

Adult Abnormal Psychology

Professor: Justin Dainer-Best
“Justin” (he/him)

Spring 2020

Course Number	Time	Location	Office Hours
PSY 210	T/Th 10:10–11:30	RKC 200	Wednesdays, 10:30–11:30

1 Overview

This course is designed to introduce students to adult psychopathology. That is, we will discuss the symptoms and course of the major psychiatric disorders that are diagnosed and treated in adults. We will emphasize a scientific approach to understanding mental illness. This course is concerned with those aspects of the human experience that are **unusual**, **maladaptive**, or **distressing**. We will focus on anxiety, mood, thought, eating, substance use, and personality disorders.

This course will discuss topics that are sensitive or personal for many students. If something discussed in class leaves you feeling upset, please speak to a trusted person about your experience. Further, if you find that you are struggling to cope with some of the topics discussed in class, you may contact Bard Counseling Services.

The course will focus on these mental illnesses through readings, lectures, and class discussion. Students will be invited to discuss topics in class, as well as to react to readings and scientific articles. Although there is some expectation that you will learn the facts and figures upon which psychological science is based, our focus in this course will be on **understanding** and **responding to** course material. Lectures will supplement readings, and will be used to thoroughly examine current thinking in clinical psychology, to provide greater detail on particular topics.

You will be graded with two exams, several written assignments, and a group presentation, all of which are discussed below. Many of the writing assignments will have more detail provided at a later date.

Pre-requisites: Introduction to Psychology

This course fulfills the psychology major’s Cluster A requirement.

2 Readings

This course does not use a textbook. Past courses have required the below (optional) text, and you are welcome to borrow the text from a classmate, or to purchase a copy; it will provide additional information throughout the course. However, the primary focus of your readings will be on articles designed for discussion: primary research articles, meta-analyses, newspaper and magazine articles, podcasts, and occasional textbook chapters. Because these readings will be discussed in class, you should come to class having read them by the date in the schedule below (or on Moodle).

The *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (DSM-5)* is the primary manual for diagnosis, and you will want to refer to it throughout the course. At least one copy will be on reserve in the library during the semester; additionally, you may choose to buy a copy, which will provide additional information and may be of use during the semester (as well as serving as a lovely coffee table book).

Optional text: Hooley, J.M., Butcher, J.N., Nock, M.K., & Mineka, S. (2017). *Abnormal psychology*, 17th ed. Pearson: Boston, MA. (ISBN 0133852059).

Optional text: American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*. (5th ed.). (ISBN-13: 978-0890425558).

3 Grading

Your grades in this course will come from seven different assignments: two exams, four writing assignments, and a group presentation.

All told, you can earn 200 points in this course:

Points	Assignment
50	Exam 1
50	Exam 2
20	Case Study
30	Portrayals of Mental Illness
20	Response Papers (10 points each)
30	Group Presentation
200	(Total)

3.1 Exams

Exams will be made up of questions in which you will be expected to demonstrate your understanding of and ability to apply course materials. You may not make up exams. The first exam will be in class on the date indicated on your syllabus. The second exam will be a take-home essay exam, due through Moodle.

3.2 Writing Assignments

There will be several writing assignments during this course. Papers should be submitted on Moodle as PDFs named with your last name and the assignment name (e.g., “Dainer-Best case study.pdf”). All papers should be submitted before class begins. Late assignments will have an additional 10% of points deducted for every day they are late, e.g., a response paper that is two days late will lose 2 points.

3.2.1 Case Study

You will be asked to write a 3–4 page response to a case vignette provided by the instructor, in which you make an argument for a diagnosis and appropriate treatment recommendations, based on your readings. The case study is due on the date listed on the schedule in your syllabus. Further details will be posted to Moodle.

3.2.2 Fictional Portrayals of Mental Illness

We all read and watch many works of fiction which attempt to represent mental illness. We will read some examples of this in this course. You will be asked to write a 4–5 page essay in which you choose a work of fiction that we have **not** read in class, and use examples from that work, from your textbook, and from the *DSM-5* to explain why it is or is not a good portrayal of mental illness. If you are unsure whether a topic is appropriate, please email me or come to office hours to discuss. (Works which explicitly discuss whether a character is mentally ill, e.g. by having the character receive a diagnosis from a therapist, are not appropriate.) This essay is due on the date listed on the schedule in your syllabus. Further details will be posted to Moodle.

3.2.3 Response Papers

Two response papers of 1–2 pages each are expected during the semester, as responses to the assigned readings. These response papers should critique or in another way respond to the reading. At least one response should be to one of the readings denoted with a typographical dagger†. The other response may be to any of the readings you wish. These response papers should cite sources in APA style, and follow the guidelines of academic integrity. They are due *before class begins* on the day the reading is assigned; responses turned in after the beginning of class will be considered late. **It is your responsibility to turn in these papers without prompting.** At least one of these response papers should be turned in before the mid-term, as indicated on the schedule below.

3.3 Group Presentation

Students will be expected to make a 15-minute group presentation in the second half of the semester, in groups of four students, in which they propose a study as a group. The study will be designed to investigate a mental illness or treatment not discussed in class. The design should be planned as a group; the presentation will be given together. Topics and groups **must** be approved beforehand. Each student should prepare their own materials,

and speak for approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the time—all group members should contribute to creating a cohesive presentation. Presentations will occur in the second half of class for the final two classes.

4 Class Policies

4.1 Accommodations & Accessibility

Bard College is committed to providing equal access to all students. If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please contact me so that we can arrange to discuss. I would like us to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. Together we can plan how best to support your learning and coordinate your accommodations. Students who have already been approved to receive academic accommodations through disability services should share their accommodation letter with me and make arrangements to meet as soon as possible.

