

PSY 256: Abnormal Psychology Spring 2019

Course Information

- PSY 256, Section 01
- TuTh 2:30-2:45 p.m., Clarke 217

Professor Information

- Professor: Dr. Taryn A. Myers
- Office: Roop 3
- Office Phone: (757) 233-8754
- E-mail: tmyers@vwu.edu
 - E-mail is the best way to reach me. I check my e-mail multiple times per day and it is sent to my smartphone. However, if your e-mail requires more than a sentence or two to answer, I will usually ask that you come see me after class, stop by during office hours, or set up an appointment to discuss the topic in more detail.
- Office Hours
 - By appointment or drop in. I am generally here in the early morning and early afternoon M, Tu, & Th, as well as all morning on F. If I am with another student, just knock on the door to let me know you are there, and I will let you know how long I will be. Please do not knock if my door is closed.
 - Please feel free to come to me with any questions or concerns. I cannot assist you with problems that I am not aware of. If you do not understand something, please ask. I am always willing to sit down with you at any time.
- VWU number to call for class closings and delays due to inclement weather: (757) 455-5711
 - Or check the top of the page at www.vwu.edu – a banner will be displayed across the top with relevant information on closings and delays.

Required Texts

- Comer, R.J. (2017). *Abnormal Psychology*. (10th ed). New York: Worth Publishers.
 - ISBN: 978-1319066949
 - Note: You **MUST** purchase one of the most recent versions (8th edition DSM-5 Update, 9th edition, or 10th edition) or the information about diagnoses will be incorrect.
 - **You need to make sure your copy has a Launchpad code or you must purchase one separately.**

Course Purpose & Objectives

Abnormal Psychology is a vast and widely studied field. One cannot reasonably expect a single course to provide comprehensive and in-depth coverage of the entire field. In fact, one could devote an entire course to any topic within Abnormal Psychology. As such, this course is designed to introduce you to some of the major concepts and controversies in abnormal psychology. During the first few weeks of the semester, we will discuss how abnormality is defined, measured, studied, and conceptualized, as well as the values and assumptions that underlie these efforts and how abnormality comes into play in our society every day. This information is important in that it will serve as a foundation for the remainder of the semester, during which various psychological disorders will be covered. Again, due to the breadth of material to be covered, each disorder will only be examined in overview; however, each of the major groupings of psychological disorders will be touched upon at least briefly. I hope that through this course you will begin to think critically about the field of Abnormal Psychology and that you will adopt an empathic and informed view about mental illness.

Blackboard

Throughout the semester, class assignments, handouts, and general guidance about various aspects of this course may be made available on Blackboard, Virginia Wesleyan College's on-line course management system. To log into Blackboard, you will need your VWU e-mail address and password. Once in the system, you will find a course listing for Abnormal Psychology.

It is your responsibility to check Blackboard on a regular basis in order to download copies of materials you will need to participate fully in class discussions and activities. Further information about the use of Blackboard in this course will be provided in class.

Attendance & Participation

100 points

You are expected to attend all meetings of a class for which you are registered. *If you choose not to come to class, you are still responsible for all material covered in class.* In addition, you are also responsible for any announcements made in class, which may include, but are not limited to, changes regarding the syllabus, exam dates, and office hours. I would strongly recommend getting the contact information of a fellow student in case you miss a class and need the notes. I will not provide anyone with a copy of my personal class notes. I can guarantee that missing class will be reflected in lower scores on exams.

Because attendance and participation are so vital for this course, you will receive **100 points** simply for attending and participating in class.

You are allowed to miss 2 (TWO) classes (1 week's worth of classes), regardless of whether it is excused or unexcused. For every absence beyond those 2 (TWO) classes, I will deduct 10 points off of your attendance and participation grade at the end of the semester.

You are also expected to come to class on time. If you are more than 5 minutes late to class, you will be marked tardy. Three tardies will equal one unexcused absence at the end of the semester and will count similarly toward deductions on your attendance and participation grade.

You should treat all of your courses like they are your job. Therefore, you should treat your one absence like you would a sick day at your job and plan accordingly.

