



South Central College

PSYC 230 Abnormal Psychology

Course Outcome Summary

Course Information

Description	In this course, students will increase their awareness and understanding of mental illness and psychological disorders. Students will become familiar with the history of the field, clinical descriptions, classification, etiology, course of onset, and typical treatment regimens specific to various disorders and mental illness. Abnormal behavior will be explored from various theoretical perspectives including psychological, biological, and socio-cultural approaches. (MNTC 5: History/Social & Behavioral Sciences & MNTC 7: Human Diversity) Prerequisite: 8 credits of psychology or consent of instructor
Total Credits	4
Total Hours	64

Pre/Corequisites

8 credits of psychology or consent of instructor.

Institutional Core Competencies

Communication - Students will be able to demonstrate appropriate and effective interactions with others to achieve their personal, academic, and professional objectives.

Course Competencies

1. Examine how abnormal behavior has been viewed, understood, and treated in both historical and contemporary contexts.

Learning Objectives

Describe the development of idea systems or models of psychopathology across time.

Understand the role of social forces and the development of psychotropic medications as a catalyst to change in the treatment of mental illness.

Identify ways in which persons with psychiatric disorders have suffered exclusion, economic discrimination, and disenfranchisement in American society

Analyze our current attitudes about mental illness.

2. Describe the research methods in abnormal psychology and demonstrate an understanding of the various methodologies used to learn about various psychological disorders including etiology, treatment, and prevention.

Learning Objectives

Explore research designs and methods typically used in abnormal psychology to develop new knowledge.

Review key research studies and critically evaluate the quality and value of existing and emerging psychological

research related to the field.

Discuss the standard of ethics of abnormal research and the unique ethical considerations in studying human mental pathologies.

3. Analyze and describe the process of Clinical Assessment and Diagnosis.

Learning Objectives

Become familiar with the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR), including its five axes, the broad categories of mental disorders, and how the DSM-IV-TR places diagnosis in a cultural context. Understand the process by which disorders are included and described in the DSM. Discuss the objections to the DSM classification system and the arguments supporting its use.

Describe the principal methods used to gather information about psychological disorders (i.e. assessment)

Analyze how beliefs, culture, values, and politics impact the classification of behavior as normal or abnormal and discuss ways in which cultural beliefs and practices (e.g. voodoo, mind reading, and speaking in tongues) can lead to misdiagnoses.

4. Examine the full spectrum of Anxiety Disorders and demonstrate an understanding of the symptoms, prevalence, etiologies, treatment options and prognosis.

Learning Objectives

Identify the criteria used in diagnosing the disorders and apply this knowledge to the selection of the appropriate treatment.

Apply established theories and important research findings in Abnormal Psychology to various cases of abnormal functioning.

Discuss how a clinician's choice of a model influences thought and action toward abnormal behavior.

5. Examine the full spectrum of Mood Disorders and demonstrate an understanding of the symptoms, prevalence, etiologies, treatment options and prognosis.

Learning Objectives

Identify the criteria used in diagnosing the disorders and apply this knowledge to the selection of the appropriate treatment.

Apply established theories and important research findings in Abnormal Psychology to various cases of abnormal functioning.

Discuss how a clinician's choice of a model influences thought and action toward abnormal behavior.

Compare and contrast cultural differences in grief and sadness and discuss effects on clinical diagnosis of depression.

Identify signs of suicidal ideation and discuss suicide prevention.

Explore and contrast theories explaining gender differences in mood disorder diagnoses.

6. Demonstrate an understanding of the symptoms, prevalence, etiology, treatment, and prevention strategies for Eating Disorders, Sleep Disorders, and Substance Abuse and Dependence.

Learning Objectives

Identify the criteria used in diagnosing the disorders and apply this knowledge to the selection of the appropriate treatment.

Apply established theories and important research findings in Abnormal Psychology to various cases of abnormal functioning.

Discuss how a clinician's choice of a model influences thought and action toward abnormal behavior.

7. Demonstrate an understanding of the symptoms, prevalence, etiologies, treatment options and prognosis for the several other classes of psychiatric disorders (including somatoform and dissociative disorders, sexual and gender identity disorders, schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders).

Learning Objectives

Identify the criteria used in diagnosing the disorders and apply this knowledge to the selection of the appropriate treatment.

Apply established theories and important research findings in Abnormal Psychology to various cases of abnormal functioning.

Discuss how a clinician's choice of a model influences thought and action toward abnormal behavior.

8. Analyze legal and ethical issues within the field of Mental Health Services.

Learning Objectives

Discuss the rationale for the insanity defense and the legal precedents that have shaped the current standing of the insanity defense, including the M'Naghten Rule, the irresistible impulse test, the Durham standard, the American Law Institute (ALI) Model Penal Code, and diminished capacity.
Describe the concept of civil commitment, the criteria by which individuals are committed, and the protections that exist against its abuse. Explain why the assessment of dangerousness is difficult.
Discuss the reasons for and the impact of deinstitutionalization of mental patients. Evaluate the present living conditions of many ex-mental hospital patients and the prospects for mainstreaming and alternative community programs.

9. Identify common misconceptions about persons with psychiatric disorders and how these have contributed to long-held stereotypes.

Learning Objectives

Identify common stereotypes (past and present) of mental illness and connotations associated with seeking professional help.
Explore society's response to maladaptive behavior.
Students will be able to analyze their own beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors.

10. Demonstrate an understanding of how the field of abnormal psychology impacts or is impacted by gender, race, culture, and other important elements of the diverse human experience.

Learning Objectives

Examine how the field has been informed by diverse human perspectives. For instance, what is the gender and racial composition of research subjects used to test theories and create new knowledge?
Identify gaps in the research or application of the research related to human diversity and theorize how the gaps might impact how the field has been conceptualized or applied.
Articulate solutions for addressing gaps.
Theorize how the field may impact diverse groups at an individual or group level.

11. Utilize critical thinking skills.

Learning Objectives

Develop an informed perspective, utilizing objective and verifiable evidence related to the abnormal psychology.
Identify and consider multiple viewpoints in terms of psychological explanations, relevance to the field or practical applicability.
Formulate logical and well-reasoned explanations on various topics related to the course.

12. Apply research methods, psychological principles, and key research findings by preparing a formal research project that adheres to the formatting expectations of the American Psychological Association.

Learning Objectives

Explore the literature and develop a research question or hypothesis.
Prepare an appropriate literature review and/or conduct a research study using an appropriate research methodology (original research or secondary data analysis).
Analyze and present results and prepare a logical analysis of findings.
Prepare a written report that adheres to the formatting expectations of the American Psychological Association.
Conduct all work within the ethical parameters of the American Psychological Association.

SCC Accessibility Statement

South Central College strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you have a disability and need accommodations for access to this class, contact the Academic Support Center to request and discuss accommodations. North Mankato: Room B-132, (507) 389-7222; Faribault: Room A-116, (507) 332-7222.

Additional information and forms can be found at: www.southcentral.edu/disability

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