

Psychology 350
Abnormal Psychology
Spring 2008
N-101
Tuesdays 4:10-6:50PM
Schedule Number: 66706
3 units

Instructor: Elizabeth D. Cordero, Ph.D.

Office: Faculty Offices East, 137

Office Hours: Tuesdays: 9AM-10AM; 3PM-4PM (and by appointment)

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Course Textbook (available on-line and/or at the bookstore):

Sue, D., Sue, D. W., & Sue, S. (2006). *Understanding abnormal behavior* (8th ed.).
Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Course Description

From the SDSU Course Catalog, p 379:

“Causes and treatment of abnormal behavior with emphasis on major behavior disorders.”

This course will introduce students to the various mental disorders as defined by the American Psychiatric Association and other mental-health experts in the United States. Students will learn about the symptoms of each disorder, as well as the etiology, assessment, and treatment of each disorder. Students are asked to consider the myriad factors that contribute to current conceptualizations of mental illness, as well as the scientific, legal, and ethical issues pertaining to abnormal psychology. By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- Discuss extant models of abnormal behavior
- Utilize basic assessment and diagnostic skills
- Identify symptoms of disorders and criteria for diagnoses
- Consider common factors of etiology of each disorder
- Determine cultural relevance of each disorder
- Verbalize their thoughts about treatment and conceptualization of each disorder
- Develop perspectives about scientific, legal, and ethical implications of abnormal behavior

Prerequisites (from the SDSU Course Catalog, p 379): “Psychology 101; completion of the General Education requirement in Foundation II.B., Social and Behavioral Sciences required.”

Course Requirements

Examinations - There will be three examinations in this course – two midterm examinations and one final examination. All three will consist of multiple-choice and/or matching questions, and material covered in the textbook and/or class lectures will be tested. The midterm exams will have 50 questions; however only the highest midterm score will count toward your grade in the course. The final exam will be cumulative and will have 100 questions. All exams will begin at 4:20PM the date each is scheduled (see course outline). Students who arrive after each exam begins will not be permitted to take the exam. Additionally, students will not be allowed to leave during an exam to answer telephone calls or to use the restroom. A study guide for each exam will be posted on the course's Blackboard website one week prior to each exam. There will be no make-up exams unless absence from an exam occurs because of a religious holiday, medical reason, or a university-sanctioned event. Please inform the instructor of planned absences for religious holidays or university-sanctioned events by the end of the second week of the semester. (150 points)

Diagnosis Presentations - In order to help students apply the assessment and diagnostic skills they learn in this course, each student will respectfully present a typical "client" to the class. Students are asked to find or create a description of an individual who has struggled with a mental illness and present information about the person to the class in a mock case conference, including the severity and duration of the symptoms the "client" is experiencing. Each student should be prepared for the class to ask them questions in order for the class to provide a diagnosis for the clients that are presented. Students will sign up for general areas (e.g., Anxiety Disorders, Mood Disorders) for their presentation and will be assigned specific disorders to prepare for by the instructor; please see the course outline for dates marked "case conference" for options. Additionally, by noon of the day of their presentations, students are required to email the instructor a description of the client they will present, including the client's symptoms and background; these descriptions should be at least 500 words in length. A format for the descriptions will be passed out by the instructor after the first midterm; the quality of this description will be taken into account for grading purposes. The instructor will present a case to the class after the first midterm in order to demonstrate the presentation. Late work will not be accepted. The instructor will ask students for their top three choices for disorders during Week Two and will try to assign students to their top choices. Detailed instructions and grading criteria will be provided by the instructor. (50 points)

Extra Credit: Participation in a Psychological Activity - Students are encouraged to participate in one psychological activity in order to give them further experience of abnormal psychology and research. Acceptable activities include:

- One hour of participation in a research study conducted by psychology faculty at SDSU-IV (a form to be signed to confirm participation is on Blackboard)
- A 500-word summary and review of an article published in 2007 in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* or the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology* (with article attached)
- A 500-word summary of an interview with a person who has a DSM-IV-TR diagnosis

Other acceptable activities might be announced throughout the semester. Students should turn in evidence of completion of this activity at the beginning of the final exam. Only one psychological activity will count toward extra credit. (5 points)

Grading:

A total of 200 points is possible. The class will not be curved; thus you are not in competition with your fellow students. Please work together to learn the course material.

185-200 points: A	155-159 points: C+	120-124 points: D -
180-184 points: A -	145-154 points: C	119 points or less: F
175-179 points: B+	140-144 points: C-	
165-174 points: B	135-139 points: D+	
160-164 points: B -	125-134 points: D	

Please let me know if you encounter any difficulties with completion of the course requirements, or if there is something in particular you'd like to learn about that pertains to this course. I'd like to facilitate you having as much of a positive experience as possible. Additionally, students who need accommodation of their disabilities should contact me privately to discuss specific accommodations of which they have received authorization. If you have a disability, but have not contacted Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473, please do so before making an appointment to see me.

In order to preserve academic integrity and encourage students to make responsible choices, all students found cheating or plagiarizing will receive an automatic fail for the course and will be sent to the appropriate administrative body for review for the aforementioned consequences. Please review the university's definition of plagiarism on page 465 of the General Catalog.

Students are asked to be respectful of all ideas and information presented; disrespect or intolerance will not be tolerated. Please turn cell phones and pagers to "silent" during class. The instructor will keep her cell phone on "silent" in order to receive messages from the university in times of crisis.

Course Outline (All assigned readings are to be done prior to the class session for which it is listed.)

Week 1 01/22	Greetings and Review of Syllabus Introduction: Abnormal Behavior/What is Plagiarism?
Week 2 01/29	Models of Abnormal Behavior Preferences for Diagnosis Presentations Due Reading: Chapters 1 & 2
Week 3 02/05	Assessment, Classification, and Science of Abnormal Behavior Reading: Chapters 3 & 4
Week 4 02/12	Cognitive Disorders & Psychological Factors Affecting Medical Conditions Reading: Chapters 7 & 14
Week 5 02/19	Schizophrenia Reading: Chapter 13
Week 6 02/26	Midterm Examination Discussion/Demonstration of Diagnosis Presentation
Week 7 03/04	Dissociative Disorders and Somatoform Disorders Reading: Chapter 6
Week 8 03/11	Anxiety Disorders Case Conference: Anxiety Disorders Reading: Chapter 5
Week 9 03/18	Mood Disorders and Suicide Case Conference: Mood Disorders Reading: Chapters 11 & 12
Week 10 03/25	Personality Disorders and Impulse Control Disorders Case Conference: Personality Disorders and Impulse Control Disorders Reading: Chapter 8
Week 11 04/01	Spring Break: No class
Week 12 04/08	Midterm Examination
Week 13 04/15	Substance-Related Disorders Case Conference: Substance-Related Disorders Reading: Chapter 9
Week 14 04/22	Sleep, Sexual, and Gender Identity Disorders Case Conference: Sleep, Sexual, and Gender Identity Disorders Reading: Chapter 10 & pp 548 - 557
Week 15 04/29	Eating Disorders and Disorders of Childhood and Adolescence Case Conference: Eating Disorders & Disorders of Childhood and Adolescence Reading: Chapter 15 & pp 526 - 547
Week 16 05/06	Therapeutic Interventions/Legal and Ethical Issues Reading: Chapters 17 & 18
Finals 05/13	Final Exam Psychological Activity Due