

Course Syllabus

Abnormal Psychology: Psychology 240 (Section T)

Spring 2014

<u>Professor:</u>	Dr. Michael Alessandri
<u>Office:</u>	FLP 238
<u>Office Hours:</u>	T&TH 3:00-4:45 PM but also available most days/times <i>Email for Personal Appointment as this is a large class!</i>
<u>Contact Info:</u>	305-284-6558; malessandri@miami.edu (EMAIL IS BEST)
<u>Meeting Place & Time:</u>	FLP 536; TTH 5:00 PM – 6:15 PM

Course Description: *This course will introduce you to a wide variety of psychological disorders and theoretical concepts that underlie them. You will learn the presenting symptoms, criteria, possible causes and treatments for each disorder discussed. By the end of this course, you are expected to have learned important information related to the study of abnormal behavior and you should be able to think critically about the topic. This course is designed in a stimulating way to increase your knowledge about how clinical psychologists approach work in their field and how abnormal psychology guides our understanding of mental processes that may disrupt lives.*

Attendance and classroom behavior:

Attendance is important. You will be responsible for material presented in class and in the text. It is in your best interest to come to class every day. I will not be taking attendance, but there will periodically be unannounced in-class assignments that will count toward your final grade.

To make this environment comfortable for everyone, please remember that there are many students with different experiences and needs in one room. Many of the topics we are going to discuss in class might seem strange or even funny to you. However, given the high rates of mental disorders in our society, it is highly likely that many of you will have direct experience with the conditions discussed in our class, either personally or through a friend or family member. It is therefore very important to be respectful during class, particularly during discussions and while we are watching videos.

Course Textbook:

The required textbook for this course is Ronald Comer's *Abnormal Psychology*, Eighth Edition with DSM-5 Updates. The class schedule below outlines the assigned chapters for each class. There is also a very helpful, free website to accompany the book at <http://bcs.worthpublishers.com/comerabpsych8e>. This site (developed by the

publisher) has self-quizzes to help you prepare for exams. It is recommended that you use these quizzes to help you study, although, as noted below, exams will also include material covered in lecture, which may not be covered by the self-quizzes.

NOTE: *There are both required and recommended readings from the textbook. The required readings reflect the chapters that we will cover in class; the recommended readings are those chapters that we will not have sufficient time to cover but that may be of interest to you.*

Writing Credit:

This course is **NOT** available for Writing Credit unless you are a graduating senior (Graduation date: May 2014) and have a letter from your advisor indicating the WC is needed.

Honors/Pink Sheeting:

This course is **NOT** available for Honors “pink sheeting.”

Course Requirements:

Required:	<i>4 non-cumulative multiple choice exams: All 4 count - 100 points each</i>
Required:	<i>8 in-class activities: 5 will count – 5 points each</i>
Recommended:	<i>One face-to-face office appointment with Dr. Alessandri</i>

Course Grading Scale (% of Total Points – 425 possible total points):

A+ 98-100	B+ 88-89	C+ 78-79	D+ 68-69	F <60
A 93-97	B 83-87	C 73-77	D 63-67	
A- 90-93	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Final Grades:

Final letter grades will be based on the above scale. Your average is based on ALL 4 exams and 5 of the 8 in-class activities. No final grades will be lower than that indicated by the total number of points earned. Furthermore, in order to obtain a certain grade, you must earn no less than the minimum average stated (e.g., an average of 92.90 would earn a course grade of A- not A; a minimum average of 93 is required for an A). *A high level of meaningful participation and an active commitment to enhancing the class discussions through insightful comments and questions, along with fulfilling the*

recommendation of a face-to-face meeting with Dr. Alessandri may, in some cases, result in a borderline grade being raised.

Academic Honesty:

It is expected that all students will maintain the standards of academic honesty.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Sections	Dates	Required Reading	Recommended Reading	Exam Date
Section One: Abnormal Psychology Past and Present; Models of Abnormality; Clinical Assessment, Diagnosis and Treatment; Personality Disorders	January 14 th – February 4 th	Chapter 1; Chapter 3; Chapter 4; Chapter 16;	Chapter 2	<u>THURS</u> <u>FEBRUARY 6TH</u>
Section Two: Anxiety, Obsessive- Compulsive and Related Disorders; Stress Disorders; Disorders focusing on Somatic and Dissociative Symptoms	February 11 th – March 4 th	Chapter 5; Chapter 17 (only pp. 519- 521); Chapter 6; Chapter 7 (only Dissociative Disorders)	Chapter 7 (Disorders focusing on Somatic Symptoms)	<u>THURS</u> <u>MARCH 6th</u>
Section Three: Disorders of Mood; Treatment for Mood Disorders; Eating Disorders	March 18 th – April 3 rd (NO CLASS APRIL 1st)	Chapter 8; Chapter 17 (only pp. 553- 557); Chapter 9; Chapter 11	Chapter 10; Chapter 12;	<u>TUESDAY</u> <u>APRIL 8th</u>
Section Four: Disorders of Sex and Gender; Schizophrenia; Treatments for Schizophrenia and Other Severe Mental Disorders	April 10 th – April 24 th	Chapter 13 (Paraphilic Disorders); Chapter 14; Chapter 15	Chapter 13 (Sexual Dysfunctions and Gender Dysphoria); Chapter 18	<u>May 1st</u> <u>5pm</u>

