



PSY 354/Abnormal Psychology
Jeanne M. Slattery, Ph.D.

10-10:50am MWF, 124 Harvey
11-11:50am MWF, 124 Harvey
Office Hours: 9-10am MWF
12-1pm MW

Office: 232 Harvey Hall
Office Phone: (814) 393-2254 or 2295
Home Phone: (814) 226-5205
e-mail address: jslattery@clarion.edu (preferred contact)

Available at many other times—drop by!

How glorious it is—and also how painful—to be an exception. —Louis Charles Alfred de Musset

What will I learn in this course?

Working with others who are having problems, we must understand what is "normal" and what is not. To be able to make that distinction we need some basic skills. We must be able to:

- Observe behavior carefully and objectively, seeing patterns in behaviors;
- Understand the behavior in context for that individual, setting and culture;
- Identify developmental and cultural norms and compare people's behavior to these;
- Compare behavior with some overarching definition of mental health.

In other words, sometimes it "makes sense" to be depressed. Sometimes it is "abnormal" to react with laughter. We will approach the goals described above using the diagnostic system developed by the American Psychiatric Association, the DSM-IV, learning both the strategies they use to categorize patterns of abnormal behavior as well as what those characteristic patterns are. Although this is not a "therapy course," we will also glance at accepted treatment strategies for particular diagnostic categories, always emphasizing empathic, respectful treatment.

As we explore these issues we will examine the major controversies in the field. Among these: What are the advantages and disadvantages of using labels? Can people with psychiatric problems be held "responsible" for their behavior? Why are people of one gender, age, race, or ethnicity more likely to diagnosed with some disorders than others? Why have diagnoses been added or deleted from the DSM across time?

This exploration of context and values has led to this course being granted a Values flag within the major (S). General Psychology is a requirement for this course, knowledge gained in other Psychology courses will be useful, but is not required. In particular, we will:

1. Discuss symptoms associated with psychiatric disorders, then consider how those symptoms are seen in real people
2. Think about the disorders as on a continuum: they are related to "normal behavior," but have more frequent and severe symptoms that cause problems in day-to-day living
3. Use psychological principles and theories to understand client problems and direct treatment, while considering the strengths and weaknesses of each explanation
4. Develop greater understanding and empathy for other people, especially those people with psychiatric problems

How will we meet these goals?

Text and MindTap. To facilitate these goals we will use Kearney & Trull's *Abnormal Psychology and Life: A Dimensional Approach*. I would strongly recommend that you bring your text to class each day once we begin talking about the disorders. *Abnormal Psychology* is available both in hardcover and as an e-book; choose

what works best for you (check your email for more information on this). *Abnormal Psychology* has a large number of resources (quizzes, notes, flashcards, etc.) available at MindTap, which is linked from the Cengage website. MindTap is an excellent resource for preparing for exams and further developing your understanding of people and disorders.

D2L. This syllabus, study guides, grades and other useful information will be available on D2L. Please check your D2L site regularly; I post announcements frequently and grades rapidly.

Syllabus quiz. Your first assignment is a Syllabus quiz (5 pts.), which is designed to help you become comfortable with the D2L site and course. You can take it up to two times; you'll earn the average of these attempts.

Chapter post-tests. Chapter post-tests can help you monitor how well you know the material and familiarize yourself with the types of questions that will be on the test. Take a post-test after you have read the chapter. I would also encourage you to do the knowledge checks and quizzes, although they aren't required. Post-tests will be open over several days to accommodate your schedule. Post-tests are open notes/book, unlimited time. Use them as a learning tool! They will be available for three days and are due by 11pm on the due date.

Exams. We will have three exams that will cover material from the text, lectures and discussions, handouts, and other materials. Exams will be multiple choice, identification, and short essay, depending on the section of the course. Exams 2 and 3 will also have a series of case studies; you will need to read these carefully to determine which disorder is described and why.

Case studies. Case studies can be found on MindTap. For each case study, there will be a series of questions that will both build and assess your understanding of the diagnoses. You can complete each case study three times; the average of your scores will be recorded in Gradebook.

Video projects. These can be found on MindTap and take two different forms: (a) the Continuum video, for which you must respond to two, and (b) the Video Case Study, for which you must choose and respond to one. As I want these to help you understand the disorders that we are talking about at that point, I'll only be keeping the Unit 2 videos open until Test 2. Although these assignments can be found on MindTap, please submit your write-up to the Dropbox in D2L.

Although I am not requiring that you complete and turn in all of the video projects available, I strongly recommend that you watch and think about each. They will help you understand the material more strongly, recognize the ways that distress occurs on a continuum, understand the experience behind the disorders, and build your ability to empathize with someone in psychological distress.

PowerPoints and other resources. The PowerPoints roughly outline where we are going. I will not talk about every slide, will spend more time on some than others, and will talk about things that are not on slides. I would choose to print them out, but do what makes sense to you. You can find these and additional readings and videos in each chapter's folder on the Content tab in D2L.

