



UNSW Course Outline

PSYC1023 Abnormal Psychology - 2024

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General Course Information

Course Code : PSYC1023

Year : 2024

Term : Term 1

Teaching Period : T1

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : Faculty of Science

Academic Unit : School of Psychology

Delivery Mode : Online

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : Kensington

Campus : Sydney

Study Level : Undergraduate

Units of Credit : 6

Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

This course provides a contemporary overview of human mental disorders. It will address questions such as How is “abnormal” defined? What causes mental illnesses and how are they treated? Each week students will explore a different mental disorder (e.g. depression, anxiety, bipolar, OCD, substance use disorder) and discuss the symptoms, causes and treatments. Students will also learn about the scientific models that link factors as well as breakthroughs in scientific understanding and treatment of mental disorders.

This course is appropriate for students with and without a background in science and is taught entirely online through Moodle.

N.B. This course is not a treatment program for mental health disorders and should not be viewed as a substitute for professional intervention.

Course Aims

This course aims to provide students with a contemporary view of psychological and biological models explaining human psychopathology. It provides an overview and discussion of the notion of “abnormality”, diagnostic practice, stigma, aetiology, prognosis and treatment in relation to depression, anxiety, bipolar, obsessive-compulsive disorder and substance-use disorder.

The course aims to build a strong foundation in psychological and scientific literacy; skills like understanding the scientific method, psychology as a science, history of psychopathology as a discipline, as well as academic writing skills, critical thinking and analysis. These transferable skills will be beneficial to students who plan to continue in psychology, academically or professionally, as well as those students whose academic and professional focus lies elsewhere.

Course Learning Outcomes

Course Learning Outcomes
CL01 : Comprehend and apply knowledge of major concepts of abnormal psychology with regard to: risk factors, classification, aetiology and treatments of common mental disorders.
CL02 : Comprehend and apply knowledge of the scientific method in order to understand how these principles are applied in abnormal psychology research and clinical settings.
CL03 : Apply critical thinking skills in order to intellectually engage with literature, differentiate quality empirical evidence from speculation, develop an argument and critique those of others.
CL04 : Demonstrate an understanding of the historical context, ethical principles and values in the area of abnormal psychology.
CL05 : Analyse and critique theory and research in the discipline of psychology and communicate these in a written format.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CL01 : Comprehend and apply knowledge of major concepts of abnormal psychology with regard to: risk factors, classification, aetiology and treatments of common mental disorders.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term exam • Essay • Final examination
CL02 : Comprehend and apply knowledge of the scientific method in order to understand how these principles are applied in abnormal psychology research and clinical settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term exam • Essay • Final examination
CL03 : Apply critical thinking skills in order to intellectually engage with literature, differentiate quality empirical evidence from speculation, develop an argument and critique those of others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term exam • Essay • Final examination
CL04 : Demonstrate an understanding of the historical context, ethical principles and values in the area of abnormal psychology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term exam • Essay • Final examination
CL05 : Analyse and critique theory and research in the discipline of psychology and communicate these in a written format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Mid-term exam Assessment Format: Individual	20%	
Essay Assessment Format: Individual	40%	
Final examination Assessment Format: Individual	40%	

Assessment Details

Mid-term exam

Assessment Overview

The mid-term test is worth 20% of the total course mark. The test will have 20 multiple-choice questions (MCQs) and will be made available online via Moodle from 9am –11:59pm Friday Week 5 (Sydney time). You will be able to sit the examination once. The test will last 15 mins allowing for 45s per question. The test should not be attempted “open book” with reference material nearby, as there is not enough time to consult any reference material to answer these questions. The time limit will provide ample opportunity for students to read and answer all the questions. The material assessed in this exam will cover all material presented in Weeks 1-3 and Week 5 including textbook readings.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Comprehend and apply knowledge of major concepts of abnormal psychology with regard to: risk factors, classification, aetiology and treatments of common mental disorders.
- CLO2 : Comprehend and apply knowledge of the scientific method in order to understand how these principles are applied in abnormal psychology research and clinical settings.
- CLO3 : Apply critical thinking skills in order to intellectually engage with literature, differentiate quality empirical evidence from speculation, develop an argument and critique those of others.
- CLO4 : Demonstrate an understanding of the historical context, ethical principles and values in the area of abnormal psychology.

Essay

Assessment Overview

A written assignment in essay format will be required for submission via Turnitin 11:59pm Sunday Week 8. The question will relate to topics broadly addressed in the course. Details will be released in Week 4. The essay will be worth 40% of the total course mark. The research and

writing chapters of the custom eTextbook will provide help on how to write a psychological essay. You will be provided with opportunities for self-assessment throughout the writing process. Penalties for late submission will be in accordance with policies stipulated in the School of Psychology Student Guide.

Essays submitted after the marking deadline will not receive a mark.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Comprehend and apply knowledge of major concepts of abnormal psychology with regard to: risk factors, classification, aetiology and treatments of common mental disorders.
- CLO2 : Comprehend and apply knowledge of the scientific method in order to understand how these principles are applied in abnormal psychology research and clinical settings.
- CLO3 : Apply critical thinking skills in order to intellectually engage with literature, differentiate quality empirical evidence from speculation, develop an argument and critique those of others.
- CLO4 : Demonstrate an understanding of the historical context, ethical principles and values in the area of abnormal psychology.
- CLO5 : Analyse and critique theory and research in the discipline of psychology and communicate these in a written format.

Detailed Assessment Description

If required, a 2 day automatic Short Extension without documentation is available for this assessment.

All short extension applications must be submitted **before** the task's due date.

For details on how to apply, and the conditions on applying, please visit the UNSW [Special Consideration](#) website.

