

Syllabus
PSYC251 Psychopathology
Spring Semester 2017

Meeting Times: Tuesday/Thursday 10:20-11:40
Location: Judd 116

Instructor: Charles Sanislow **E-mail:** csanislow@wesleyan.edu
Office: Judd 316 **Hours:** Tuesdays 4:30-6:00 & Thursdays 12:15-1:00

Course Description

Psychopathology is literally the *Pathology of the Mind*. This course will provide you with an overview of psychopathology, which is also sometimes called “abnormal psychology” or the study of mental disorders. We will consider how abnormal behavior is defined. You will learn about the phenomenology, diagnosis, and what is known (and not known) about the causes of mental disorders. We will study the major domains of psychopathology, including the symptoms and behaviors associated with common mental disorders, as well as the mechanisms hypothesized to be involved with them. Throughout the course, various treatment approaches and research methods will be examined. Questions will be raised about how psychopathology affects individual sufferers, their families, and their friends. What does it mean to have a diagnosis? How does mental suffering affect a person’s relationships, or their ability to work? Is a mental disorder a brain disease? You will be encouraged to think critically about these and other issues, and to compare the approaches to conceptualizing, diagnosing, and treating psychopathology over the past century to those in the present. When faced with the limitations of our knowledge, you will be reminded that how we define and treat abnormality has real-life implications for the person who is suffering and in dire need of relief.

Much of the material we will cover by its very nature may understandably be troubling for most everyone (e.g., harmful treatments, extreme trauma, intense madness). It is also normal to see a little bit of yourself in every psychopathology we study. In fact, if you do, it shows that you are really engaged in the course. Medical residents do this so often with diseases that they study, there even is a name for it. It’s called “resident’s syndrome.” It is also true, that for some, certain material may be “too close to home.” In those instances, it may be advisable to avoid delving in to a topic too deeply, perhaps to even plan in advance to not attend a lecture if the material is likely to be overwhelming. You might also find yourself surprised to discover that a topic is unsettling in the midst of learning about it. If this happens, or if you find yourself dreading or worrying about an upcoming topic, please come and see me. I am always interested in strategizing and available to plan alternatives so that your learning is not interrupted.

Most everyone has been touched indirectly or directly by mental illness. Personal experiences may guide or motivate the desire to learn or make contributions. Sometimes in a particular moment it may feel “right” to disclose personal experiences about yourself, friends, or family in class. Please resist this temptation. Past experience has shown that it is not unusual for later regret after making such disclosures and it is also important to respect the privacy of others by not disclosing personal information about them.

This course is not for all students. If you have in mind that it may help you to resolve personal issues or dilemmas, you are bound to be disappointed. The nature of personal growth in this class is not like that. The aim is to challenge your beliefs about mental illness and how you think about, and to help you develop a credible knowledge base that will provide you the wherewithal to think critically about this field. If, together, we are successful, you will leave this course with a changed way of thinking about mental illness. You will be better able recognize informed public policies and formulate your own opinions about controversial issues. This course will also help prepare those of you interested in pursuing post-graduate education in clinical psychology, clinical neuroscience, and related mental health fields such as psychiatry or social work.

Readings

The primary textbook and an additional book (listed below) are required for the course. Both are available from the Broad Street Book Store.

Textbook:

Oltmanns, T. F. & Emery, R. E. (2014). *Abnormal Psychology* (8th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Additional Book:

Spiro-Wagner, P. & Spiro, C. (2005). *Divided Minds: Twin Sisters and Their Journey Through Schizophrenia*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Selected Articles: (Available on Moodle)

Blaustein, M. & Fleming, A. (2009). Suicide from the golden gate bridge. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 166, 1111-1116.

Faludi, S. (1991). *Backlash*. New York: Crown. (Selected Excerpt)

Herman, J. L. (1992). Complex PTSD: A syndrome in survivors of prolonged and repeated trauma. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 5, 377-391.

Sanislow, C. A., Marcus, K. L., & Reagan, E. M. (2012). Long-Term Outcomes in Borderline Psychopathology: Old assumptions, current findings, and new directions. *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 14, 54-61.

Sanislow, C. A., Quinn, K., & Sypher, I. (2015). The Research Domain Criteria (RDoC). In R. L. Cautin and S. O. Lilienfeld (Eds.) *The Encyclopedia of Clinical Psychology*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Winnicott, D. (1967/1968/1984). *Delinquency as a Sign of Hope*. Address given to the Royal College of London.

Supplemental:

The *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (5th Edition) is on reserve at the Olin Library.

Class Policies

Disability Accommodations. Wesleyan University is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact Disability Resources as soon as possible. If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Dean Patey in Disability Resources located in North College, room 021, or call 860-685-5581 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations.

Attendance: University policies are followed for exam attendance. For an absence during a scheduled exam date to be excused, your dean will need to verify the reason for the absence with the appropriate third party (e.g., health care professional if medically related, or parent or guardian in the case of a family emergency). If you attend lectures, you will do better on exams than if you don't. The text and material presented in class do not entirely overlap. Lectures have unique information beyond the text and also help you to better comprehend text material. Discussion in class goes beyond what is on the slides, and just as important, your questions and contributions benefit everyone else. Class discussion material may appear on the exams.

Assignments and Grading

Grades: Your grade will be based on three semester exams (100 points each, 300 points altogether), a written Case Study due at the end of the semester (100 points), and CR/NC activities during the semester (100 points total). For your exam scores, the lowest score will be replaced with the average of all three exams. The total possible points that you may earn for the course (excluding extra credit) is 500.