Attendance. This is your class. Your active involvement will enrich your learning and that of your classmates. I expect that you will come to class regularly, read the material carefully before class, actively assist in your classmates' learning, and listen to your fellow students' views of their world. As class participation is an important part of this class, you will lose 2 pts per class after your third missed class *for any reason*. In other words, you have three free absences; use these wisely. Coming late or leaving early may cause you to be marked absent for the day. People who miss no more than three times—and are well-prepared for class and active contributors to class—may earn up to 10 points extra credit. I will use these points to resolve borderline grades.

What about classroom behavior?

This is our class. Please be interested, curious, questioning and observant. When you have questions or comments, ask. Be open, honest, and ethical: <http://www.clarion.edu/judicial/ahonesty.htm> I want class to run as smoothly as possible and for you to learn as well as possible—which is more difficult when you are distracted. As a result, except for emergencies, cell phones have no place in class. If I see you texting, your phone is mine. ☺ If you need to study for

another class, do so, but please not during our class. On the other hand, I promise to come to class prepared, curious, and enthusiastic. I will respond to emails in a timely fashion and grade assignments and exams rapidly.

Let's talk about ethics...

Many of you plan on entering one of the helping professions (e.g., psychology, sociology, speech pathology, nursing, rehabilitative sciences). Given this—and our content—it is especially important for us to begin practicing ethical behavior. This means using Person First language, protecting people's privacy, talking about people in respectful manners, and listening to and respecting other ideas. This doesn't mean that you need to agree with everyone else—you may often disagree—but you need to continue to find ways to respectfully and professionally disagree (e.g., using good listening skills, backing up your opinions with strong evidence). On my part, I promise to listen carefully, encourage critical thinking about the topics we discuss, and work toward a safe, thoughtful, and respectful classroom. I will disguise the identify of the people in my cases and maintain their privacy, ask for my clients' consent before I talk about them in class, consider other explanations of symptoms, and stay current in my reading of the literature.

Can things be turned in late?

Most assignments cannot be turned in late. Your video projects, however, can be turned in several days late (with a penalty of 10%). Make-ups for in-class exams can be arranged up until the date of the exam. If you miss an exam without talking to me beforehand, you will receive a 10% penalty. This is fair to people who took the exam on time and who, presumably, would have done better with several extra days preparation. In addition, punctuality is an important skill in the real world.

Why so much technology?

Some of you may initially have difficulty with this the amount of technology this class requires. If so, please talk to me and we'll try to get you up to speed. I believe the technology offers many opportunities that you will enjoy! In addition, our culture is increasingly technological in orientation; people are expected to know how to adapt to and use new software, even when they don't enjoy doing so.

What is Clarion University's policy on confidentiality?

Clarion University is mandated by federal and state laws to report crimes occurring on campus or in campus-related functions. In order to help Clarion University comply with these laws, I am required to report information about university-related crimes to Public Safety. If you tell me of a crime on campus that meets certain criteria (especially assaults, sexual assaults, robbery, or hate crimes), I will report it. I am not required to identify either victims or witnesses by name. I will, of course, inform you before making a report.

If you need accommodations for a documented disability

If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, you must be registered with the university's Office of Disability Support Services (DSS). You must provide current documentation to DSS that identifies your disability and need for accommodation(s), meet with DSS to discuss requested accommodations, and provide instructors with appropriate notification from DSS of the approved accommodation as early in the semester as possible. The Office of Disability Support Services is located in 102 Ralston Hall (x2095).

How do I determine grades?

Grades and assignments will be posted on D2L and will be determined as the percentage of the available points. These will come from three sources: (a) the sum of the percentages from your tests (300 pts.); (b) the number of points from your chapter post-tests (15 pts each; best 13 of 14, 195 pts total), (c) the number of points earned from your video assignments (10 pts for each of the two Continuum videos, 20 pts for the Report; 40 pts. total), (c) the number of points from your case studies (130 pts, with a possibility of 20 pts extra credit), and (d) your syllabus quiz (5 pts), less (d) two points for each absence over three (plus up to 10 pts for regular attenders who are active in class). Your total earned can be compared with the following scale (670 pts available):

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage earned</i>	<i># of points earned</i>
A	90 - 100%	603 and up
B	80 - 89%	536 - 602

C	70 - 79%	469 - 535
D	60 - 69%	402-468
E	less than 60%	401 and down

I do not expect that a certain number students fail and would be happy if the class received only As and Bs. To meet this goal I will be happy to help you when you need it. If you want more help, make an appointment with the Student Success Center (2249). If you have test anxiety or if this course raises issues that you want to work on, call the Counseling Center (2255).

