

SYLLABUS ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

#81914, 830:340:B7, Summer Session I, 2012

MeetingTime: M,W; Mondays and Wednesdays, 6:00 – 9:15 pm
Place: HH-A7, Hardenbergh Hall, College Avenue Campus

Instructor: Professor Jan Mohlman, Ph.D.
Email: jmohlman@rci.rutgers.edu

Office location: TBA
Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 5:00 to 6:00 pm or by appointment.

Syllabus: You are responsible for all the information contained in this syllabus, and for all changes to the syllabus that I announce in class or post on the website. You must read this syllabus thoroughly and refer to it throughout the term.

Email and Sakai website:

The Sakai site is used to communicate with you and provide tools for the class, <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal>. I will post slides for each lecture at least an hour ahead of time, and you should print them out and bring to class with you. Please check the Sakai site at least every other day for updates. All handouts, announcements, study guides etc. will also be posted on Sakai. Please check the Sakai site first before emailing me if you need any class documents. I will do my best to respond to emails on the same day I receive them, but I can't promise that I will always be able to do this.

Required Text: Barlow, D. & Durand, M. (2008) *Abnormal Psychology: An Integrative Approach* (6th edition). I recommend buying a used copy from NJ Books – this book might not be available at the Rutgers Bookstore. You do not need the CD that comes with the book. You do not need to bring your book to class. You do not need to purchase any separate study guides. Don't pay any attention to signs in the bookstore telling you that you need the study guide – no additional books are needed for this class.

Course Overview and Objectives

This course provides an introduction to the field of abnormal psychology. First, we will discuss definitions of abnormal psychology and the diagnosis and assessment of emotional disorders. The most commonly occurring disorders will be covered with an emphasis on phenomenology (the experience of the individual experiencing the disorder), etiology (the possible causes of the disorder), and contemporary approaches to treatment. Special attention will be paid to controversial topics and current trends in the study of abnormal psychology, such as the importance of research in developing effective treatments. I have worked in this field as a clinical psychologist for 20 years, and can tell you much from my personal experiences as well.

Exam Dates: There are three noncumulative exams in this class on the following dates: **WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, MONDAY, JUNE 25, and MONDAY, JULY 2.** Please make notes of these dates in your calendar, and plan to begin studying well in advance of the exam date. Each exam will cover material from six or seven lectures. These are regular exams given during the regular class time; there are no cumulative midterms or final exams in this class. No grades will be dropped - your grade in the class is based on these three exams, which are worth 50 points each.

Extra Credit: There is one extra credit point on each exam. **Do not** ask me for additional extra credit opportunities – you will not be offered any, *even if your final score in the class is just one or two points away from the next highest grade.*

Classroom Etiquette

I am impressed when students ask thoughtful questions about course material, or respond to questions I pose to the class during lectures. It is best if you ask questions in class as opposed to over email, because that way other students who have the same question will benefit from my response.

When in the classroom, you must sit in a seat, as opposed to sitting on the floor or standing in the back of the room. **Please** turn off cellphones, pagers, etc. when you enter the classroom. In a large classroom such as

this, it is important to be considerate of your fellow students at all times. No one is ever allowed to sit on the floor or in the aisles due to Rutgers' fire regulations.

I cannot meet with students to answer questions right before or after class. Thanks in advance for honoring this policy.

How To Do Well in This Class

It can be challenging to remember material from seven lectures for each exam. To do well in this class, you must be an "active learner." Please ask questions in class if you do not understand or want to know more about something. You are strongly advised to keep up with the reading assignments - you should plan to do at least a little bit of reading each day, and certainly make time to *think about* the material every day. It is also recommended that you use learning aids, such as flash cards, study groups, etc.

The Sakai website contains all the slides that I will show in class along with handouts. You should print out the slides and handouts from each assigned chapter and bring them to class with you; lectures tend to move quickly and the slides give you a head start on note taking. You should bring to class the slides that correspond to the chapter we are covering that day; however if we fall behind or jump ahead of the timeline shown later in this syllabus, you can adjust accordingly.

