

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL
Department of Psychology
Spring 2011

I. COURSE INFORMATION

Course Number	47.272.205
Course Title	Abnormal Psychology
Course Meetings	TR 11:00-12:15
Prerequisites	47.101, General Psychology, or its equivalent
Catalog Description	An introduction to the study of various patterns of mental, behavioral, and personality disorder with consideration of issues of diagnosis, etiology, and treatment in terms of contemporary theory, research, and practice. 3 credits.

II. INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name	Richard A. Siegel, Ph.D.
Campus Office and Mail	Mahoney Hall 109, South Campus (870 Broadway St., Lowell MA 01854)
Office Hours	MTR 9:30-11:00 A.M., or by appointment
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III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through readings and class presentations and discussions, students will learn:

- How difficult it can be to distinguish normal from abnormal
- That there are many different ways of thinking about abnormal psychology, and that thinking in terms of "illness" and "disease" can be problematic
- How scientific research adds to our understanding of psychopathology
- About many of the major patterns of psychological dysfunction that are the focus of current research and treatment
- About the many possible causes and risk factors that contribute to the development of psychological problems
- That there are many possible approaches in treatment and that it is difficult to know what works best
- About some of the major debates and controversies in the field today
- How to think critically and to understand and use research.

IV. TEXTBOOK INFORMATION

- Butcher, Mineka, & Hooley *Abnormal Psychology: Core Concepts (2nd Ed.)*. Allyn & Bacon 2011
- Meyer, Chapman, & Weaver *Case Studies in Abnormal Behavior (8th Ed.)*, Allyn & Bacon 2009

Both these books can be purchased at the UMass Lowell South Campus bookstore, bundled together at a discounted price.

V. COURSE CALENDAR

In the Table below, under Assigned Readings, you will often see the phrase "designated pages only;" the specific pages from each chapter for that topic will be listed on the course website.

[Unfortunately, our textbook, like all textbooks currently available, is organized primarily around a chapter-by-chapter presentation of various forms of psychopathology, with descriptions, explanations, and treatments all mixed together into one chapter. For me, it is much more logical to first focus entirely on description, across the broad range of psychopathology, then look at aspects of explanation (causation) and treatment methods and issues. Thus, I have had to "cut and paste" the pages of our text to fit into my organization. I hope you won't find it too confusing.]

DATES	TOPIC	READINGS	REQUIRED WORK
Topic 1: Jan 25-Feb 1	Basic Concepts and Definitions	BM&H: Ch 1; M: Ch 1	
Topic 2: Feb 3-10	Assessment and Classification	BM&H: Ch 3 pp 74-90	
Topic 3: Feb 15-22	Psychopathology of Affect	BM&H: designated pages only in Ch 4,5,6,7,11,14; M: Ch 3,5,7	Quiz #1 on Topics 1-3 and Case Study 1: Feb 24
Topic 4: Feb 24-Mar 3	Psychopathology of Behavior	BM&H: designated pages only in Ch 7,8,9,10,11,14; M: Ch 8 (pp 130-154),9,10,11,12,13	Term Paper Proposal and Case Study 2: Mar 8
Topic 5: Mar 8-22 (Spring Break in between)	Psychopathology of Cognition	BM&H: designated pages only in Ch 7,12,13,14; M: Ch 4 (pp 59-65),6,14 (pp 274-278),15	Case Study 3: Mar 24
Topic 6: Mar 24-31	Explanations and Treatments	BM&H: Ch 2, 3 pp 100-102; M: Ch 2	Quiz #2 on Topics 4-6: Apr 5
Topic 7: Apr 5-12 (Apr 11 last day to withdraw with 'W')	Biological Approaches to Psychopathology	BM&H: Ch 3 pp 102-112, plus designated pages only in Ch 4-14	Draft of Term Paper (optional): Apr 14
Topic 8: Apr 14-21	Psychological Approaches to Psychopathology	BM&H: Ch 3, pp 90-100, plus designated pages only in Ch 4-14	
Topic 9: Apr 26-May 5	Social-Environmental Approaches to Psychopathology	BM&H: designated pages only in Ch 4-14, Ch 15	Term Paper: May 5
Finals Week	Review all	Review all	Quiz #3 on Topics 7-9 and Final Exam: TBA during Finals

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Grading in this course involves a point system, with each of the various course requirements worth a designated number of points (see Table below). In general, to succeed in this course, you should expect

to devote at least 3-4 hours per week outside of class, on average, to keeping up with all these requirements.

Attendance and Participation

Regular class attendance is expected, and attendance and participation will earn bonus points (see below). I make no provision for excused absences other than those due to conflicts with university obligations.

