

Date: April 2006

- I. **Course Name:** Abnormal Psychology
Prefix and Number: PSY 220
Credit Hours and Contact Hours: 3 credit hours - 3 contact hours

Catalog description:

This course is an introduction to the field of abnormal psychology. It introduces the student to the current edition of the DSM system of classifying disorders. It emphasizes paradigms that organize and interpret data about behavioral disorders. It seeks to make students aware of the different assumptions behind different therapeutic approaches to behavioral disorders. This course is not intended as in clinical psychology. *Prerequisite:* PSY100, PSY200, or permission of the instructor.

II. Course objectives and outcomes

Learning outcomes:

- Develop a basic understanding of the DSM-IV system of classification of mental disorders along with a specific understanding of individual disorders, particularly the more prevalent disorders (e.g., mood disorders, anxiety and stress disorders, substance-related disorders, schizophrenia, and personality disorders).
- Consider the biological, psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive, and sociocultural causes of mental disorders.
- Address the role of society and culture in defining—and potentially creating and promoting—psychological disorders.
- Gain an appreciation for the suffering caused by psychological disorders and the ambiguity often inherent in defining, diagnosing, and treating them.
- Other outcomes may include the development of skills in critical thinking, problem solving, ethics/values, citizenship, reading, and writing and oral communication.

Relationship to academic programs and curriculum:

This course fulfills a Social Science elective.

College competencies addressed by the course:

The course will address a subset of the following competencies:

- Writing
- Oral communication
- Reading
- Computer literacy
- Problem solving
- Ethics/values
- Citizenship
- Information resources

III. Methods of instruction

Types of course materials:

The textbook and other course material will be selected by the instructor and listed on the course outline. Students may be required to obtain the assigned textbook and any relevant supplements, such as a student study guide and/or a text-based CD-ROM. In addition, students may be required to obtain a WebCT account, necessitating access to the Internet.

Methods of instruction:

The course may be taught in any of a number of formats suitable to the specific topic being presented. These formats may include (but are not limited to) lectures, discussions, collaborative teamwork, demonstrations, active-learning activities, and/or on-line activities.

Methods of evaluation:

Students may be evaluated via a number of different formats suitable to each specific topic. These formats may include (but are not limited to) multiple choice, short-answer, and/or essay tests and quizzes administered in class and/or via the Internet; homework assignments; research projects, term papers; and/or collaborative work.

Assessment measures:

The course will be evaluated via course-embedded measures. Assessment measures will consider students' mastery of the content of the course and/or their critical thinking ability.

IV. General outline of topics covered

- The general criteria of all psychological disorders (deviance, distress, and dysfunction)
- The biological, psychodynamic, behavioral, cognitive, and sociocultural theoretical perspectives of psychological disorders
- The five axes of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM; American Psychiatric Press, Inc.)
- The most prevalent disorders, including mood disorders, anxiety and stress disorders, substance-related disorders, schizophrenia, and personality disorders
- Other classes of psychological disorders, time permitting.