



PSY 210- Abnormal Psychology **Mercer County Community College**

Heather Jennings, Ph.D.

Email: jennin@ccc.edu

Phone: 609-586-4800 ext.3450

Office: LA 132

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 1-2:30 pm, Friday 12-1:00 pm and by appointment

Webpage: www.mccc.edu/~jennin

Required Textbook:

Halgin & Whitbourne (2010) **Abnormal Psychology: Clinical Perspectives on Psychological Disorders, 7/e.**

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 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 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!**

Texting Policy:

As a student in this class you are expected to maintain college-level etiquette, which includes respectful conduct inside and outside the classroom. Texting or use of phone during this class will not be tolerated by any student, there are NO exceptions. Should any student violate this policy the following penalties will be enforced:

1. The first time you are seen texting in class **20 points** will be taken from your final grade.
2. If you are seen texting a second time **50 points** will be taken from your final grade.
3. If you are seen texting a third time **you will be dropped** from the course. If the drop period has passed, you will receive an F for the class.

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** 50 question multiple-choice/true-false exams, each question worth 1 point. 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 during the final exam period.

Online Quizzes via Connect (75 points)

Each student will be required to register and use Connect which will be provided by the textbook publisher. This will be provided at no expense to you. Connect is an all-digital learning platform for students in higher education. This program is designed for students to connect with the course material through engaging, interactive content for more effective learning. You will be assigned various activities throughout the semester. Each graded activity will have a

due date. Once the deadline has passed, you will not be able to earn points for that assignment. You are responsible for logging into the following your online class section and completing the provided assignments.

Registration link:

http://connect.mcgraw-hill.com/class/h_jennings_abnormal_psychology_fall_2013

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 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.

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. The questions assigned to each movie are not the only questions that should be addressed; these are only to guide you in the writing process. This paper should be essay-style and not bulleted answered to the assigned questions. The only source required for this paper is the textbook. If other sources are used, please cite them appropriately. 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 **Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive, and Trauma-and Stressor-Related Disorders**

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

- **The Aviator** (2004; Drama; Leonardo DiCaprio; Cate Blanchett, Kate Beckinsale)
- **As Good as it Gets** (1997; Drama, Romance; Jack Nicholson, Helen Hunt, Greg Kinnear)
- **Reign over Me** (2007; Drama; Adam Sandler, Don Cheadle)
 - What disorder was depicted in the movie?
 - How did this disorder impact the character's relationships with others? Did the disorder impact the character's overall level of function?
 - Identify and discuss symptoms displayed in the movie. Do these symptoms present an accurate picture of the disorder? Explain.
 - Did the movie portray treatment of the disorder? Was the treatment successful? Was the treatment accurate?

Due September 24th

Ψ **Dissociative and Somatic Symptom 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)
 - **Shutter Island** (2010 Thriller/suspense; Leonardo DiCaprio, Mark Ruffalo)
 - **Black Swan** (2010 Drama/Thriller; Natalie Portman; Mila Kunis)
- 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. Is there another disorder that would be a more appropriate depiction or diagnosis?

Due October 22nd

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.
 - How is a personality disorder different from an Axis 1 disorder?
 - 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.

Due November 5th

Ψ Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders

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

- **A Beautiful Mind** (2001 Drama/Mystery; Russell Crowe, Jennifer Connelly).
- **The Soloist** (2009 Drama; Robert Downey Jr., Jamie Foxx)
 - What type of schizophrenia is displayed in the movie? Identify and discuss a scene that depicts the “positive symptoms” of schizophrenia. Identify and discuss a scene that depicts the “negative symptoms.” Are these depictions accurate to the disorder?
 - What does the film imply about recovery from this disorder? Based on your knowledge of this disorder, is this a realistic depiction? Explain and justify your answers.

Due November 26th

Late Assignments

All assignments 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” which was sent to your Mercer email account on the first day of class.

This late pass will allow a **ONE day extension...not one class...one day only**. 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 3rd. This paper will be worth **10 extra credit points**.

