A-: 90%-92.9%; B+: 87%-89.9%; B: 83%-86.9%; B-: 80%-82.9%; C+: 77%-79.9%;
C: 73%-76.9%; C-: 70%-72.9%; D: 65%-69.9%; F: < 65%

Please note that I do not round grades.

Office hour: I do not have set office hours, but will be in my office most times I am not in class. You are welcome to drop in or set up an appointment. I am not available on Tuesdays.

Email Etiquette:

You are encouraged to contact me via e-mail with any questions that you may have, but I ask that you comply to the following 'house rules': **Check the syllabus and Moodle *first*** to see if your question can be answered. If you ask a question that has already been answered, you will receive an automated reply telling you to find the answer yourself.

Please use appropriate etiquette when you e-mail and I will do the same in return: (a) begin with a greeting; (b) state who you are and which class/section you are in; (c) end with an appropriate signature. Don't forget to use spell-check! *If you fail to adhere to these guidelines, you will receive an automated reply that instructs you to consult these guidelines and to re-send your e-mail.*

Example of appropriate e-mail format:

'Dear Rachael,
My name is [YOUR FULL NAME] and I am in your [NAME OF COURSE]*. I have a question about X
Thanks,
[YOUR NAME]'

*You do not have to tell me what course you're in after the first few weeks of class, when I've learned your name.

Example of inappropriate e-mail format resulting in no response (lack of greeting; no personal identification; no reference to course name/section; no signature; spelling errors; inappropriate language):

'So i was wonderign when you were gonna post the notes?'

Proper e-mail etiquette is *extremely* important in that (a) it enables me to be more efficient in helping you because I won't lose time trying to figure out who you are or what you are asking; (b) it is a vital skill to have in the 'real world'. Professional relationships necessitate professional e-mail correspondence. Thanks in advance for your cooperation!

Academic Honesty:

All students are expected to conduct themselves with honesty and integrity in this course. The honor code is both a privilege and a responsibility, and you are expected to take it seriously. Suspected infractions, such as plagiarism or fabrication of reports will be treated seriously and will be reported. ***Professional misconduct in a placement setting will result in an F for the course.*** Furthermore, if you are aware of a violation of academic integrity, it is your responsibility to take action.

Students with Disabilities:

Please speak with me as soon as possible and let me know what accommodations Academic Support Services has suggested for you. Accommodation arrangements must be made in the first 2 weeks of the semester. Please see <http://www.earlham.edu/policies/learning-disabilities.html> for details.

Schedule of Topics & Assignments

Please note that this schedule is tentative and may change as circumstances require.

**Readings are due the day they are listed.*

Dates:

Topic & Reading:

1/12	Topic: Syllabus, Service Placement, Historical Perspectives
1/14, 1/17	Topic: Historical & Modern Perspectives Reading: Chapter 1 <i>Make first contact for placement before class on 1/17</i>
1/19	Topic: Research Methods in Abnormal Psychology Reading: Chapter 2
1/21	Topic: Research Methods in Abnormal Psychology
1/24, 1/26	Topic: Assessment & Diagnosis Reading: Chapter 3
1/28	Topic: Assessment & Diagnosis Reading: Tyson Case <i>Reaction paper due via email by class time.</i>
1/31	Topic: Anxiety Disorders Reading: Chapter 4, Case 2 <i>Placement should be finalized & visits begun</i>
2/2	Topic: Anxiety Disorders Reading: Case 3
2/4	Topic: Anxiety Disorders Reading: Case 1
2/7	Topic: Somatoform Disorders Reading: Chapter 5 (Somatoform Disorders)
2/9	Topic: Somatoform/Factitious Disorder Reading: Chapter 5 (Factitious Disorder), Case 6 Optional Reading: <i>Sickened</i>
2/11	Topic: Dissociative Disorders Reading: Chapter 5 (Dissociative Disorders) Optional Reading: <i>The Flock</i>
2/14	Topic: Mood Disorders Reading: Chapter 6, Case 4
2/16	Topic: Mood Disorders Reading: Case 5 Optional Reading: <i>An Unquiet Mind</i> <i>First Journal due via email by 11:59 pm</i>
2/18	<i>No Class, Early Semester Break</i>
2/21	Topic: Mood Disorders Reading: Suicide interview (available on Moodle)
2/23, 2/25	Topic: Mood/Somatoform/Factitious/DID/Anxiety Reading: Student-selected articles – See Moodle
2/28	<i>Test 1: Chapters 4, 5, & 6</i>

3/2	Topic: Eating Disorders Reading: Chapter 7 Groups & Topics due for Placement Presentation
3/4	Topic: Eating Disorders Reading: Case 9
3/7	Topic: Gender & Sexual Disorders Reading: Chapter 8, pg. 258-270
3/9, 3/11	Topic: Gender & Sexual Disorders Reading: Chapter 8, pg. 270-291; Case 11
3/14, 3/16, 3/18	<i>No Class, Spring Break</i>
3/21	Topic: Substance Abuse Disorder Reading: Chapter 9 Second Journal due via email by 11:59 pm
3/23, 3/25	Topic: Substance Abuse Disorder Reading: Case 10
3/28	Topic: Eating/Substance Abuse/GID Reading: Student-selected article – See Moodle
3/30	Test 2: Chapters 7, 8, & 9
4/1	Topic: Schizophrenia Reading: Chapter 10 Guest Speaker: Erin Nelson
4/4	Topic: Schizophrenia Reading: Case 12
4/6	Topic: Schizophrenia Optional Reading: <i>The Quiet Room</i>
4/8	Topic: Personality Disorders Reading: Chapter 11
4/11	Topic: Personality Disorders Reading: Case 14 Detailed outline due for Placement Presentations
4/13	Topic: Personality Disorders Reading: Case 13 Optional Reading: <i>Girl, Interrupted</i>
4/15	Topic: Personality/Schizophrenia Reading: Student-selected article – see Moodle
4/18	Test 3: Chapters 10 & 11
4/20	Topic: Aging & Cognitive Disorders Reading: Chapter 13
4/22	Topic: Aging & Cognitive Disorders Reading: Student-selected article – see Moodle
4/25, 4/27, 4/29	Student Presentations
5/3	Third Journal due via email by 11:59 pm on 5/3