

FP6005 MALADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR AND PSYCHOPATHOLOGY

FALL, 2006

- Class:** Psychopathology and Maladaptive Behavior  
**Program** M.A. - Forensic Psychology  
**Instructor:** Martha P. Wilson, Ph.D.  
**Email:** wilsonargosy@sbcglobal.net (the only way to reach me)  
**Class Meets:** Saturday - Sunday 09/09/0 to 09/10/06 and  
Saturday - Sunday 10/07/06 to 10/08/06  
**Online Component:** Approximately one hour during each week of the term  
**Office Hours:** By special arrangement only  
**Required Texts (2):** 1. Abnormal Psychology: Clinical Perspectives on Psychological Disorders, Updated, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition.  
Authors: Richard P. Halgin, and Susan Krauss Whitbourne  
Publisher: McGraw-Hill Higher Education.  
ISBN: 0-07-297643-8, © 2005  
2. Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision: DSM-IV-TR  
Publisher: American Psychiatric Association  
ISBN: 0-89042-024-6 or 0-89042-025-4, © 2000

**Course Description:**

This class is an introductory graduate course in psychopathology, which may be alternately referred to as “abnormal psychology” or “maladaptive behavior.” Instruction will be primarily focused on the accurate diagnosis of mental disorders and developing an adequate understanding of the differences between them. Those disorders that are most likely to be seen in forensic settings will be highlighted. Related topics include history of diagnosis, ethical issues and socio-cultural factors in diagnosis, controversies in the field, and professional application of diagnostic knowledge. Some initial discussion will focus on what is “normal” and “healthy” in contrast to “abnormal” or pathological.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course students should be able to:

- Recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness, and other forms of psychological and behavioral dysfunction.
- Understand and use the DSM-IV-TR nosological system for the classification and diagnosis of psychological disorders.
- Consider the complex factors that contribute to psychological and behavioral function and dysfunction, including biological, developmental, psychodynamic and socio-

cultural issues.

- Obtain a general understanding of the common treatments of major classes of mental illness.

### **Reading and Lecture Schedule:**

You are expected to read the Abnormal Psychology text thoroughly. The DSM-IV-TR introduction should be read thoroughly. You must be completely familiar with the purpose and intent of the DSM along with its use. You must become so familiar with its use that you are able to use it as a diagnostic tool. You need not memorize all the details of every diagnosis. However, know and understand its organization, format and review the appendices thoroughly. Below are approximate guidelines for which text chapters correspond to the teaching outline. It is understood that, given the weekend format of the class, almost all of your preparations will be done in the weeks preceding the first and second weekends. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to choose a reading and study schedule that works for you. In the strictest sense, because there is only one exam at the end of the class, you are not “responsible” for knowing all the material until then, but you will be expected to participate in a thoughtful and analytical way throughout. Your participation should reflect the readings. Suggested reading schedules are included below. You may be asked to do some supplemental reading and discussion for the online component of the class.

### **Lectures, topics, and corresponding reading for first weekend:**

Saturday 9/09/06 -

Introductions, Class Outline, Normalcy, The DSM Diagnostic System, History and Theories of Abnormality, Assessment, Disorders of Childhood, Cognitive Disorders (Sleep Disorders, Delirium, Dementia and Amnesic Disorders)

*(Abnormal Psychology, Chapters 1, 2, 4; DSM pp 1-38)*

*(Abnormal Psychology, Chapters 3, 11, 12 and corresponding DSM chapters)*

Sunday 9/10/06 -

Anxiety Disorders, Mood Disorders, Adjustment Disorders, Other Conditions that May be a Focus of Clinical Attention

*(Abnormal Psychology, Chapters 5, 8 and corresponding DSM chapters)*

### **Lectures, topics, and corresponding reading for second weekend:**

Saturday 10/07/06-

Psychotic Disorders (Schizophrenia), Personality Disorders. Case Presentations. Film: Titticut Follies

*(Abnormal Psychology, Chapters 9-10 & corresponding DSM chapters).*

Sunday 10/08/06 - Dissociative Disorders, Sexual Disorders, Gender Identity Disorders, Impulse-Control Disorders, Eating Disorders, Somatoform Disorders, Substance-Related Disorders, Legal and Ethical Issues. Final Exam Review. Case Presentations. Psychopathology Topic Paper Due. Final Exam.  
(*Abnormal Psychology, Chapters 6, 13, 14, 15 and corresponding DSM chapters*)

### **Course Requirements:**

Your performance will be evaluated in four ways: a written assignment, a verbal presentation, a final exam, and class participation. Because all the assignments are due at the end of the last class meeting, and the final exam will be on that day, it is suggested that you complete most or all of your work before the last weekend.