The use of electronic devices, such as cell phones, laptops, tablets, and iPods, are prohibited during scheduled class time. If I see you using any of these electronic devices, I will ask you to leave class and you will be marked "absent" that day. The format of the class will include lecture, group activities, watching videos, and discussion. Just how much discussion depends on all of you. I encourage you to share your questions, opinions, and comments to the extent that you feel comfortable. However, this class is NOT the appropriate forum for discussing personal issues relating to the class material (i.e., your, your friends', or your family members' struggles with mental illness, etc.). If you are experiencing these difficulties, or know someone else who is, proper referral information can be provided, but please note that I will NOT be able to serve as your therapist or provide advice beyond this referral information because of ethical guidelines set forth by the American Psychological Association.

Please also be aware that some of the topics we discuss will relate to personal issues and may foster strong opinions in each of us. We will strive to keep communication in the classroom civil and respectful. Also be aware that some of the terminology and topics discussed in the context of certain topics may be uncomfortable, offensive, and/or objectionable to some. We will discuss these issues because of their relevance to the material that are central to this class and to our knowledge in this area.

Exams

4 exams at 100 points each for 400 points total

Exams will consist of multiple choice question, fill-in-the-blank, and short essays, and they will include information from the text as well as material presented in the lectures and from class discussions. There will be four exams altogether. Each exam is worth **100 points** for **400 points total**. These exams are *not* cumulative. Please arrive on time for exams. Once the first person has finished the exam, you will not be able to start the exam if you are late. *Students caught cheating on exams will be dealt with severely according to the Honor Code.*

Make-up Exams

If a student misses an exam, and has an *adequate written excuse* – meaning written documentation that your absence from class has been excused by a doctor, family member for a family emergency, or athletic coach – she or he may take a make-up exam. I reserve the right to decide on the adequacy of excuses. See me *immediately* if you anticipate missing an exam or missed an exam due to an emergency. Prior permission is necessary in order to make-up an exam. If an exam is missed and no make-up is taken, you will be given a zero for that exam.

Media Project**100 points**

As a way of further exploring the intersection of abnormality as it is viewed in the psychological community and in society at large, each of you will be asked to select one disorder (e.g., anorexia nervosa, schizophrenia, Alzheimer's disease). Your task will be to read an article in a scholarly journal about that disorder (a comprehensive review article from a journal such as *Psychological Bulletin* may be especially useful, but a recent article concerning an empirical study would also suffice) and also to find some reference to that disorder in popular culture (e.g., a film, television episode, song, magazine article, advertisement, etc.). Then, using the information from these two sources as well as from the textbook and class lectures, you will write up a summary of the features of disorder and how views on this disorder from the scientific and popular media differ. This project is worth **100 points**.

Format

The format for this project should be a 3 to 5 page paper. It should be **typed, double-spaced** and submitted in two ways: 1) a hard copy with the supplementary materials turned in the day it is due **in class**, and 2) the main text of the paper uploaded to Blackboard **by class time** the day it is due. A **reference list** should also be included for both versions. If you do not turn in your paper both ways, you will automatically receive **10 points off** your final score.

What to write

The paper should include at least one paragraph on each of the following:

1. An introductory paragraph explaining your topic
2. A summary of the scholarly article's description of the disorder
3. A summary of the popular media's description of the disorder
4. A comparison of the two descriptions
5. A concluding paragraph wrapping up the paper

What to turn in

1. Your paper with reference list in either APA or MLA
2. A copy of the scholarly article
3. Some representation of your popular culture reference (this can be a copy of a magazine article, a copy of the cover of the DVD you used, a frame from a YouTube video, etc.)

Grading

Grading will take into account grammatical style, coherence of writing, requirements, and requirements in the following manner:

10 points	Introductory paragraph
10 points	Summary of scholarly article's description
10 points	Summary of popular media's depiction
10 points	Comparison of the two descriptions
10 points	Concluding paragraph
15 points	Grammar and punctuation
15 points	Coherent/thoughtful argument
10 points	Copy of scholarly article and popular media item included (5 pts each)
10 points	<u>Reference list included</u>
100 points total	

The project will be due on Thursday, 4/4 at class time! Late papers will lose 5 points for each calendar day they are turned in late.

