

Three Rivers Community College, Spring, 2011  
Abnormal Psychology, Psych K245, DL

Professor: Dov Kugelmass, M.A.

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Office Hours: Mondays; 11:50-12:20 and 5:30-6:30pm

Wednesdays, Fridays 11:50-12:50 and 1:50-2:20. Other times are available by appointment.

Class Tutor:

Individual tutoring available online and on ground by appointment.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** “This course offers an introduction to psychopathology and psychotherapy. A study of emotional disturbance includes: neuroses and personality disorders, psychoses, psychodiagnosis, and psychotherapy with an emphasis on how disorders begin and various treatments that are used. Topics in the course are: the nature of neurosis, anxiety reactions, obsessive-compulsive reactions, depressive reactions, hysteria and psycho-physiological reactions, personality disturbance, sexual deviance, addictions, theories of psychosis, forms of psychosis, somatic therapies, psychoanalytic therapies, behavior therapy, client-centered therapy, and group therapies.” From course descriptions, Three Rivers Community College, Online Catalog. Retrieved 1/04

**LEARNING GOALS, OBJECTIVES, OUTCOMES:**

The goals and objectives for Abnormal Psychology are integrated with the college’s general education goals. After completing this course, the successful student will have the following knowledge and skills.

**Critical Thinking:** Utilize Critical thinking skills to analyze theories and research pertaining to abnormal psychology

- Develop the ability to critically analyze the major models/theories used to explain abnormal behavior and psychopathology.
- Develop knowledge of how historical and modern psychiatric nosologies are constructed and applied.
- Develop the ability to apply knowledge of contemporary major models/theories of abnormality to selected examples of abnormality .

**Cultures and Society:** Understand how social institutions, historical trends, and cultural context impact the conceptualizations of abnormality and psychopathology.

- Demonstrate an understanding of how cultural and economic factors generally influence the definition and conceptualizations of normalcy, abnormality, psychopathology, and what constitutes appropriate mental health treatment.
- Demonstrate knowledge of cross cultural/ethnic differences in incidence, manifestation, and/or treatment of selected mental disorders.
- Develop an understanding of culturally competent models of mental health services.

**Communication:** Understand and express ideas about abnormal psychology through reading and writing:

- Demonstrate the ability to comprehend and interpret written passages.

- Develop the ability to accurately use the nomenclature of abnormal psychology and associated fields.
- Develop the ability to describe individuals with mental disorders in a way that is respectful and in keeping with best professional practices.
- Produce college level writing including grammar/spelling, content, and appropriate source citation strategies.

**Systematic Inquiry:** Understand how social science research methods are used in abnormal psychology:

- Acquire knowledge about academic inquiry appropriate to the field of abnormal psychology.
- Develop an understanding of how scientific methodology is applied to the understanding of abnormal psychology (including incidence, etiology, and treatment of mental disorders).
- Acquire knowledge about men and women whose research and/or theories have made significant contributions to the field of abnormal psychology.

#### REQUIRED TEXT:

Comer, R.J. (2007). *Abnormal Psychology* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.).  
New York: Worth Publishers.

-Articles as assigned in class.

#### Learning Resources:

-Study Guide may be helpful:

-Web Site: [www.worthpublishers.com/comer](http://www.worthpublishers.com/comer)

-Tutoring: TASC hours generally coincide with the LRC hours, but may vary each semester. You can contact the TASC by telephone at:

-Writing Center: [TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu) 892-5773 or 892-5769

-Library Services: Rob Walsh has left as our reference librarian, but there should always be a librarian available to help.

-Problems with Blackboard

-IT (Three Rivers) HELP DESK: (860) 885-2334 (during business hours)

-Conn Community College support For 24/7 after hour support, please call **866.940.1928**

#### ASSIGNMENTS:

-This is a rigorous, advanced, college level class. Online courses generally take MORE time, not less time than on ground courses. Everyone works at different speeds, but a rule of thumb is that a 3 credit class takes 3 hours of class time and 9 hours of prep time (for a weekly total of 12 hours). I recommend planning to spend at least that much time on this class. If you're falling behind or experiencing other difficulties with the course, please contact me right away. I am very committed to student learning and may be able work with you to complete the course successfully.

