

# COURSE SYLLABUS

Social & Behavioral Sciences 1652 PSY\* F245 Abnormal Psychology, section 30

Department Course No. Course Title

3 N/A N/A

Credit Hrs. # lecture hrs./week # lab hrs./week

Prepared by Ronald Brone, Ph.D. Spring 2015

Faculty Member Date

Course prerequisites: PSY F111 – General Psychology I, ENG 101

Course Location (building/room number): MxCC – on line

Meeting time (days/hours): N/A – Distance Learning Course

## SCOPE OF COURSE:

This course examines the major theories of psychopathology and explores the research, classification systems, and intervention strategies relative to each theoretical perspective. Diagnostic categories and processes will also be studied.

## TEXTBOOK:

**Understanding Abnormal Behavior**, Tenth Edition, Sue, Sue, Sue & Sue, 2013, Wadsworth, ISBN: 978-1-111-83459-3.

Office Location (building/room number): Middletown Campus, Snow Hall, Room 508 Office Hours: By appointment

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## EVALUATION (EXAMS, PAPERS, ATTENDANCE AND PERCENTAGES TOWARDS FINAL GRADES):

There will be 3 tests weighed at 20% each, 10 discussions worth 2% each, and one research paper worth 20%. If you do not take a test within the specified timeframe, at least 10% will be deducted if you do not have a doctor's excuse or some other unforeseeable circumstance, since it is not fair to the rest of the class that anyone has extra time to prepare. The longer it takes for you to make up the test, the greater the reduction in grade.

Final grades will be determined as follows:

A+	≥ 95%
A	92 - 94.99%
A-	89 - 91.99%
B+	86 - 88.99%
B	83 - 85.99%
B-	80 - 82.99%
C+	77 - 79.99%
C	74 - 76.99%
C-	71 - 73.99%
D+	68 - 70.99%
D	65 - 67.99%
D-	62 - 64.699%
F	<62

## UNIT OUTLINES/UNIT OBJECTIVES/EXPECTED OUTCOMES/ASSESSMENT MEASURES:

This course will introduce the student to abnormal behavior and the ways in which it is defined, assessed and treated. The challenge of defining behavior as “abnormal” while respecting individual and cultural differences will be explored. The student will also gain an appreciation for the strides that have occurred in the mental health field as well as an awareness of how much there is about mental illness that we still do not know. The student will be challenged to think about ethical issues that arise while balancing the need to respect individual freedom and choices and trying to offer treatment to those who may not be aware they even have an illness. Through discussion of the various painful and debilitating symptoms from which the mentally ill suffer, the student will also develop an awareness of the importance of pursuing increasingly effective treatment interventions. Their grade will be a reflection of their achievement of these objectives.

## EXAMINATIONS

Each of the 3 exams will be multiple choice. The material covered in the exams will be drawn from the textbook, discussions and PowerPoint presentations.

## DISCUSSIONS

You will be required, by midnight on the Sunday the discussion is due, to have posted your own original comment on the topic and to have commented on the responses of at least 2 of your classmates. In order to receive full credit, your original comment must address the discussion topic in a manner that draws on the information presented in the book, PowerPoint presentations and/or films posted. Your comment and your feedback to peers must be well thought out and fully explained. Simple one-line responses will not earn full credit – you must show an understanding of and thoughtful response to the topic.

## RESEARCH PAPER

You will be required to write a 5 - 6 page research paper on any of the psychiatric disorders presented in class. The goal is to research one of the disorders and present information beyond that provided in your text or in the PowerPoint presentations. You should include the symptoms of the disorder, possible causes, information regarding prevalence, any cultural/gender differences in rates of the disorder, typical age of onset and possible treatments. You will be required to cite at least 3 references (other than your textbook). Please be sure to consult the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – 5<sup>th</sup> edition (DSM 5) as one of those 3. In order to receive full credit, you must e-mail the paper by midnight on April 26. The paper is worth 20% of your grade. Late papers will be accepted, but will be marked down due to lateness.

## TUTORING

We have a Learning Center (860-343-5858) on campus that provides free tutoring. I am also available for tutoring (by appointment). You may call me on my cell (860-685-1407).

## WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

NOTE: We cannot cover all of the chapters in the book, so I will be skipping around somewhat to cover the areas I believe are most important/relevant/interesting.

<u>Week of</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading/Assignment</u>
Jan 21	Abnormal Behavior	Chapter 1 DISCUSSION – Questions and answers, introductions (not graded)
Jan 26	Models of Abnormal Behavior	Chapter 2 DISCUSSION 1 DUE 2/1
Feb 2	Assessment and Classification of Abnormal Behaviors	Chapter 3 DISCUSSION 2 DUE 2/8
Feb 9	Anxiety and Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders	Chapter 5 DISCUSSION 3 DUE 2/15

Feb 16	EXAM 1 AVAILABLE 2/18 – 2/22	Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 5
Feb 23	Trauma and Stress-Related Disorders	Chapter 6 DISCUSSION 4 DUE 3/1
Mar 2	Somatic Symptom and Dissociative Disorders	Chapter 7 DISCUSSION 5 DUE 3/8
Mar 9	Depressive and Bipolar Disorders	Chapter 8 NO DISCUSSION
Mar 16	SPRING BREAK – NO ASSIGNMENT	
Mar 23	Suicide	Chapter 9 DISCUSSION 6 DUE 3/29
Mar 30	EXAM 2 AVAILABLE 4/2 – 4/6	Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9
April 6	Eating Disorders	Chapter 10 DISCUSSION 7 DUE 4/12
April 13	Substance Abuse	Chapter 11 DISCUSSION 8 DUE 4/19
April 20	Schizophrenia and other Psychotic Disorders RESEARCH PAPER DUE 4/26	Chapter 12
April 27	Personality Psychology	Chapter 15 DISCUSSION 9 DUE 5/3
May 4	Legal and Ethical Issues	Chapter 17 DISCUSSION 10 DUE 5/10
May 11	EXAM 3 – AVAILABLE 5/12 – 5/17	Chapters 10, 11, 12, 15 and 17