If you have a learning difference or disability that may relate to your ability to fully participate in this class, but have not yet met with the Disability Support Coordinator at Bard, you can contact their office by emailing disabilityservices@bard.edu; the Coordinator will confidentially discuss the process to establish reasonable accommodations. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and thus you should begin this process at the beginning of the semester if you believe you will need them. Additionally, as my office in Preston Hall may be physically difficult to access, you may always request to meet with me in another location.

Lastly, it is important to me that we have an open, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students in this course. Please speak with me if you have any concerns or questions regarding issues of diversity, equity, or inclusion in the classroom.

4.2 Attendance

Please be on time to class. Late entrance to the classroom disrupts others.

I expect you to attend class and participate in discussions. If you must miss a class, please let me know by sending me an email explaining your absence.

4.3 Plagiarism

You are required to be familiar with what plagiarism is and is not. You may not present someone else's work as your own without proper citation. You may not copy someone else's work. You may not simply reword text from another source without giving credit. Please cite others' work where relevant, and use your own writing. If you are not sure about the definition of plagiarism, or whether something constitutes plagiarism, please consult with me or with someone at Bard's Learning Commons. Students caught plagiarizing will be reported to the Academic Judiciary Board, will get no credit for the assignment, and may fail the course.

4.4 Cell phones and laptops

Before class, you should silence your cell phone, and you should not be on your phone during class. (Please do not take notes on your phone.) If you prefer to take notes on your computer or tablet, I encourage you to turn off your WiFi whenever possible, or at minimum to enable Do Not Disturb and ignore email and messages. Browsing unrelated materials (including checking your email) is distracting to you and also to the people around you. Not using electronic devices during class is a great way to focus on the matters at hand.

4.5 Late Assignments

Late assignments will immediately lose 10% of their grade, and another 10% for each additional day late. (e.g., a 20-point assignment will lose 2 points after the deadline, and an additional 2 points if turned in more than 24 hours after the deadline.) Exams may not be completed after the deadline. No work may be turned in after the end of the semester.

5 Schedule

The schedule may change over the course of the semester. Changes to assignment dates will be announced via email or Moodle. You are responsible for following the readings, showing up to class prepared for discussion, and turning in assignments on-time.

Date	Topic	Reading	Due
Jan 28	Abnormal Behavior: Definition	Syllabus	
Jan 30	Abnormal Behavior: Definition II	Szasz	
Feb 4	Abnormal Behavior: History	Mars; Bernheimer	
Feb 6	Clinical Assessment (with Prof. Tabb)	Aviv	
Feb 11	Clinical Assessment II	Groth-Marnat†	
Feb 13	Clinical Research Methods	Guglielmi; Gilbert and Irons	
Feb 18	Mood Disorders: MDD	Beck and Haigh†; Wallace	
Feb 20	Mood Disorders: BPD	Jamison; Forney	
Feb 25	Suicide	Brosh; Friend	
Feb 27	Anxiety Disorders: Fear	Ruscio†	
Mar 3	Anxiety Disorders II	Barlow et al.†	
Mar 5	Health Psychology & Stress	Chekroud et al.†	Case Study
Mar 10	PTSD	Finnegan	1 st Response Paper
Mar 12	Midterm Exam		Exam I
Mar 17	Eating Disorders	Vitousek et al.†	
Mar 19	Obesity	Hobbes	Groups/topics

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Date	Topic	Reading	Due
(Mar 24)	<i>No class: Spring Break</i>		
(Mar 26)	<i>No class: Spring Break</i>		
Mar 31	Cross-cultural Clinical Psychology	Betancourt et al.†; Matsuno†	
Apr 2	Alcohol Use Disorders	Sundström et al.†	
Apr 7	Substance Use Disorders		
Apr 9	Schizophrenia	Solomon	
Apr 14	Schizophrenia II		Portrayals
Apr 16	Dissociation; Somatic Symptoms	Lynn et al.†	
Apr 21	Sexual and Gender Identity	Pan et al.; Richards et al.†; Belc	
Apr 23	Personality Disorders	Linehan et al.†	
(Apr 28)	<i>No class: Advising days</i>		
Apr 30	Personality Disorders II	Seabrook	
(May 5)	<i>No psychology classes for Boards</i>		
(May 7)	<i>No psychology classes for Boards</i>		
May 12	Introduction to Treatment	Leichsenring and Leibing†	Groups A & B
May 14	Group Presentations II		Remaining groups
(May 19)	Final Exam due		Exam

† Please refer to section 3.2.3 for more information about response papers. These articles may be used for the specific response paper, as they are peer-reviewed journal articles.

Citations follow for the above-mentioned readings. All PDFs are available on Moodle. If you need alternative versions of readings, please speak to the professor.

Aviv, R. (2011, May). God knows where I am. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2011/05/30/god-knows-where-i-am>

Barlow, D. H., Gorman, J. M., Shear, M. K., & Woods, S. W. (2000). Cognitive-behavioral therapy, imipramine, or their combination for panic disorder: A randomized controlled trial. *JAMA*, *283*(19), 2529–2536. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.283.19.2529>

Beck, A. T., & Haigh, E. A. (2014). Advances in cognitive theory and therapy: The generic cognitive model. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, *10*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-032813-153734>

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Bernheimer, C. (1990). Introduction. In C. Bernheimer & C. Kahane (Eds.), *In Dora's case: Freud—hysteria—feminism* (2nd ed., pp. 1–18). Columbia University Press.

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