Online Launchpad Clinical Choices and Video Activities complete 10 of 12 for 100 points total

Throughout the semester, you will complete activities via your textbook's online platform, Launchpad. These activities come in two types: Video Activities, where you will complete 2 short activities related to specific videos for a given day, and Clinical Choices, where you will complete an interactive case study activity and answer questions. You are assigned a total of 12 of these activities throughout the semester, listed with their due dates below. **All activities are due by 11:59 p.m. on the day they are assigned. Late Launchpad assignments will not be accepted.** However, you only need to complete 10 of the 12 activities assigned. Therefore you get 2 "freebies" for days you might not be able to complete the assignment or may forget about the due date.

- Video Activities – Early Treatment and City of Gheel – Due 2/5 (5 pts each for 10 pts total)
- Video Activities – Experimental Design and Bobo Doll – Due 2/12 (5 pts each for 10 pts total)
- Video Activity – Psychopathy and Brain Fingerprint – Due 2/21 (5 pts each for 10 pts total)
- Clinical Choices – John's Case – Due 3/7 (10 pts)
- Clinical Choices – Priya's Case – Due 3/14 (10 pts)
- Clinical Choices – Michelle's Case – Due 3/26 (10 pts)
- Clinical Choices – Jonanne's Case – Due 4/2 (10 pts)
- Clinical Choices – Jenny's Case – Due 4/9 (10 pts)
- Clinical Choices – Charles's Case – Due 4/11 (10 pts)
- Clinical Choices – Randy's Case – Due 4/16 (10 pts)
- Clinical Choices – Jorge's Case – Due 4/30 (10 pts)
- Clinical Choices – Alicia's Case – Due 5/7 (10 pts)

To connect with the Launchpad section for our course – and thus ensure that you get credit for the work you do throughout the semester – **either link through our Blackboard page or follow the instructions below:** Follow these steps to get started. If you need additional guidance, consult the [support site](#), especially the system requirements which list recommended browsers.

Go to <http://www.macmillanhighered.com/launchpad/comerabpsych10e/10272299>

- Bookmark the page to make it easy to return to (although note that the URL will look different due to security measures).
- Enroll in this course using one of the following options:
- If you have an access code, select "I have a student access code", enter the code exactly as it appears on the card, and click Submit.
- If you don't have an access code, either purchase a text package that includes one OR click "I want to purchase access" and follow the instructions.
- If you need to start working but can't purchase right away, select "I want temporary access" and follow the instructions. Please note: Your grades are linked to your Launchpad account username (email address). If you use temporary access, make sure you purchase or register your code using the same email address for your paid access.
- If you have problems registering, purchasing, or logging in, please [contact Customer Support](#).
- You can reach a representative 7 days a week:
 - through the online form
 - by chat
 - by phone at (800) 936-6899

NOTE THAT DR. MYERS IS NOT TECH SUPPORT – IF YOU HAVE ISSUES CONNECTING OR COMPLETING ASSIGNMENTS, YOU MUST CONTACT CUSTOMER SERVICE USING THE INFORMATION ABOVE. IF YOU EMAIL DR. MYERS, SHE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO HELP YOU.

Presentation**100 points total**

Working with a group of 4-5 people, you will choose a disorder not currently covered in the curriculum for this course (for example, a disorder from one of the following categories: impulse control disorders, sleep disorders, disorders of childhood, disorders of aging) and present information on this disorder to the entire class. Any format can be used for this presentation (PowerPoint, short film, etc.), and the length will be 15-20 min. *The topic of the presentation may NOT be one that is covered in class.* The members of the group will research the disorder and integrate the information from a variety of scholarly sources pertaining to theory, symptoms, assessment, treatment, and quality of life issues related to the disorder. As part of the process for developing the presentation, *all members* of the group are required to meet with Dr. Myers once together to discuss the project.