### **Psychopathology Topic Paper, 100 points (due no later than last class).**

You will choose **one** psychological disorder that is sometimes diagnosed among people who are seen in various forensic settings, and write a brief (approximately 5 double-spaced pages) paper addressing **at least two** topics related to the disorder.

You may choose any **one** of the following disorders for your paper:

narcissistic personality disorder, borderline personality disorder, antisocial personality disorder, paranoid personality disorder, mental retardation, conduct disorder, schizophrenia (all types), bipolar disorder (all types), major depressive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or impulse control disorders (either kleptomania or pyromania)

You must cover these three topics in your paper:

1. What is the etiology of this disorder? In other words, what genetic, biological, psychological or social factors cause or contribute to the development of the disorder in an individual?
2. Why are people with this disorder commonly encountered in forensic settings? In other words, how might the symptom of the disorder lead the person to become involved in criminal behavior, violence toward others, victimization by others, family or civil court battles, or the juvenile justice or adult corrections systems?
3. According to current research, what treatment options or interventions are considered best for treating people with this disorder?

Your paper should be in APA format and include at least two references other than your textbooks. These should be books, articles or periodicals; website addresses are not sufficient references. Your paper will be graded on following the instructions, writing

clarity, and level of applied thoughtfulness and critical thinking.

### **Clinical Case Presentation, 100 points (presented to class during second weekend)**

The format of this presentation will be a verbal discussion of a person, including identifying information, presenting problem, identifying information, history, mental status and multi-axial diagnosis. You will also write a brief report outlining the case. For your subject, you may choose a character from a well-known movie or book, or a famous historical or cultural personality. Your selection requires advance approval by the instructor.

The purpose of this assignment is to expose you to the kind of critical thinking about a person that is a necessity in understanding psychopathology, and familiarize you with the DSM system of diagnosis.

### **Attendance and Participation, 100 points**

Because this is a high-intensity class occurring over two long weekends, attendance is critical. You are expected to attend all classes. If you are absent even once, your ability to synthesize the material will be undermined. Unless special arrangements are made ahead of time with the instructor, your final grade will be negatively impacted by any absences. Missing class is not acceptable. It is assumed when you enrolled in the course that you have allocated the time for class. No student can achieve an A in the class if there is any absence.

In class participation requires active listening, commenting on topics, engaging in dialogue and discussion on all four class days without having to be called upon. Any student remaining silent during class will lose participation points, which are a fifth of the grade. Professionals in the field are able to converse appropriately in public settings. An A cannot be achieved without thorough verbal participation.

### **Weekly Postings (do NOT start a new thread)**

1. You must log in the first week of class and every week thereafter a minimum of twice per week. The first log in is to provide your own response to the topic of the week. The second is to respond to another student's comments.

2. Do not start a new thread EVER in this class. All students should stay on the same thread even if you change topics or respond to another student.

3. If at any time, the platform does not contain the weekly topic, you are required to post anyway as you have all the weekly topics on the syllabus which will be emailed to you.

Week 1 (9/5):

Introduce yourself. Identify your current career/employment status and experience in the field. Discuss your reasons for entering this program and your possible future academic or career goals.

Week 2 (9/11): Discuss the pros and cons of formal diagnoses. What are the implications for health care, employment, lifestyle for those receiving the diagnosis? What does the DSM say the diagnoses are for?

Week 3 (9/18): What are the primary differences between Axis I and Axis II diagnoses? Discuss the implications for treatment for these two Axis?

Week 4 (9/25): How is it that there can be three people with the exact same diagnoses but each has completely different symptoms? What is important about this? How does it work?

Week 5 (10/2): Discuss the difficulties of diagnosing children. What are the pitfalls?

Week 6 (10/9): Final Exam Review. Post questions and answers with classmates about difficult or confusing material. Each student must pose three questions, and must respond thoughtfully to at least two questions posed by other classmates. Instructor will clarify unresolved issues online or during final class weekend.

Week 7 (10/16): Please read the article “Psychopathy and Antisocial Personality Disorder:” <http://www.psychiatrytimes.com/p960239.html>. Discuss with classmates online.

### **Final Examination, 100 points (given at end of last class meeting)**

There will be a comprehensive oral final exam at the end of the final class meeting. The exam may cover all relevant material from your texts, and any material in the instructor’s lectures. Some elements of the exam will be open-book; be sure to bring your DSM-IV-TR to class. Each student will have an opportunity to answer 3 to 5 oral questions in class.

### **Grading:**

Your final course grade will be based on the following:

Written Assignment	100 points (due no later than last class)
Individual Presentation	100 points (presented to class during final weekend)
Attendance and Participation	100 points (25 points per class)
Online Participation	100 points (14 points per week)
Comprehensive Final Exam	100 points (given at end of final weekend)
Total	500 points

Letter grades will be assigned according to a traditional percentage system. Assignments will not be accepted if turned in late.

