



PSY 210- Abnormal Psychology
Mercer County Community College

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Office Hours:
Tuesday 10:00-12:00 pm (WW)
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Required Textbook:

Hansell, J. and Damour, L. (2008). *Abnormal Psychology* (2nd Ed). Wiley Publishers.
ISBN: 978-0-470-07387-2

Books that Can Really Help You!

American Psychiatric Association. (2000). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (4th ed., text revision). Washington, DC: Author.

Perrin, R. (2004). *Pocket guide to APA style*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Company

American Psychological Association Publication Manual, Fifth Edition. (2001).

Gelfand, H., Walker, C., American Psychological Association. (2001). *Mastering APA Style: Student's Workbook and Training Guide*.

- This is a self-guided workbook for learning APA style writing.

Welcome to Abnormal Psychology!

This class will explore that fascinating world of abnormal behavior...but what is that exactly? By the end of this course you WILL be able to answer that question! We will focus on the elements of psychopathology and mental disorders, as well as the history and classifications of various disorders.

This class will discuss a variety of mental illnesses, such as, depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, PTSD, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, personality disorders and other intriguing ailments that so many people endure on a daily basis; Posing the question, “How abnormal is it really?” This class is great for anyone interested in understanding those “abnormal” behaviors seen very often within our society. This class will also examine the tremendous impact mental illness has on the person living with abnormality.

When I tell people that I work as a therapist, I am usually bombarded with stories like, “I know a guy who sees little green aliens”... “My sister has depression and is on medication...” “I think my neighbor is crazy, he stares at the side of his house all day long and talks to his car...what do YOU think?”

When examining the behavior of another, we can see many things both normal and abnormal. This is not to think everyone has a diagnosable disorder! As this class progresses, you will learn many tell-tale indicators of mental illness and psychopathology. It is a common practice for us to enjoy analyzing people and placing them into neat little categories, but please refrain from diagnosing yourself, your friends, your parents and family, your classmates, your professors or anyone else ☺

This class will be interesting and fun, but it will not make you a
psychologist!

Course Objectives:

This course is an introduction to the field of abnormal psychology. It is designed (1) to provide students with an integrative overview of the field of abnormal psychology and major psychological problems and disorders;(2) to familiarize students with the multiple causes of psychopathology as viewed from a number of different theoretical perspectives;(3) to illustrate an integrative view of research in the area of abnormal behavior; (4) and, to discuss intervention and prevention strategies for psychological disorders.

Academic Integrity

The work a student produces must be their own and should result solely from their own efforts. Plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Student's who violate this policy will receive an “F” for the course. Please refer to the Mercer County Community College Academic Integrity Handbook, or request one from the professor.

Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Documented Disabilities

Mercer County Community College is committed to supporting all students in their academic and co-curricular endeavors. Each semester, a significant number of students document disabilities, which may require learning, sight, hearing, manual, speech, or mobility accommodations to ensure access to academic and co-curricular activities. The college provides services and reasonable accommodations to all students who need and have a legal entitlement to such accommodations.

For more information regarding accommodations, you may visit the Office of Academic Support Services in FA129 or contact them at 609.570.3422 or urbanb@mccc.edu.

It will be the student's responsibility to arrange an accommodation. If you are a student with a disability or special need, please advise the professor within the first 2 weeks of the course so appropriate accommodations can be made.

Attendance and Conduct

As college students you choose to be here. You have elected to register for this course and **YOU** will determine your overall experience in this class. Although I do not expect students to attend every class due to demands of life, attendance is very important and required. If you miss class, it is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to get the information you have missed. Do not expect or request the notes to be supplied by me if you did not attend lecture. Attendance and lecture notes are crucial to success in this class.

Without question, students who attend class perform better than those who do not...make sure you get to class. If you are often absent, it should lead you to ask the question, "**Why did I register for this course?**"

You will not hurt my feelings if this class is not for you, but please don't just disappear- **drop** the class as soon as you realize you don't want to be here. If you choose to not return without officially dropping the course, you will receive an "F" on your transcript. **I will NOT drop you from the course- YOU must withdraw!**

Attendance Bonus

Students who attend every class will receive a **4 point bonus**. If you miss only one class, you will receive a **2 point bonus**. Lateness is not acceptable from college students; therefore two lates will be equal to one absence. If you arrive to class after I have taken role, it is **YOUR** responsibility to advise me that you arrived late otherwise you will be marked as absent. All absences without a doctor's note will be considered unexcused. It is at my discretion to add additional points for active participation.

