

a place of mind



PSYC 300A: INTRODUCTION TO
ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY
DISTANCE EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) people. This means that anyone who is not of xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) descent is allowed to live and study on these lands at the discretion of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) people. A 1976 declaration of land title and rights can be found [here](#). The land UBC is situated on has always been a place of learning for the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) people, who have passed on their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site for thousands of years. For those of us who are guests on these lands, it is our responsibility to respect the land, the culture and practices of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) people, and to recognize our position as settlers. You can learn more about the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) people and their history [here](#).

COURSE INFORMATION

| Course Title | Course Code Number | Credit Value |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Introduction to Abnormal Psychology | PSYC 300A 992 | 3 |

PREREQUISITES

Either (a) PSYC 100, or (b) all of PSYC 101, PSYC 102, or (c) 6 credits of 200-level Psychology (but not 205 or 263).

CONTACTS

| Course Instructor | Contact Details | Office Location |
|--------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Dr. Bethany Michel | <p>bmichel@psych.ubc.ca</p> <p>*include the course number (300A 992) in the subject line of your email</p> <p>You can typically expect a response within 3 days. If you haven't heard back after this time, feel free to email again.</p> <p>You are also encouraged to email the TA.</p> | Kenny Bldg, room 2402 |

COURSE INSTRUCTOR BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Dr. Michel is a registered psychologist and a sessional lecturer in the Department of Psychology. She is white (of European and Mexican descent) and therefore a guest on the Musqueam lands. She teaches undergraduate courses in abnormal psychology and graduate courses in child and adolescent treatment. She is also the Director of the Child, Adolescent, and Family Division at the DBT Centre of Vancouver, where she works as a clinician with children and youth (ages 5-20) and their families and supervises graduate students and postdoctoral fellows learning DBT. Dr. Michel earned her doctorate in Clinical Science at Harvard University and completed her pre-doctoral internship at Brown University. Her research interests include child and adolescent suicide and self-injury, as well as factors that influence their response to treatment. She may or may not be obsessed with dogs.

COURSE STRUCTURE

This course is a self-directed lecture-based course with modules containing lecture videos (slides, voiceover), thought questions, and additional reading and online video resources.

DISTANCE EDUCATION FORMAT

As a Distance Education course, the entire class is asynchronous, meaning all of the learning opportunities can be accessed on your own time. There are no office hours and we are not able to meet with individual students to discuss course material or assignments. The Discussion board provides opportunities to talk about the material with your classmates and get feedback from your teaching team. By using this, we can create the kind of conversations we might have during lectures in an in-person course, but all students will be able to access it, regardless of their time zones. Please use this, so we can create a meaningful class discourse that everyone can participate in.

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

| | |
|--------|--|
| Week 1 | Overview of Abnormality, Research Design, Historical Views |
| Week 2 | Causes of Mental Illness |
| Week 3 | Treatment for Mental Illness |
| Week 4 | Stress and Anxiety |
| Week 5 | Anxiety and Related Disorders |
| Week 6 | Midterm Exam |
| Week 7 | Mood Disorders |
| Week 8 | Suicide and Eating Disorders |
| Week 9 | Substance Use Disorders |

| | |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| Week 10 | Psychosis and Schizophrenia |
| Week 11 | Childhood Disorders |
| Week 12 | Personality Disorders |
| Week 13 | Legal and Ethical Issues |
| Week 14 | Final Exam Period |

LEARNING OUTCOMES

In this course, we will examine the nature of abnormal psychology, largely based on a Western conceptualization of and research on mental illness. This differs from a First Nations perspective, which considers wellness to be based on mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical health. We will pay close attention to factors that contribute to the etiology (what causes it), presentation (the signs and symptoms), and treatment (how to reduce symptoms and suffering) of mental illness. In order to construct the most complete picture, we will approach this from multiple angles, including biological, psychological, and social perspectives. The primary goal of this course is to develop your ability to think critically about how we think about mental illness using theory, research findings, logic, and applied knowledge. A secondary goal is to become educated consumers of mental health information to be able to predict the factors that increase the likelihood of a given disorder developing and discriminate between treatment types based on efficacy demonstrated in the research literature.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Over the course of the term, students will watch and listen to lecture videos, have regular small group discussions about selected topics, take quizzes to integrate and apply their knowledge to novel questions/cases, and take 2 exams (midterm and final). There will be regular opportunities to ask questions and discuss issues with Dr. Michel and other students on the *Discussion* board.

