

## Course Syllabus

*This is your syllabus. Please refer to it often.*

**Welcome!**

### Abnormal Psychology

**Fall 2018**

PSY 352 • Unique #42840 • Online!

#### Instructor:

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

#### Teaching Assistants:

██████████ onlinepsy352odTA@austin.utexas.edu

██████████ onlinepsy352odTA@austin.utexas.edu

██████████ 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, **post to Piazza!** This is the most efficient way for us to share knowledge and build our 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) as soon as possible. Please attach a copy of your accommodations letter so that we can tailor your accommodations appropriately.

For questions about a **specific test item** (quizzes or exams) or to learn why you **lost points** on an assignment, please direct your inquiry to the **TA email** (onlinepsy352odTA@austin.utexas.edu). Please be sure to reference the specific assignment and grade, or to include the *actual test item and how you answered it*, along with your question.

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 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** in person or online, or attend a meet-and-greet with Dr. B (see course announcements). Come see us! Contact information and office hour times and locations for the teaching team are listed on the home page of Canvas under Office Hours.

**IMPORTANT: 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! To send us a message, post to Piazza or email us directly at the email addresses given above.

#### 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.

There are no in-person requirements for the course. **Class attendance and participation, assignments, and tests are all completed online.** The instructional team holds in-person office hours, as in any traditional class; you are not required to attend these, but any student is welcome to come ask questions or just say hello.

To get a thorough understanding of the course content, 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 quizzes and exams is to **pay attention** 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 learning resources available to you in this course!

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 to three modules per week. Modules are released throughout the semester, not all at once. Exams cannot be taken early, 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 will NOT work well and is not recommended. Please check all the technical requirements here:

<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/tower/tech.html> (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 team here:

[gatewaytechsupport@austin.utexas.edu](mailto: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 Non-majors - 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. \*Some prerequisites may not be enforced for all students or in all semesters. If you are registered for the class, you met any enforced prerequisites. Degree

requirements are complex and the teaching team for this course knows nothing about how exactly you must navigate the treacherous waters of UT degree completion. When in doubt, check with an academic advisor in your major department!

### **Assessment: How you earn your grade.**

We expect you to immerse yourself in the readings and lectures, and to complete all the assignments to the best of your ability. We expect the level of time and effort required for you to do well in this class to be similar to that required for any upper-division course in psychology at UT.

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

1. Module Quizzes. Following completion of each Module, you will take a short (3-item) multiple-choice quiz on the material covered in that Module. Benchmark quizzes are completed online through Canvas. We count 20 of 28 module quizzes (we drop your lowest 8).
2. Exams. There will be 4 scheduled exams during the regular semester. You must log on to the course home page at the specified time to take the exam online. **You will be given a choice of two exam times for each exam; you must sign up to take the exam at one of the times offered and take it only at the time you sign up for.** Exams will consist of 50 multiple-choice items. You will have 40 minutes to complete the exam. All 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 exam is on the specific set of modules covered on that 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 as .pdf files online via TurnItIn. We count four of the five writing assignments (we drop your lowest Assignment grade). You will find the Writing Assignments on Canvas after we announce they are ready. Once the assignment is available, go to the Writing Assignment that you need to complete, and then follow the instructions there. When finished, press the SUBMIT button. You can use your own computer or any university computer in the various UT libraries or computer labs. If you take a writing assignment seriously and submit relevant, thoughtful work, on time and according to the instructions, you will receive full points for that assignment. *Any of the following errors can result in lost points (in full or in part, at the discretion of the grader, depending on the severity of the error): Claiming or implying that someone else's work is your own; turned in late or not according to the submission instructions; unreadably poor writing and/or irrelevant content; far too long or far too short; doesn't follow instructions for content; is needlessly vulgar or offensive; incomprehensible; overly superficial or lacking in substance.* All these errors are easily avoided. Students typically do very well on these assignments.

### **IMPORTANT!::: Make-up and Late Work Policies:**

**Benchmark Quizzes:** Because of our generous drops policy, we do not administer make-up module quizzes for any reason.

**Exams:** Because we offer you a choice of exam times, we are very strict about how we administer make-up exams. If you have class or work during both the offered exam times, you will need to email the TA email and provide documentation of class or work schedule that indicates a conflict. The TA will assist in coordinating a make-up time. If you sign up for one of the regular exam times but then are unable to take your scheduled exam due to serious illness or personal emergency, you will need to email the TA email and provide documentation of the unavoidable and unexpected nature of your absence. The TA will assist in coordinating a make-up time. There are no make-ups for the make-up; if you miss an exam you arranged with a TA, you will receive a zero for that exam.

**Assignments:** Assignments turned in late (via email to the TAs) will be docked 1 point per day late, up to 7 days. Assignments will not be accepted more than 7 days late for any reason.

