

Duquesne University  
Psychological Disorders  
22529 PSYC 252W – 01  
Spring 2015  
11:00 – 11:50am MWF  
Canevin Hall 306

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### Course Overview

In this course, we will learn about human experiences that are both ordinary and extraordinary, focusing on those that have been characterized as psychological disorders. We will learn how various communities and individuals make sense of mental and emotional suffering, and of behavior that breaches social norms and expectations. We will explore questions like: what does it mean to define these experiences as illnesses? Why do different societies come to understand these experiences in significantly different ways? How do we best help those who are troubled by these experiences?

We will be guided in our exploration by the diagnostic system most widely in use, within the United States, which is the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). However, we will also discuss other possible ways of thinking about these conditions, examining their differences and similarities.

### Department-Specific Learning Goals

By exploring the ways that different cultures and communities, both within and outside the United States, make sense of psychological distress and work toward healing, we will become more *critically and socially engaged with the contemporary world, including being appreciative of its many forms of diversity*. Writing (and rewriting) papers that compare different perspectives, and discussing these complex issues (including the requirement that all students contribute to discussion) will help us learn to *communicate ideas effectively*. Students in this course will become familiar with the content and history of the DSM-5, as well as critiques of and alternatives to that system. Comparing the variety of approaches to psychological disorder within psychology and psychiatry, as well as other disciplines, will give us a broad-based understanding of *the fundamental concepts, issues, and interest areas of psychology, both as a human science and a natural science*. We will use a variety of genres, including autobiography, graphic novels, songs and spoken word pieces about the lived experience of psychological disorder, to *think critically and creatively about human psychology and life as a whole*. Becoming familiar with these ways of understanding human suffering and healing will help prepare students for *careers and/or graduate study in psychology, social work, and counseling, and in related fields such as education, business, law, health care, and human services*.

## Course Readings

The readings for this class (or links, if the assigned reading is a web page or other online resource) will be available under Course Documents.

You are not required to purchase a textbook for this class. ***Instead, you are expected to print out readings and bring them to class.*** You will need them to participate fully in class.

Readings for most weeks of the course (Weeks 3 – 16) include a handout containing text from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: Fifth Edition*, as well as one to three other readings (or sometimes a short video).

On Mondays, please come to class having read that week's handout.

On Fridays (or Wednesday if the week has only two classes) please come to class having read the remaining texts for that week.

For Week 2, please read the articles assigned for each day.

There are no readings assigned for Week 1 or Week 17 (the first and last day of class).

## Course Requirements

### Attendance/Participation:

This class will consist of some lecturing by me, and some discussion by all of us. In order to benefit fully from this class, you will need to attend class regularly and participate actively in discussion. **You are expected to make at least one comment in class per week, and your attendance/participation score will be determined in part by whether you have done so.** If you are a quieter student and find this difficult, we can work together to find ways for you to participate in discussion that feel more comfortable for you. Please come on time to class; repeated tardiness will lower your attendance/participation grade.

### Synthesis Papers:

One of the most important skills you will develop in this course is the ability to bring together different perspectives, recognizing the strengths and limitations of each. To help develop this ability, at five points during the semester, you will write a one-page "synthesis paper" that brings two course readings into conversation with each other. These papers should be about one to two pages long, and accomplish three tasks:

1. Briefly introduce the readings that you will be discussing, by summarizing their main points in one to two sentences each.
2. Relate the two readings to each other in some way. For example, you could write about how a point overlooked in one reading is addressed in another, or about how two different authors write about the same thing, but look at it in two

different ways, or about how two different authors rely on different kinds of evidence to make their point.

3. Make an observation or raise a question for discussion *that emerges from this discussion*. Your final point *must* connect to what you wrote about *both* readings and how they relate to each other, rather than being connected to only one of the readings or being something you find interesting for other, unrelated reasons. You will not get full credit unless you have a distinct final observation or question that draws on both readings AND the connection you have made between them. Before you submit your paper, ask yourself whether your final point could have been made using only one of the readings; if so, you should change it to something that relies on both readings.