For exams, you should know major points from lectures and assigned reading, both sides of controversial issues, how to differentiate similar disorders, different theoretical perspectives on treatment (for example, medical/biological model, cognitive or behavioral treatment). On exams you must read every item very carefully. I do not include 'trick' questions on my exams; however, I will expect you to choose between answers that are somewhat similar to indicate the very best answer choice. I will always provide thorough study guides for exams.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. You should attend every class, since lectures contain material that is not found in the book. If you should happen to miss a class, please do not write to me or call me to find out what you missed. I cover course information once; unfortunately there is not enough class time to repeat material, so please make a few contacts in the class who can fill you in on what you missed. You are also welcome to audiotape lectures. We watch videos and DVDs fairly often in this class and I cannot lend videos to students, so it is also important to find out whether any videos were shown on the day you missed, and what topics the videos covered. University religious holiday policy is at <http://scheduling.rutgers.edu/religious.shtml>.

How Not To Do Well in This Class

Here are some common mistakes that students make that jeopardize their performance in this class: Don't come to class. Put off reading until the last minute. Don't think much about course material after you leave the class. Memorize terms without developing a deeper understanding of the material. Ignore one side of a controversy or theoretical orientation. Cheat on a test (academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and all cases of suspected cheating will be referred to the dean). Please do not do any of these things.

Current Academic Integrity Policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml>

Violations include: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity.

Grading

Since there are relatively few grading opportunities, it will be crucial that you prepare thoroughly for each exam. Your course grade will be based on three exams, each worth 50 points. You will receive study guides for each test and I will give you a good idea of what to study. Exams will include multiple choice, matching, true/false items, and occasionally, a case that you will have to diagnose and treat. Each exam will include one extra credit point. It is considered **bad behavior** to ask for additional extra credit or ask for a higher grade without any legitimate basis for doing so – your T.A. and I ignore all such requests the first time; however, the second time you ask I will begin to **deduct** points from your score.

Any grade discrepancies must be addressed **within two class periods** of when you receive your exam scores; no one is allowed to request changes on exam scores beyond the two-week point or at the end of the term. The proper way to handle a grade dispute is to first email me a brief summary of the problem. I will schedule a meeting with you if the situation warrants it.

Grading Scale (this scale does not change and is not curved):

Point breakdown (sum of scores on three exams plus extra credit):

138-150 = A

112-116 = C+

79 and below = F

133-137 = B+

96-111 = C

Any student who is dissatisfied with my grading policies, grading scale, or anything else in this syllabus is strongly encouraged to take another section of this class. There is nothing I will be able to do for you if you are dissatisfied with your final grade, so please be forewarned. Some of you will miss an A or B by just one point, and there will not be anything I can do for you under those circumstances. The best way to ensure that you will receive a high grade is to come to class every day, be an active participant, and keep up with the reading.

Make-Up Exams

Students are allowed *one* make-up exam, and only under **extraordinary** circumstances (i.e., a **verifiable** emergency accompanied by a doctor's or dean's note). One make-up exam will be given **only if you give me advance notice** that you will not be able to take it in class with everyone else and I then give you written permission to take the makeup. You will only be able to take the makeup *if you present relevant documentation of the emergency*. This usually means a letter from your dean, an accident report, doctor's note, etc. If your emergency necessitated that you leave town, then you must present documentation of the emergency, NOT of the fact that you left town. In other words, showing me an airline boarding pass is NOT adequate documentation of an emergency.

I will be willing to reschedule your exam only if I receive notice **before** the actual in-class exam, and documentation either before or on the day of the makeup. In other words, if I do not hear from you and you are not in class to take the exam, you will not be allowed to make it up; but if you tell me in advance that you will not be present that day, I will reschedule it for you if I think the situation warrants it and I give you written permission for a makeup. This rule is waived *only if there has been a dire emergency that was unpredictable and can be verified through documentation* (death in family, serious accident, or other major crisis). **Unexpected travel plans, car trouble, heavy workloads, personal problems, sporting or military events, or minor illnesses are not acceptable reasons for missing an exam, so plan your schedules accordingly.**

Anyone who has to make up an exam must arrange this with me well ahead of time.

