

Adult Abnormal Psychology (PSY 210)

Justin Dainer-Best

Fall 2021

Course Number	Time	Location	Online Office Hours
PSY 210	M/W, 15:50-17:10	Hegeman 308	Th, 10:00-11:30

Make an appointment to come to my office hours.

Pre-requisites: Introduction to Psychological Science.

This course fulfills the psychology major's Cluster A requirement.

Overview

This course is designed to introduce students to adult psychopathology. That is, we will discuss the symptoms and course of the major psychiatric disorders that are diagnosed and treated in adults. We will emphasize a scientific approach to understanding mental illness. This course is concerned with those aspects of the human experience that are **unusual, maladaptive, or distressing**. We will focus on anxiety, mood, thought, eating, substance use, and personality disorders.

This course will sometimes discuss topics that are sensitive or personal for many students. If something discussed in class leaves you feeling upset, please speak to a trusted person about your experience. Further, if you find that you are struggling to cope with some of the topics discussed in class, you may contact Bard Counseling Services, and make an appointment; you may also email counselingservice@bard.edu or call 845-758-7433.

The course will focus on these mental illnesses through readings, lectures, and class discussion. Students will be invited to discuss topics in class, as well as to react to readings and scientific articles. Although there is some expectation that you will learn the facts and figures upon which psychological science is based, our focus in this course will be on **understanding** and **responding to** course material. Lectures will supplement readings, and will be used to thoroughly examine current thinking in clinical psychology, to provide greater detail on particular topics.

You will be graded with a take-home exam, several written assignments, and a group presentation, all of which are discussed below. Many of the writing assignments will have more detail provided at a later date.

Land Acknowledgment

In the spirit of truth and equity, it is with gratitude and humility that we acknowledge that this class will take place on the sacred homelands of the Munsee and Muhheaconneok people, who are the original stewards of this land. Today, due to forced removal, the community resides in Northeast Wisconsin and is known as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. We honor and pay respect to their ancestors past and present, as well as to future generations, and we recognize their continuing presence in their homelands. We understand that our acknowledgment requires those of us who are settlers to recognize our own place in and responsibilities

towards addressing inequity, and that this ongoing and challenging work requires that we commit to real engagement with the Munsee and Mohican communities to build an inclusive and equitable space for all.

Objectives

By the end of the semester you should. . .

- be able to read scientific articles about clinical research,
- understand the process of differential diagnosis and learn to critique the diagnostic system,
- understand the helping professions and their applications with regards to mental illness, and
- have a working knowledge of common psychopathology and the *DSM*.

Instructor

The instructor for this course is Assistant Professor of Psychology Justin Dainer-Best (he/him/his).

Materials

Optional books

This course does not use a textbook. Past courses have required the below (optional) text, and you are welcome to purchase a copy; it will provide additional information throughout the course. However, the primary focus of your readings will be on articles designed for discussion: primary research articles, meta-analyses, newspaper and magazine articles, podcasts, and occasional textbook chapters. Because these readings will be discussed in class, you should come to class having read them by the date in the schedule below (and listed on Brightspace).

The *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (DSM-5)* is the primary manual for diagnosis, and you will want to refer to it throughout the course. The e-book should be available through the library, and there is also a physical copy; additionally, you may choose to buy a copy, which will provide additional information and may be of use during the semester (as well as serving as a lovely coffee table book).

- **Optional text:** Hooley, J.M., Butcher, J.N., Nock, M.K., & Mineka, S. (2017). *Abnormal psychology*, 17th ed. Pearson: Boston, MA. (ISBN 0133852059).
- **Optional text:** American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author. ISBN 978-0-890-42554-1. (Available through the Bard library)

All readings should be accessible to a screen reader; if you need one but the reading is not processed correctly, please let me know and I will convert it, or you may do so using this conversion tool. You should complete each reading *in preparation for class*, as listed below on the schedule.

Class Policies

Attendance

We will move at a rapid pace; material that is missed due to absence will not be repeated in class or office hours. Our classes are designed as interactive, and your absence will impact both your own understanding and the class.

However, this is a college class and you are an adult; your attendance is your decision. Late arrivals can be disruptive to the class, especially in the current moment. Consistent patterns of lateness are unfair to other students. Please be on time.

If you are not feeling well, please do not come to class.

Masks

If you have recently been ill, please feel free to wear a mask when you attend; masks are effective at reducing spread of many respiratory illnesses. Each of us shares responsibility for the health and safety of all in the classroom. For the first two weeks of class, all students (and the instructor) are required to wear masks. Following these two weeks, we will follow College guidance, but you may choose to wear a mask at any time.

Accommodations & Accessibility

Bard College is committed to providing equal access to all students. If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please contact me so that we can arrange to discuss. I would like us to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. Together we can plan how best to support your learning and coordinate your accommodations. Students who have already been approved to receive academic accommodations through disability services should share their accommodation letter with me and make arrangements to meet as soon as possible if necessary.

