Course Objectives & Goal: The primary objective of abnormal psychology courses is to explore the subject matter of abnormal psychology and to become familiar with the vocabulary and concepts of the field and with some of the research findings upon which our knowledge of abnormal behavior is based. A goal of this class is to emphasize development of critical thinking skills and to prepare you to be a cautious and analytical consumer of information that is proclaimed to be scientific or to be based on research.

Course Requirements: There are fourteen regularly scheduled tests and a comprehensive final examination. Each test consists of fill-in, short answer items, and an essay. Each chapter test will be worth 30 points and the final exam will have items worth 200 points. The test items will be taken from the reading assignments and lecture material. Finally, each student will be expected to write a research paper on a psychological disorder that will be worth 100 points. This paper will be written in APA style which we will talk about at length in class. There may be extra credit questions as well on each examination and the student is strongly encouraged to answer these questions both for the additional points and for the experience of learning to write effectively.

Grading: Grades will be assigned based on the number of points accumulated during the semester. The maximum number of points for each exam is 30. Students will be allowed to drop two regular exams for a possible point total of 360 points. Because students can drop two tests there are NO make up exams! There are NO exceptions. If you know that you must miss an exam, you will be allowed to take it ahead of time but not after it is given. If you miss a test due to poor health or some other reason you can use a drop for that test. The final exam will contribute a total of 200 points toward your final grade. The research paper is worth 100 points. The total points possible for this class is 660 points. The grading scale is as follows: 90% or better is an "A", 80% is a “B”, 70% is a “C”, 60% is a “D”, and below 60% is an “F”.

Tentative Schedule

Week 1       Introduction - Models of Mental Illness
Week 2       History of Abnormal Psychology
Week 3       Assessment of Mental Illness
Week 4       Diagnosis of Mental Illness
Week 5    Mood Disorders
Week 6    Anxiety Disorders
Week 7    Personality Disorders
Week 8    Substance Abuse and Dependence Related Disorders
Week 9    Eating Disorders and Obesity
Week 10   Schizophrenia and other Psychotic Disorders
Week 11   Disorders of Childhood
Week 12   Disorders of Aging
Week 13   Impulse Control Disorders, Paraphilias, Sexual Disorders, &
Week 14   Somatoform, Dissociative, and Psychophysiological Disorders
Week 15   Sleep Disorders and Review
Week 16   Final Exam - Inclusive

Research Paper

Paper: This writing exercise should be 5 to 6 pages long, typed, double-spaced and using the APA style, in which you take a write about a mental illness using the DSM-IV Manual. Papers should be written so that the reader knows what you are trying to say or present at the outset of the paper. Grammar and spelling should be correct. If you would like to write a first draft for me to comment on please feel free to do so. I will grade this first copy as it may help to focus your work. Subsequent copies can be turned in for an improved grade as many times as you would like but the final copy must be turned in before the end of week 14. Each revision must have the previous revisions attached to it. You must use references and any research that is referenced in the paper must be listed on the reference page. Papers can be submitted as many times as one wants for more points if corrections are addressed. I will talk more about this in class. Students will be expected to add relevant comments or talk about current research during the weeks that their topic is being discussed in class. Topics MUST be chosen by week four and the first draft of the paper must be submitted by the spring break (third week of March). Failure to meet the week four deadline will reduce the total by 5% and the second deadline by 10%. Final copies of the paper will not be accepted after the End of week fourteen and the student will take a zero on the paper.

Disability Statement

If you need support or assistance because of a disability, you may be eligible for academic accommodations thorough the Special Population office. Stop by office B-204 or call (815) 224-0284.

Attendance Policy

Attendance will be taken on a daily basis. As mentioned above part of you grade is dependent upon you come to class and participating. Whether or not you come to class is up to you. Experience has shown, however, that students that come to class and participate get more out of the course and eventually end up with a better grade. Please arrive to class on time. It is very disruptive to arrive late to class, especially on days of examinations.
Withdrawal Policy and Financial Aid Statement

It is the student’s responsibility to ask the instructor to be withdrawn from the class. I do not automatically withdraw students without their agreement to do so. Withdrawal should be made to me in writing and include your name, student identification number, and your address. Withdrawal from the course can affect financial aid. Students who receive financial aid should see an advisor in the Financial Aid Office before withdrawing from a course.

Plagiarism & Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and cheating of any kind will not be tolerated. If a student is caught cheating the test will be taken and the student will receive a failing grade for that test. If a student cheats a second time, they will be failed for the semester. Using someone’s work and claiming it as your own will also not be tolerated. If a student is caught plagiarizing they will be failed for the semester.

Classroom Rules

Students are expected to practice self-control allowing others to speak, respecting each other, and allowing others to work in quiet during exams. This allows for a positive learning environment for all. Please turn all cell phones off during class unless arrangements are made ahead of time.

NOTES: