

Course Syllabus

This is your syllabus. Please refer to it often.

Welcome!

Abnormal Psychology

Spring 2018

PSY 352 • Unique #42775 • Online!

Instructor: Kirsten Bradbury, Ph.D. bradbury@austin.utexas.edu

Teaching Assistants:

Julia Chafkin onlinepsy352odta@austin.utexas.edu

Rahel Pearson onlinepsy352odta@austin.utexas.edu

Communicating with your teaching team: We love hearing from you! Please follow these guidelines to help us to maximize everyone's learning experience:

For most questions related to course material or class administration, please post your question to Piazza. This is the most efficient way for us to share knowledge among the entire learning community. Never doubt the value of your questions – if you are wondering about something, at least a few of your classmates are wondering the same thing!

For questions related to accommodations for sensory or learning disabilities, please email the TAs (onlinepsy352odta@austin.utexas.edu).

For questions about a specific test item (benchmark or exam), please direct your inquiry to the TA email (onlinepsy352odta@austin.utexas.edu). Please be sure to include the *actual item and how you answered it*.

For questions about grad school or career advice, please first review the Grad School 101 videos available to you under Modules. Then ask your follow-up/personalized questions on Piazza, over email, or in online or in-person office hours. We love talking to students about their life paths!

For conversation about psychology and related topics, please visit us in office hours either online or in person, or attend a meet-and-greet with Dr. B (see course announcements). Come see us!

IMPORTANT: Please DO NOT message us through Canvas. We regret that we cannot guarantee that we will even see a message sent to us this way, much less respond effectively to it!

Course Description

Psychology is a field that examines how we think, feel, and behave. Abnormal Psychology is concerned with those aspects of the human experience that are unusual, maladaptive, distressing, damaging, or pathological. In this survey course on the science and practice of Abnormal Psychology, we review major models and definitions of abnormality, methods of assessment and treatment, many DSM disorders, and ethics. We cover a variety of topics related to mental illness including social stigma, how to be a conscious consumer of mental health services, differential diagnosis, risk and resiliency factors, prevention, developmental psychopathology, and mechanisms by which mental health can deteriorate or improve across time. A complex, multivariate, multi-level conceptualization of health is emphasized, in which biological, psychological, social, and sociocultural variables act together in complex ways to produce mental illness as well as mental wellness. Throughout the course, we apply psychological theories and principles to everyday human experience. We hope to make the science of Abnormal Psychology accessible and understandable, and we particularly want you to see how the theories and concepts we discuss relate to your own life.

This Online Course is comprised of a series of Modules containing lectures for you to watch and listen to, as well as supporting materials like lecture slides, required and supplemental readings, videos, and related websites to explore. Instead of a traditional textbook, you will read and view assigned materials online for each class, including articles, TED talks, and a variety of multimedia materials. We recommend listening to the lecture for each module first, then completing the associated readings, viewings, and explorations. In fact, recent research finds that students learn far more efficiently if they read the reading material after the lecture than if they do so before the lecture.

To get a thorough understanding of abnormal psychology, we urge you to actively view all the lectures as well as read (or watch) all of the online material. The best way to prepare for the benchmark quiz at the end of each module is to actively attend to the lecture while you watch it, taking notes as you would in any class, then read all of the associated material. Ask us questions, and talk with your classmates and others about what you've learned. Actively talking with others about the theories and ideas of the course helps to organize them in your mind. Be sure to take advantage of the many online learning resources available to you.

Although you can listen to the lectures and complete the modules on a flexible schedule (whenever you find it convenient to do so), you must keep up with the overall pace of the course by taking exams spaced intermittently throughout the semester. The schedule of exams determines how quickly you must complete each module; in general, the course is paced such that you will keep up if you complete two modules per week. Modules are released well ahead of the pacing of the course in case students need to work ahead. However, exams cannot be taken early / ahead of schedule, so it is wise to not work too far ahead.

Required Internet-enabled device. All students must be connected to the class via Canvas using an Internet-connected computer or laptop. An internet-based cellphone/smartphone is not

acceptable. Please check all the technical requirements here:

<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/tower/tech.html> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

- Be sure your browser is updated to the versions specified in that link. Google Chrome is the recommended browser. If you need technical assistance, email our tech support people here: gatewaytechsupport@austin.utexas.edu.

Prerequisites: For psychology majors - upper-division standing and PSY301 and 418 with a grade of at least C in each; For Nonmajors - upper-division standing, PSY301 with a grade of at least C, and one of the following with a grade of at least C: Biology 318M, Civil Engineering 311S, Economics 329, Educational Psychology 371, Government 350K, Kinesiology 373, Mathematics 316, Psychology 317, Sociology 317L, Social Work 318, Statistics 309.

Assessment: How you earn your grade.