At any point during the semester, you can rewrite **one** of your synthesis papers based on the feedback you received, and the new grade will replace your old one.

**Midterm Examination and Final Examination:**

This course has a midterm and a final. Both of these will consist of a combination of multiple-choice/short answer questions and longer essays. The multiple choice/short answer questions will assess your knowledge of specific course content; the essay questions will encourage you to think and write about some of the “big questions” that we have discussed throughout the semester.

**Spot Quizzes:**

To encourage all students to come to class prepared, at several points throughout the semester, class will begin with a quiz to assess whether or not you have completed the readings for class that day.

**First-Person Accounts**

We will start each class by reading aloud a brief passage (1-2 paragraphs) written by a person who is affected by one of the conditions we are discussing that day. Each of you will be responsible for choosing one day’s reading, bringing it to class, and reading it aloud. I am happy to assist you in locating and choosing a reading; doing a web search for the phrase “first-person account of [condition]” will also turn up some options.

### **Grading for the course**

There are a total of 1000 points to be earned over the course of the semester. Points are assigned as follows:

**Synthesis Papers:** 70 points each, for a total of 350 points (35% of final grade)

**Midterm:** 200 points (20% of final grade)

**Final Exam:** 200 points (20% of final grade)

**Attendance/Participation:** 100 points (10% of final grade). Students who miss two or fewer classes and who speak up in class at least once each week will get the full 100 points; those who do not will get a significantly lower score.

**Spot Quizzes:** 20 points each, for a total of 100 (10% of your final grade).

**Choosing and Reading a First-Person Account:** 50 points (5% of your final grade)

Grades will be assigned as follows:

930 – 1000:	A	(93 – 100 percent of possible points)
900 – 929:	A-	(90 – 92.9 percent of possible points)
870 – 899:	B+	(87 – 89.9 percent of possible points)
830 – 869:	B	etc.
800 – 829:	B-	
770 – 799:	C+	
700 – 769:	C	
600 – 700:	D	
Less than 600:	F	

**Grading rubrics**, which explain in more detail how your synthesis papers, exam essays, and attendance/participation will be scored, are available under Course Documents.

#### **Note about Blackboard Portfolios**

If you are a psychology major and you have already taken or are currently taking PSYC 102 (Orientation to the Psychology Major) you **must** upload at least one of your five synthesis papers to your Blackboard portfolio. You may do this at any time during the semester, but it must be done by the end of classes. We will be in touch about the final deadline. You cannot receive your grade from this class until you have done this.

## Policies

### **Absences:**

You are allowed **two absences** over the course of the semester. If you miss class more than twice, it will lower your grade for attendance/participation.

My general policy is to not judge whether or not a student has a good-enough reason for missing class. You know your own life best and only you can make that decision.

*Therefore, I do not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences.* The consequences of missing more than two classes for any reason is a lower attendance/participation score. If you are facing extraordinary personal or medical circumstances, however, please come and speak with me about it so we can work together to make your experience of the course as full and fulfilling as it can be.

### **Late Assignments:**

Synthesis papers must be turned in by 5pm on the day they are due. Synthesis papers turned in late will be penalized one letter grade. Synthesis papers will not be accepted more than three days after their due date unless prior arrangement has been made with me. If unusual life circumstances are preventing you from getting your work done on time and you would like to be granted an extension, come speak to me *before* the due date; documentation such as a doctor's note will help you make a stronger case.

### **Makeup Exams:**

Makeup exams will only be offered under very unusual circumstances, and only when a student has documentation of a situation that makes it impossible for them to take the exam on the scheduled day.

### **Academic Integrity:**

Students at Duquesne University are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty, and consequences for violating these standards are very serious. The University policy on academic integrity can be found at:  
[http://www.duq.edu/documents/academic-affairs/\\_pdf/academic-integrity-5-1-12.pdf](http://www.duq.edu/documents/academic-affairs/_pdf/academic-integrity-5-1-12.pdf).