- *Steps in developing the presentation*

- 1) **Preference for topics.** You must give Dr. Myers a list of the three topics on which you would prefer to do your presentation by **Thursday, 2/28 in class**. You can choose to indicate your preferred group members at this time, or Dr. Myers will assign you to a group based on topic. If you choose your group members, you should all turn in ONE hard copy paper for the entire group. If you choose to work alone, you should also turn in a hard copy paper. **(5 pts)**
- 2) **Meeting.** By **Friday, 4/26** at the *latest*, all members of each presenting group will meet with Dr. Myers to discuss and clarify directions for the presentation. They should bring to the meeting a 1-2 page typed description of the tentative general outline of the presentation, the topics to be discussed, and a reference list of resources consulted. The outline and meeting are worth **10 pts**. Therefore, prior to the meeting, members of the group must:
 - a. Meet as a group to discuss possibilities for a presentation.
 - b. Go to the library & consult resources.
 - c. Develop a general outline of the presentation.
- 3) **Presentation.** The presentation will be given at the time of the scheduled Final Exam, **Tuesday, May 13 at 11:30 a.m.** Any format can be used for this presentation (PowerPoint, short film, etc.), and the length will be 15-20 min. Grading for the presentation will be assigned using the rubric on the reverse side of this sheet. Note that group members will be asked to evaluate each other's participation throughout the process of the project, and the average of these scores will be integrated into the presentation grade for each individual. The presentation in class will have **65 pts** assigned by Dr. Myers. Your group members will also grade your performance for **20 pts**.

The following rubric will be used to grade the presentation:

Content:

- Theory **(5 pts)**
- Symptoms **(5 pts)**
- Assessment **(5 pts)**
- Treatment **(5 pts)**
- Quality of life issues **(5 pts)**
- Relevance to the topic and to abnormal psychology **(5 pts)**
- Presented in an interesting way **(5 pts)**
- Topic not covered in class **(5 pts)**

Presentation Skills:

- Adequate length (15-20 min) **(5 pts)**
- Rate of speech and articulation **(5 pts)**
- Clear explanations throughout the presentation **(5 pts)**
- Overall flow of the presentation **(5 pts)**
- All group members participate in presentation **(5 pts)**

Average of ratings given by other members of the group (20 pts)

TOTAL

5 points	Topic
10 points	Outline & Meeting
65 points	Presentation
<u>20 points</u>	<u>Group Member Ratings</u>
100 points	TOTAL

Grading

Your final grade will be determined by your performance on all aspects of course work as outlined above:

Exams (4 at 100 pts each)	400
Media Project	100
Launchpad Activities (10 of 12 at 10 pts each)	100
Presentation	100
<u>Attendance & Participation</u>	<u>100</u>
Total	800

Approximate grades will be based on the following distribution:

<u>Points</u>	<u>Percentages</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Percentages</u>	<u>Grade</u>
752-800	94-100%	A	592-615	74-76%	C
720-751	90-93%	A-	560-591	70-73%	C-
696-719	87-89%	B+	536-559	67-69%	D+
672-695	84-86%	B	512-535	64-66%	D
640-671	80-83%	B-	480-511	60-63%	D-
616-639	77-79%	C+	0-479	< 60%	F

Incompletes

Incompletes will be arranged for severe emergencies only. Arrangements for incompletes **MUST** be made with me before prior to the end of the semester. A formal contract must be agreed upon and signed.

Extra Credit

Throughout the semester, we will be discussing many findings from psychological research. But what might not be obvious is the fact that much of this research was conducted at colleges and universities like Virginia Wesleyan College, with participants much like yourself. The descriptions of psychological research that appear in textbooks necessarily omit a great deal of information about what participants actually do in these studies, and what the experience is really like.

Serving as a research participant gives you a unique, behind-the-scenes look at how research is conducted. Accordingly, I am giving you the option to earn extra credit points in this course from research experience. Research experience points may be earned either through participation in research studies (conducted by faculty and student researchers in the Department of Psychology) or by writing brief reviews of research articles. Regardless of which option you choose, the goal is to supplement the broad coverage of many topics in class with experiences that will deepen your understanding of psychological research.

Option 1

You may earn extra credit points (1 per online study, 2 per in person study) by participating in research studies that will be advertised throughout the semester. If you choose to participate in research studies, note that these are **REAL** studies that are being conducted by **REAL** researchers (for example, faculty projects and student research). You should take your participation seriously – you are helping to promote a better understanding of human thought, emotion, and behavior. (Who knows – you may even participate in a study that gets published in a psychology journal and discussed in the next generation of textbooks.) Opportunities for participation will be announced in class or via email as they arise.

