Abnormal Behavior
Columbia University, Summer 2012
Course Syllabus

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Course Description

This course presents an introduction to the study, diagnosis and treatment of pathological and maladaptive behaviors. We will review psychopathology as represented in the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (2000: 4th ed., Text Revision). Students will acquire critical insight into DSM-IV-TR through examination of the current debate over categorical vs. dimensional conceptualizations of mental disorders. In addition, we will integrate and review proposed revisions for DSM-V. The course is comprehensive in scope and will incorporate diverse theoretical perspectives, scientific research and socio-cultural issues which inform the conceptualization and treatment of psychological/psychiatric disorders.

Course Format

The introductory class sessions will provide students with a foundation in significant historical and contemporary issues including: a discussion of definitions of abnormality, descriptions of theoretical orientations and a critical analysis of the categorical assumptions inherent in DSM-IV TR. In this initial phase students will also be introduced to the process of clinical assessment, diagnosis and empirical approaches to psychopathology and psychotherapy. In the following lectures/discussions the major categories of psychological disorders will be reviewed in depth. Each class session will begin with a Case presentation. A patient’s presenting symptoms will be described and the course of treatment reviewed. This clinical picture will serve to personalize the disorder and familiarize students with presenting symptoms. In addition, students will gain an appreciation for the complex and often subjective components of diagnosis. An overview of the core symptoms and current theory and research related to etiology, course and treatment interventions will then be provided. The Biopsychosocial Model will guide our understanding. Psychopathology in the Adult is the central focus; however, Child and Adolescent disorders will be integrated throughout the course.

Course Readings

Four books are required for the course. Each may be purchased at the Columbia Bookstore or Online.


**Additional readings will be distributed in class and/or posted on the Courseworks website. Listed below is a sampling of the texts from which readings will be taken.**


**Course Requirements**

**Examinations**

Each student will be required to complete a midterm and final examination. The final exam is cumulative. Exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. If a student is unable to take an exam due to illness or emergency, documentation from a physician or college dean must be provided before the exam. A make-up exam may be taken only under these conditions. A zero grade for the missed exam will be calculated in the final average without such documentation.

**Book Reviews**

In an effort to better comprehend the subjective experience of mental disorders two memoirs-autobiographies have been assigned. The assignment will be discussed further in class.

**The Unquiet Mind**

**The Quiet Room**

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Your final average will be calculated as follows:

- Midterm (40%)
- Final Examination (40%)
- Book Reviews (20%)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Discussion Topic</th>
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| Tuesday, July 3 | *Welcome to the Course!*  
*Definitions of Abnormality, Clinical Assessment and Diagnosis* |
|              | **Readings:**                                                                   |
|              | Butcher, Chapter 1                                                               |
| Thursday, July 5 | *Definitions of Abnormality, Clinical Assessment and Diagnosis*                  |
|              | **Readings:**                                                                   |
|              | Butcher, Chapters 3 and 4  
*Additional Readings posted on Courseworks* |
| Tuesday, July 10 | *Anxiety Disorders*                                                            |
|              | **Readings:**                                                                   |
|              | Butcher, Chapter 6  
Oltmanns, Cases 1, 2, 3                                                           |
| Thursday, July 12 | *Mood Disorders*                                                                |
|              | **Readings:**                                                                   |
|              | Butcher, Chapter 7  
Oltmanns, Cases 6 and 7                                                            |
| Tuesday, July 17 | *MIDTERM EXAMINATION* (First Half of Class)  
Chapters 1, 3, 4, 6, 7*                                                      |
|              | *Eating Disorders* (Second Half of Class)                                        |
|              | **Readings:**                                                                   |
|              | Butcher, Chapter 9  
Oltmanns, Cases 15 and 16                                                           |
Thursday, July 19  
*Personality Disorders*

Readings:

Butcher, Chapter 10
Oltmanns, Cases 18, 19 and 20
*Additional Readings posted on Courseworks

Tuesday, July 24  
*Book Club Meetings and Class Discussion*

The Unquiet Mind and The Quiet Room

Thursday, July 26  
*Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders*

Readings:

Butcher, Chapter 13
Oltmanns, Cases 9 and 10

Tuesday, July 31  
*Conference- Class Will Not Meet*

Thursday, August 2  
*Substance-Related Disorders*

Readings:

Butcher, Chapter 11
Oltmanns, Case 11

Tuesday, August 7  
*Final Examination Review*

Thursday, August 9  
*FINAL EXAMINATION (Cumulative)*

Book Review Due
Extra Help

Please do not hesitate to ask for assistance if you are experiencing difficulty with the course material. Feel free to contact me for any advice or support you may need.

**WELCOME TO ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR!**

“How we conceive of psychopathology and related terms has wide-ranging implications for individual, medical and mental health professionals, government agencies and programs, and society at large.” Maddux, J.E., Gosselin, J.T. & Winstead, B.A. (2009)