### **Technology:**

Laptop computers and mobile electronic devices cannot be used in class without the permission of the instructor.

### **Disability Support:**

Students with documented disabilities are often entitled to accommodations in the classroom. If you require such accommodations, please contact the Office of Freshman Development and Special Student Services in 309 Duquesne Union (412-396-6657), and then speak with me, as soon as possible, so that we can get them set up for you in this class. *Regardless of whether you have a documented disability, please come talk to me if you feel that something about the classroom environment is getting in the way of your active participation or learning process.*

**Veterans and active duty military personnel with special circumstances are welcome and encouraged to communicate these to me, in advance if possible.**

**Office Hours:**

I am always happy to meet with students. If you'd like to meet with me outside of class, or if I have suggested that you do so, you can send me an email and we'll set up a time to talk – or you can also set up an appointment with me via Starfish.

Please see me if you are having a problem with some aspect of the course, but also keep in mind that office hours are not only a time to address problems. I'd be happy to talk with you about your areas of special interest, help you find further readings, discuss longer-term goals, et cetera.

**Course Schedule:**

	Topic	Please come to class having read:
Week 1 (1/9)	Introduction to the Course	No readings assigned.
Week 2 (1/12, 1/14, 1/16)	Systems of Diagnostic Classification	<b>Monday: The DSM</b> Spiegel, Alix. (2005). The dictionary of disorder: how one man revolutionized psychiatry. <i>New Yorker</i> . <b>Wednesday: The RDoC</b> "Director's Blog: Transforming Diagnosis" and "NIMH Research Domain Criteria" (links to these web pages are under "Course Documents" for Week 2) <b>Friday: The Psychodynamic Diagnostic Manual</b> PDM Task Force (2006). "Introduction"
Week 3 (1/21, 1/23)	Schizophrenia	Handout: <u>Schizophrenia Spectrum and Psychotic Disorders</u>  Luhmann, Tanya (2007). Social defeat and the culture of chronicity: or, why schizophrenia does so well over there and so badly here. <i>Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry</i> 31(2):135-172.
Week 4 (1/26, 1/28, 1/30)	Schizophrenia	Metzl, Jonathan (2009). The protest psychosis: how schizophrenia became a black disease. Boston: Beacon Press. "Preface" (ix-xxi) Chapter 13: "A racialized disease" 95-108
<b>FIRST SYNTHESIS PAPER DUE</b> <b>2/2 at 5PM</b>		
Week 5 (2/2, 2/4, 2/6)	Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders	Handout: <u>Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders</u>  Lemelson, Robert (2003). Obsessive-compulsive disorder in Bali: the cultural shaping of a neuropsychiatric disorder. <i>Transcultural Psychiatry</i> , 40(3): 377-408.
Week 6 (2/9, 2/11, 2/13)	Anxiety Disorders	Handout: <u>Anxiety Disorders</u>  "The Face Behind the Mask" from Elliott, Carl (2003) <i>Better Than Well: American Medicine Meets the American Dream</i> . New York: Norton

