Goals of the course

The goal of this class is to familiarize you with current concepts and research on adult psychopathology. Class meetings will consist of lectures designed to provide a broad overview of the topic for that class, and discussions. Typically, we will cover diagnosis and classification, epidemiology, course, and the genetic, neurobiological, and psychosocial factors implicated in the etiology, pathogenesis, and maintenance of the disorder. Our discussion of treatment will be minimal, as that is the focus of other courses.

Readings

The required readings, listed below, consist of several papers per week. The readings are intended to provide greater depth on selected topics of particular importance, and to illustrate some of the approaches and methods in current psychopathology research. Please make the time to read each of the assigned articles. Focus on the main questions, findings, and implications of the papers, and don’t worry if you can’t fully grasp the more technical details. It is a good idea to get as much of the assigned reading done as possible before each class meeting for three reasons: (1) you will get more out of the lectures and the course if you have read the assigned material, (2) you will be a better participant in class discussions, and (3) you will not be in a frenzy trying to read everything at the last minute during the week you are trying to think about and write answers to essay questions on the final exam.

Journal articles will be available from either electronic resources or will be available for photocopy. You will be given instructions on how to access the electronic resources. For each disorder, I would like you to photocopy and read the relevant sections from the American Psychiatric Associations’ *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, fourth edition-text revision (DSM-IV-TR). It will not be listed below, but this should be done for each of the anxiety, mood, substance, and sexual disorders discussed in class. You are required to purchase it. Here is the reference:


If you are interested in keeping abreast of current developments in psychopathology, the following journals are generally recognized as the leading general journals in the field: *Archives of General Psychiatry*, *American Journal of Psychiatry*, *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, and *British Journal of Psychiatry*. There are also specialty journals devoted to major disorders.

The optional readings will not be addressed on the final exam. However, these additional readings may be discussed in class, as they shed light on some of the more innovative theories and findings for specific domains related to psychopathology.

Grades

**A. PARTICIPATION.** Class participation will account for 20% of your grade. You are expected to come to class having already read the assigned material and prepared to make comments, raise
questions, and offer opinions on the comments and questions of others. Quantity is less important than quality.

a. In addition, each week you will write 2 thought-provoking discussion questions based on the readings in preparation for each class meeting. The questions can stem from the required or optional readings. The discussion questions should integrate across various readings for each week (or even across weeks). Email the 2 questions to me and the rest of the class by the day before (at 10:00 AM) each class meeting.

b. Finally, I reserve the right to employ either unannounced evaluations of your knowledge of the readings or to require brief position papers in which you summarize and react to the readings for a particular class period or topic. At present there is no final exam. However, a take-home final exam will be employed if students do not adequately participate in class and complete the readings.

B. THOUGHT PAPERS. Thought papers account for 30% of your course grade. What are thought papers? You will write a 1-2 page “thought paper” based on the readings for that week. Thought papers can involve raising an interesting question or issue, proposing a study, or making an observation based on the readings. Summaries of the readings are not acceptable. These papers are due by 6pm on Monday by email. Late papers will not be accepted. You are expected to work on your professional writing skills and thus, errors in grammar and spelling will be penalized. You only have to write 8 papers for the semester and can select which weeks you wish to write a paper. You will have to keep track to ensure that you complete 8 by the end of the semester.

C. TERM PAPER. 40% of your grade. The paper should be an integrative review of the available literature on a specialized topic of your choosing (approved by me), follows American Psychological Association publication guidelines, and be approximately 25 (typed, double-spaced) pages (of text) in length. The paper must be submitted to me before December 6th, 2004. Select a topic on psychopathology that you would like to learn more about and believe a synthesis of the field is necessary. You must obtain topic approval by me by the end of September 2004. Before September 2004, please write 1-2 paragraphs about the nature of your topic and submit it to me. To complete the paper you will have to locate, read, synthesize, and critically examine references beyond those required in this course (i.e., journal articles, book chapters). For examples of review articles, the most relevant journals are (a) Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice and (b) Clinical Psychology Review. Here are 2 important articles on writing a narrative review:


D. PRESENTATION. 10% of your grade. Each student will give a 20-minute presentation to the class on any specialized topic related to this course. It makes most sense to focus on term paper topics. The final 3-4 classes are devoted to these presentations. Everyone is expected to attend all presentations and take part in the question and answer period.

Additional Course Policies

Students with Special Concerns
If you are a student with a disability and need academic accommodations please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.
Statement of Academic Integrity
In accordance with University guidelines, I will take vigorous action against students who engage in cheating, misrepresentation, or other dishonest practices. Penalties for students found guilty of academic dishonesty will be determined on a case by case basis, in accordance with university guidelines. If you have any concerns about matters of academic dishonesty please see me immediately.

Tentative Schedule of Class Topics and Readings

Note that this is a tentative syllabus. Any changes will be announced in class.

1 (August 29): Introduction and Administrative Information

2 (August 31): Defining Disorder


Optional Readings:


3 (September 5): Classification, Disorder, and Using and Critiquing DSM-IV


Optional Readings:


4 (September 7): Part II: Sex and Cultural Issues


5 (September 12): Anxiety Disorders I: General Information

******* Paper Topics Must Be Decided and Approved!*******


Optional Readings:


6 (September 14): Anxiety Disorders II: Risk and Protective Factors


7 (September 19): Panic Disorder


8 (September 21): Generalized Anxiety Disorder I


9 (September 26): Generalized Anxiety Disorder II: Treatment Issues


(available at: [http://www.personal.kent.edu/~dfresco/](http://www.personal.kent.edu/~dfresco/)).

Optional Readings:

Commentaries by Craske, Borkovec, or Hayes that are a part of this special issue of *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice* on GAD.

10 (September 28): Social Anxiety Disorder I


Optional Readings:


11 (October 3): Social Anxiety Disorder II: New Perspectives and Treatment


**Optional Readings:**


12 (October 5): Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder I


13 (October 12): Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder II: New Perspectives and Treatment


14 (October 17): Specific Phobia


15 (October 19): Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder


**Optional Readings:**

16 (October 24): Mood Disorders I


**Optional Readings:**


17 (October 26): Mood Disorders II


18 (October 31): Mood Disorders III: Bipolar Disorder


19 (November 2): Mood Disorders IV: Prevention and Treatment of Unipolar Depression


20 (November 7): Mood Disorders V

just in case…

21 (November 9): Substance Use Disorders I


**Optional Readings:**


22 (November 14): Substance Use Disorders II


**Optional Readings:**


23 (November 16): Sexual Disorders I


**24 (November 21): Sexual Disorders II**


**Optional Readings:**


**November 22-26----Thanksgiving Break**

25 (November 28): Presentations

26 (November 30): Presentations

27 (December 5): Presentations

**28 (December 7): Psychology X----**ask any questions you want about topics that were not covered sufficiently or anything else related to psychopathology

******* Paper is Due on December 12th *******