



Course Number PSY 210	Course Title Abnormal Psychology	Credits 3
Hours: Lecture/Lab/Other 3/0/0	Co- or Pre-requisite ENG 101 PSY 101 (completed with a C higher)	Implementation Semester & Year Fall 2022

Catalog description:

The purpose of this course is to provide students with an introduction to Abnormal Psychology, which is the study of psychological disorders. This course will examine the various psychological disorders, in accordance with the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5-TR) that create atypical distress or impairment of function. This course will also examine the influence and interaction of biological, psychological, and sociocultural contributions to the development of psychological disorders. Upon completion, students should be able to distinguish between normal and abnormal behavior patterns as well as demonstrate knowledge of etiology, symptoms, and therapeutic techniques.

General Education Category:
Goal 5: Social Science

Course coordinator:
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Required texts & Other materials:

Text: Jennings (2022). Nolen-Hoeksema's Abnormal Psychology (9th ed.) McGraw Hill publishers, NY. NY. ISBN # 978-1-265-31603-7

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Define and analyze abnormal behavior (psychological disorder) and describe psychological dysfunction, distress, and atypical or unexpected cultural responses. [Supports ILGs#1,5,8,9,11]
2. Demonstrate understanding of assessment, etiology, symptoms, and treatments of the major psychological disorders presented within the DSM 5 [Supports ILGs#1,5,8,9,11]
3. Demonstrate familiarity with research methods and ethical considerations appropriate for the study of abnormal psychology. [Supports ILGs#1,5,8,9,10,11]
4. Identify and apply major psychological theories/perspectives and findings of empirical studies to explanations of psychopathology. [Supports ILGs#1,5,8,9,11]
5. Describe cultural, social, and developmental influences on abnormal behavior. [Supports ILGs#1,5,8,9,11]
6. Develop writing skills in conjunction with the use of APA format. [Supports ILGs#1,5,8,9,10,11]

Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):

Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English. Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

Institutional Learning Goal 5. Social Science. Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

Institutional Learning Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective: Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples

Institutional Learning Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action. Students will understand ethical frameworks, issues, and situations.

Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy: Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking: Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.

Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:

Unit I Understanding Abnormality: History and Research Methods [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3,4,5]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define abnormal behavior (psychological disorder) and describe psychological dysfunction, distress, and atypical or unexpected cultural response.
- Trace the major historical developments and underlying assumptions of the biological approach to understanding abnormal behavior.
- Describe the different approaches of the psychological tradition (i.e., psychoanalysis, humanism, and behavioral) with regard to their explanations of abnormal behavior.
- Explain the importance of science and the scientific method as applied to abnormal behavior.
- Describe the multidimensional-integrative approach to diagnosing and evaluating abnormal behavior and explain why it is important.

Unit II Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3,4,5]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe the nature and function of clinical assessment and the concepts that determine the value of assessment.
- Explain the nature and purposes of psychiatric diagnosis and how the DSM is used to help therapists and counselors make an accurate psychiatric diagnosis.
- Describe and explain the basic components of research in psychopathology and the importance of ethical principles in the research process.
- Evaluate the various scientific methodologies in terms of advantages and disadvantages of the different approaches
- Compare and contrast experimental research, descriptive research, and correlational research.
- Explain how studying behavior over time and across cultures fits within the research design and the research process more generally.

Unit III Anxiety Disorders, Obsessive-Compulsive and Trauma-related Disorders [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3,4,5]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe psychological and biological similarities and differences between anxiety, fear, and a panic attack.
- Recognize the difference between anxiety disorders and phobias.
- Identify the genetic and biological vulnerability factors that are known to influence the development of anxiety disorders
- Describe the essential features of generalized anxiety disorder, its proposed causal factors, and available treatment approaches.
- Describe the essential features of panic disorder.
- Identify the principal causes of phobias and the most typical strategies used to treat them.
- Describe the essential features of posttraumatic stress disorder, its proposed causal factors, and available treatment approaches.
- Describe the symptoms, defining characteristics, and integrative model of obsessive-compulsive disorder.
- Describe biological and psychological approaches that have been successful in treating anxiety-related disorders

Unit IV Somatoform Disorders, Psychological Factors Affecting Medical Conditions, and Dissociative Disorders [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3,4,5]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Identify the defining features of somatoform disorders and distinguish the major features of hypochondriasis and somatization disorder.
- Describe sensory, motor, and visceral symptoms that characterize conversion disorder.
- Describe important etiological and treatment factors, including important known cultural influences on each disorder.
- Describe and distinguish between the five types of dissociative disorders.
- Describe the problems with diagnosing dissociative identity disorder, and in determining the validity of cases of recovered childhood memories.

