

**PS254: Abnormal Psychology**  
**Spring 2020**  
**Prof. Erin Sheets**  
**Department of Psychology, Colby College**

**Meeting Times:** Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30PM-3:45PM

**Location:** Davis 301

**Course website:** <http://moodle.colby.edu> (PS254 Abnormal Psychology)

**Email:** [erin.sheets@colby.edu](mailto:erin.sheets@colby.edu)

**Office:** Davis 336

This course provides an overview of the classification, treatment, and academic study of abnormal behavior. We will explore the diagnostic symptoms, etiology, and clinical intervention strategies of various forms of psychopathology. The course is not intended as an exhaustive survey of all mental disorders. Instead, the course will focus on the major classes of disorders and treatment approaches that have created a core of understanding within clinical psychology.

***Learning Objectives***

- Identify the diagnostic features of DSM-5 psychological disorders
- Demonstrate an understanding of contributing factors and possible causes of these psychological disorders
- Describe cognitive-behavioral techniques used in treating psychological disorders
- Recognize the assessment methods commonly used by clinical psychologists
- Appreciate the ethical issues associated with clinical research and treatment
- Communicate accurately and effectively about clinical science
- Expand empathy for the impact of psychopathology on patients and those around them

***Course Structure***

Class sessions will include lecture, video presentations, and discussion. Case studies will be used as a learning tool throughout the semester. The success of this course is dependent on you completing the readings **before** the relevant class and participating in classroom discussions.

## **Course Readings**

### **Required Textbook**

Kring, A. M., Johnson, S. L., Davison, G. C., & Neale, J. M. (2018). *Abnormal psychology: The science and treatment of psychological disorders (14<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

### **Required Casebook**

Oltmanns, T. F. & Martin, M. T. (2019). *Case studies in abnormal psychology (11<sup>th</sup> ed.)*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

### **Select 1 of these 4 memoirs to complete the memoir assignment**

de Rossi, P. (2010). *Unbearable lightness: A story of loss and gain*. New York: Atria Books.  
*Memoir about anorexia*

Jamison, K. R. (1995). *An unquiet mind*. New York: Vintage Books.  
*Memoir about bipolar disorder, written by a psychologist*

Karr, M. (2009). *Lit: A memoir*. New York: Harper Perennial.  
*Memoir about alcohol use disorder (alcoholism)*

Saks, E. R. (2007). *The center cannot hold: My journey through madness*. New York: Hachette.  
*Memoir about schizophrenia*

The textbook and casebook are available through the Colby Bookstore. The memoirs can be purchased online, and will be available in Reserves in the library. Selected readings will also be distributed via Moodle.

The course readings are important for full understanding of the course material. The class sessions are intended to expand on text material rather than solely restating the text. Therefore, you are responsible for the content of the assigned readings on exams, including portions not covered in lecture.

## **Evaluation**

### **Exams**

There will be 3 exams in the course given on **March 9, April 8, and May 6**. The exams will cover material from the text, casebook, and lectures. These exams will not be cumulative. However, there are topics, such as particular treatment models, that will be discussed throughout the semester and therefore may appear on multiple exams. The class sessions are intended to expand on text material rather than solely restating the text. Therefore, you are responsible for the content of the assigned readings on exams, including portions not covered in lecture.

## ***Assignments***

Training in clinical psychology balances two complementary goals: becoming a researcher and becoming a clinician. Accordingly, you will complete 2 assignments, one focused on disseminating treatment research and one focused on the life of an individual coping with a psychological disorder. The assignments are briefly described below. Detailed descriptions will be provided later in the semester.

### **Direct-to-Consumer Advertising Project**

In recent decades, pharmaceutical companies have used direct-to-consumer (DTC) marketing to expand the use of psychiatric medications. The dissemination of equally effective evidence-based therapies has been less successful, leading some to suggest the need for DTC marketing of psychological treatments. For this assignment, you will work in a small group to develop a “direct-to-consumer” video advertisement that presents information about a psychological disorder and an evidence-based psychological treatment. The goals of the assignment are (1) to read primary literature in clinical psychology, (2) to gain further experience concisely summarizing empirical work, (3) to expand your skills creating video-based presentations, and (4) to promote understanding of psychological disorders and their treatment. Over the semester, your group will identify the goals of your advertisement (**due March 4, 2:30PM**), create an outline for the ad (**due April 1, 2:30PM**), write a script (**due April 22, 2:30PM**), and ultimately screen your advertisement on **May 13 at 6:00PM**.

### **Memoir Assignment**

Throughout the semester we will use case studies to understand how diagnostic symptoms in the textbook present in real people. This assignment provides an opportunity to do this on a larger scale by reading and responding to a memoir written by an individual coping with a psychological disorder. The goals of this assignment are (1) to recognize specific symptoms of a clinical disorder, (2) to identify the potential cause(s) of the disorder, (3) to describe a cognitive-behavioral treatment plan for this individual, and (4) to expand your empathy for the difficulties associated with the disorder. After reading one of the memoirs listed above, you will write an approximately 6 page (double-spaced) case report on the diagnostic symptoms, potential causes, and recommended treatment of the author’s psychological disorder. This assignment is **due April 29, 2:30PM**.

