

Psychological Disorders

Psychology 252

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Prof. Marlene Sandstrom

Office: 315 Bronfman

Phone: 597-3659

e-mail: m.sandstrom@williams.edu

Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 10-11 or by appointment

T.A. Tasha Chu

This course covers a broad array of "abnormalities" in emotion, thought, and behavior. Together, we will explore the symptoms and causes of various types of psychological disorders, including depression, bipolar disorder, phobias, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress, schizophrenia, anorexia, personality disorders, and others. We will view each disorder from multiple perspectives (biological, psychological, socio-cultural), and consider how these perspectives are translated into effective therapeutic interventions.

The field of abnormal psychology is incredibly exciting, due to its innate complexity as well as the ongoing clinical research that continues to modify its landscape. Early on, you will discover that there are no clear-cut answers to many of this field's most pivotal questions. What causes disorder? How do effective medications work? Why do some people respond to treatment better than others? Even the most basic definition of "*abnormality*" is under considerable debate. This course is designed to shed light on the maladaptive side of human functioning and to enhance the skills required to critically evaluate divergent positions within the discipline.

Reading

- Barlow & Durand (2009). *Abnormal Psychology: An Integrative Approach* (5th Ed).

This text has been used for the past several years, so used copies should be available

- Supplemental Reading Packet



Requirements

Exams:

There will be 2 hour-long midterm exams during the course of the semester and a final exam during Finals week. Midterm exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. The final exam will consist of 2 parts: Part 1 will be a noncumulative exam based on material covered in the last third of the semester and will be identical in format to the midterm exams. Part 2 will include integrative exercises in which you will be asked to tie together material covered throughout the entire course. Each midterm will count 30% toward the final grade and the final exam will count 40%. Please note that make-up exams **are not offered**. Be aware of exam dates, and be sure to be in class on time and ready to complete the exam during the scheduled time.

Extra Credit Options:

There are 2 ways to earn extra credit in this course. First, you may participate in up to 5 hours of **psychology experiments**. Every 1/2 hour experiment slot counts as 1 unit of credit. Ten units of participation (5 hours) will improve your grade one interval (e.g., from a B to a B+, or from a B- to a B).

The other option for extra credit involves searching for examples of key abnormal psychology concepts in the **popular culture** (including song lyrics, movie clips, cartoons, or advertisements). Please submit the original clip along with a 1-2-page commentary in which you describe the psychological concept being portrayed and comment critically on the accuracy/inaccuracy of the portrayal. A total of 5 submissions can improve your final grade up to one interval (again, from a B to a B+, or from a B- to a B). **Submissions must be well-written and insightful in order to receive credit!**

NOTE: Extra credit points of either type (research participation or popular culture submissions) **CANNOT** be used to increase your grade from an A to an A+, or from an F to a non-failing grade. Extra-credit materials must be turned in by the last day of class in order to receive credit.

Honor Code Issues:

All exams and extra-credit submissions must be your own *independent* work. No collaboration is allowed. Please make sure you have reviewed the Honor Code as described in the Student Handbook. Let me know if you have any questions.

Consultation:

This is a large lecture class, but I hope to get to know you personally! Please feel free to take advantage of my office hours, or to touch base with me before or after class. You may choose to discuss a class issue, or simply introduce yourself.



Course Outline and Readings



Reverse Psychology

Please do the reading **before** the class for which it is assigned; the lectures will assume that you have done so. While readings and lectures will cover the same broad area of material (e.g. depression), they are meant to *complement* rather than overlap with each other. Therefore it will not serve you well to "substitute" class attendance with reading or vice versa. Both are crucial.