-Reading assignments (see attached schedule) should be completed as the semester progresses. It is important to complete reading on time so that we can have active discussions. There is a lot of reading and it is important to keep up. *If you're*

*having trouble keeping up, or understanding the material, please speak to/contact me right away.*

-Class Discussions: There will be an ongoing class discussion on the discussion board on Blackboard. Discussions should be thoughtful, informed, and scholarly. This includes proper referencing/source citing in APA format/style. Plagiarism will not be tolerated-see student conduct for details. Discussion topics/questions will progress with class content under a new “thread” in the discussion. Discussions close at the end of each third of the class. Participation should be spread out over the five week section (not merely crammed in at the end), so leave yourself plenty of time to keep up and participate. These discussions will make up the bulk of the class participation grade. Criteria they will be assessed on include regularity of posts, appropriateness and civility, relevance, originality, clarity, accuracy, and logic.

-Diagnostic Essays: There will be Three essays (diagnostic questions based on movie characters) to be submitted as a “assignments”. These will be formal and will be graded separately from discussions. Please read the directions carefully and consult the word document on how to write a good diagnostic essay before beginning. Proper referencing/source citing in APA format/style is REQUIRED. Plagiarism will not be tolerated-see student conduct for details. It is the student’s responsibility to obtain the required movies.

-Quizzes: There will be three quizzes. Quizzes will consist of Blackboard-based timed multiple choice questions with perhaps some short answer/essay questions. Quizzes are closed book/note and must be completed without assistance from anyone. Makeup quizzes will be given only with immediate notification of emergencies.

**-Final Exam: There will be an on-ground, in-person, closed note/book cumulative final exam.**

- The final exam will consist of
  - multiple choice questions (based on quizzes) and
  - essays based on discussions and diagnostic essays, from throughout the semester.
- If you cannot attend the on ground final, you must make alternative arrangements to take a proctored exam either at the TRCC tutoring center or another regionally accredited college or university. Valid picture ID may be required at the Final Exam. **If you plan to take the final exam at another college, please notify instructor and begin making arrangements by the 8th week of classes**

-Class participation: Please realize that even though this is a distance learning class, it is still a “class.” **This is NOT an independent study or a correspondence class.** As such, you need to participate regularly. Other than the orientation class and final exam there are no required times to participate (e.g. scheduled “chats”). However, it is your responsibility to maintain a “presence” by actively participating in the ongoing “class discussion”, taking quizzes, turning in essays on time, checking Blackboard Vista regularly for announcements and communications, etc.

-Late Work: In the instance of emergencies and (some) unavoidable obstacles late work will be allowed. If an extension is needed, please contact me as soon as possible. Also, **late work will likely not be graded until the end of the semester** (or

even after the end of the semester during intersession). Please contact me individually by phone or Blackboard Vista email if you need to discuss.

-Extra Credit: To Be Announced

#### GRADING:

Class Participation: 30%  
Essays: 30%  
Quizzes: 10%  
Final exam: 30%  
Total: 100%

#### Numeric Equivalents:

94-100 = A  
90-93 = A-  
87-89 = B+  
83-86 = B  
80-82 = B-  
77-79 = C+  
73-76 = C  
70-72 = C-  
67-69 = D+  
64-66 = D  
60-63 = D-  
0-59 = F

**STUDENT CONDUCT:** All students are expected to behave as responsible and mature adults. This means participating in class discussions in a respectful, prepared, and thoughtful manner. Students will be encouraged to express opinions and beliefs in class. It is important that critical discussions and feedback are conducted in a considerate and scholarly manner. Citing the work of others that is not properly credited is plagiarism. This is unethical and illegal and will result in referral to proper school authorities and/or a flunking grade for the assignment and/or course. The college recommends we include the following passage taken from the TRCC handbook (2006) "Academic integrity is essential to a useful education. Failure to act with academic integrity severely limits a person's ability to succeed in the classroom and beyond. Furthermore, academic dishonesty erodes the legitimacy of every degree awarded by the College. In this class and in the course of your academic career, present only your own best work; clearly document the sources of the material you use from others; and act at all times with honor." We will discuss these issues in more detail at the start of the semester. If you have questions about what it means to be considerate and scholarly please be sure to ask questions and clear this up. It is essential that we talk and write about individuals with mental illness as people for whom we have respect. This is true because the tone of these activities influences (or even determines) the reality of the experience of mental illness.