### **Research Participation**

The purpose of this requirement is to enhance your understanding of scientific approaches in the field. So that you may better understand the research process within psychology, the departmental policy is that students in all 200-level content courses complete 2 Sona research credits (at least one credit must be in a lab, not online). Information on how to sign up for psychology studies through the Sona website is available on Moodle. At least 1 credit

(half the requirement) must be completed by March 20. **Failure to complete the requirement by May 8 will result in a grade reduction of 1/3 of a letter grade.**

**Evaluation Summary**

- 20% Exam 1
- 20% Exam 2
- 25% Exam 3
- 20% Direct-to-Consumer Ad Project
- 15% Memoir Assignment

**Course Schedule**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
Feb. 5	Introduction	
Feb. 10	Defining Abnormal Behavior	Textbook, Ch. 1, pp. 1-8, 25-26
Feb. 12	Assessment and Diagnosis	Textbook, Ch. 3, pp. 60-81, 86-89 Textbook, Ch. 6, pp. 168-169, 184, & 188
Feb. 17	Approaches to Treatment	Textbook, Ch. 1, pp. 22 Textbook, Ch. 2, pp. 42-49, 52-54
Feb. 19	Approaches to Treatment, continued	Textbook, Ch. 1, pp. 20-22 Textbook, Ch. 2, pp. 41-42 Gallo, Comer, & Barlow (Moodle)
Feb. 24	Panic Disorder	Textbook, Ch. 6 Casebook, Ch. 7
Feb. 26	<b>NO CLASS – Professor Traveling for Invited Talk</b>	
March 2	Social Anxiety Disorder	Textbook, Ch. 6 Oltmanns et al. Case Study (Moodle)
March 4	Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder <b>DTC Ad Goals Due, 2:30PM</b>	Textbook, Ch. 7, pp. 192-206 Casebook, Ch. 8
March 9	<b>Exam 1</b>	
March 11	Posttraumatic Stress Disorder	Textbook, Ch. 7, pp. 207-216 Listen to “Ten Sessions” episode of <i>This American Life</i> (Moodle)
March 16	Major Depressive Disorder	Textbook, Ch. 5, pp. 120-126, 131-142, 144-147 Casebook, Ch. 6
March 18	Bipolar Disorder	Textbook, Ch. 5, pp. 127-130, 142-143, 147-148

		Casebook, Ch. 5
March 23	<b>NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK</b>	
March 25	<b>NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK</b>	
March 30	Binge Eating Disorder and Bulimia Nervosa	Textbook, Ch. 11, pp. 331-354 Casebook, Ch. 14
April 1	Anorexia Nervosa <b>DTC Ad Outline Due, 2:30PM</b>	Textbook, Ch. 11, pp. 326-331, 341-342, 350 Casebook, Ch. 13
April 6	Schizophrenia	Textbook, Ch. 9 Casebook, Ch. 3
April 8	<b>Exam 2</b>	
April 13	Alcohol Use Disorder	Textbook, Ch. 10 Casebook, Ch. 19
April 15	Substance Use Disorders	Textbook, Ch. 10 Casebook, Ch. 4
April 20	Professional Ethics	Textbook, Ch. 16, pp. 501, 505-509
April 22	Criminalization of Mental Illness <b>DTC Ad Script Due, 2:30PM</b>	Textbook, Ch. 16, pp. 485-504 Winerip & Schwirtz (Moodle)
April 27	Conduct Disorder and Antisocial Personality Disorder	Textbook, Ch. 13, pp. 395-403 Textbook, Ch. 15, pp. 466-470 Casebook, Ch. 23
April 29	Personality Disorders <b>Memoir Assignment Due, 2:30PM</b>	Textbook, Ch. 15, pp. 454-466, 470-482 Casebook, Ch. 21
May 4	Dissociative Identity Disorder	Textbook, Ch. 8, pp. 224-229 Casebook, Ch. 11
May 6	<b>Exam 3</b>	
May 13, 6:00PM	<b>DTC Ad Presentations</b>	

### ***Course Policies***

#### ***Professionalism in the Classroom***

College offers continuous opportunities to develop and practice appropriate, professional behavior before you launch your career.

- Students are expected to attend all class meetings and are responsible for any work missed.
- It is expected that you will arrive on time for all class meetings. Arriving on time demonstrates respect for your professors and your peers.

- It is expected that you will have cell phones turned off and that you will not text or read texts during class.
- I strongly discourage you from bringing a computer to class. It is distracting for those around you and is often *extremely* distracting for you.
- Before emailing me, please check if your question can be answered by the syllabus or the course Moodle page.
- It is expected that you will interact with fellow students and with me in an open-minded, respectful, and supportive manner.