**ADA ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT:**

“Students with physical or learning disabilities who may require accommodations are encouraged to contact the Counseling Office. After disclosing the nature of the disability, students are urged to discuss their needs with individual instructors. This should be done at the beginning of each semester. Instructors, in conjunction with appropriate college officials, will provide assistance and/or accommodations only to those students who have completed this process.”

**ACADEMIC ETHICS AND CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR:**

“At Middlesex Community College we expect the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in accordance with the Board of Trustees’ Proscribed Conduct Policy in section 5.2.1 of the Board of Trustees’ Policy Manual. This policy prohibits cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, unauthorized access to examinations or course materials, plagiarism, and other proscribed activities. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another’s idea(s) or phrase(s) and representing that/those idea(s) as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally.”(Board of Trustees’ Policy 5.2.1)

**DIVERSITY**

This class will cover some aspects of diversity and how it impacts our understanding of human behavior. It will point out that understanding and appreciating cultural-based differences between people enhances our abilities to get along with others and eventually work productively in a human services occupation. We will discuss such topics as the relative contribution of genetics versus experience in determining human behavior, the influence of culture in shaping one’s experiences, and the importance of appreciating cultural influences in our understanding of normal versus abnormal behavior. The goal is to reinforce critical thinking skills when dealing with diversity.

MxCC CORE COMPETENCIES – This class will include each of these competencies.

1. **COMMUNICATION SKILLS:** Communication skills include reading, writing, speaking and research. We expect our graduates will have good critical reading skills so that they can discriminate between primary and secondary sources and between more and less important ideas in what they read. We expect our students to write and speak clear and to use correct expository English to communicate their ideas as well as to frame sensible arguments to support their points of view in an intelligent, thoughtful and civilized way. Communication is an interactive process through which there is an exchange of verbal and/or nonverbal information.

This course includes reading material, on line discussions and a research paper.

2. **CONCEPTUAL SKILLS/CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS:** Conceptual skills refer to organized, responsive and critical thought. Many educators and philosophers define critical thinking as skillful, responsible, reflective thinking that facilitates good judgment because it: a) relies upon criteria developed or assessed, b) is self-correcting, and c) is sensitive to context. Critical thinkers can distinguish between fact, inference, and opinion; construct worthwhile questions; arrive at and justify conclusions; prioritize ideas; apply strategies for dealing with error, improbability and ambiguity; value and access information including that derived from textbooks, lectures and electronic media; give and accept criticism constructively.

This course studies various ways of assessing and understanding human behavior in an effort to define and treat abnormal behavior. Critical thinking about complex and at times opposing viewpoints on the determinants and methods of treating abnormal behaviors will be required.

3. **QUANTITATIVE REASONING:** Quantitative reasoning helps us learn about reality by applying measurement, mathematics, data collection and evaluation to the study of specific problems. Quantitative reasoning involves several skills or abilities: 1) to describe research problems or questions in terms of numerical, symbolic, and visual representation; 2) to solve problems by collecting and analyzing data, formulating alternative theories, and making reasonable conclusions based upon a body of evidence; 3) to communicate and critique quantitative arguments.

This course will address the understanding of data related to incidence, prevalence and causes of psychological disorders.

4. **TECHNOLOGICAL LITERACY:** Technological literacy requires us to understand the potential and limitations of technology and to identify and effectively use the appropriate technology to achieve a desired outcome.

As this is an on line course, extensive use of technology is required.

5. **INFORMATION LITERACY:** Information literacy encompasses skills that enable individuals to determine when information is needed, efficiently access information, critically evaluate information and its sources, apply legal and ethical standards in using information, and appropriately apply information to one's needs.

This course will require students to use information and think critically, particularly in addressing discussion topics and completing the research paper.

6. **AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVES:** The most elusive area in a well-rounded education is that of aesthetics. Students should be aware of aesthetics both in daily life and in the context of their academic studies. Aesthetics encompasses forms of personal expression both in the natural world and in the world of man-made things (building, objects of art, etc.). In addition, aesthetics can be seen in more abstract, universal constructs such as symmetry of an equation or the balanced physical structures of an atom. Students should be able to analyze and formulate opinions about the principles of design behind these formal and expressive structures.

7. **UNDERSTANDING OF DIVERSITY:** Diversity means difference. People may be different with respect to their ethnicity, race, culture, religion or national origin. Or these differences may be social and personal such as class, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or appearance. We hope our graduates are able to

recognize and appreciate these and other differences. Psychology embraces a global perspective in presenting issues of diversity concerning cultural awareness, gender, ethnicity, sexuality and age.

This course looks at diversity as it pertains to the varied behaviors displayed across cultures and influences our definition of normal versus abnormal behavior.

8. **VALUE, ETHICS, AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP:** Psychology will help the student to recognize and analyze ethical issues, make and defend ethical decisions, demonstrate ethical behavior and social responsibility by engaging community, social, civic, or cultural service.

This course will especially look at ethics in research and in the treatment of those suffering from behavioral disturbances.