We expect you to immerse yourself in the readings and lectures. This is an idea class as opposed to a simple fact class. We are more concerned with the ideas and implications of what Freud or Skinner thought than with their birthdays or favorite colors. All of the assessments will stress psychological concepts and their relationships to other concepts and to practical examples.

Your grade comes from your performance on three types of assessment:

1. Module Benchmarks. Following completion of each Module, you will take a short (3-item) multiple-choice quiz on the material covered in that Module. Benchmarks are completed online through Canvas. We count 20 of 28 benchmarks (we drop your lowest 8).
2. Exams. There will be five scheduled exams during the regular semester (we count your four top scores). Exams will be completed online through Canvas. You must log on to the course home page at the specified time to take the exam. The course calendar below shows the dates and times for the exams and the material covered on each. Exams will consist of 50-100 multiple-choice items. You will have one hour to complete the exam.
3. Writing Assignments. There will be five writing assignments. Writing assignments are brief (500 words) and experiential/applied. Due dates for writing assignments are given in the course calendar. Writing assignments are submitted online via TurnItIn. We drop your lowest Assignment grade. You will find the Writing Assignments on Canvas after we announce they are ready. Once there, go to the Writing Assignment that you need to complete, and then follow the instructions. When finished, press the SUBMIT button, and your life will be beautiful. You can use your own computer or any university computer in the various UT libraries or computer labs. Do not procrastinate doing the writing assignments.

All benchmarks and exams are considered cumulative in that we expect you to retain and apply the information you are learning in order to develop a higher level of long-term knowledge of the course topics. However, the focus of each benchmark is on the specific module it tests, and the focus of each exam is on the specific set of modules covered on that exam.

Make-up and Late Work Policies:

Because of our generous drops policy (we drop 1 of 5 exams, 1 of 5 writing assignments, and 8 of 28 benchmark quizzes), we do not administer make-up exams or quizzes for any reason, including illness, approved school projects and travel, religious holidays, family emergencies, or anything else. **There are rare exceptions:** you will know if you are one of them, because an event will have occurred in your life so catastrophic that it shreds right through our drops policy. If this applies to you, please contact us and the Dean of Students' Office of Emergency Student Services; they, and we, will help you.

Writing assignments turned in late (via email to the TAs) will be docked 1 point per day late, up to 7 days. Writing assignments will not be accepted more than 7 days late.

You must complete your quizzes, exams, and writing assignments independently and without assistance or consultation with another person. Writing assignments must be your own original, previously unpublished work. Please study well enough for the benchmark quizzes and exams that you will not be tempted to consult your notes or other fact-checking sources; although fact-checking is allowed during the benchmarks, it is NOT allowed during the exams. Fact-checking never includes talking to another person. Consulting with another person while taking quizzes or exams for this class is never allowed and could incur serious consequences. The number of technological ways they have devised for detecting cheating in these online classes blows my mind; trust me, you don't want to risk it. If you have any questions about what counts as cheating, we encourage you to check out the [student judicial services website \(links to an external site\)](#).

Reviewing Benchmarks. Benchmark and Exam results are typically available soon after you take the quiz or test. You will be able to review your answers once grades have been released. To review your completed Benchmarks, go to the Assignments tab on the left side of Canvas and open your benchmark from there. You will see which questions you answered correctly and incorrectly.

- **Question Queries.** Queries about a benchmark or exam item will be considered for only ONE WEEK from the time the grade was released. If you have a query about a benchmark or exam question, please email the TA email (onlinepsy352odta@austin.utexas.edu) with the full question, all answer choices, your response, the correct response, and your related question.

Course Grades

Computing your final grade. Your Final Grade will be computed in the following way:

60 points: Each benchmark is worth 3 points (one point per item). 28 benchmarks will be available for you to take (one per module). Of these, 20 will count toward your grade (we drop your 8 lowest benchmark scores), so the maximum number of points you can earn from benchmarks is 60.

40 points: Each writing assignment is worth 10 points. You will have five writing assignments available to you to complete. Of these, four will count toward your grade (we drop your lowest writing assignment score). The maximum number of points you can earn from writing assignments is 40.

400 points: Each exam is worth 100 points each. You sign up to take four exams (see sign-up details, below). If you miss an exam during the semester or you need to try to pull up your grade, you can sign up for an optional fifth exam at the end of the semester (see course calendar). We will drop the lowest of your five exam grades. If you only take four exams, all four grades count toward your final grade.

Thus the total number of points you can earn is:

Benchmarks: $20 \times 3 = 60$

Writing Assignments: $10 \times 4 = 40$

Exams: $100 \times 4 = 400$

TOTAL = 500 points

If we offer you any Extra Credit during the semester (typically a point or two), we add it to this total.

Then, we divide the total points by 5 to yield a percentage score.