If you have a learning difference or disability that may relate to your ability to fully participate in this class, but have not yet met with the Disability Support Coordinator at Bard, you can contact their office through <https://www.bard.edu/accessibility/students/> or by emailing disabilityservices@bard.edu; the Coordinator will confidentially discuss the process to establish reasonable accommodations. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and thus you should begin this process as soon as possible if you believe you will need them.

Additionally, as my office in Preston Hall may be physically difficult to access, you may always request to meet with me in another location if we plan to meet in-person.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

It is important to me that this course provides an open and supportive learning environment for all students. I invite you to speak with me if you have concerns or questions regarding issues of belonging, safety, or equity in the classroom. I want our discussions to be respectful of all students. If I am not helping the classroom to feel like an inclusive environment, I invite you to provide me with [anonymous] feedback. All forms of knowledge are valuable in this class.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

I expect you to be familiar with what plagiarism is and is not. You may not present someone else's work as your own without proper citation. You may not copy someone else's work. You may not simply reword text from another source without giving credit. Please cite others' work where relevant, and use your own writing. If you are not sure about the definition of plagiarism, or whether something constitutes plagiarism, please consult with me or with someone at Bard's Learning Commons. Students caught plagiarizing will be reported to the Academic Judiciary Board, will get no credit for the assignment, and may fail the course.

I operate from the standpoint that you are interested in learning this material, and are doing your best to operate with integrity.

Cell phones and laptops

Before class, you should silence your cell phone, and you should not be on your phone during class unless you are asked to be (e.g., to respond to a poll). I do not recommend taking notes on your phone as a rule. I *do* recommend taking notes on paper wherever possible. If you text or access materials unrelated to class during our class time, you are mentally absent from class.

When using a laptop, I encourage you to turn off notifications / turn on Do Not Disturb whenever possible. Browsing unrelated materials is distracting to you and also to your classmates.

Late Assignments

Most assignments can be turned in **within two days** of their due dates without penalty. For example, if an assignment is due before class on a Monday, it may be turned in by Wednesday at midnight without penalty. However, please note that many assignments are intended to develop into conversations; even if you have not turned in a final document to me, you should be prepared to discuss your work in class.

Assignments may still be turned in after their late date. However, such assignments are considered “missing” (see section on grading below). If your work is consistently turned in late, this also may impact your grade unless you discuss this lateness with me. All assignments are due by the last day of the semester.

Assignments

Exam

The exam will be made up of questions in which you will be expected to demonstrate your understanding of and ability to apply course materials. You may not make up the exam, which will be taken at home (rather than in class). There is no late due date for the exam. If you will be unable to take the exam when it is assigned, you should speak to me as soon as possible.

Self-Assessment

Towards the end of March (see the schedule), you will be asked to submit a self-assessment in which you reflect on your progress and understanding. This assessment will be partially based on a rubric and partially involve reflection. It is required but will not contribute to your grade.

Writing Assignments

There will be several writing assignments during this course. Papers should be submitted on Brightspace as PDFs named with your last name and the assignment name (e.g., **Dainer-Best case study.pdf**). All papers should be submitted before class begins, and by no later than midnight two days after they are due.

Case Study

You will be asked to write a 3–4 page response to a case vignette *provided by the instructor*, in which you make an argument for a diagnosis and appropriate treatment recommendations, based on your readings. The case study is due on the date listed on the schedule below. Further details will be posted to Brightspace and discussed in class.

Fictional Portrayals of Mental Illness

We all read and watch many works of fiction which attempt to represent mental illness. We will read some examples of this in this course. You will be asked to write a 3–4 page essay in which you choose a work of fiction that we have **not** read in class, and use evidence from that work, from our readings, or from the *DSM-5* to explain why it is or is not a good portrayal of mental illness. If you are unsure whether a topic is appropriate, please email me or come to my office hours to discuss. (Works which explicitly discuss whether a character is mentally ill, e.g. by having the character receive a diagnosis from a therapist, are not appropriate.) This essay is due on the date listed on the schedule below. Further details will be posted to Brightspace.

Response Papers

Two response papers of 1–2 pages each are expected during the semester, as responses to the assigned readings.

1. One response paper must be a “news story” written as a description of a research paper (denoted with a typographical dagger † in the schedule below).

- The other response paper can take any form—creative forms welcomed, as are critiques or responses. (It may respond to *any* of the readings).

These response papers should cite sources in APA style, and follow the guidelines of academic integrity. They are due *before class begins* on the day the reading is assigned; the late policy applies, but you should be prepared to discuss the reading in class even if you intend to turn in the writing late.

It is your responsibility to turn in these papers without prompting. At least one of these response papers should be turned in before the mid-term, as indicated on the schedule below.

