

340 01 Abnormal Psychology Karlin

## **Syllabus followed by the planned class schedule**

ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY (830:340:01; index 03752)

Fall, 2021

Class time: TuTh4, 1:00 – 2:20. Online

Professor R. Karlin ([rakarlin@psych.rutgers.edu](mailto:rakarlin@psych.rutgers.edu))

Office hours: Tu & Thursdays 2:30 – 3:00 (Starting 9/9)

Phone and text: 609-947-5493

Messages: Please use email for messages. If it is urgent, please text me.

T.A. TBA

Email: TBA

Office Hour: TBA

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK**

Susan Nolen-Hoeksema's *Abnormal Psychology, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition*. The book is available from the Barnes and Nobles Rutgers Bookstore at 100 Somerset St. in downtown New Brunswick. There are a couple of formats for text book. At the bookstore, the loose leaf copy of the text is available for purchase (new **\$131**, used **\$98**) and rental (new **\$118**, used **\$80**). An e-book is also available there for \$84. Amazon has somewhat less expensive prices including a kindle version for about \$50.

You will not need the MHeducation “connect” software. It is available from McGraw Hill, I believe, if you want it.

## **WEB RESOURCES ON SAKAI**

A variety of materials will be available on the course Sakai website. Most can be found with the resources tab on the course website. For example, there are the slides for each of the book's chapters we are covering. Also, there are some papers that are required reading.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES.**

(a) to provide students with an integrative overview of the field of

abnormal psychology and major psychological problems and disorders;

(b) to familiarize students with the multiple causes of psychopathology as viewed from a number of different theoretical perspectives;

(c) to illustrate principles of the psychotherapy for different problems;

(d) to provide an integrative view of research in the area of abnormal behavior;

(e) to discuss intervention strategies for psychological disorders;

(f) to promote critical thinking skills in the area of abnormal psychology

To satisfy criteria (f), you will often have to hold two conflicting ideas in your head simultaneously. For example, we will often discuss “disorders” as if they were “real things.” However, psychological disorders are, generally, not “things” in the same way a bicycle or a broken arm is a “thing.” They are stereotypes put together by experts on a committee. Such stereotypes are very useful if used judiciously. And you must know them to be able to talk to other people in this field. But .... (We will discuss the “But” as the course goes on.)

## ATTENDANCE AND SCHOLARLY CONDUCT

Online attendance in class is required. It is your responsibility to come to class, or to otherwise obtain information presented in class from another class member. *Please note that to do well on the exams, you will need to attend class lectures, as some of the material presented in lecture will not be found in your textbook or on the slides. Further, there may be occasional pop quizzes in class.*

I sorry to tell those celebrating Sukkot on September 21 and 23 and those celebrating Milad un Nabi on Tuesday, October 19 that I will be holding class on those days. However, I have tried to schedule the material so that it can all be obtained online.

I further apologize to those celebrating Simchat Torah on September 28. I tried to find a way to avoid an exam on that day but, given the

constraints of other required class activity, could not. If religious reasons preclude your taking the exam on 9/28, please contact your TA to reschedule that exam.

## EXAMS

Our first exam, on September 28<sup>th</sup> will cover chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4 of your text. As in the case of all exams, it will cover all other related activities such as lectures, class discussion and films. The October 21<sup>st</sup> exam will cover chapters 5, 6 and 7 of your text. The November 11<sup>th</sup> exam will cover chapters 8, 9 and 10. The December **TBA** final exam will cover chapters 12 - 14 class discussion and films. We will be omitting Chapters 11, 15 and 16. We will not cover them in class and you are not responsible for them on exams. Your grade total will be based on the sum of your scores on all four exams.

Each and all of these dates may have to be revised. Please get in the habit of checking your email and the Sakai website for these and other announcements. Exams will be accessed online and each will allow one hour for you to answer.

All exams will be a combination of 50 multiple choice and true/false questions. Alternative, hard copy forms of the exam (probably in essay format) will be available for anyone with major connectivity problems.

**Need for extra time:** If you need another time or a longer time to answer multiple-choice and true/false questions, please consult the disabilities office. They will make appropriate arrangements for you.

**Preparing for exams:** Most exams questions come from one or two sources: what the book says and what I say in class. As noted above, this is an evolving field with differing approaches and understandings. I chose our text because I think the late Susan Nolen-Hoeksema created the most balanced textbook in the field. But, as in any introductory text, issues get simplified.