Flash cards

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 chart below to keep track of your cumulative points from the exams, paper, writing assignments and extra credit:

Required Assignments	Possible Points	Earned Points
Exam 1	50	
Exam 2	50	
Exam 3	50	
Film critique	25	
Case Summary	50	
Online Activities via Connect	75	
Extra Credit Assignments	Possible Points	Earned Points
Total Flashcards	0-12	
Journal Article Review	10	
Attendance Bonus	0-4	
Total Points:	300	Total Earned Points:

Final grades can be computed as follows:

Points	Letter Grade	Percentage
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	

Course Schedule

August 27th	-----	Course Introduction
August 29th	Chapter 1	Overview to Understanding Abnormal Behavior
September 3rd	Chapter 3	Assessment
September 5th	Chapter 3	Assessment
September 10th	Chapter 2	Diagnosis and Treatment
September 12th	Chapter 8	Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive, and Trauma-and Stressor-Related Disorders
September 17th	Chapter 8	Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive, and Trauma-and Stressor-Related Disorders
September 19th	Chapter 8	Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive, and Trauma-and Stressor-Related Disorders
September 24th	Chapter 8	Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive, and Trauma-and Stressor-Related Disorders
September 26th	Exam 1 (Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 8)	
October 1st	Chapter 7	Depressive and Bipolar Disorders
October 3rd	Chapter 7	Depressive and Bipolar Disorders
October 8th	Chapter 7	Depressive and Bipolar Disorders
October 10th	Chapter 7	Depressive and Bipolar Disorders
October 15th	Chapter 9	Dissociative and Somatic Symptom Disorders
October 17th	Chapter 9	Dissociative and Somatic Symptom Disorders
October 22nd	Chapter 9	Dissociative and Somatic Symptom Disorders
October 24th	Exam 2 (Chapters 7 and 9)	
October 29th	Chapter 14	Personality Disorders
October 31st	Chapter 14	Personality Disorders
November 5th	Chapter 14	Personality Disorders
November 7th	Chapter 11	Paraphilic Disorders, Sexual Dysfunctions, and Gender Dysphoria
November 12th	Chapter 11	Paraphilic Disorders, Sexual Dysfunctions, and Gender Dysphoria
November 14th	Chapter 11	Paraphilic Disorders, Sexual Dysfunctions, and Gender Dysphoria
November 19th	Chapter 6	Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders
November 21st	Chapter 6	Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders
November 26th (Thursday Schedule)	Chapter 6	Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders
November 28th		THANKSGIVING RECESS- NO CLASSES 11/28-12/1
December 3rd	Chapter 6	Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders Case Summary Assignment Due
December 5th	Exam 3 (Chapters 6, 11, and 14)	
December 10th	Final class meeting!! Return of graded assignments.	

Helpful Tips for Success

Student success is not given at the end of the semester as a letter grade, begins on the first day of the semester and earned through persistence. Will you be successful in this class? Each semester many students register for this class and fail...why? Mostly because they did not come to class understanding what it takes to succeed. High school is over...you will not pass this class just by showing up, it will take effort. **YOU** must care about your success in this class from the very beginning.

How can I succeed in this class?

1. Read the syllabus!!

2. Read the syllabus!!

3. Take responsibility for your performance. YOU will determine your success in this class, not me.

4. Come to class with a good attitude...(or stay home)

5. Come to class on time, prepared and ready to participate.

6. Ask questions and get involved.

7. Complete all assignments on time

8. Take advantage of the extra credit opportunities.

9. Attend office hours if you are having trouble

10. Be proactive...don't wait until the end of semester to get involved!

The following are behaviors and attitudes not associated with successful college students. I encourage questions of all kinds, both inside and outside of the class, but the following are exceptions. None of your Professors enjoy questions such as these, don't be that student 😊

The Top Ten Questions You Shouldn't Ask Professor Jennings!	Top Ten Answers You will Receive if you do:
1. I wasn't here last class...Did I miss anything important?	No, we waited for to show and when you didn't we all left.
2. When are your office hours?	Read the Syllabus
3. Where is your office?	Read the Syllabus
4. What chapters are on the exam(s)?	Read the Syllabus
5. When is that paper due?	Read the Syllabus
6. Do you have a stapler I can borrow?	No.
7. Are the exam questions HARD...are you trying to trick us?	No.
8. I forgot to take the test...can I have a make-up?	No, take the optional final at the end of the semester.
9. Do I have to buy the book?	No, but you are setting yourself up for failure if you do not have all the course material.
10. Do we really need to cite our sources?	No, you are special. Everyone else must cite, except for you. Of course you need to cite your sources!

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 or by email with any questions.