Exams

Your final grade will be based, in part, on **THREE** 75 question multiple-choice/true-false exams. All exams will be administered in class on designated testing days provided in the course

schedule (See below). It is the student's responsibility to take the exam on time. Make-up exams are not an option in this course. Should you miss an exam, you will have the option of taking EXAM 4, a cumulative final exam, which will replace your lowest exam grade. Exam 4 will be available at the testing center only.

Analytical writing assignments

Each student must submit 2 short writing assignments, for a total of **75 points**. Each student must submit **(1) Film Critique and (1) Case summary**. Each writing option will have individual instructions and due date attached below.

Late Assignments

All assignments and exams must be completed by the due date listed below in the course schedule. If you miss a due date please do not attempt to submit the assignment, I will not accept late papers. However, you may submit ONE late assignment during the course. The ONE late assignment MUST be submitted with a "late pass" (attached below). This late pass will allow a ONE day extension...not one class...one day only. So for example, if the assignment is due on October 1st, you can submit the assignment on October 2nd without penalty. Once the one day extension has passed the assignment will not be accepted. Therefore, if you want to earn extra credit in this course YOU MUST PLAN AHEAD

Extra Credit Opportunities

Students will have the option of submitting an additional one page, type-written journal summary paper (Instructions included at the end of the syllabus). This paper can be submitted at any time during the semester however, it MUST be submitted by December 1st. This paper will be worth **10 extra credit points**.

To encourage good study habits, I will give 4 extra credit points per exam to students who make flash cards of the chapter material. It may not sound like much, but that adds up to **12 extra credits points** which will be added to your overall final points. Take advantage of this opportunity!

Course Grading

Your final grade for this class will be calculated on a point system. Your grade will be based on exam totals for a **total of 300 possible points for the course**.

Use the space below to keep track of your cumulative points from the exams, paper, writing assignments and extra credit.

EXAM 1 _____/75 pts.

EXAM 2 _____/75 pts.

EXAM 3 _____/75 pts.

FLASHCARDS EXAM 1 _____ pts.

FLASHCARDS EXAM 2 _____ pts.

FLASHCARDS EXAM 3 _____ pts.

Total Points _____

Total Points _____

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Total Exam Points | /225 points |
| Case Summary | /50 points |
| Film Critique | / 25 points |
| Total Flash Card Points (extra credit) | / 12 points |
| Journal Review (extra credit) | / 10 points |
| Attendance Bonus (extra credit) | Points |
| | |
| TOTAL EARNED POINTS | /300 points |
| | |
| | |

The final grades can be computed as follows:

| <u>Points</u> | <u>Letter Grade</u> | <u>Percentage</u> |
|---------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 279 + | A | 93% |
| 270 | A- | 90% |
| 261 | B+ | 87% |
| 249 | B | 83% |
| 240 | B- | 80% |
| 231 | C+ | 77% |
| 210 | C | 70% |
| 180 | D | 60% |
| Below 180 | F | |

I sincerely hope that you find this subject to be interesting and enjoy this psychology course. It is my goal for each of you to successfully learn in this class, as well as, think critically about issues related to Abnormal Psychology. Please feel free to contact me at any time during the semester in class, during office hours, by phone or email with any questions.

Course Schedule:

| Week of: | Course material | Exam period | Assignment Due Dates |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| September 1 st | Course Introduction Ch.1-Defining Abnormality: What is Psychopathology? | | |
| September 8 th | Ch.3- Classifying Abnormality: Diagnosis, Assessment and Research | <u>Exam 1</u> October 1 st (Ch.1 and 3) | |
| September 22 nd | Ch.4-Anxiety and the Anxiety Disorders | | |
| October 13 th | Ch. 5- Mood and the Mood Disorders | | |
| October 27 th | Ch. 7-Dissociation and the Dissociative Disorders | <u>Exam 2</u> November 12 th (Ch. 4, 5, and 7) | |
| November 10 th | Ch.11-Personality and the Personality Disorders | | |
| November 17 th | Ch. 10- Sex, Gender, and the Sexual Disorders | | |
| November 24 th | Ch.12-Psychosis and Schizophrenia | | |
| | | | December 1 st Case Summary Due |
| December 15 th | Final class meeting!! | <u>Exam 3</u> December 15 th (Ch.10, 11 and 12) | |
| | December 9-16 th (Testing Center) | <u>Exam 4</u> OPTIONAL cumulative make-up exam | |

Analytical Writing Assignments

Recalling and memorizing concepts about abnormal psychology is the easy part, but evaluating and analyzing concepts regarding is far more challenging. Each student must submit 2 writing assignments, for a total of **75 points**. Be sure to check the guidelines and due dates, as there are variations.