Some of the time, lecture will provide alternative and/or more nuanced views. On exams, I may ask about the difference between the views I express in class and the more introductory level views in your text.

In the past I have drawn about 60-67% of exam questions directly from your text and the remaining 33-40% from films and lectures in class. Therefore, you need both to study the text and come to class or (at the least) review the slides and videos and get detailed notes from fellow students to do well in this class.

**Exam Content:** Note that each of the monthly exams will cover material just studied. Exam 1 will cover the material related to Ch. 1-4 and class, Exam 2 will cover Ch 5-7 and class, Exam 3 will cover Ch. 8- 10 and class and the final covers Ch. 12 - 14 and class.

By the way, occasional hints will be given in class that particular info may appear among those question on exams.

**Going over your exams:** There are only so many good questions that can be asked about these materials. We do not hand back exams. Your TA will have them. If you want to go over your exam, it will be available during your TA's office hours. If you want to debate the correctness of an answer, I will be glad to go over it with you during my online office hours.

By the way, if, on an exam, you are uncertain about the meaning of a question, you will be able to note the problem after the exam. If we were in person and you were to ask us for help, unfortunately you would almost always be told to "do the best you can." Over the years, I have found it impossible to answer such questions without providing an unfair advantage to those who ask them. However, if you see a problem with the wording of a question, send your TA a comment about it. If multiple students have similar problems with the same question, we may give everyone credit. We will also drop it, or at least reword it, for next semester's abnormal class.

**Make-ups:** Except under quite unusual circumstances, make-up exams will be very limited. Makeup exams will usually be in essay format. There are four exams during the semester. Please plan to attend them all.

If you know now that you will be away during the week around an exam for a legitimate reason (e.g. you will be away to play on a university team or you will be celebrating a religious holiday), tell us on or before September 21<sup>st</sup> . If an unplanned problem arises (for example, if you become ill), you should notify your TA at least 24 hours before the exam and have relevant documentation.

Simply not showing for the exam, and then contacting the instructor afterwards with an excuse (however justified), is not a good idea. In that case we will allow you to take a makeup only if you were confronted by extreme circumstances and can provide complete documentation (or if you catch one of us is in a very good mood). For example, you were in a hospital emergency room after a car crash and your cell phone was crushed during the accident. You would then provide a copy of the hospital bill.

Usually, there will be only one scheduled makeup for each exam. It will be up to you to deal with all other obligations and get to that makeup. Again, except for extreme circumstances there are no makeups for missed makeups.

Why the strict rules? Unfortunately, this is much too large a class for us to be very flexible. When I started teaching at Rutgers the maximum number of students in a 300 level course was 35 and I had a full-time TA. Now my classes are routinely 2 to 6 times that size and your TA will also be involved in another course.

## EXTRA CREDIT

Extra credit is available by completing book reviews. You may review up to two books from those listed below. Each book review should be about 5 double-spaced pages. You should provide a good

overview of the book as well as the answers to questions showing you have thought about the book, not just turned the pages (e.g., What did you learn? How did it relate to ideas presented in the text or in class? Did it raise other interesting questions for you?).

You will receive up to 3 points for each review you complete up to a maximum of 6 points of total extra credit. (Grading will be: Good = 3 points, OK = 1 point, No good = 0 points). Sometimes extra points will make half a grade difference, sometimes they won't. It depends on the cut points on the curve and your total score after EC is added.

By the way, you can't change the grading curve by doing extra credit. We set the cutpoints for A, B+ ...D before we add extra credit. Then, if the extra credit takes you past a cutpoint, great. So, your getting extra credit can only help you. It can't change the curve and penalize your classmates.

I view extra credit is an individual endeavour. If we receive multiple similar reviews, OK = 1 point will be the best grade available on each of them. So, an extra credit review that seemed good will have its grade changed to ok if it is thought to be one of a set.

Here is a list of books that qualify for this purpose. Almost all the books noted below are available inexpensively in paperback on Amazon or other online bookstores when I last looked. Only books on this list qualify for extra credit.

Atwood, G. & Stolorow, R. 1979. *Faces in a cloud: Intersubjectivity in personality theory*. Lanham. MD: Jason Aronson. (210 pages.)

