

Abnormal Psychology: PSY-131-1



Professor: Steve Rogers, Ph.D.
Class Time: MWF 8:00-9:05am
Location: WH 106
Semester: Spring 2018

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Office Hours: MWF: 9:15-10:15am, 12:45-1:45pm, & by appointment

Course Goals and Objectives

The main objective of this course is to introduce students to the primary psychological disorders that constitute the field of abnormal psychology. The focus will be on understanding the etiology, symptomatology, diagnosis, assessment, and treatment of the various forms of psychopathology, as well as the major theories and research methodologies involved in understanding and assessing abnormal psychology. Attention will also be given to DSM-5 classifications and both legal and ethical issues. Classroom time will be a mixture of lecture, discussion, and experiential activities aimed at assisting students in understanding and appreciating the major forms of psychopathology.

Throughout this course, students will be expected to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the psychological disorders that constitute the field of abnormal psychology and be able to recognize diagnostic signs of the major categories of psychopathology.
- Incorporate theory and research toward a better understanding of psychopathology.
- Increase self-awareness regarding their own mental health and how it influences their relationships, behaviors, and thinking.
- Critically engage with the foundational concepts that have shaped our contemporary understandings of abnormal psychology, including the multi-disciplinary prehistory and current definitions of abnormality.
- Appreciate the ways our Christian faith informs and interacts with mental illness.

Required Texts

- Hooley, J. M., Butcher, J. N., Nock, M. K., & Mineka, S. (2017). *Abnormal psychology* (17th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.

One of the following four texts is also required:

- Jamison, K. R. (1995). *An unquiet mind: A memoir of moods and madness*. Random House.
- Saks, E. R. (2007). *The center cannot hold: My journey through madness*. Hachette.
- Solomon, A. (2001). *The noon-day demon: An atlas of depression*. New York: Scribner.
- Stossel, S. (2013). *My age of anxiety: Fear, hope, dread, and the search for peace of mind*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Recommended Resources

- American Psychiatric Association (2013). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fifth Edition. Washington, DC: Author.
- American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication manual of the American psychological association (6th ed.)*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

Reading assignments

The reading assignments in the schedule form the basis of the lectures and discussions, so they are to be read prior to the date for which they are assigned. The readings in the schedule are for the Hooley et al. (2017) textbook and refer to chapters (not pages) that need to be read for the assigned day.

Four Exams

There will be four exams that cover information from the readings and class lectures. Each exam will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer essays.

Course Projects

In addition to the reading assignments and exams, there are three required course projects – a comprehensive report on a psychological disorder, a paper reflecting on the interaction between Christianity and mental illness, and a paper reacting to *The Noonday Demon*, *My Age of Anxiety*, *The Center Cannot Hold*, or *An Unquiet Mind*. Details for each of these projects are as follows:

1. Psychological Disorder Report

In this paper, you are to write a comprehensive review of a psychological disorder of your choice (e.g., schizophrenia, bulimia nervosa, autism spectrum disorder, borderline personality disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, etc.). Your paper should discuss the clinical features and symptoms of your chosen disorder, prevalence rates, the course of the condition, proposed etiologies (e.g., biochemical, psychological, sociocultural), available treatment options, and anything else relevant to a contemporary understanding and treatment of the condition. This is your opportunity to learn in-depth about a particular psychological disorder. The majority of your sources should come from journal articles and/or professional books, with no reliance on internet resources (other than journal articles printed online). This paper should be approximately 12 pages long.

2. Christianity and Mental Illness Reflection Paper

In this paper you are to explore your thoughts about the field of abnormal psychology in relationship to Christianity. This is an opportunity for you to wrestle with theological questions about the suffering that occurs due to mental illness (e.g., why do psychological disorders exist), God's justice (or the seeming lack thereof) in mental disorders, the role of sin in mental illness (if any), and how the Christian faith helps and hinders both our conceptualization and treatment of mental disorders, including implications for the church and community. In a sense, you are reflecting on the way faith and mental illness inform each

other, including how mental disorders develop and can be treated. If it helps, you can also address the following questions: Does God afflict individuals with mental illness? What are the psychological and theological implications if a psychological disorder leads someone away from God? How might the concepts of heaven and hell help or harm those with mental illness? What is “abnormal” from a Christian lens? The paper should be at least 8 pages long.

3. Reaction Paper

After reading *The Noonday Demon* (Solomon, 2001), *My Age of Anxiety* (Stossel, 2013), *An Unquiet Mind* (Jamison, 1995), or *The Center Cannot Hold* (Saks, 2007), compose a paper detailing your reactions to the book. Among the points you can address are your thoughts about their respective discussions about depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia, any new insights you gained, areas where you disagree with the author, and any aspects that were affirming or troubling. Because these are lengthy and comprehensive books, it is highly recommended that you start reading early in the semester. If you select *The Noonday Demon*, you can skip chapters 4, 8, 9, and 10 in your reading. This paper should be approximately 10 pages long.

Grading Criterion

Assignment	Percent of Total
Examinations	60% (15% each)
Psychological Disorder Report	20%
Book Reaction Paper	12%
Christianity and Mental Illness Reflection Paper	8%

Course grades will be assigned on the basis of the total score, using cut-point scores of 90, 80, 70 and 60 for grades of A, B, C and D, respectively (+ and – grades will be assigned at the instructor’s discretion).