Please be sensitive to the fact that we know, based on prevalence rates, that students in this class may themselves have experienced a psychological disorder that we discuss or may have a close friend or relative with one of these disorders. Although your personal experiences with psychological disorders may seem relevant to the class discussion, ***I ask that you refrain from personal disclosure.*** Personal disclosure often makes others uncomfortable when it occurs in groups outside the treatment setting, such as a class.

### ***Academic Accommodations***

If you have a disability or learning difference for which an academic accommodation is recommended, please provide your supporting letter from the Office of Student Access and Disability Services as soon as possible. I would prefer to have a conversation with you about the accommodations, so I encourage you to bring the letter to office hours. Please keep in mind that accommodations are not retroactive and cannot be granted at the last minute.

## ***Department and College Policies***

### ***Delayed Exams/Papers***

This course follows the psychology department's policy on delayed exams and deadline extensions: Students should treat deadlines as firm. Only valid medical excuses, documented personal catastrophes (such as a death in the family), and religious observances will be accepted as reasons not to take an exam or turn in an assignment as scheduled. If you are, for legitimate reasons, unable to take an exam or turn in an assignment when it is scheduled, you should notify me ***in advance*** of the exam time or due date. Having a lot of work to do, several exams/papers in a few days, being generally unprepared, or having conflicting travel arrangements are not acceptable excuses to miss an exam or assignment due date.

### ***Course Late Assignment/Paper Policy***

In order to be fair to every student, late assignments will lose 10% credit for each day that they are late. *Assignments that are more than one week late will receive no credit.* In order to receive full credit for a late paper, documentation of the serious and verifiable reason that prevented you from completing the assignment on time must be provided.

### ***Religious Observances***

Colby College supports the religious practices of students, faculty, and staff. Students should contact their professors at least 14 days ***in advance*** to make arrangements for academic events that conflict with a religious observance.

### ***Incomplete Grades***

The mark of incomplete (I), indicating that a course was not completed, will be assigned only in the case of documented emergencies. The assignment of a mark of I is contingent on students making prior arrangements with their professor regarding completion of the course work by a certain date in accordance with policy specified in the *Colby College Catalogue*. Professors may consult with the department chair and/or the dean of students office (e.g., advising deans) prior to assigning an incomplete.

### ***Academic Honesty & Consequences for Academic Dishonesty***

Honesty, integrity, and personal responsibility are cornerstones of a Colby education and provide the foundation for scholarly inquiry, intellectual discourse, and an open and welcoming campus community. These values are articulated in the Colby Affirmation and are central to this course. You are expected to demonstrate academic honesty in all aspects of this course. If you are clear about course expectations, give credit to those whose work you rely on, and submit your best work, you are highly unlikely to commit an act of academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: violating clearly stated rules for taking an exam or completing an assignment; plagiarism (including material from sources without a citation and quotation marks around any borrowed words); claiming another's work or a modification of another's work as one's own; buying or attempting to buy papers or projects for a course; fabricating information or citations; knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty; misrepresentations to faculty within the context of a course, on an academic assignment, or an academic record; and submitting the same work, including an essay that you wrote, in more than one course without the permission of the instructors for those courses.

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense against the college. Sanctions for academic dishonesty are assigned by an academic review board and may include failure on the assignment, failure in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the College for multiple academic dishonesty findings.

For more on recognizing and avoiding plagiarism, see the library guide: [libguides.colby.edu/avoidingplagiarism](http://libguides.colby.edu/avoidingplagiarism)

### ***Sexual Misconduct Policy***

Colby College prohibits and will not tolerate sexual misconduct or gender-based discrimination of any kind. Colby is legally obligated to investigate sexual misconduct (including, but not limited to, sexual assault and sexual harassment). Students should be aware that faculty members are considered responsible employees; as such, if you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a faculty member, he or she has an obligation to report it to Colby's Title IX Coordinator. "Disclosure" may include communication in-person, via email/phone/text, or through class assignments. To learn more about sexual misconduct or report an incident, visit [www.colby.edu/sexualviolence/](http://www.colby.edu/sexualviolence/)

### ***Colby College Grading Guidelines***

#### **A**

Excellent work in meeting the goals of the course, in mastering the course material, in critical analysis, in written and oral communication, or in other forms of creative expression, within the context of the course expectations.

(The grade of A+ is awarded only in very rare instances when a student exceeds the highest reasonable expectations for undergraduates.)

#### **B**

Very Good to Good work in meeting the goals of the course, in mastering the course material, in critical analysis, in written and oral communication, or in other forms of creative expression, within the context of the course expectations.

#### **C**

Satisfactory work in meeting the goals of the course, in mastering the course material, in critical analysis, in written and oral communication, or in other forms of creative expression, within the context of the course expectations.

#### **D**

Minimally acceptable work in meeting the goals of the course, in mastering the course material, in critical analysis, in written and oral communication, or in other forms of creative expression, within the context of the course expectations.

(While the grade of D counts as a passing grade for any individual course, a student receiving D grades in multiple classes may be at risk of falling below the minimum 2.0 GPA required for graduation.)

#### **F**

Seriously deficient work that is not acceptable. No credit is awarded.