Erikson, E. 1980. *Identity and the life cycle*. NY: Norton (191 pages.)

Fairburn, C. 1995. *Overcoming binge eating*. NY: Guilford Press. (246 pgs.)

Fisher, R., Ury, W. & Patton, B. 1991. *Getting to YES: 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. NY: Penguin Press. (200 pages.)

Frank, J. 1974. *Persuasion and healing: Revised edition*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP. (377 pages. You can stop at page 261, if you like. This is not the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition which was by Frank and Frank.)

Freud, S. 1965. *Dora: An analysis of a case of hysteria*. NY: Macmillan (157 pages.)

Jamison, K. 1996. *An unquiet mind: A memoir of moods and madness*. NY: Random House. (223 pages.)

Jung, C. 1963. *Memories, dreams and reflections*. NY: Random House. (430 pages. You can stop at page 237, if you like.)

Kagan, J. 2013. *The human spark: The science of human development*. NY: Basic Books. (333 pages. You can stop on page 256, if you like.)

Kirsch, I. 2010. *The emperor's new drugs: Exploding the antidepressant myth*. NY: Basic Books. (228 pages.)

Margulies, S. 2001. *Getting divorced without ruining your life*. NY: Simon and Schuster. (367 pages. Read only 9 – 185 and 214-287 if you like.)

Perls, F. 1970. *Gestalt therapy verbatim*. NY: Bantam Books. (306 pages. Read only pages 77-306 if you like.)

Woolfolk, R. 2015. *The value of psychotherapy: The talking cure in the age of clinical science*. NY: Guilford Press. (190 pages)

Yalom, I. 2002. *Love's executioner*. NY: Basic books (295 pages, easy read)

**Extra credit book reviews will be accepted only until midnight on November 22nd.** Reviews handed in after that time will not be considered for extra credit. Please send 3 copies of each review: email one of them to me, email one to the TA and place one in your dropbox on the sakai dropbox tab.

We plan no other type of extra credit. But there is always the possibility of some research project coming to class and soliciting students from our class.

#### TRIGGER WARNINGS:

This course is about abnormal psychology. Discussions of anxiety, depression, schizophrenia and the like can be disturbing.

My lecture on dieting and eating disorders has upset a few students. Even less frequently students have become uncomfortable in regard to discussions of sexual disorders and couple conflict. I have posted trigger warnings about these two lectures in the class schedule. I am sure that occasionally other material can be upsetting to some. That is the nature of the material.

If, for personal reasons, you can not attend a class, please go over the text and slide material on a topic. We will do whatever we can to help. If the material is too upsetting for that, please let me know so that we can arrange alternative testing.

#### ACADEMIC DISHONESTY.

Any student caught cheating on an exam and/or plagiarizing extra credit assignments will be immediately reported to the appropriate Dean's office. If you have any questions, the University's academic integrity policy, to which this class will adhere, can be reviewed at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-at-rutgers/>.

#### CLASSROOM CULTURE

**Statement on Disabilities:** Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation. Please



see <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

**Names and Pronouns:** Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will be glad to honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. Incidentally, during my recent review of the slides I found that some of the older slides use binary pronouns. I will try to change them as the semester goes on.

**Respect for Diversity:** It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated.

## COURSE GRADE AND CURVING

Your grade will be based on the cumulative points you earn from all exams and any extra credit points you earn. Keep in mind that you can earn an A in the course without doing extra credit.

Although we are trying to assess the same things, some year's exam questions are harder than other years. If this year's exams prove especially hard and produce unusually low point totals, some curving

will occur.

Please remember that curving can only help you, not hurt you. We only curve grades up, not down. Also, please note that extra credit is only added after cutpoints for the curve are chosen. That is, we set the cutpoints for grades of A, B+, B, C+, C and D **before** extra credit points are added to anyone's scores. Thus, the cutpoints are set before we add in extra credit. Your EC cannot hurt your classmates' grades, it can only help yours.

## **PLANNED CLASS SCHEDULE**

This will almost certainly change as we go along. Please keep checking the website and class announcements from Sakai.

9/2 Class business: Go over syllabus together. Film: *Three approaches to psychotherapy, Part 1 - Rogers*.