Group Presentation

As part of requirements for Cluster A of the Psychology major, students will be expected to make a 15-minute group presentation in the second half of the semester, in groups of four students, in which they propose a study as a group. The study will be designed to **investigate** a mental illness or treatment not discussed in class. The design should be planned as a group; the presentation will be given together. Topics and groups **must** be approved beforehand. Each student should prepare their own materials, and speak for approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the time—all group members should contribute to creating a cohesive presentation. (Top scores will be given to groups that all speak on all parts of the project, rather than simply dividing up the presentation.) Presentations will occur towards the end of the semester. Additional information will be provided in-class and on Brightspace.

Grades

Assignment	Points
Self-Assessment	–
Exam	50
Case study	30
Portrayals of Mental Illness	30
Response Papers (10 each)	20
Group presentation	20
Total	150

Your grades in this course will come from the assignments described above: a mid-term exam, the case study, the portrayals essay, the two response papers, and the group presentation. The exam, self-assessment, and one response paper will be completed before the mid-term.

The self-assessment is a Pass/Fail assignment; not completing it will result in a drop of one grade level (e.g., from a B+ to a B).

Completing the reading and thoughtfully participating in the class is an important component of your learning. As discussed above, all assignments may be turned in up to two days late without penalty (except where otherwise mentioned). Assignments turned in later than that will not receive full points—at maximum a point off for each day late.

Grade	Range
A-range	135-150
B-range	120-134
C-range	105-119
D-range	90-104
F	below 90

Schedule

The schedule may change over the course of the semester. Changes to assignment dates will be announced via email and also changed on the course website. You are responsible for keeping up with the readings, showing up to class prepared, and turning in assignments on-time.

Readings are listed by author last name; PDFs can be found on Brightspace.

Day	Date	Topic	Reading	Due
Monday	Aug 30	Abnormal Behavior: Definition	Syllabus	
Wednesday	Sep 1	Abnormal Behavior: Definition II	Szasz (1960)	
Monday	Sep 6	Abnormal Behavior: History	Allen and Mars (2019); Bernheimer (1990)	
Wednesday	Sep 8	Clinical Assessment	Aviv (2011); Phillips and Raskin (2020)	
Monday	Sep 13	Clinical Assessment II	Groth-Marnat (2009)†	
Wednesday	Sep 15	Clinical Research Methods	Guglielmi (2018); Gilbert and Irons (2005)	
Monday	Sep 20	Mood Disorders: MDD	Beck and Haigh (2014)†; Wallace (1996, 2009)	
Wednesday	Sep 22	Mood Disorders: BPD	Jamison (2006); Forney (2012)	
Monday	Sep 27	Suicide	Brosh (2013); Gray and McCullagh (2014)†	
Wednesday	Sep 29	Anxiety Disorders: Fear	Ruscio (2019)†	
Monday	Oct 4	Anxiety Disorders II	Barlow et al. (2000)†	1 st Response Paper
Wednesday	Oct 6	<i>No class: take-home exam</i>		Exam & Self-Assessment
Monday	Oct 11	<i>No Class: Fall break</i> (Indigenous People's Day)		
Wednesday	Oct 13	Health Psychology & Stress	Chekroud et al. (2018)†; Zarse et al. (2019)†	
Monday	Oct 18	PTSD	Finnegan (2008)	
Wednesday	Oct 20	Eating Disorders	Vitousek et al. (1998)†	
Monday	Oct 25	Obesity	Hobbes (2018)	
Wednesday	Oct 27	Cross-cultural Clinical Psychology	Betancourt et al. (2003)†; Matsuno (2019)†	Groups/topics
Monday	Nov 1	Alcohol Use Disorders	Glaser (2015); Sundström et al. (2016)†	
Wednesday	Nov 3	Substance Use Disorders		
Monday	Nov 8	Schizophrenia	Solomon (2012)	
Wednesday	Nov 10	Schizophrenia II		Portrayals
Monday	Nov 15	Dissociation; Somatic Symptoms	Lynn et al. (2016)†	
Wednesday	Nov 17	Sexual and Gender Identity	Richards et al. (2016)†; Belc (2018)	
Monday	Nov 22	Personality Disorders	Linehan et al. (2015)†	
Wednesday	Nov 24	<i>No class: Thanksgiving break</i>		Case study
Monday	Nov 29	Personality Disorders II	Seabrook (2008)	
Wednesday	Dec 1	Introduction to Treatment	Muñoz (2010)†; Leichsenring and Leibling (2003)†	
Monday	Dec 6	Group Presentations I		All presentations
Wednesday	Dec 8	<i>No class: Advising day</i>		
Monday	Dec 13	Group Presentations II		
Wednesday	Dec 15	<i>Completion week</i>		

References

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