

Three Rivers Community College, Spring, 2009  
Abnormal Psychology, Psych K245, M01

Professor: Dov Kugelmass, M.A.

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Office Hours: Tuesday 12:15-1:15, 6-6:30; Thursday 6-6:30; Friday 2-3pm.

Tutor: Janet Rubin; [abnormaljanet@live.com](mailto:abnormaljanet@live.com)

Individual tutoring available, Wednesday pm, email, and 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 OBJECTIVES:** By the end of this course, students should:

- Have a basic knowledge of diagnosis, varieties of psychopathology, their development, and treatment.
- Be able to conceptualize the term “abnormal psychology” in a sophisticated manner.
- Improve writing, critical thinking, and research skills.
- Demonstrate sensitivity and respect for individuals who have a mental illness (or symptoms of a mental illness).

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Comer, R.J. (2007). Abnormal Psychology (6<sup>th</sup> ed.).

New York: Worth Publishers.

-Articles and DSM-IV-TR sections (available on reserve and on webct) 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.
- Writing Center: [TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:TRWritingCenter@trcc.commnet.edu) 892-5773 or 892-5769
- Library Services: Rob Walsh is our reference librarian

## ASSIGNMENTS:

-Reading assignments (see attached schedule) should be completed prior to class so that we can have active discussions about the material both as a whole class and in small groups. 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 me right away.*

### OPTION A (clinical focus):

-Diagnostic Essays: Three essays total: You will complete two open book/note essays/psycho-diagnosis of movie characters on topics from our readings or class. Additionally, in a group you will create a case study and comment on other groups' case studies.

-Quizzes: There will be three quizzes that will be multiple choice and possibly include short answer and/or essay. Makeup quizzes will be given only with immediate notification of an emergency. Make-ups will be in a different format, may be MORE DIFFICULT, and will be administered at the time of the Final Exam.

-There will be a cumulative final exam

-Class participation: Attendance *and* participation are required. This means coming on time to all classes, having done the assigned reading, and joining in class discussions. If you miss a class it is your responsibility to obtain notes, make up assignments, connect with group project members, and/or note changes to the syllabus that are presented in class.

-There will be two extra credit opportunities worth up to a total of four percentage points. More on this in class.

## GRADING:

Quizzes=30%  
Diagnostic Essays=30%  
Final Exam=20%  
Class Participation: 20%  
Total: 100%

OPTION B (research focus): Alternatively, you may complete a research proposal in lieu of two diagnostic essays and the final. This option is appropriate for students that have had some exposure to research methodology, have good writing skills, and are interested in delving deeper into a particular topic. However, please be aware that this option will most likely be MORE difficult and will require meeting times outside of class to discuss/coordinate the assignment. Please see me individually if you're interested in this option.

Quizzes=30%  
Diagnostic Essay=10%  
Research Proposal=40%  
Class Participation: 20%  
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+  
63-66 = D  
60-63 = D-  
0-59 = F

Honor Course Designation: If you are interested in earning an honors designation for this class please see me to discuss.

**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. 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:** If class is cancelled (when the college is not) I will attempt to post an announcement on WEBCT, send out a group email from banner, and also leave a message on my college voice mail. If the class is unable to meet for an extended period of time, we will attempt to continue the class on webct.

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 5/11 or you will likely receive an "F" final grade.

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change):

Week #1 Starts 1/21: INTRODUCTION to ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR: overview, ground rules, definitions, methodology and MODELS of abnormality.

-Reading for this week; Chapters 1 and 3.

Week #2 Starts 1/26: MODELS of ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR (continued) and Research, Assessment, diagnosis, and treatment:

Reading for this week; Chapters 2, 3 and 4.

Week #3 Starts 2/3: ANXIETY and STRESS DISORDERS

Reading for this week; Chapter 5 and 6

Practice essay?

Week #4 Starts 2/9: \*Quiz #1 (chapters 1-6) Personality disorders and diagnostic strategies

Week #5 Starts 2/16: \*Essay #1; Borderline Personality Disorder and Anti-social Personality Disorder

PERSONALITY DISORDERS

Reading for this week; Chapters 16

Week #6 Starts 2/23 : SUBSTANCE RELATED DISORDERS

Reading for this week; Chapter 12.

Week #7 Starts 3/2 Mood Disorders

Reading for this week; Chapters 8 and 9

Meet in groups for case study.

Week #8 Starts 3/9: Quiz #2 (Chapters 2, 8, 9 12, 16)

Topic: TBA

Meet in groups for case study construction. (due 4/6)

Week #9 Starts 3/16: Spring Break!

Week #10 Starts 3/23: DISORDERS of CHILDHOOD and ADOLESCENCE;

Reading for this week; Chapter 17 .

Week #11 Starts 3/30: Paranoid Schizophrenia

SCHIZOPHRENIA and other PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS;

Reading for this week; Chapter 14 & 15, Charles Schmidt article

Essay #2 Pi; (due 3/30):

Week #12 Starts 4/6: DISORDERS OF AGING and COGNITION

Reading for this week; Chapter 18.

Essay #3 case study due (4/6 by email)

Week #13 Starts 4/13: Working class for group essays/research projects

Week #14 Starts 4/20: TBA

Week #15 Starts 4/27: Discussion of group essays (#3) and written essay and participation form due (4/27)

Week #16 Starts 5/4: \*Quiz #3 (chapters 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, and TBA)

SEXUAL and GENDER IDENTITY DISORDERS OR EATING DISORDERS, TBA

Reading for this week; Chapters 11 & 13 .

Week #17 Starts 5/11: Final Exam

Week #18 Starts 5/18: No Class

SYLLABUS/SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.