Instructor

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Course Description

Welcome to Abnormal Psychology. Many of you may be taking this class as a required course. Others will be taking it as an elective, either for social sciences or health-related professions. Still others may simply have been attracted by the deviant nature of this course description. Whatever your particular motivation, it’s my hope that you will gain something from this course relevant to your interests, even if that amounts only to satisfying a morbid curiosity about abnormality.

By the end of the semester you should understand the various criteria used to determine “Abnormality.” You will also learn something about the historical foundations, assessment, and treatment of deviancy as well as become conversant regarding the description and explanation of a wide range of specific psychotic, neurotic, and behavioral disorders. Lastly, you should begin to appreciate the array of available treatment approaches, together with how much (or how little) can be done to treat specific disorders. This is quite a lot for a single semester. In the end you will be filled with enough “fun facts to know and tell” about the world of deviance to stimulate (or bore) your friends for hours on end.

But this is not the major objective of this course. The major objective is to stimulate thinking. It requires that you understand and integrate a broad spectrum of conceptual and empirical material and that you apply it in a way that helps you to better understand human behavior.

A Short History of the Making of this Course

I have been teaching abnormal psychology since “the earth first cooled” (actually, about 20 years). It’s my favorite course, in part because it draws from my background and experiences in so many ways. When I was an undergraduate psychology major at the University of Florida, it was my favorite course then, as well, and it is part of what made
me want to go on and get my doctorate in psychology, which I received from the
University of Notre Dame. During my doctoral training, I worked in a Veterans
Administration Medical Center, a university counseling center, and a number of
community mental health contexts. I always knew I wanted to become a faculty member
at a university, though, and much of my professional work focused on personality, social
psychology, and psychotherapy. So Abnormal Psychology was a natural for me to teach.
Across the years of teaching Abnormal Psychology, I also began to serve the profession
and the university in a number of other ways. These included serving as the Director of
Training in our APA-approved doctoral program in counseling psychology for 10 years
and serving as the Chair of the Executive Board of the Council of Counseling Psychology
Training Programs in the United States, as well. Currently, I serve as the Graduate
Coordinator in the Department of Psychology at the University of Florida, I also hold an
appointment in the Department of Community Health and Family Medicine, where I help
train medical residents in Family Practice and work with primarily underserved client
populations with a wide range of psychological disorders and difficulties.

I am very excited by the opportunity to bring this course to you in this “hybrid” format.
By “hybrid”, I mean that the course is run online through Web Vista, with optional
weekly discussion sections, as well. The optional in-class meetings are designed to help
deepen, extend, and illustrate the course material. But I will not be introducing any new
material in those sessions that you will be responsible for on your tests. Everything that
you will be responsible for in the course will be available online, with the exception of
one final in-class exam at the end of the semester. Beyond that, all of the course
assignments, tests, and readings are entirely online. With your textbook in hand, you will
be able to progress through the course wherever you may be, completing and submitting
your assignments interactively and checking the grade book to see where you stand.

I should tell you that I began with some qualms about delivering the course in this way
because I was concerned that I might not be able to convey the intense, personal nature of
serious emotional distress and disorders, or that the course might be “dry” or “boring” in
the absence of the videos, interactions, and assignments that are usually part of the
classroom course. Yet, as I continued to work on the course, I came to realize it had more
possibilities than I had initially thought, including possibilities that I would not have been
able to include in a conventional, on-site course. In any event, the course you are now
taking part in has a long history. In a very real way, it goes all the way back to my own
early interest in Abnormal Psychology as an undergraduate, and it carries with it my
various clinical and research experience across the years, as well. Most importantly
though, it carries my strong interest in engaging you in this course material, so that you
generate your own excitement for the field and allow your interests to develop in
whatever ways you might like.

Any course in Abnormal Psychology is necessarily a work “in progress” because the field
is changing so rapidly that it is impossible to keep pace with it. That is all the more true
with this course, where I will be adding in additional video and audio streams, and
continuing to enhance the interactivity as things progress. I very much welcome your
comments and suggestions on this, too. So, feel free to contact us at any time with your
thoughts and experiences regarding the course: the more involved you become in the
course, the more you will benefit, and the more you will contribute to further
modifications and developments, as well.

Let me conclude by again welcoming you to the course. If you are excited about the field
of abnormal psychology and are motivated to learn more about it at the end of the course,
then I feel we will have accomplished our purpose. My fondest hope is that you will one
day look back on this course in Abnormal Psychology, as I do the course that I took so
long ago, and marvel at how much the field has again changed in the intervening years,
while your interest in has remained constant.

Course Materials:

Textbook
We will be covering the book according to the attached schedule.

E-Pack - Nutrition and Mental Health & The Complete Practitioner

Compact Clinical Manuals (Extra Credit)

This is an opportunity to develop more in-depth specialty knowledge in one particular
disorder. This term you can choose from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Obsessive
Compulsive Disorder, or Borderline Personality Disorder, according to whichever you
would prefer to learn more about. Once you decide, you will need to order the
appropriate Compact Clinical (see below) and read that book. The Compact Clinicals are
short, 100-page books designed to provide an introductory professional level of
knowledge about a targeted disorder. You can order your Compact Clinical by clicking
on the link below going to the order page. When you have finished reading your Compact
Clinical, simply click on the Quiz associated with that title to complete a 25-item
multiple-choice quiz over that material. You can only do one Compact Clinical book for
extra credit, though (25 pts.)!