That percentage is reflected in a letter grade according to the following scale:

A = 92 and above	C+ = 78-79
A- = 90-91	C = 72-77
B+ = 88-89	C- = 70-71
B = 82-87	D = 60-69
B- = 80-81	F = 59 and below

If you are taking the course Credit-No Credit or Pass/Fail, you must make the equivalent of a D or better to receive credit or pass the course. There are no exceptions to this grading scheme.

Percentage course grades are calculated to two decimal places and rounded to the nearest whole number, such that, for example, the lowest A- is 89.50 (rounds to 90).

Borderline Grades Stay Borderline: Every semester, some students score just below the borderline of the next highest grade. I have great sympathy for people who find themselves in that position, but raising those grades would simply uncover a new group of people whose grades are near the new borderline. This makes everybody edgy. Therefore, my policy must be that borderline grades stay as they are. Thus, for example, an 89.49 is a B+. *Attempting to get me to make an exception to this policy is a waste of your precious time on this planet.*

Community Support.

Use the resources below to help yourself be successful in class.

This semester, we will be using **Piazza** as a class-wide discussion forum. If you have questions or topics that you'd like to discuss with your classmates and teaching team, this is the place to do it. The system is highly catered to getting you help fast and efficiently from classmates, TAs, and instructors. Rather than emailing questions to the teaching staff, we encourage you to post your questions on Piazza.

We have a skilled team of **Teaching Assistants**. The TAs will have at least three contact hours each week outside of class during which they can meet in person or virtually. Contact information and office hour times and locations are listed on the home page of Canvas under Office Hours.

Dr. B and the LAITS production team have created two sets of videos to support the learning goals of the course in the areas of **Self-Care (Self-care Toolkit) & Professional Development (Grad School 101)**. These are available under Modules.

Additionally, supportive **supplemental materials** for each course topic are included in each module. Although you will not be tested on these materials, they will enrich and extend your learning experience should you choose to avail yourself of them.

Other support - UT runs the Sanger Learning Skills Center in Jester Hall that offers advice on studying and note-taking techniques in general. More study tips are also given on the course FAQ page (under Modules).

The University of Texas at Austin provides, upon request, appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-4641 TTY.

It is common for students to feel a great deal of stress during college, and it is common for students studying about mental disorders to develop concerns about their own mental health. If you need to talk to someone, contact the Counseling and Mental Health Center at 512-471-3515, consult the online help resources linked to our course page, or reach out to any health professional for a referral.

We hope you enjoy the course. Your TA's and I are here to help you. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you to thrive in this class and truly enjoy it. Never hesitate to ask us questions. Talk to us!

Exam and Writing Assignment Due Dates and Pacing of Modules: Complete two modules per week to stay caught up!

Pre-class Activities: MUST be completed before accessing Module 1.

Module 1: Introduction

Module 2: Defining Abnormality

Module 3: Models & Theories of Abnormal Behavior, Part 1

Module 4: Models & Theories of Abnormal Behavior, Part 2

Module 5: Careers in Mental Health

Module 6: Ethics

Exam 1 on Modules 1-6: February 7, 2018 at 5:30PM

Writing Assignment 1 is due February 9, 2018 by 5:30PM

Module 7: Assessment & Diagnosis

Module 8: Anxiety Disorders, Part 1: Specific & Social Phobias

Module 9: Anxiety Disorders, Part 2: Panic, GAD, OCD, PTSD

Module 10: Dissociative Disorders

Module 11: Stress & Coping, Part 1

Module 12: Stress & Coping, Part 2

Exam 2 on Modules 7-12: March 7, 2018 at 5:30PM

Writing Assignment 2 is due March 9, 2018 by 5:30PM

Module 13: Mood Disorders, Part 1

Module 14: Mood Disorders, Part 2

Module 15: Psychosis & Schizophrenia, Part 1

Module 16: Psychosis & Schizophrenia, Part 2

Module 17: Personality Disorders, Part 1

Module 18: Personality Disorders, Part 2

Exam 3 on Modules 13-18 : March 28, 2018 at 5:30PM

Writing Assignment 3 is due April 6, 2018 by 5:30PM

Module 19: Abnormal Psychology in Forensic Settings

Module 20: Sleep, Part 1: Sleep & Dreaming

Module 21: Sleep, Part 2: Sleep Disorders

Module 22: Gender Identity

Module 23: Sexual Health & Sexual Disorders

Module 24: Substances

Exam 4 on Modules 19-24: April 25, 2018 at 5:30PM

Writing Assignment 4 is due April 27, 2018 by 5:30PM

Module 25: Eating Disorders

Module 26: Motivation

Module 27: Abnormal Psychology in Medical Settings

Module 28: Final Class Q&A

Exam 5 on Modules 25-28: May 2, 2018 at 5:30PM

Writing Assignment 5 is due May 4, 2018 by 5:30PM