Final examination

Assessment Overview

There will be an examination held online during the University examination period (time and location TBA). The examination will include 80 multiple choice questions that you need to answer in 1 hour (+ 15 minutes reading time) covering all lecture material and textbook readings.

Course Learning Outcomes

- CLO1 : Comprehend and apply knowledge of major concepts of abnormal psychology with regard to: risk factors, classification, aetiology and treatments of common mental disorders.
- CLO2 : Comprehend and apply knowledge of the scientific method in order to understand how these principles are applied in abnormal psychology research and clinical settings.
- CLO3 : Apply critical thinking skills in order to intellectually engage with literature, differentiate quality empirical evidence from speculation, develop an argument and critique those of others.

- CLO4 : Demonstrate an understanding of the historical context, ethical principles and values in the area of abnormal psychology.

General Assessment Information

Students should be familiar with the School of Psychology Student Guide, which contains key staff contact details and important information about policies and procedures related to courses and assessment

Special Consideration: Students who experience circumstances outside of their control that prevent them from completing an assessment task by the assigned due date due can apply for Special Consideration. Special Consideration applications should include a medical certificate or other documentation and be submitted within 3 days of the sitting/due date.

Important note: UNSW has a “fit to sit/submit” rule, which means that if you sit an exam or submit a piece of assessment, you are declaring yourself fit to do so and cannot later apply for Special Consideration. This is to ensure that if you feel unwell or are faced with significant circumstances beyond your control that affect your ability to study, you do not sit an examination or submit an assessment that does not reflect your best performance. Instead, you should apply for Special Consideration as soon as you realise you are not well enough or are otherwise unable to sit or submit an assessment.

Once your application has been assessed, you will be contacted via your student email address and advised of the official outcome. If the special consideration application is approved, you may be given an extended due date, or an alternative assessment/supplementary examination may be set. For more information about special consideration, please visit: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>.

Alternative assessments: will be subject to approval and implemented in accordance with UNSW Assessment Implementation Procedure and Psychology Student Guide.

Supplementary examinations: will be made available for students with approved special consideration application and implemented in accordance with UNSW Assessment Policy and Psychology Student Guide.

All course assessments have been designed and implemented in accordance with [UNSW Assessment Policy](#).

The APA (7th edition) referencing style is to be adopted in this course. Students should consult

the publication manual itself (rather than third party interpretations of it) in order to properly adhere to APA style conventions. Students do not need to purchase a copy of the manual, it is available in the library or online. This resource is used by assessment markers and should be the only resource used by students to ensure they adopt this style appropriately: [APA 7th edition](#).

Grading Basis

Standard

Course Schedule

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
Convenor	Jamie Dracup					Yes	Yes

Other Useful Information

Academic Information

Upon your enrolment at UNSW, you share responsibility with us for maintaining a safe, harmonious and tolerant University environment.

You are required to:

- Comply with the University's conditions of enrolment.
- Act responsibly, ethically, safely and with integrity.
- Observe standards of equity and respect in dealing with every member of the UNSW community.
- Engage in lawful behaviour.
- Use and care for University resources in a responsible and appropriate manner.
- Maintain the University's reputation and good standing.

For more information, visit the [UNSW Student Code of Conduct Website](#).

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Referencing is a way of acknowledging the sources of information that you use to research your assignments. You need to provide a reference whenever you draw on someone else's words,

ideas or research. Not referencing other people's work can constitute plagiarism.

Further information about referencing styles can be located at <https://student.unsw.edu.au/referencing>

Academic integrity is fundamental to success at university. Academic integrity can be defined as a commitment to six fundamental values in academic pursuits: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage. At UNSW, this means that your work must be your own, and others' ideas should be appropriately acknowledged. If you don't follow these rules, plagiarism may be detected in your work.

Further information about academic integrity, plagiarism and the use of AI in assessments can be located at:

- The [Current Students site](#),
- The [ELISE training site](#), and
- The [Use of AI for assessments](#) site.

The Student Conduct and Integrity Unit provides further resources to assist you to understand your conduct obligations as a student: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/conduct>

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Penalty for Late Submissions

UNSW has a standard late submission penalty of:

- 5% per day,
- for all assessments where a penalty applies,
- capped at five days (120 hours) from the assessment deadline, after which a student cannot submit an assessment, and
- no permitted variation.

Any variations to the above will be explicitly stated in the Course Outline for a given course or assessment task.

Students are expected to manage their time to meet deadlines and to request extensions as early as possible before the deadline.

Special Consideration

If circumstances prevent you from attending/completing an assessment task, you must officially apply for special consideration, usually within 3 days of the sitting date/due date. You can apply by logging onto myUNSW and following the link in the My Student Profile Tab. Medical documentation or other documentation explaining your absence must be submitted with your

application. Once your application has been assessed, you will be contacted via your student email address to be advised of the official outcome and any actions that need to be taken from there. For more information about special consideration, please visit: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>

Important note: UNSW has a “fit to sit/submit” rule, which means that if you sit an exam or submit a piece of assessment, you are declaring yourself fit to do so and cannot later apply for Special Consideration. This is to ensure that if you feel unwell or are faced with significant circumstances beyond your control that affect your ability to study, you do not sit an examination or submit an assessment that does not reflect your best performance. Instead, you should apply for Special Consideration as soon as you realise you are not well enough or are otherwise unable to sit or submit an assessment.

Faculty-specific Information

Additional support for students

- [The Current Students Gateway](#)
- [Student Support](#)
- [Academic Skills and Support](#)
- [Student Wellbeing, Health and Safety](#)
- [Equitable Learning Services](#)
- [UNSW IT Service Centre](#)
- Science EDI Student [Initiatives](#), [Offerings](#) and [Guidelines](#)