Unit V Depressive and Bipolar Disorders [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3,4,5]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Differentiate a depressive episode from a manic and hypomanic episode.
- Describe the clinical symptoms of major depression and bipolar disorder.
- Differentiate major depression from dysthymic disorder and distinguish bipolar disorder from cyclothymic disorder.
- Describe the differences in prevalence of mood disorders across the life span.
- Describe the biological, psychological, and sociocultural contributions to the development of unipolar and bipolar mood disorders.
- Describe medical and psychological treatments that have been successful in treating mood disorders.
- Describe the relationship suicide and mood disorders, including known risk factors and approaches to suicide prevention and treatment.

Unit VI Eating and Sleep Disorders [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3,4,5]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe the defining features and clinical manifestations of bulimia nervosa.
- Describe the clinical manifestations and medical complications associated with anorexia nervosa.
- Compare the symptoms and psychological features of binge eating disorder and bulimia.
- Describe the possible social, psychological, and neurobiological causes of eating disorders.
- Compare the use of medications with psychological therapies for the treatment of eating disorders.
- Identify the critical diagnostic features of each of the major sleep disorders.
- Describe the nature of REM and non-REM periods of sleep and how they relate to the parasomnias.
- Define circadian rhythms and explain its relation to the sleep-wake cycle.
- Describe the medical and psychological treatments used for the treatment of sleeping disorders.

Unit VII Paraphilic Disorders, Sexual Dysfunctions, and Gender Dysphoria [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3,4,5]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe how sociocultural factors influence what are considered "normal" sexual behaviors.
- Describe the defining clinical features, causes, and treatments of gender identity disorder, and distinguish gender identity disorder from transvestic fetishism.
- Describe the defining clinical features and known causes of sexual dysfunctions, including important gender differences.
- Describe the psychosocial and medical treatments for sexual dysfunctions, including what is known about their relative effectiveness.
- Identify the common clinical features of each of the major paraphilias.
- Explain what is known about the causes and treatments (medical and psychosocial) of paraphilias and relative effectiveness.

Unit VIII Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3,4,5]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Define Schizophrenia and explain the difference between schizophrenia and psychosis.
- Discuss the history of schizophrenia research, including the contributions of Kraepelin and Bleuler.
- Distinguish between positive, negative, and disorganized symptoms of schizophrenia.
- Describe the clinical characteristics and major subtypes and prevalence of schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders.
- Identify the potential genetic, neurobiological, developmental, and psychosocial contributions and risk factors for schizophrenia.
- Describe biological and psychosocial treatments for schizophrenia, and the general goals of therapy.

Unit IX Personality Disorders [Supports Course SLOs # 1,2,3,4,5]

Learning Objectives

The student will be able to...

- Describe the essential characteristics of each of the Cluster A (odd/eccentric) personality disorders, including information pertaining to etiology and treatment.
- Describe the essential characteristics of each of the Cluster B (dramatic/erratic) personality disorders.
- Identify the differences between psychopathy and antisocial personality disorder.
- Describe the essential characteristics of each of the Cluster C (anxious/fearful) personality disorders, including information pertaining to etiology and treatment.
- Describe and understand the essential features of personality disorders according to the DSM 5

Evaluation of student learning:

Exams and quizzes (a maximum of 70% of overall course grade):

- Students will be required to take a series of tests and/or quizzes (at least two), each of which may consist of multiple choice, true-false, matching, completion, or essay type questions of any combination of the above.

Writing assignments (a minimum of 30% of overall grade):

- Students will be required to complete a series of writing assignments to assess specific knowledge, critical thinking skills, and the ability to apply psychological theory to everyday life. These writing assignments may consist of ongoing journaling, reflection or reaction papers, research or position papers. At least one assignment should incorporate information and computer literacy. In addition, students will be introduced to APA format and will be expected to incorporate this publication style into their writing assignments.