Ψ Hollywood Film Critique- (25 points)

Select one of the following films and review the film as an Abnormal Psychology student, not just a movie-watcher. You will provide a summation of the selected movie and discuss it from a psychological perspective. You should explain and discuss the mental illness depicted in the film. Based on your knowledge from class and your text, determine if the film accurately depicts the disorder identified or if it is flawed. Be sure to discuss the observable behaviors that support this diagnosis.

- As Good as it Gets (1997; Comedy, Drama, Romance; Jack Nicholson, Helen Hunt, Greg Kinnear)
 - What disorder did Melvin (Jack Nicholson) have in the movie?
 - How did this disorder impact Melvin's (Jack Nicholson) relationships with others? How does Melvin behave when his well-established routine is interrupted? What internal feelings might lead to those behaviors?
 - What form of treatment did Melvin use in the movie? Is this a successful treatment? Explain.

Due October 15th

- Dissociative Disorders

Select one of the following movies and answer the discussion questions that follow:

- Primal Fear (1996 Drama/Suspense; Richard Gere, Edward Norton)
 - Me, Myself And Irene (2000 Comedy; Jim Carey, Renee Zellweger)
 - Identity (2003 Thriller; John Cusack, Ray Liotta, Amanda Peete)
 - Fight Club (1999 Action/Drama; Brad Pitt, Edward Norton)
 - Secret window (2004 Thriller; Johnny Depp, John Turturro)
- Identify the character and the psychological disorder they display.
 - Did the movie accurately portray the symptoms of the disorder? Was this an accurate clinical picture? Explain in detail and provide examples from the movie.
 - Discuss any inaccuracies and misconceptions perpetrated of the disorder in the movie. If the disorder was misrepresented explain how this could be misleading to a typical movie-goer.
 - Many reputable theorists believe DID does not exist. What do you think? Support your thoughts.

Due November 10th

Ψ Personality Disorders

Select one of the following movies and answer the discussion questions that follow:

- **Girl Interrupted** (1999 Drama; Angelina Jolie, Winona Ryder, Whoopie Goldberg)
- **Fatal Attraction** (1987 Thriller/Drama; Glenn Close, Michael Douglas)
- **Natural Born Killers** (1994 Thriller/Drama; Woody Harrelson, Juliette Lewis)
- **American Psycho** (1999 Drama/Suspense; Christian Bale)

- Identify the character and the psychological disorder they display.
- Did the movie accurately portray the symptoms of the disorder? Was this an accurate clinical picture? Explain in detail and provide examples from the movie.
- Discuss any inaccuracies and misconceptions perpetrated of the disorder in the movie. If the disorder was misrepresented explain how this could be misleading to a typical movie-goer.
- How is a personality disorder different from an Axis I disorder?

Due November 24th

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- **A Beautiful Mind** (2001 Drama/Mystery; Russell Crowe, Jennifer Connelly).
 - What type of schizophrenia does John Nash (Russell Crowe) have? Discuss a scene that depicts the “positive symptoms” of schizophrenia. Discuss a scene that depicts the “negative symptoms.”
 - Do you think the film implies that a person with schizophrenia can fully recover? Do you think the film implies that a person can recover without medication? Explain and justify your answers.

Due December 3rd

Once you select a movie be sure to plan ahead to watch it...students sometimes find it hard to obtain a movie, especially if many classmates plan to rent the same one. Several of the movies are available at the MCCC library. The movies available cannot be checked out, but you can watch them in the library.

Ψ Case Study- (50 Points)

You will review a case study provided in this packet. You will be responsible for reviewing the case and assigning multi-axial diagnoses. You will also be responsible for providing a rationale for the diagnoses, as well as a discussion of rule outs, differential diagnoses, and prognosis. This assignment should be 2-3 pages in length (typed, double-spaced, one inch margins).