Tentative Schedule of Dates, Readings, and Assignments

Setting the stage:			
	Topic	Readings and videos	Assignments
8/25-29	<i>What is abnormal behavior?</i>	Chapter 1 ▪ Think people first	▪ 9/1: Syllabus quiz (D2L) ▪ 9/1: Post-test 1 (MT)
9/3-8	<i>A multidimensional perspective</i>	Chapter 2	▪ 9/10: Post-test 2
9/10	<i>Risk and prevention</i>	Chapter 3	▪ 9/12: Post-test 3
9/12-19	<i>Assessing behavior</i>	Chapter 4	▪ 9/18: Post-test 4
September 19 * * * * * Test 1 (Chs. 1-4)			
The disorders:			
9/22-29	<i>Anxiety, OCD, and trauma</i>	Chapter 5 ▪ Let me tell you a secret ▪ Six years of selfies	▪ 9/30: Adam (MT) ▪ 9/30: Katherine (MT) ▪ 9/30: Lena (MT) ▪ 10/1: Post-test 5 (MT)
10/1-3	<i>Somatoform & dissociative disorders</i>	Chapter 6	▪ 10/5: Hannah (MT) ▪ 10/5: Felix (MT) ▪ 10/6: Post-test 6 (MT)
10/6-17	<i>Depression: The "common cold" of mental health</i>	Chapter 7 ▪ Best things to say to someone who is depressed	▪ 10/19: Jacob (MT) ▪ 10/19: Giancarlo (MT) ▪ 10/20: Post-test 7 (MT)
10/20-22	<i>Eating disorders: Our culture's gift to us?</i>	Chapters 8	▪ 10/23: Alexis (MT) ▪ 10/23: Bianca (MT) ▪ 10/24: Post-test 8 (MT)
10/24-31	<i>Substance abuse</i>	Chapter 9	▪ 10/28: Continuum video assignment 1 (MT-> DB) ▪ 10/30: Jack (MT) ▪ 10/30: Gloria (MT) ▪ 10/30: Post-test 9 (MT)
October 31 * * * * * Test 2 (Chs. 5-9)			
11/3-7	<i>Personality disorders: Inflexible ways of approaching the world</i>	Chapter 10	▪ 11/9: Margaret (MT) ▪ 11/9: Emmie (MT) ▪ 11/10: Post-test 10 (MT)
11/10-12	<i>Schizophrenia: Problems perceiving reality</i>	Chapter 12 ▪ Interview with John Nash ▪ Schizophrenia simulator	▪ 11/13: Alan (MT) ▪ 11/13: Adrian (MT) ▪ 11/14: Post-test 12 (MT)
11/14-21	<i>Childhood disorders</i>	Chapter 13 ▪ Welcome to Holland ▪ The world needs all sorts of minds ▪ Why can't doctors recognize killers?	▪ 11/21: Continuum video assignment 1 (MT-> DB) ▪ 11/23: Joey (MT) ▪ 11/23: Julia (MT) ▪ 11/24: Post-test 13 (MT) ▪ 11/25: Video report (MT -> DB)
11/24-25	<i>Problems with aging and the nervous system</i>	Chapter 14 ▪ President Reagan courageously	▪ 11/30: Alice (MT) ▪ 11/30: Alex (MT)

		announces his illness	▪ 12/1: Post-test 14 (MT)
12/1-5	<i>A consumer guide</i>	Chapter 15	▪ 12/5: Post-test 15 (MT)
Wednesday, December 10 * * * * Test 3 (Chapters 10, 12-15)			

How to do well in this class

Attend class and participate. Attending class is essential for doing well in this class. In addition to talking about ideas not in your book, you'll see videos of people with the disorders and hear discussions about people and the disorders. These will make the material "come alive."

Read the text *before* coming to class. Our class time will be lecture/discussion based. When you read the chapter first you'll have a better understanding of class material, and the questions that you ask will be more useful for you and your classmates.

Get involved! As you read the text or listen to class discussions, make it interesting and become involved! Relate the ideas to yourself, your friends, and your families. Think about those places where the material applies—and those where it doesn't. Wonder about what puts people at risk, as well as what makes others resilient. Actively read the material by thinking about, applying, and using it.

Use MindTap wisely. Cengage offers a variety of services to make your learning the material easier, some of which I require. Some of you will go above that and take advantage of the extra resources: the online quizzes, unassigned videos, the flashcards, etc. These will help you process the material more deeply and learn it well.

Read over your notes daily. Doing so will eliminate the "need to cram"—almost impossible with this much information. It's hard to forget something that you use every day.

Put time and energy into this course. For a 300 level course, you should spend a minimum of 2-3 hours outside of class for every hour you spend in class. For a class like this that meets 3 hours/week, you should plan on spending an additional 6-9 hours on the course each week.

Get together with other students to study together. Helping someone else understand something is an excellent way to learn. And, if you get lost somewhere along the way, it's helpful to have folks who can help you out. Besides, it's fun and can increase your motivation for the class.

Check out these websites for helpful study skills information. There are numerous sites containing information on test-taking, time management, note-taking (both in class and from the text), some of which are posted on the Content tab in D2L. In addition, you may find these sites useful:

- Study Strategies (University of Minnesota - Duluth): <http://www.d.umn.edu/student/loon/acad/strat/>
- Academic Success Center (George Washington University): <http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/asc/>
- Establishing Good Study Habits (Edinboro University of Pennsylvania): <http://www.edinboro.edu/cwis/acaff/suppserv/tips/CAT9.html>
- How-to-Study.com

Like any class, the more you put into it, the more you will get out!