There are NO EXCEPTIONS to these make-up and late work policies!!!\*

**\*Actually, when we say "no exceptions," we mean very rare exceptions.** You will KNOW if you are one of those very rare exceptions because an event or series of events so catastrophic will have occurred in your life that it shreds right through our drops and make-ups policies both practically and existentially. If this applies to you, we are so sorry and please contact us by email. We also recommend you contact the Dean of Students' Office of Emergency Student Services. They, and we, will help you.

**Please, no cheating.** You must complete your quizzes, exams, and 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 quizzes so that you will not be tempted to consult your notes or other fact-checking sources; although fact-checking is allowed during the quizzes, it is NOT allowed during the exams. Sources for allowed fact-checking do NOT include people. 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 our minds, and has resulted in such a low level of cheating in our online courses that it's easy to spot when something shady does happen. Don't risk it!! If you have any questions about what counts as cheating, we encourage you to check out the [student judicial services website \(Links to an external site\)](#), or ask us questions!

### **Reviewing Quizzes and Exams.**

You will be able to review your Quiz and Exam answers once grades have been released, which typically occurs soon after the quiz is closed to students or the exam (all dates) has been administered. To review your completed Quizzes or Exams, go to the Assignments tab on the left side of Canvas and open your quiz/exam from there. You will see which questions you answered correctly and incorrectly.

### **Course Grades.**

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

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

40 points: Each writing assignment is worth 10 points. You will have five writing assignments available for 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 of the four exams will be counted toward your final grade, for a possible total of 400 points.

Grades determined by:

- 20 quizzes (3 points each) = 60 points
- 4 Exams (100 points each) = 400 points
- 4 assignments (15 points each) = 40 points

Total possible points = 500

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

Divide by 5 to yield % score.

Conversion of % score to letter grade according to this table:

<b>A = 92 and up</b>	<b>C+ = 78-79</b>
<b>A- = 90-91</b>	<b>C = 72-77</b>
<b>B+ = 88-89</b>	<b>C- = 70-71</b>
<b>B = 82-87</b>	<b>D = 60-69</b>
<b>B- = 80-81</b>	<b>F = 59 and down</b>

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.

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). There are no exceptions to this grading process.

**Borderline Grades Stay Borderline.** Every semester, some students score just below the borderline of the next highest grade. We 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, our policy must be that borderline grades stay as they are. Thus, for example, an 89.49 is a B+. *Attempting to get us 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. Dr. B also holds office hours weekly. We all enjoy talking to students! **Contact information and office hours times and locations for the teaching team are listed on the home page under Office Hours.**

Throughout the semester, watch Canvas for Announcements of additional opportunities to meet your on-camera instructor, Dr. Bradbury, live and in person!

**Other support** - UT runs the Sanger Learning Skills Center in Jester Hall that offers advice on studying and note-taking techniques in general.

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 some course topics 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.

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 illness 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. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you to thrive in this class and get the most out of it. Never hesitate to ask us questions and talk to us!

It's going to be a great semester!

### **Exam and Writing Assignment Due Dates and Pacing of Modules.**

Complete about three 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

*Writing Assignment 1 due: W Sept 12 by 5 PM*

Module 5: Careers in Mental Health

Module 6: Ethics

Module 7: Assessment & Diagnosis

*Exam 1 on Modules 1-7: M/T Sept. 24-25*

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

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

Module 10: Dissociative Disorders

*Writing Assignment 2 due: W Oct 3 by 5PM*

Module 11: Stress & Coping, Part 1

Module 12: Stress & Coping, Part 2

Module 13: Mood Disorders, Part 1

Module 14: Mood Disorders, Part 2

*Exam 2 on Modules 8-14: T/W Oct.16-17*

Module 15: Psychosis & Schizophrenia, Part 1

Module 16: Psychosis & Schizophrenia, Part 2

*Writing Assignment 3 due: W Oct 24 by 5 PM*

Module 17: Personality Disorders, Part 1

Module 18: Personality Disorders, Part 2

Module 19: Abnormal Psychology in Forensic Settings

Module 20: Sleep, Part 1: Sleep & Dreaming

Module 21: Sleep, Part 2: Sleep Disorders

*Exam 3 on Modules 15-21: M/T Nov. 12-13*

Module 22: Gender Identity

Module 23: Sexual Health & Sexual Disorders

*Writing Assignment 4 due: W Nov 14 by 5 PM*

Module 24: Substances

Module 25: Eating Disorders

Module 26: Motivation

Module 27: Abnormal Psychology in Medical Settings

*Exam 4 on Modules 22-27: M/T Dec 3-4*

Module 28: Final Class Q&A

*Writing Assignment 5 due: W Dec 5 by 5 PM*

We hope you have a great semester!