The first page is to be completed in the multi-axial diagnosis format provided below. The remaining pages are to be a discussion of how you determined the diagnoses. It is often helpful to organize the latter pages by axis (see below). This discussion is to include the signs/symptoms of each diagnosis you assign, as well as a complete discussion of differential diagnoses. Differential diagnosis refers to all of the diagnostic categories that you seriously considered during the diagnostic process. Because the symptoms present in the case study suggest the possibility of several disorders, a thorough discussion of disorders that you excluded is warranted. In other words, you should discuss why you assigned the diagnoses that you did and why you ruled out others. You DO NOT need to include diagnostic Numbers.

Multi-axial Diagnosis Format

Axis I: Clinical Disorders

Other Disorders That May Be a Focus of Clinical Attention

Axis II: Personality Disorders

Mental Retardation

Axis III: General Medical Conditions

Axis IV: Psychosocial and Environmental Problems

Axis V: Global Assessment of Functioning

Multi-axial Diagnosis Pointers

Axis I: Includes all of the disorders we will cover in class, with the exception of Personality Disorders and Mental Retardation.

Axis II: Includes only Personality Disorders and Mental Retardation

Axis III: Includes general medical conditions that are relevant to Axis I and Axis II diagnoses.

Axis IV: Includes a listing of any relevant psychosocial and environmental problems or stressors.

Axis V: Includes a numerical rating of current functioning, and occasionally highest functioning over the past year, on a scale of 0 to 100.

You can have multiple diagnoses on any axis. It is also possible that there is no diagnosis on an axis. List every diagnosis for which the diagnostic criteria are met. When no diagnosis exists for a particular axis, "No Diagnosis" is entered on the line.

The first diagnosis listed on Axis I is assumed to be the principal diagnosis unless otherwise specified. If the principal diagnosis is a Personality Disorder or Mental Retardation, it should be listed on Axis II, labeled as the "Principal Diagnosis" in parentheses.

In the instance that diagnostic criteria are minimally met for two similar disorders and one diagnosis appears relatively clear but there remains a question about which diagnosis fits best, you can identify the most likely diagnosis on one line and list the

second possibility on the next line followed by the term “Rule Out” in parentheses. This indicates some diagnostic certainty for the former diagnosis with a suggestion to monitor for the possibility of the latter diagnosis.

If there is insufficient information to make any diagnosis on any axis, enter “Diagnosis Deferred” on the line. This is different from “No Diagnosis” in that there is some possibility of a diagnosis on that axis but there is insufficient information to specify which diagnosis or not enough information to consider a “Rule Out” or a “Provisional Diagnosis”.

The first page of the case summary MUST include the Axis summary. Each axis will be graded on a 5-point scale. Use this sample as a reference for your paper:

Axis I: Major Depressive Disorder (Principle Diagnosis),
Generalized Anxiety Disorder (Differential Diagnosis)

Axis II: Narcissistic Personality Disorder

Axis III: No Diagnosis

Axis IV: Job loss, recent divorce, financial stress

Axis V: GAF -25

Grading criteria for the case summary assignment:

5 points: Student provided the correct diagnosis(es) for each axis, including principle, deferred and/or differential. Each diagnosis or lack of a diagnosis was clearly justified based on current clinical criteria. Student clearly identifies and insightfully analyzes important features of the symptoms/behaviors demonstrated by “client” to support diagnosis(es). Student develops ideas cogently and organizes them logically. There are few or no errors in mechanics, usage, grammar, or spelling. The content presented is exceptional and presents a very comprehensive clinical picture of the case summary.

4 Points: The student provided one inaccurate diagnosis, or provided justification for the diagnosis that was not concise or lacked important analysis of symptomatology. The paper is grammatically correct, and has more than 4 spelling errors. The student provides personal insight, but less of a thorough analysis of the content. The content presented is very good and presents a comprehensive clinical picture of the case summary.

3 Points: The student provided 2 inaccurate diagnoses or provided little justification of diagnoses presented or lack of analysis of symptomatology. The paper contains multiple grammatical errors and/or more than 4 spelling errors. The content presented is marginal and does not present a comprehensive clinical picture of the case summary.

2 Points: The student provided 2 or more inaccurate diagnoses or provided little or no justification of diagnoses presented or lack of analysis of symptomatology. The content presented is below average and does not present a comprehensive clinical picture of the case summary. The writing quality of the assignment was below average.

1 Point: Student proved no correct diagnosis(es) or provided no justification of diagnoses presented or lack of analysis of symptomatology. The content presented is well below average and no evidence of comprehension of the case summary is demonstrated. Writing quality is well below average.