Policies:

Attendance: Students are responsible for knowing course material and announcements made during normal class meetings. If you miss a class, get notes from one or two other students, compare those notes with readings, and (if necessary) schedule an appointment with me to answer specific questions. According to Westmont policy, students missing more than six unexcused absences during the course of a semester may be dropped from the class with an F. You are responsible for making up any work missed by excused or unexcused absences.

Digital

Etiquette: This is hopefully self-evident, but you should turn off your cellphone and/or other electronic devices before you enter the classroom. If you bring a laptop to class, it

should only be used for taking notes pertinent to the class discussion and lecture. If you check your email, play Call of Duty, text your friends, manage your Instagram account, or work on assignments for other classes, you will be asked to put your laptop away. Such activities not only distract you, but they also distract those around or behind you.

Late work: Assignments other than exams are due at the beginning of lecture on the day specified in the attached schedule. Assignments turned in after these times incur a 10% per day penalty.

Academic

Honesty: All students are expected to subscribe to the highest ideals of academic integrity. Any form of academic dishonesty will be dealt with as severely as allowed by the college, most likely a grade of F in the course and recommendation of dismissal from the college. “Academic dishonesty” includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, and falsification. Please refer to the College’s policy on Academic Honesty.

Plagiarism: You are responsible for knowing the entire Westmont College Plagiarism Policy, which is available at:
http://www.westmont.edu/offices/provost/plagiarism/academic_integrity_policy.html

Students with

Disabilities: Students who have been diagnosed with a disability (chronic medical, learning, physical, or psychological) are strongly encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) as early as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations for this course. Formal accommodations will only be granted for students whose disabilities have been verified by ODS. For more information, contact Sheri Noble, Director of Disability Services (565-6186, snoble@westmont.edu) or visit the website <http://www.westmont.edu/offices/disability>. ODS is located in Voskuyl Library rooms 310A and 311.

Confidentiality:

Due to the strong likelihood that confidential material may emerge within class sessions, it is essential that we be ethical in our treatment of others and uphold the highest principles of confidentiality. Respect the trust of your classmates by maintaining strict confidentiality of all discussions occurring within the class.

Take your Professor to Lunch:

One of the things I value the most is the opportunity to develop relationships with students. The classroom environment does not always allow for more personalized attention or one-on-one exchanges, but I am always open to getting together for coffee or lunch. Feel free to take advantage of the *Take Your Professor to Lunch* passes that the Office of Campus Life makes available.

Tentative Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading Assignments	Exams/Papers
1/8	Course review, Introduction		
1/10	<i>Class Cancelled</i>	H 1	
1/12	<i>Class Cancelled</i>	H 2	
1/15	<i>Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday</i>		
1/17	Historical and Contemporary Views		
1/19			
1/22	Causal Factors and Viewpoints	H 3	
1/24			
1/26	Assessment & Diagnosis	H 4	
1/29			
1/31			Exam 1: Chapters 1-4
2/2	Stress & Physical/Mental Health	H 5	
2/5			
2/7	Disorders of Panic, Anxiety, & Obsessions	H 6	
2/9			
2/12			
2/14-16	<i>No Class – Work on Your Christianity and Mental Illness Paper</i>		
2/19-20	<i>Presidents' Holiday</i>		
2/21	Mood Disorders & Suicide	H7	
2/23			Christianity & Mental Illness
2/26			
2/28	Somatic Symptom & Dissociative Disorders	H 8	
3/2			
3/5			Exam 2: Chapters 5-8
3/7	Eating Disorders	H 9	
3/9			
3/12-16	<i>Spring Recess</i>		
3/19	Personality Disorders	H 10	
3/21			
3/23	Substance-Related Disorders	H 11	Psychological Disorder Report
3/26			
3/28	Sexual Variants, Abuse, & Dysfunctions	H 12	
3/30-4/2	<i>Easter Recess</i>		
4/4			
4/6			Exam 3: Chapters 9-12
4/9	Psychotic Disorders	H 13	
4/11			
4/13	Neurocognitive Disorders	H 14	
4/16			
4/18	Neurodevelopmental Disorders	H 15	
4/20			Book Reaction Paper
4/23	Psychological Treatment	H 16	
4/25			
4/27	Contemporary & Legal Issues	H 17	
5/1	Final Exam	8:00-10:00am	Exam 4: Chapters 13-17

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the psychological disorders that constitute the field of abnormal psychology and be able to recognize diagnostic signs of the major categories of psychopathology.

Assessment: Exams

Relative to Program Learning Outcome: Knowledge Base

Our students will be able to articulate both (a) the structure of the academic discipline of psychology and (b) the key elements of content within a wide variety of areas within psychology, integrating them with each other.

2. Students will critically explore and analyze how the Christian faith informs and interacts with human suffering and mental illness.

Assessment: Writing assignment

Relative to Program Learning Outcome: Values and Character - Faith. Our students will articulate the interactions between psychology and faith.

Relative to Institutional Learning Outcome: Christian Understanding/Practices/Affections. Graduates will demonstrate faithfulness in Christian service.