Psychoogy 3140 3.0 (W) 2016

Introduction to Abnormal Psychology

What sane person could live in this world and not be crazy? - Ursula K. Le Guin

Course Director: Alexandra Rutherford, Ph. D.  
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Room 150A BSB  
Office Hour: by appt. Often available after class.

Location and Time: CLH-E  
Tuesdays, 2:30pm-5:30pm

Prerequisites: AK/AS/SC/PSYC 1010 6.00 or AK/PSYC 2410 6.00, with a minimum grade of C.


Required Readings: A selection of journal articles and on-line material. Library links available at the course website.

Course Objectives: To provide students with the skills to think critically about our current definitions and explanations of, and responses to, mental distress. Students will consider the historically and socially constructed nature of mental health and distress. They will learn how people identified as “abnormal” or “disordered” have been understood and treated by the psychological and psychiatric establishments. They will also consider how those labelled “mentally ill” have understood their own experiences. They will reflect on how these perspectives relate to one another.
Course Evaluation: Your grade in this course is based on two writing assignments worth 15% and 25% respectively, and three in-class tests worth 20% each. Tests consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Tests cover assigned readings, lecture material, and any video or web material that is shown or discussed IN CLASS.

Check the course schedule below for test and due dates. Descriptions of the writing assignments follow the schedule.

Please plan your exam studying accordingly, as tests in many courses tend to be held at similar times. It is the student’s responsibility to organize his/her schedule to take into account this eventuality. **Having multiple tests the same week is NOT considered a legitimate excuse for missing the tests in this course. Tests and assignments will NOT be re-weighted to compensate for poor performance on one component. Additional assignments CANNOT be used to boost your grade. If you are worried about your performance be proactive, not reactive. Speak to me or the TA well in advance of the next assignment to ensure that you are on track.**

Course Policies: Attendance is expected at all class meetings. Material and activities will be presented that are not covered in your textbook, and we will engage in active learning exercises that will enhance your experience of this course. **Neither the course director nor the TA will lend out their lecture notes and notes will not be posted on-line.** Active learning via note-taking and participation is more effective than reading posted notes, and since I do not follow my notes verbatim they are not a completely accurate record of the class content. No notes but your own will adequately reflect what goes on in class.

That said, if you must miss a class for unavoidable reasons, borrow notes from a classmate, or if you know in advance that you must miss a class, have a classmate audiotape the class for you to listen to later. This is the only way to ensure you recover what is presented in that class.

Powerpoint slides **will** be posted on the course website in advance of the class meeting. If a student has a documented disability that requires accommodation involving notetaking, please contact the professor immediately to arrange accommodation.

There are NO EXCUSES for missing a test, save serious illness on the day of the test. Notification that you have missed a test must reach both me and your TA within 48 hours of the missed date, preferably via an e-mail cc’ed to both of us. Proper documentation, consisting of a note from a physician outlining the specific nature of the illness and dated within 2 days of the test, is required to excuse a student from a test and must be
presented to the TA at the makeup exam. **All students who miss any tests due to illness will be required to write a makeup test that may differ from the original in BOTH format and content on the date specified by the instructor. Failure to write the makeup on this date will result in a 0 on the exam.**

Important information for students regarding the Access/Disability, Academic Honesty/Integrity, Student Conduct, and Religious Observance Days is available on the following webpage:

http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/

Please consult the following website on Academic Integrity:

http://www.yorku.ca/spark/academic_integrity/index.html

It is important that you are aware of the York University Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. Please consult the following website:

http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-honesty-senate-policy-on/

York offers excellent support to help you develop your writing skills. See:

http://www.yorku.ca/laps/writ/centre/

**Percentage grades are converted to letter grades using the following table:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From Percentage</th>
<th>To Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80- 89</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75- 79</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70- 74</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65- 69</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>60- 64</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>55- 59</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>50- 54</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Marginally below 50%)</td>
<td>Marginally failing E</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Below 50%)</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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<td>------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) Jan. 5</td>
<td>What is abnormal about human psychology?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Jan. 12</td>
<td>What can we learn from history?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guest presenter: Jennifer Bazar</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Jan. 19</td>
<td>Diagnosis and its discontents</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Jan. 26</td>
<td>TEST 1 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills-building around first writing assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Feb. 2</td>
<td>What does culture have to do with it?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Feb. 9</td>
<td>Culture has a lot to do with it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE ON FEBRUARY 12th**

7) WINTER READING WEEK

|            |                                                                        | Lane (2010)                                   |

9) March 1  | TEST 2 (20%)                                                            |                                               |
|            | Skills-building around second writing assignment                       |                                               |

**MARCH 4th IS THE LAST DATE TO DROP WITHOUT RECEIVING A GRADE**

10) March 8 | Gender and madness                                                     | Marecek (1993)                                |
|            |                                                                        | Shaw & Proctor (2005)                          |

|            |                                                                        | Belluz (2015)                                 |

|            |                                                                        | Carey (2015)                                  |

13) March 29| TEST 3 (20%)                                                            |                                               |

**SECOND WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE ON APRIL 5th (Agnes’s Jacket)**
**READING LIST BY WEEK:**

1) **Jan. 5th**: What is abnormal about human psychology?


Frances, A. (2013). *Saving Normal*, Chapter 1

2) **Jan. 12th**: What can we learn from history?


3) **Jan. 19th**: Diagnosis and its discontents


4) **Jan. 26th**: TEST #1 and facilitated small group work for first assignment

5) **Feb. 2nd**: What does culture have to do with it?


6) **Feb. 9th**: Culture has a lot to do with it


7) WINTER READING WEEK

8) Feb. 23rd: Poverty, inequality and discrimination


9) March 1st: TEST #2 and facilitated small group work for second assignment

10) March 8th: Gender and madness


11) March 15th: Medicalizing sex


12) March 22nd: Treatment debates


Also see YouTube video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luKsQaj0hzs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luKsQaj0hzs)


Carey, B. (2015). New approach advised to treat schizophrenia. [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/20/health/talk-therapy-found-to-ease-schizophrenia.html?_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/20/health/talk-therapy-found-to-ease-schizophrenia.html?_r=0)

13) March 29th: TEST 3 (20%)
SECOND WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE ON APRIL 5th (Agnes’s Jacket)

ASSIGNMENTS

There are two writing assignments for this course. They are designed to develop your skills in critical analysis and reading and evaluating the main arguments in scholarly writing. They are also designed to have you engage with first-person accounts of mental distress.

Unfortunately, we do not have enough person-power to provide individual feedback on pre-e-mailed drafts of the writing assignments. If you have questions about how to write up the assignments, come to office hours or attend the in-class session devoted to the assignment. If you have trouble with writing generally, there are lots of great resources at York. Check out the Writing Centre:

http://writing-centre.writ.laps.yorku.ca/

Also check out SPARK – Student Papers and Academic Research Kit:

http://www.yorku.ca/spark/

It is a great on-line resource that leads you through some important steps in essay writing and other important academic skills.

Assignment 1 (15%; due by midnight on February 12):

Explore “Remembering Oak Ridge”
https://historyexhibit.waypointcentre.ca/

In an 800-word essay, reconstruct a day in the life of a patient at Oak Ridge by writing a first-person account. Imagine that you have been incarcerated there because you have been found to be “criminally insane.” Pick the historical time period of your incarceration (e.g., in the 1960s, 1980s) and flesh out the details of a typical day for you within the walls of Oak Ridge.

Base your account on the details about patient lives and the institution that you learn about at the website. What sorts of activities might you engage in? What treatment might you receive? Who might you encounter (staff, other patients)?

Although this is a creative essay, be sure to reference the source of the details you provide following the “To cite this page” instructions at the bottom of every page on the site. (and for more on APA style, see below)

Assignment 2 (25%; due by midnight on April 5):

Read the book Agnes’s Jacket: A Psychologist’s Search for the Meanings of Madness by Gail Hornstein.
In a 1,000-word essay, provide your reflections on the book. Your reflections, although written in essay style, should address the following questions/topics:

1) Summarize/express Hornstein’s main points or arguments. Given this, what is the significance of the title’s reference to Agnes’s jacket?

2) How did Hornstein research her book? What challenges did she face?

3) How have your views of madness been influenced by reading Agnes’s Jacket? That is, what were your views before reading the book, and how did reading her account affect those views? Be specific and give examples.

4) What recommendations does Hornstein have (implicit or explicit) for how to respond to people with emotional problems? Do you agree or disagree with these recommendations? Why or why not?

HOW TO PRESENT YOUR ASSIGNMENTS

• APA format is to be used for both assignments. Try to keep direct quotes to a minimum, but if they are used, in-text references would look like this:

Hornstein (2009) has noted that despite strenuous efforts to silence the mad, communications from the “world of madness are far more numerous than one might think” (p. xii).  OR

Despite strenuous efforts to silence the mad, communications from the world of madness “are far more numerous than one might think” (Hornstein, 2009, p. xii).

• Your assignment must be double spaced, one-inch margins all around, 12-pt font. Do not exceed 1000 words of written work (not including references).

• Page one is a cover page that clearly indicates the title of your essay, your name, your student number, and your e-mail.

• The last page of your assignment is a separate page that has your short reference list in APA style.

• Save your essay as a Word doc (not .pdf) with the following file name: Lastname_Assignment 1 (or 2)

• Submit it through the Moodle site by the due date and time