### **Additional Recommended Reading:**

These are books related to psychopathology or forensics that I have personally found helpful. None are required for this class, but you may be interested in purchasing or examining them as an aide in this class and/or your degree program.

DSM-IV-TR Casebook: A Learning Companion to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision. Robert L. Spitzer (Editor), Miriam Gibbon (Editor), Andrew E. Skodol (Editor), Janet B. W. Williams (Editor), Michael B. First (Editor), Mariam Gibbon. American Psychiatric Pr; 4th edition (January 2002) ISBN: 1585620599

*Vignettes give prose examples for hundreds of difficult diagnostic situations.*

Essential Psychopathology and Its Treatment. Jerrold S. Maxmen and Nicholas G. Ward. W.W. Norton & Company. ISBN: 0393701735.

*The perfect companion for the DSM...discussions about all the diagnoses in DSM-IV.*

Testifying in Court: Guidelines and Maxims for the Expert Witness. Stanley L. Brodsky. American Psychological Association. © 1991

*A handy and user-friendly reference for anyone who may be put in the position of testifying in court.*

## **Student Performance Evaluation Criteria and Procedures**

### **Criteria for Class Participation**

Grade	
A = 90+	Student actively participated in discussions in <b>&gt;80%</b> of class sessions; <b>nearly all</b> comments were <b>thought provoking and incorporated material from the assigned readings</b>
B = 80 – 89	Student actively participated in discussions in <b>&gt;80%</b> of class sessions; <b>most</b> of the comments were thought provoking and incorporated material from the assigned readings
C = 70 – 79	Student participated in discussions in <b>&gt;70%</b> of class sessions; comments/questions demonstrate a surface level understanding of course topics
F = <70	Student participated in <b>&lt;70%</b> of class sessions; comments/questions did not demonstrate an understanding of course topics, or <b>student did not participate</b> in class discussions.

### **Criteria for Class Presentation**

Grade	
A = 90+	Presentation is well organized and provides <b>excellent</b> coverage of the topic area; informative visual aids provided to the instructor and classmates
B = 80 – 89	Presentation is well organized and provides <b>adequate</b> coverage of the topic area
C = 70 – 79	Coverage of material is marginal; presentation is slightly disorganized
F = <70	Presentation is <b>disorganized</b> and does not provide adequate coverage of the topic area, or presentation was <b>not completed</b> by student.

### **Criteria for Paper**

Grade	
A = 90+	Paper is in appropriate APA format, well thought out and provides <b>excellent</b> coverage of material

B = 80 – 89	Paper is well thought out, but is missing one component of APA format OR coverage of material is <b>adequate</b>
C = 70 – 79	Insufficient number of references provided AND <b>limited</b> coverage
F = <70	Paper is disorganized AND coverage is not adequate AND does not conform to APA format, or there is evidence of <b>plagiarism</b> , or paper not submitted

### **Grading**

93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
69 below	F

### **Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism**

In an effort to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity during the learning process, Argosy University requires that the submission of all course assignments represent the original work produced by that student. All sources must be documented through normal scholarly references/citations and all work must be submitted using the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (2001)*. Washington DC: American Psychological Association (APA) format. Please refer to Appendix A in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition* for thesis and paper format. Students are encouraged to purchase this manual (required in some courses) and become familiar with its content as well as consult the Argosy University catalog for further information regarding academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

Additionally, Argosy University considers resubmission of a work produced for one course in a subsequent course or the submission of work done partially or entirely by another to be academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from the instructor regarding how much help may be received in completing an assignment, exam or project and what sources may be used.

**Scholarly writing:** The faculty at Argosy University is dedicated to providing a learning environment that supports scholarly and ethical writing free from academic dishonesty and plagiarism. This includes the proper and appropriate referencing of all sources. You are responsible for maintaining an electronic copy of any work submitted, because you may be asked to submit your course assignments through "Turnitin," ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)), an online resource established to help educators develop writing/research skills and detect potential cases of academic dishonesty. Turnitin compares submitted papers to billions of pages of content and provides a comparison report to your instructor. This comparison detects papers that share common information and duplicative language.

### **ADA Policy**

It is AU/San Francisco Bay Area Campus policy not to discriminate against qualified students with a documented disability in its educational programs, activities or services. If you have a disability-related need for accommodations in this class, contact the Campus Director of Student Services at 510-215-0277.

**Your instructor is responsible for delivering this curriculum in a format that will ensure the objectives are met and measured. This can be accomplished in a variety of ways depending upon the experience, orientation, technological acumen, emphasis and preferences of the instructor as well as**

**the resources available. Your instructor is also required to ensure that the course Outline include details regarding assignments and method of instruction.**