Students with Special Needs

Students requesting special testing accommodations (e.g., extra time, separate space) will always need to make these arrangements with their counselor/coordinator from the Office of Student Disabilities. In a class this size I am unable to provide such accommodations but am happy to work with coordinators to provide them for you. Be sure to notify your coordinator of your needs at least *one week* before the exam date. Also please note that if you take the exam at a different location, I will not be available to answer your questions about test items, which can be a disadvantage.

Friendly Tips From Your Instructor

Participation in class discussions is essential, and I take note of students who are active contributors in class. However, please do not get carried away in the heat of our discussions and disclose personal information that you might later regret. Many people wish to share their own experiences with emotional disorders; this is fine, but you must keep all stories brief and free of identifying details.

Occasionally, personal problems take on greater intensity for students taking Abnormal Psychology classes. Less frequently, a student might become convinced that he or she has many of the disorders being studied in class. The majority of people who take this class probably do not have many of these disorders. However, if you happen to experience personal problems or believe that you may have an emotional disorder, it is important that you seek help.

Whereas I am happy to offer help for academic problems you are having (such as trouble keeping up with reading assignments), I will not be able to provide psychotherapy for personal problems (such as depression, a relationship breakup, or a family member's alcohol problem). Therefore, you should go to the clinic in the Rutgers Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology or the University Counseling Center to discuss personal problems. Contact information is on my website. I am more than happy to help any student schedule an appointment at either of these locations if the need arises, so please don't hesitate to ask.

SAS Learning Goals: Psychology

Students will know the leading terms, concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology. Students will apply basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis and interpretation, to standard lab problems. Those students pursuing research careers will also be able to design new experiments, use a subset of modern laboratory techniques, analyze information, and communicate their research effectively in reports that follow American Psychology research report style. Students will use critical

thinking, skeptical inquiry, and, when possible, the scientific approach to ask, answer and understand questions related to behavior and mental processes. Students will apply psychological concepts and content to become engaged citizens. Some students will work in an applied setting under the supervision of trained mental health professionals and be able to integrate academic concepts and ideas with personal observations and provide programmatic and case reports.

COURSE TIMELINE, READINGS**DATE** **TOPIC** **(read by next class/bring slides to next class)**

Wed., 5/30 Welcome to the class! Syllabus review. Short class tonight. CH. 1, models.doc

Mon., 6/4 What is abnormal psychology? Definition of abnormal behavior, theoretical perspectives: medical, psychodynamic, cognitive behavioral, biopsychosocial. Historical perspective, social issues, importance of research. CH. 3

Wed., 6/6 Our diagnostic system – the DSM-IV, assessment of mental disorders Psychological testing. CH. 14
Child abuse.ppt

Mon., 6/11 Child abuse
Disorders of childhood intro to anxiety.ppt

Wed., 6/13 *Exam 1**
Anxiety disorders, Part 1 CH. 5

Mon., 6/18 Anxiety disorders, Part 2 CH. 7, major depression.doc
more on depression.doc, suicide.doc
Learned helplessness.pdf

Wed., 6/20 Mood disorders, suicide CH. 6, dissociative disorders.doc

Mon., 6/25 *Exam 2**
Somatoform disorders CH. 13
Dissociative disorders

Wed., 6/27 Schizophrenia, Psychotic disorders CH. 10

Mon., 7/2 Sexual disorders
EXAM 3 – NO MAKEUPS ON THIS EXAM

Information on syllabus is subject to change. It is your responsibility to keep up with all changes to the syllabus. I hope you enjoy the class, and please let me know if there is anything I can do to make this a more rewarding experience for you.

Please complete this page and turn it into the professor on the first or second day of class. Thank you!

I am (check one): Male _____ Female _____

I am (check one):

Freshman ____ Sophomore _____ Junior _____ Senior _____ Other (describe)

I am a psychology major: Yes _____ No _____

Please answer the following questions about this class.