Extra Credit Paper

Submission deadline no later than December 3rd

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PAPER:

This is an extra credit paper worth **10 points** toward your total final grade. Your paper should be a summary of a selected article that you choose from a reputable source related to the topic of behavior. Acceptable sources would include articles of at least 4 pages, but no longer than 12 pages from a scholarly, peer-reviewed journal. The article must be published from 2000 to the present.

Your paper must be typed, double-spaced and **one page only**. The font size should be either 10 or 12 point. You should include your name and section number on the back of the paper only. Please do not submit your paper in a plastic binder or folder.

The title of your article should not be included at the top of the paper or in the body of the paper. The title of the article should only appear in the reference at the bottom of your paper. **The first sentence of your paper should include the author of the article you are summarizing and the date of the publication.** Examples of how you may start include: As Aronson (2002) discovered that...or Aronson (2002) suggests in his article...or Aronson (2002) states that...found that...etc.

The bottom of your paper should include the reference: author (last name, first initial). If there is more than one author, all the authors must be named in the reference, but not the body of the paper.) The body of the paper can say, Aronson et al. (2002)...). An example of the APA (American Psychological Association) method that your paper should follow to cite your reference, looks like this:

Murray, B. (2000). Teaching students how to learn. *Monitor on Psychology*, Vol. 31 (8), pp. 64-68.

The reference should be single spaced and the second line should be indented.

The summary that you write should not be an opinion paper or personal feelings paper. You need to read an article and then summarize the article in your own words. Try not to use direct quotes. If you do, be sure to follow the APA format for direct quotes, do not copy directly from the article. You will be limited to ONE direct quote ONLY should you elect to do so. Your job will be to rewrite what you read...in other words, paraphrase.

Your paper will be graded on the selection of your article, the content, the organization of your paper, and the clarity and coherence of your writing. Spelling, grammar, punctuation, style, all count in the evaluation.

Grading Criteria:

An “A” level paper will receive 7-10 points:

The student uses a scholarly, peer-reviewed article to summarize that is about 4-12 pages in length on a topic clearly related to psychology. The student makes a copy of the article and reads it several times, making comments in the margin and highlighting important sections of the article. The student has full understanding of the article and captures the essence of the article in a clear and concise one page summary. The student manages to address what the article is about, and if it is about an experiment, the student explains the author’s hypothesis and if it was supported. If the student is summarizing an experimental research article, the student relies on the Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion sections to write the summary. It is not necessary for the student to understand the statistics used in the Results section, but the student must report whether the findings support the hypothesis and what the implications are for the research.

The paper has less than two spelling errors and is grammatically correct, captures the essence of the article and is clearly written. The APA format is followed and the reference is properly cited.

A “B” level paper will receive 4-6 points:

The student selects a topic clearly related to psychology but uses a more readable, less scholarly article to summarize such as Psychology Today, Time Magazine or Newsweek. The student follows the same procedure as above, and writes a clear and concise summary that captures the essence of the article. The paper is grammatically correct, and has more than 4 spelling errors. The student follows APA format and the reference is appropriately cited.

A “C” level paper will receive 1-3 points:

The student submits a paper that meets the requirements of the assignment. The student has done a satisfactory job with the assignment, but the paper is not as clearly written as an “A” or “B” level paper and/or may have cited the reference improperly.

No points will be awarded for a paper that falls below a C level of work.

ONE MORE THING!
What to do if class is cancelled

In the event that class is cancelled you will be required to watch a video on a topic related to a current psychological concept. These are streaming videos can be accessed through **Annenberg CPB Videos**. This website is an archive of streaming videos that are “on demand” so students can watch from any computer with an internet connection.

This is a free service that requires registration before accessing the video archives. Follow the link below to register. If class is cancelled I will send a class-wide email through the MCCC email system to notify students of the cancellation. In this email I will provide the link and/or title of the required video. A class discussion will occur in the following class and this information will appear on the next exam.

http://www.learner.org/view_programs/view_programs.html

And, of course, ENJOY the day off ☺

Please cut and staple the “late pass” to the late assignment before submission.

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| <p>PSY 210 Abnormal Psychology</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">“LATE PASS”</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Assignment : _____</p> <p>Original Assignment Due Date: _____</p> <p>Date submitted: _____</p> |
|--|--|