Carl Rogers demonstrates a classic form of psychotherapy. The film is from the mid 1960s, but is still relevant today. **We will watch and discuss this film during class hours because it is worth it.**

**Assigned: 1.)** Explore resources tab on Sakai. Get the textbook.  
2. Read Ch.1 and review Ch.1 slides in the resources section on the class website on sakai.

## **9/7 NO CLASS**

9/9 **Brief discussion:** Rogers film **Lecture:** Chapter 1. The concept of abnormality and its problems: History and Reality. Has there been real progress from 1700 to now? If so, why do "primitive" societies seem to do at least as well as we do with severely impaired people? The shame of institutions and the shame of deinstitutionalization: why it needed to happen and what resulted. What is the difference between an asylum and a prison? In the US, what do we see when we compare rates of psychiatric hospitalization and incarceration in prisons over time? Problems don't postulate solutions.

**Assigned:** Read Ch. 2 and review slides

9/14 **Lecture:** Chapter 2. The diathesis (vulnerability) + stress model. The basic anatomy and physiology of the brain. Auto immune disorders and endocrine problems. Genes and the environment: inheritance and activation. Tom Insel on lack of progress.

**Assigned:** Read Ch. 3 and review slides

**9/16 NO CLASS**

9/21 **Lecture:** Chapter 3. Assessment of psychopathology. Psychological testing. MMPI, Behavioral Observation and the functional analysis of behavior, IQ. Highly questionable tests such as the Myers-Briggs and the Rorschach Inkblot Test.

**Assigned:** Read Chapter 4 and review slides

9/23 **Lecture:** Ch 4: Research strategies: Benefits and problems. Case studies. Correlational research and its problems. The logic of experimentation. Outcome research: Double blind designs and RCTs and their problems. Alternatives to RCTs.

**Assigned:** Review for exam.

9/28: **Exam 1.** Ch. 1 – 4, class and films. Please see syllabus and Announcements on Sakai for further details

9/30: **Lecture and film clips:** Anxiety disorders Chapter 5 Part 1: RUN!! Real safety. When exposure does and doesn't work: Acute and post-traumatic stress disorders. PTSD has myriad complications (even without dealing with complex grief problems). A soldier's problem - what happens when you are the one who creates the trauma instead of the one who is traumatized? Specific Phobias, Panic disorder with and without agoraphobia.

10/5 **Lecture:** Ch 5: Part 2: Anxiety disorders not easily treated with

exposure: GAD and Social anxiety disorders. Also, not so ordinary stress responding: OCD. OCD can have purely physical roots. Or not. Exposure and OCD.

**Assigned:** 1. Read Chapter 6 and review slides.

10/7: **Lecture:** Ch. 6- Somatoform disorders as puzzles. Chronic Pain syndromes. The mind has effects on the body but the body has far stronger effects on the mind. Pain syndromes. My own early case of pseudocyesis (false pregnancy). Autoimmune disorders. Psychosis or (underdiagnosed) delirium. Why somatic symptoms as opposed to other stress related reactions. Illness anxiety disorder (care seeking or care avoidant). How can you realistically reduce anxiety. Boutique or other trusted doctors. Forgetting your keys vs. forgetting what your keys are for.) Conversion disorder: glove anesthesia vs carpal tunnel syndrome.

10/12 **Lecture:** Dissociative disorders: A not so brief history of the memory wars. The Karlin and Orne and Geraerts et al. articles. Blaming someone outside the therapy dyad often does harm, not good. Dissociative Identity Disorder: Problems with this diagnosis. Film clips from *Three Faces of Eve* and *Sybil* featuring each key trauma. The possibility of 3 personalities vs. the impossibility of 16 personalities. Factitious disorder and malingering. Malingering in the forensic context.

**Assigned:** Read Ch 7 and review slides.

10/14 & 10/19 **Lectures:** Ch. 7 Mood disorders. The phenomenology of depression (Hint: it is not, basically, sadness.) Sherwin Nuland and ECT. Views at odds with your textbook: RCTs and the fight for and against orthodoxy. Outcome research on antidepressants: As usual money does not talk, it screams. Visions of mania  
The work of Edwin Shneidman. Psychological autopsy and psychache. More on suicide and self-harm. If it can be discussed it may well be able to be managed.

**10/21 Exam 2.** Chapters 5-7, films and class.

**Assigned:** Read Ch 8 and review slides.

10/26 & 10/28 **Lectures:** Schizophrenia and how to hate it.