When in class, please observe the following rules of classroom etiquette: turn off cell phones and pagers; listen respectfully to the instructor or other students who are talking, and do not engage in side conversations; do not consume food or drink during class; use a laptop computer only with permission from the instructor; arrive on time and do not leave early; take any rubbish with you, and if you move your chair, please return it to its proper position at the end of class.

Students should plan to always complete the assigned readings prior to the first class on the topic.

Case Studies

To promote *reflection and analysis*, each student will be asked to write a brief (no more than 2 pages, 500 words) case study for 3 different cases chosen from the assigned chapters in Meyer, Chapman & Weaver, one each from those assigned for Topics 3, 4, and 5, and due on the dates shown above. In your case study you will do the following, *entirely in your own words*:

- Begin with a quick summary of the person's name and whatever demographics you have (e.g., age, race/ethnicity, marital status, etc.).
- Identify the DSM-IV diagnosis given by Meyer et al.
- Consulting the DSM criteria as needed, describe the characteristics of the case that seem to be sufficient to justify the diagnosis given (use our textbook, or go to http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/DSM-IV_Codes#Depressive_disorders)
- Describe any alternative diagnosis that you think might be either a better fit or might also be applicable or that at least might need to be considered as a possibility (what clinicians call a "rule out")

Quizzes and Exams

To promote *comprehension and application*, there will be three 25-minute multiple-choice quizzes, at the end of Topics 3, 6, and 9. These exams are not cumulative; each will cover approximately one-third of the course, focusing on the readings from the Butcher et al. and Meyer texts. Quizzes 1 and 2 will be given on the first day of coverage for Topics 4 and 7; Quiz 3 will be scheduled during Finals Week. In addition, there will be a comprehensive essay-style Final Exam covering the entire course. The date for our Final is assigned by the Registrar; do not make travel plans in May until you know your Final Exam schedule.

Make-up Policy: I will allow make-ups of missed quizzes *only* if students can provide suitable documentation of a medical or family emergency, and the student missing a quiz must contact me to arrange for the make-up (e-mail preferred) *before the quiz is graded and returned to students* (usually the next class day. There will be no make-up or early availability of Quiz #3 and the Final, so do not make travel plans before you know our Final Exam schedule.

Term Paper

To promote *critical thinking*, each student will submit a 5-6 page paper that examines one specific theory relevant to identifying the possible causes of a particular aspect of psychopathology. Whenever you begin to think about possible term paper topics, you should share your ideas with me to make sure that you are selecting an appropriate topic, and I also want you to share some possible high quality references—at least 2 or 3—that you hope to be able to use. I will be requesting a brief proposal from you early in the course.

The paper itself should consist of three parts. First, you should provide some background information about the area of psychopathology you have chosen: descriptive characteristics, DSM criteria, statistics, etc. Second, you should describe and discuss the specific theory about possible causation you have chosen to investigate and present supporting information, including the opinions of experts in the field and the results of scientific studies that support your theory, including information taken from at least one research study published in a professional or scientific journal. Finally, you should offer a well-reasoned conclusion, based on your critical evaluation of the information you have presented. Additional information about this requirement as well as some guides for locating good reference materials and for writing good papers will be posted to the course website.

For this paper, you have the opportunity to submit a draft by April 14. If you do, I will review and return the paper within a week, and you then will have the opportunity to use my feedback and to discuss the paper with me to enable you to make appropriate revisions. Final drafts of papers are due by the last day of classes, May 5.

FINAL GRADE

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Points</i>
Case Studies (20 each)	60
Quizzes (3 @ 30 each)	90
Final Exam	75
Term Paper	75
TOTAL	300
Attendance/Participation bonus	15

A total of 270 points or better (90%) will earn an A, 261-269 an A-, 249-260 a B+, 240-248 a B, 231-239 a B-, 219-230 a C+, 210-218 a C, 201-209 a C-, 189-200 a D+, and 180-188 a D; a total below 180 will result in a failing grade of F.

VII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Honesty

You must work independently on all requirements. Any exam or paper that shows evidence that you have collaborated with one another, or have copied from someone else's work, will receive a 0 and you will be referred for disciplinary action, in accordance with university policies as set forth at http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/academic_dishonesty.htm.

Accommodations and Support

Students with disabilities need to work through the [UML Office for Disability Services](#). There are also many resources available through the [UML Centers for Learning](#), including peer tutors. Other supports are available through the [Student Counseling Center](#).

Student Complaints

UMass Lowell is committed to the fair treatment of all its students by faculty, staff, and other students. If you feel you have been unfairly treated, your rights are described at http://www.uml.edu/catalog/undergraduate/policies/student_complaints.htm.

Safety

UMass Lowell strives to provide a safe and secure environment for all its students and employees. In any emergency, UMass Lowell police can be reached by dialing x2911 or e-mail to police@uml.edu.