**SPECIAL NEEDS:** If you have any special needs related to the class (e.g. physical or learning challenges), please contact me at the start of the semester. Also, if any difficulties arise that may interfere with your full participation (such as not understanding course material, missed class, etc.), please contact me as soon as possible.

**CLASS CANCELLATION:** I do not foresee any events that would cause us to “cancel or suspend” class. However, in the event that Blackboard Vista is down for an extended period of time (days), Class will be conducted via email, if it is possible.

**REGISTRATION and WITHDRAWAL:** It is the responsibility of each student to manage their registration status. If you do not complete the course you must formally withdraw by 12/9/10 or you will likely receive an “F” final grade.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE** (subject to change):

#### SECTION I

**WEEK #1**(starts 1/20): Abnormal Psychology in Context: **INTRODUCTION** to **ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR**: overview, ground rules, definitions, methodology.

-Reading for this week; Chapter 1.

-Discussion: Introductions; changes in perception of abnormality

**! ON GROUND ORIENTATION MEETING 1/24 @ 5pm-6:30, Room: E218**

**WEEK #2** (Starts 1/24): **PERSPECTIVES/MODELS** of **ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR**

Reading for this week; Chapter 3

-Discussion: Is there one model you like best?

**WEEKS #3 and #4** (starts 1/31): **ASSESSMENT and RESEARCH** in **ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY**. Assessment, diagnosis, and treatment:

Reading for these weeks Chapter 4

-Discussions; Most interesting assessment tool.

**WEEK #5** (Starts 2/14) **ANXIETY Disorders**

Reading for these weeks; Chapter 5, 6 (pgs 163-169 in the 7<sup>th</sup> edition or pgs.155-161),

Week #5 (starts 2/14) Discussion: Check-in on quiz and essay

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Essay: #1 OCD (movie As Good As It Gets) due end of week 5

Quiz : #1 (chapters 1-6) due before end of week 5

#### SECTION II (this section is under construction and will be revised)

**WEEK #6** (Starts 2/21) and **MOOD DISORDERS**

Reading for these weeks; Chapters 8, and 9 (just the sections on **UNIPOLAR depression**)

-Discussion TBA

**WEEKS #7 & #8 (Starts 2/28) PERSONALITY DISORDERS**

Reading for this week; Chapters 16  
Essay: #2 due end week 10 Borderline Personality Disorder and Anti-social Personality Disorder (Movie: Girl Interrupted)  
-Discussion: TBA

**WEEKS #9 & 10 (Starts 3/14): SUBSTANCE RELATED DISORDERS (Spring Break-Good week to read about substance abuse/dependence)**

Reading for this week; Chapter 12.  
Discussion: Harm reduction models;

-Quiz #2 (Chapters TBA) due by end week 10

SECTION III (this section is under construction and will be revised)

Quiz #3 will include research (chapter 2)

**WEEKS #11, 12, and 13 (starts 3/28): Major Mental Disorders: Schizophrenia, Pervasive Developmental Disorders, Dementia and Delirium**

-Diagnostic Essay #3: Schizophrenia (movie: Pi), Dementia (movie: The Notebook) or Autism Spectrum Disorders (movie Rainman or Mozart and the Whale) due by end week 15

-Reading for this week; Chapter 14 & 15 , pgs 542-553, and 515-522.

-Discussion: TBA

**WEEK #14 (Starts 4/18) Developmental Psychopathology DISORDERS of CHILDHOOD and ADOLESCENCE;**

Reading for this week; Chapter 17 + 18

-Discussion: TBA

**Week #15 (Starts 4/25) Student Choice: Other mental disorders OR special contextual considerations (e.g. law, ?, Etc)**

Reading for this week; TBA

Discussion: What did you hope to cover that we didn't?

Quiz #3 due by end week 15 (Chapters TBA)

**Weeks #16 & 17 (starts 5/2) Abnormal Psychology in context (reconsidered)**

-Discussions; TBA

**FINAL EXAM ONGROUND 5/9, 5-6:30 pm, room D210**

Weeks #18 & 19 (starts 5/16)

SYLLABUS/SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.