Option 2 If you would like to earn extra credit but do not wish to participate in research, you can write a short paper (no longer than 4 pages typed, double-spaced) which reviews, connects, and draws conclusions about three recent research articles on one topic about which you have a particular interest which is covered in class or in the text. “Recent” will be arbitrarily defined as since 2015. The articles should be empirical in nature and revolve around the same topic. Topics should be approved in advance by Dr. Myers.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Virginia Wesleyan University is committed to giving all students the opportunity of academic success. If you are a student who is requesting accommodations based on the academic impact of a disability, speak to me about your accommodations letter and your specific needs. If you do not have an accommodations letter for this course, you will need to visit or call for an appointment with Disability Support Specialist Crit Muniz at (757) 233-8898 to coordinate reasonable accommodations. He is located in the Learning Center, Clarke Hall, 2nd floor.

Academic Honesty

Honesty is one of the most valuable assets that a member of an academic community possesses. In recognition of this fact, Virginia Wesleyan has enacted an honor code which is available to you in your student handbook. I adhere to this code explicitly and follow its recommended procedures. If I discover you have plagiarized an assignment in any way, I reserve the right to give you a 0 on that assignment. If I see you touching your phone during an exam, I will give you a 0 on that exam. If you repeat this offense or have previously plagiarized in a different class, I reserve the right to fail you for the entire course and/or take your case to the Honor Board.

Counseling Center

The nature of psychology describes some very personal human experiences. Therefore, from time to time, the topics in this course may touch on personal issues for you, especially topics related to mental health, relationships, and/or stress-related experiences. In addition, college in general is an exciting but often challenging time for most students, and there can be lots of ups and downs. Please don't try to manage these problems and issues alone. I encourage you to seek confidential support from the counseling center when you need it. Contact: Bill Brown, 455-5730, bbrown@vwu.edu

Lecture and Reading Outline

The outline on the next page can be only a rough guide, since dates for particular lecture topics can only be approximate and since material may be added or deleted. The dates and material for the exams will be as listed, unless changes are absolutely necessary. If changes affecting exams are made, they will be announced in class as soon as possible.

Abnormal Psychology Spring 2019
Tentative Schedule of Lecture Topics and Readings

(CC = Online Clinical Choices Activities through Launchpad; VA = Online Video Activities through Launchpad)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>	<u>Due</u>
Tu 1/29	Class Introduction		
Th 1/31	What Is “Abnormal?”	Chapter 1	
Tu 2/5	Views & Models of Abnormality	Chapter 3	VA 1: Early Treatment & Gheel
Th 2/7	Who Decides What Is Abnormal?		
Tu 2/12	Research in Abnormal Psychology	Chapter 2	VA 3: Exp Design & Bobo Doll
Th 2/14	Research & Assessment	Chapter 4	
Tu 2/19	Assessment, Treatment, and Diagnosis		
Th 2/21	EXAM 1		VA 4: Tragic Conseq & Brain Fingerprt
Tu 2/26	Mood Disorders	Chapter 7	
Th 2/28	Mood Disorders		<i>Topics</i>
Tu 3/5	Treatment of Mood Disorders	Chapter 8	
Th 3/7	Suicide	Chapter 9	CC John
Tu 3/12	Anxiety Disorders & OCDs	Chapter 5	
Th 3/14	Anxiety & Stress Disorders	Chapter 6	CC Priya
Tu 3/19	NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK!		
Th 3/21	NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK!		
Tu 3/26	EXAM 2		CC Michelle
Th 3/28	Dissociative & Somatoform Disorders	Chapter 10	
Tu 4/2	Dissociative & Eating Disorders	Chapter 11	CC Joanne
Th 4/4	Eating Disorders		Media Project Paper
Tu 4/9	Sexual Disorders & Gender Variations	Chapter 13	CC Jenny
Th 4/11	Schizophrenia & Treatment	Chapter 14	CC Cheryl
Tu 4/16	EXAM 3		CC Randy
Th 4/18	NO CLASS – Dr. Myers at VAPS		
Tu 4/23	Alcohol & Substance Use Disorders	Chapter 12	
Th 4/25	Alcohol & Personality Disorders	Chapter 16	<i>Group meetings by 4/26</i>
Tu 4/30	Personality Disorders		CC Jorge
Th 5/2	NO CLASS – PORT Day		
Tu 5/7	EXAM 4		CC Alicia
Tu 5/13	STUDENT PRESENTATIONS 11:30 a.m.		<i>Presentation</i>

** Note: The last day to drop a course without record is 2/1, and the last day to drop a course without receiving an automatic “WF” is 4/12.