1) I am taking this class because...

- a) I just needed to take any abnormal psych class, and this is the one I got into.
- b) I needed to take a class in this time slot, and this class fit my schedule.
- c) I wanted to take abnormal psych, and would have taken it with any professor I could get.
- d) I wanted to take abnormal psych specifically with Professor Jan Mohlman.

If you picked 'd' above, please answer these additional questions...

2) How did you hear about Professor Mohlman's abnormal psych class?

- a) From a friend or roommate.
- b) From the psychology advisor.
- c) From another professor. If you pick this option, please write the name of the professor who referred you to this class on the line below.

- d) From 'rate my professor' or a similar website.
- e) Other (please explain on the lines below).

THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING! Please return to Prof. Mohlman.

SUPPLEMENTARY READING

Just for fun!

The Boy Who Couldn't Stop Washing by Judith Rappoport

This book is a series of accounts of obsessive compulsive disorder in children and adults. Some are written by patients, with commentary from Rappoport, a prominent researcher of OCD.

The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat by Oliver Sachs

Fascinating stories of neurological phenomena such as spatial neglect, agnosia, etc. A great book for those who want to learn more about specific functions (and malfunctions) of the brain.

Phantoms in the Brain by V. S. Ramachandran and Sandra Blakeslee

An amazing book that explains unusual phenomena in neuroscience such as phantom limb syndrome and bizarre delusions.

Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers by Robert M. Sapolsky

Entertaining essays on stress, coping, and disease. Sapolsky's other books are very good too (e.g., *The Trouble With Testosterone*, *A Primate's Memoir*).

Mozart's Brain and the Fighter Pilot by Richard Restak

A N.Y. Times bestselling book containing mental exercises that just might make you smarter...

The Emotional Brain by Joseph LeDoux

Emotions and neurobiology for the layman. A very interesting read, especially the sections on fear and anxiety, which is the author's area of expertise.

The Man Who Tasted Shapes by Richard Cytowic

A book of vignettes on synaesthesia, the neural condition associated with sensory overlap (e.g., the experience of 'hearing' colors, 'seeing' sounds, or 'tasting' shapes).

What Remains by Carole Radziwill

A moving and intense story of human suffering, grief, and coping with tragic circumstances.

Unbearable Lightness by Portia de Rossi

A surprisingly compelling autobiography that deals with eating disorders, gay and lesbian issues, and the darker side of fame. Highly recommended.

The Glass Castle by Jeanette Walls

The author describes her childhood, which was rife with neglect and abuse. Somehow, however, her chaotic upbringing results in resilience, acceptance, and optimism in adulthood.

Katie.com by Katie Tarbox

A teenage girl's story of her virtual, and eventually face-to-face, encounters with an internet predator.

Electroboy by Andy Behrmann

This highly entertaining book gives the reader a sense of what it's like to be bipolar. Also an interesting chronicle of art forgery and other illicit acts by the author, many of which took place during his manic phases in NY's East Village in the 1980's and 90's.

A Round Heeled Woman by Jane Juska

A 67-year-old's personal ad in the NY Review of Books yields plenty of dates! A study of sexuality and one brave woman's quest for romance and intimacy in later life.

Is Your Parent in Good Hands? by Edward J. Carnot

A sad but very informative story of an older man who is scammed out of thousands of dollars, and his son's desperate attempts to protect his father against subsequent fiduciary abuse by the same hired caretaker.

Wasted by Marya Hornbacher

A book that reveals the lesser-known side of living with a serious eating disorder.

The Quiet Room by Lori Schiller and Amanda Bennett

This book taught me a lot about schizophrenia and related problems, such as drug abuse, homelessness, and suicidality. The author and subject of the book, Lori Schiller, now teaches a class on schizophrenia at Cornell Medical School in NYC.

As Nature Made Him – The Boy Who Was Raised As a Girl by John Colapinto

This is a story of gender identity and the failure of an attempt to artificially reassign gender following a botched circumcision.