Introductions: Some interaction with the professor outside of class is often helpful in a variety of ways, and most students who do well usually meet with the professor during office hours a couple of times during the semester. For some this comes naturally, but it is also easy to put it off. To help break the ice, I ask each of you to schedule a brief (~10 minutes) meeting with me during the second or third week of the course. This will also help me to learn more about your goals for taking this course. To help everyone get to know each other more quickly, I ask that you post an updated photo (or a symbolic representation of yourself) on Moodle. For both the introduction meeting and the photo post, you will earn 10 points CR/NC.

E-Discussion: Discussions will be available on Moodle throughout the course. The goal of these discussions is to give you a chance to raise questions or express thoughts beyond the classroom, and to allow opportunities for you to see what others are thinking as well. The expectation is that you will actively participate and use these dialogues to learn. To encourage you, at least once for each section, you'll raise an intriguing question or post a thoughtful response. If you miss a deadline for posting, there is no make-up. Grading is CR/NC, 10 points for each first post per section (30 points total). Final posting due dates for each section will be posted on Moodle. Additional posts are encouraged, and though they do not bring extra points, they tend to enhance learning. Posts are not anonymous and I may chime from time to time to help correct, clarify, or encourage.

Opinions: Three times during the semester, you'll write a brief "Opinion-Editorial" in response to a pertinent issue raised in the popular media. Each "Op-Ed" is worth 10 points CR/NC (30 points total).

Practice Exam Questions: One of the best ways to prepare for exams is to test your knowledge, whether you turn away from your text and test your ability to recall and elaborate material that you have just read, reflect on material covered in class or reconstruct lecture notes, or attempt practice exam items. A short set of representative questions for practice will be offered on Moodle the Friday prior to each exam. Completion of each practice test will earn 10 points CR/NC and help you do well on the exams (30 points total).

Exam Format: Each of three exams will have 30 multiple-choice items (2 points each), 10 true/false items (1 point each), and 5 short answer questions (6 points each) for a total of 100 points for each (300 points total).

Comprehensive Final: The final assignment for the course is a comprehensive, project-based case study, about 10-12 pages in length (100 points). For this, you will be asked to choose a person popular in the media, or a television, film or literary character, and to write a brief case study including a DSM-5 diagnostic formulation. This is a take-home assignment, and open book including the use of the DSM-5 and other pertinent resources is allowed and encouraged. Specific expectations for this assignment will be handed out in the third section of the course.

Extra Credit: Occasionally throughout the semester you will have a chance to respond to a survey question or complete another activity in class. Each extra credit assignment may be worth 1-2 points (CR/NC).

Reading Assignments: The lectures are designed to extend what you learn from the text. You will learn more if you do the reading assignments prior to each class, and you'll be much more likely to do well on exams.

Grade Scale:

		%			%
A	=	93.35	D+	=	66.65
A-	=	90.0	D	=	63.35
B+	=	86.65	D-	=	60.0
B	=	83.35	E+	=	56.65
B-	=	80.0	E	=	53.35
C+	=	76.65	E-	=	50.0
C	=	73.35	F	=	45.0
C-	=	70.0			

To determine your standing at any point during the semester, divide all points that you have earned by the total possible points (exclude extra credit points in the denominator) and then multiply by 100 to get your percentage score. For your final percentage for your course grade, divide your total score by 500 and then multiply by 100. Remember to replace your lowest exam score with the average of your three exams.

Course Schedule*				Reading	
Dates		Topic		Chapter	Pages/Articles
	R	1/26	Introduction to <i>Psychopathology</i>	-	-
1	T	1/31	Defining [Ab]normal Behavior	1	1-23
2	R	2/2	Causes	2	24-51
3	T	2/7	Treatments	3	52-76
4	R	2/9	Diagnosis, Classification, and Assessment	4	77-104; Sanislow et al. (2014)
5	T	2/14	Affective Disorders	5	102-132
6	R	2/16	Affective Disorders, continued	5	132-141; Blaustein & Fleming (2009)
7	T	2/21	Anxiety Disorders	6	143-173
8	R	2/23	Film: <i>Prozac Nation</i> (abridged)		No Assigned Reading
	T	2/28	Exam 1		
1	R	3/2	Stress and Physical Health	8	207-230
2	T	3/7	Posttraumatic Stress	7	174-186
3	R	3/9	Complex PTSD		Herman (1992)
			<i>Mid Semester Break</i>		
4	T	3/28	Dissociation		186-205
5	R	3/30	Schizophrenia	13	348-378
6	T	4/4	The Psychotic Spectrum	-	No Assigned Reading
7	R	4/6	Speaker: Dr. Carolyn Spiro		Spiro-Wagner & Spiro (2005)
	T	4/11	Exam 2		
1	R	4/13	Personality Pathology	9	231-261 & Winnicott (1967)
2	T	4/18	Personality Pathology, continued	-	Sanislow et al. (2012)
3	R	4/20	Feeding and Eating Disorders	10	262-283
4	T	4/25	Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders	11	284-317
5	R	4/27	Psychological Disorders of Childhood	16	435-464
6	T	5/2	The Autism Spectrum	15	419-434
7	R	5/4	Film: <i>Temple Grandin</i> (abridged)		No Assigned Reading
	T	5/9	Exam 3		
			<i>Case Study Assignment Due Sunrise Saturday 5/20</i>		

***NOTE: Schedule subject to change due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances; all changes posted to Moodle.**