LEARNING MATERIALS

Hooley, J.M., Butcher, J.N., Nock, M.K., & Mineka, S. (2017). *Abnormal psychology* (17th edition). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.

This is available in the following formats:

- etextbook
- Hard copy
 - 17th or 18th edition (in the 17th edition, the chapter numbers may be different, so be sure that you are reading on the correct topic)

For more information about all things textbook-related, go to the *Assignments* page on the course Canvas site and look at posts under *Textbook readings*.

ASSESSMENTS OF LEARNING

Assessment of learning will be based on performance on assigned tasks with the following weightings:

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Discussions | 10% |
| Group projects | 8% |
| Midterm exam | 40% |
| Final exam | 42% |

****Please do not rely on Canvas to correctly calculate your grade in the course. There are many things that can go wrong in Canvas's calculations. Course grades are calculated independent of Canvas.****

PEER-GRADED DISCUSSIONS

Students are required to post responses to questions/prompts (and responses to other students' posts) that address an issue related to the lecture material for the week. There are 5 graded discussions over the course of the term. You will be assigned to a discussion group for the term to keep these discussions engaging. For more information, see the *Peer-Graded Discussion Instructions* on the *Assignments* page.

GROUP PROJECTS

Students will work in small groups to collaborate on a biopsychosocial model of an assigned psychological disorder. There are 2 group project assignments over the course of the term. You will be assigned to a small group project group. For more information, see the *Group Project Instructions* on the *Assignments* page.

EXAMS

The midterm and final exams will include multiple-choice, short answer, fill-in-the-blank questions, and at least 1 biopsychosocial model. All exams are open book. They will cover material from lectures and other information included on the modules and course website. They will *not* include information from the textbook that is not covered in lecture or on the modules/course website.

The midterm exam will be open-book to be taken during a 2 hour period of your choice on the Friday of Week 6.

The final exam will be offered during the regular exam period. Do not make travel plans before the final exam schedule comes out; there is no alternative exam date. For more information, see the *Midterm Exam Information* and *Final Exam Information* on the *Assignments* page.

Students have the right to view their marked examinations with instructional staff, if they apply to do so within a month of receiving their final grades. However, the examination itself is the property of the university.

LATE/MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will not be accepted, unless accompanied by a physician's note documenting the student's incapacitating illness with the dates of incapacity.

The midterm will be given only on the published date. Students with a physician's note documenting the illness and dates of inability to participate in schoolwork will have their marks adjusted accordingly; only under rare circumstances will a makeup midterm exam be offered.

Students who miss the final exam must apply for academic concession from [Arts Academic Advising](#) or the [Centre for Accessibility](#). Makeup final exams may consist entirely of essay questions.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.

Details of the policies and how to access support are available on [the UBC Senate website](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is the foundation for your education and the development of the critical thinking skills you will need in your personal and professional life. University requires you to invest a considerable amount of time, effort, and money as you build your knowledge and ability to analyze and interpret information with increasing acumen as you work toward your degree. Engaging in academic integrity is a practice of self-respect, respect for learning, and for your university. We are invested in helping each student grow. As such, cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are VERY serious concerns. Please review the [Academic Integrity](#) page for university policies and procedures on academic misconduct and consequences. Also visit the Learning Commons Academic Integrity for information on academic integrity, and tips on appropriate citation of sources.

All graded work in this course, unless otherwise specified, is to be original work done independently and without the use of AI programs (e.g., ChatGPT). Evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in zero

credit for the work in question. In cases of academic misconduct, UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension or expulsion from the University, cancellation of scholarships, and/or a notation on the student's transcript.

LEARNING ANALYTICS

Learning analytics includes the collection and analysis of data about learners to improve teaching and learning. This course will be using the following learning technologies: Canvas and ViDeX. These tools capture data about your activity and provide information that can be used to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In this course, I plan to use analytics data to:

- View overall class progress
- Assess overall class understanding (via statistics on quizzes and exams)
- Review statistics on course content being accessed to support improvements in the course
- Track participation in discussion forums
- Assess your participation in the course

ADVICE FOR A CAREER IN PSYCHOLOGY

There are a lot of factors that go into deciding on a career path in psychology. If you are considering this, you will want to learn about some of the specific steps to be taken on the path toward graduate school. [The Psychology Students' Association \(PSA\)](#) puts on a series of events to discuss many of the issues related to considering and preparing oneself for graduate school. The Department of Psychology also puts on [events](#) that can provide more information about the process of applying for graduate school. I highly recommend looking into these if you are considering pursuing a career in psychology.

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