Borderline Personality Disorder, ISBN: 1-887537-17-1

PowerWeb Articles
In addition to your textbook readings, you will have a series of nineteen (19) brief
PowerWeb readings, each accompanied by a two (2) point multiple-choice quiz to assess
your comprehension. These readings are already loaded into your course.

Course Structure

One of the major advantages to web-based learning is its flexibility. It provides you with
the opportunity to engage multiple learning styles and you can complete your learning
according to your schedule, since all course materials, assignments, and tests are available to you 24-hours a day. The only constraints with the online version of this course are time/date related: the course is “released” at a set time and date at the beginning of each semester, and also, you must complete it by the end of the term. Specific “start” and “stop” dates will be announced according to the particular semester you are registered for (i.e. there are designated windows to complete quizzes and assignments, after which submissions will either receive a late penalty or not be accepted at all, based on the instructor’s decision). Another constraint is that you must show course “activity” (logging on and taking a test, watching a video, or doing a reading or assignment) of some sort at least once every two weeks. This is to prevent you from falling behind in the course and having to take an “I”, which will convert to an “E” on your transcripts at the end of the subsequent semester. So be sure to keep up!

You will see that the course has been structured into a series of 16 units and that each unit contains a variety of different content. This content might include chapter readings from your primary text, Abnormal Psychology, Internet articles from your PowerWeb readings, or a number of video or interactive activities that you can click on to extend your learning and enhance your experience in the course. In all, you will see that we have incorporated over 25 videos and interactive activities to enhance your learning, in addition to your tests and quizzes, and all of this is at your fingertips, just a click away!

Everything is structured in a very straightforward way to take you from beginning to end in a step-by-step fashion. But, if you have questions or comments along the way, we have assigned a Teaching Assistant (T.A.) to your course. Contact information for your T.A. will be announced at the beginning of the course, and the T.A. will be available for regularly scheduled online office hours for your convenience. If you have any questions or comments at any time, feel free to e-mail us. We are excited to have your participation in this course and we look forward to your contributions to it!

Course Grading

Grading is based on mastery of content, not on a curve. Tests will be based on material presented in the text, the PowerWeb articles, and streaming videos. Your final grade is based on the total number of points you accumulate. A total of 745 points is possible and your grade is determined by the percentage of that total which you earn. The breakdown is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Points</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>671-745</td>
<td>90% and above</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>634-670</td>
<td>85% - 90%</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>596-633</td>
<td>80% - 84%</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Points

**Chapter Quizzes:** Each chapter in your book will be followed by a short multiple-choice quiz. The purpose of the quiz is to provide you with an opportunity to assess your learning and to become familiar with the nature of the content and the types of questions that you will see on each of your four examinations (see Examinations, below). We will be covering 16 Chapters, each accompanied by a 10-point quiz, for a total of 160 chapter quiz points. The quiz due dates will be listed in the calendar.

**The Complete Practitioner Quizzes.** As part of your e-pack, you will receive access to 12 issues of The Complete Practitioner (TCP). TCP provides synoptic updates on recent developments in the assessment, diagnosis and treatment of psychological disorders. Each issue is accompanied by a 10-item multiple choice quiz that is worth 10 possible points (for a total of 120 possible points).

**Mental Health and Nutrition Quiz.** As part of your e-pack, you will receive access to Mental Health and Nutrition, and Internet-based program that overviews the relationship between aspects of nutrition and a range of psychological disorders. The program is associated with a 25-point quiz.

**PowerWeb Quizzes:** In addition to your textbook readings, you will have a series of nineteen (19) brief PowerWeb readings, each accompanied by a two (2) point multiple-choice quiz to assess your comprehension, for a total of 38 PowerWeb quiz points. The due dates for the PowerWeb quizzes will be listed in the calendar.

**Exams:** You will have four exams. Each exam will be made available after the chapter quizzes related to that exam have been completed. Each exam will consist of a 50-item multiple-choice test based on your readings. Each question is worth 2-points for a possible total of 100 points per Exam. You will have 60-minutes to complete the exam. The due dates for the exams will be listed in the calendar.

**Compact Clinical Quiz (Optional Extra Credit):** You have the option of completing one 25-question multiple choice quiz associated with a Compact Clinical book of your choice. Each question will be worth 1 points for a total of 25 points. The due date for the quiz will be listed in the calendar.
Your total breakdown of possible points in the course appears below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quiz Type</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introductory course quiz</td>
<td>2 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Complete Practitioner Quizzes</td>
<td>120 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health and Nutrition Quiz</td>
<td>25 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Chapter Quizzes</td>
<td>160 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 PowerWeb Quizzes</td>
<td>38 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Exam</td>
<td>400 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>725 Points</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The extra-credit points you receive for completing one of the Compact Clinical books will be added to the total number of points to earn in the course to determine your final grade.*

**Academic Honesty Policy**

“We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity.”

Please review the University's honesty policy regarding cheating and use of copyrighted materials on the University web site. Academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.) will not be tolerated and will be handled according to University of Florida policy.