Week 7 (2/16, 2/18, 2/20)	Trauma and Stressor Related Disorders	<p>Handout: <u>Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders</u></p> <p>Hinton, Devon and Lewis-Fernandez, Robert. Idioms of distress among trauma survivors: subtypes and clinical utility. <i>Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry</i>, 34 (209-218).</p> <p>Excerpt from: Herman, Judith. (1992). <i>Trauma and recovery: the aftermath of terror - from domestic abuse to political terror</i>. New York: Basic Books.</p>
<b>SECOND SYNTHESIS PAPER DUE</b> 2/23 at 5PM		
Week 8 (2/23, 2/25)	Dissociative Disorders	<p>Handout: <u>Dissociative Disorders</u></p> <p>Chapin, Bambi (2008). Transforming possession: Josephine and the work of culture. <i>Ethos</i>, 36(2):220-245.</p>
<b>MIDTERM EXAM: 2/27</b>		
Week 9	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
Week 10 (3/9, 3/11, 3/13)	Neurodevelopmental Disorders: The Autism Spectrum	<p>Handout: <u>Neurodevelopmental Disorders</u></p> <p>Sinclair, Jim. (1993). Don't mourn for us. <i>Our Voice</i>, 1(3).</p> <p>Please watch the video "Autism Every Day (7 Minute Version)" directed by Lauren Thierry and Autism Speaks (link under "Course Documents")</p> <p>Bagatell, Nancy. (2010) From cure to community: transforming notions of autism. <i>Ethos</i>, 38(1), 33-55.</p>
<b>THIRD SYNTHESIS PAPER DUE</b> 3/16 at 5PM		
Week 11 (3/16, 3/18, 3/20)	Neurodevelopmental Disorders: ADHD and Learning Disabilities	<p>Handout: <u>Special Education Services</u></p> <p>Ginsburg, Faye and Rapp, Rayna (2013). Entangled ethnography: Imagining a future for young adults with learning disabilities. <i>Social Science and Medicine</i>, 99: 187-193.</p>



Week 12 (3/23, 3/25, 3/27)	Substance-Related Disorders and Impulse Control Disorders	Handout: <u>Substance-Related Disorders</u> Handout: <u>Impulse Control Disorders</u>  Excerpt from Schüll, Natasha. (2010). <i>Addiction by design: machine gambling in Las Vegas</i> . Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Week 13 (3/30, 4/1)	Eating Disorders	Handout: <u>Feeding and Eating Disorders</u>  Becker, Anne. <i>et al.</i> (2002). Eating behaviours and attitudes following prolonged exposure to television among ethnic Fijian adolescent girls. <i>British Journal of Psychiatry</i> , 180. (509-514).  Bordo, Susan. (1985). Anorexia nervosa: psychopathology as the crystallization of culture. <i>Philosophical Forum</i> , 17(2).  Udovitch, Mim. (2002). A secret society of the starving. <i>New York Times Magazine</i> .
<b>FOURTH SYNTHESIS PAPER DUE</b> <b>4/7 at 5PM</b>		
Week 14 (4/7, 4/8, 4/10)	Personality Disorders	Handout: <u>Personality Disorders</u>  Lester, Rebecca (2013). Lessons from the borderline: anthropology, psychiatry, and the risks of being human. <i>Feminism and Psychology</i> , 23 (1): 70-77.  Excerpt from Linehan, Marsha (1993). <i>Cognitive- Behavioral Treatment of Borderline Personality Disorder</i> . New York: Guilford Press.
Week 15 (4/13, 4/15, 4/17)	Bipolar Disorders	Handout: <u>Bipolar Disorders</u>  Excerpt from: Jamison, Kay. (2009). <i>An unquiet mind: a memoir of moods and madness</i> .  Egan, Jennifer. (2008). The bipolar puzzle. <i>New York Times</i> .

<p>Week 16 (4/20, 4/22, 4/24)</p>	<p>Depressive Disorders</p>	<p>Handout: <u>Depressive Disorders</u></p> <p>Watters, Ethan. (2010). <i>Crazy like us: the globalization of the American psyche</i>. New York: Simon and Schuster. Excerpt from Chapter 4: "The Mega-Marketing of Depression in Japan"</p> <p>Brosh, Allie. (2011) <i>Hyperbole and a Half</i> "Adventures in Depression" "Depression Part Two" (links under Course Documents)</p>
<p align="center"><b>FIFTH SYNTHESIS PAPER DUE 4/27 at 5PM</b></p>		
<p>Week 17 (4/27)</p>	<p>Wrap-up and Review</p>	<p>No readings for this week; come to class with (at least) one question for our review session</p>
<p align="center"><b>SYNTHESIS PAPER REWRITES DUE BY 4/29 at 5PM</b></p>		
<p align="center"><b>FINAL EXAM 5/1 from 8:30 – 10:30am</b></p>		