Antipsychotic meds and long-term outcomes. (Is it possible to have an outcome much better than sitting on the porch of a group home?)

**Film clips:** Ted talks: Elyn Saks on an unusually successful life with schizophrenia. Eleanor Langdon on hearing voices. Varying forms of schizophrenia and delusional disorder. The problem with being a smart schizophrenic. Film clips (if time) from *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

**Assigned:** Review slides and read Ch. 9

11/2 & 11/4: **Lectures:** The personality disorders: What is me and what is a disorder with which I must contend? The easy ones – Clusters A and C. The not so easy ones – Cluster B. Borderline, histrionic and narcissistic personality disorders. Lots of film clips, mostly brief.

**Assigned:** Review slides and read Chapter 10

11/9 **Lecture:** Brain Disorders: Autism, Alzheimer's and delirium.

Autism and the MMR vaccine: An untrue rumor with consequences.

Films –Autism: Applied behavior analysis (ABA). 1<sup>st</sup> seventeen minutes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGhIcAnBQZ4>

Alzheimer's: Forgetting your keys vs. forgetting what your keys are for. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NGxsIzRseWE>

Delirium, the most underdiagnosed diagnosis. (Film Clip, if available)

**Assigned:** Review for third exam

**11/11 Exam 3** Ch. 8-10, class and films

**Assigned:** Read Chapter 12

**TRIGGER WARNING:** In the last part of the course, we cover dieting and eating disorders, sexual issues and drug use. In the past, students have been made uncomfortable with one or more of these topics. If you might be uncomfortable, please briefly review the descriptions of the lectures. If you cannot attend any or all of these classes because of discomfort, please review the chapter, films and slides at your own pace. If going over the written and/or film material is too disturbing for you, please let me know before class. We will create an alternative final exam, probably in essay format, that will allow you to skip the disturbing material.

**Please remember, ALL EXTRA CREDIT PROJECTS MUST BE IN YOUR DROP BOX BY MIDNIGHT ON 11/22 TO GIVE US TIME TO READ AND GRADE THEM**

11/16 & 11/18 **Lecture:** Adult dieting – a problematic activity. (Can seriously overweight people who diet and exercise really lose significant amounts of weight (>15-20 pounds) if they really want to and have enough will power? The importance of craving. The limits and risks of dieting and keeping weight off (or not). Yo-yo dieting. Latest alternative (perhaps) = bariatric surgery. But it is not without problems. The stigma of obesity. Treating bulimia and binge eating. Anorexia: 20% of the most “successful” dieters die.

**Assigned:** Read Ch.13 and review slides.

11/23 & 11/30 **Lecture:** 1. Easy, pleasant, masturbatory treatments for premature ejaculation and female orgasmic dysfunction. 2. Sensuality: Did you forget being sensual (like most other people) after “graduating” to sexual intercourse? 3. Research and suggestions about close dyadic relationships 4. The many variations on sexual orientation and (hopefully) our approaching the end to horrific reactions to differences. Sexual dysfunctions. The paraphilias.

**11/25 NO CLASS**

12/2/& 12/7 **Lecture:** The drug war: Lost before it started. (In my view, the drug war has been even more unbelievably expensive,

destructive, historically absurd and pointless than our other wars over the last 60 years.

2. Amending the U.S. Constitution and then amending it again to put it back the way it was: The lessons of Prohibition

3. Question: Which are the bad drugs? Is it the ones with the most horrifying long term effects: Nicotine and alcohol? Or the ones that make you a nasty person, such as the amphetamines? Or is those that make you less fit for some of modern life, like the opiates?

4. Fentanyl and why it kills lots of people.

5. Minimizing harm and medically assisted treatment for opiate addictions: morals vs medicine. We are legalizing marijuana. What about legalizing the recreational use of heroin?

6. Question: Public opinion: what happened to the crack epidemic and the street crime catastrophe that accompanied it?

7. The subjective effects of illegal and legal drugs and their treatment.

**Addiction and craving.** Abstinence vs. occasional drug use:

Cigarettes, and alcohol as models. The importance of craving and extinction.

12/9: **Lecture:** Loose ends and summary. Another psychotherapy film, if time.

**TBA Final Exam.** Chapters 12-14, films and class.