



Psychology 431-01

Current Issues in Psychopathology

Winter 2014

Instructor:	Dr. Sally During	Lecture Location:	SS 010
Phone:	403-630-7043	Lecture Days/Time:	TR 09:30 – 10:45
Email:	sduring@shaw.ca		
Office:			
Office Hours:	By appointment		

Course Description and Goals

Discussion of current developments and controversies in the assessment, etiology, and treatment of psychopathology. Emphasis will be on teaching students how to strengthen their critical thinking skills using controversial issues in the field of abnormal and clinical psychology as a basis for discussion and debate.

Prerequisites

Psyc 312 - Experimental Design and Quantitative Methods for Psychology
Psyc 385 – Abnormal Psychology

Required Text

Halgin, R.P. (2013). Taking Sides: Clashing Views In Abnormal Psychology (7th Edition). MacGraw-Hill. Available in the University Bookstore (7th Edition required).

Evaluation

Students are expected to attend class regularly and to participate in classroom activities, including the debates presented by classmates. There will be two noncumulative examinations in the course. Exams will most likely consist of multiple choice and essay questions from the text, class presentations and lectures. These will include materials from the textbook, lectures, and classmate presentations.

1. 25% of your mark will be based on a mid-term exam scheduled during class time
2. 40% of your mark is based on a class presentation/debate (20%) and position paper (20%). A team of 2-3 people will debate another team of 2-3 people on a contentious issue in clinical psychology. A position paper must be submitted **at the time of the presentation.**
3. 35% of your mark is based on a final 2-hour exam scheduled by the Registrar during the final examination period.

Points will be deducted for position papers handed in late. Late papers must be turned in to the Psychology main office, 275 Administration Building and receive a date stamp. Late papers will be subjected to a 10% penalty per day, including weekends. Emailed papers or assignments slipped under office doors or left on desks will NOT be accepted.

Department of Psychology Grade Distribution Policy

The distribution of grades in Psychology courses (the percentage of A grades, B grades, etc.) will be similar to the distribution of grades in other courses in the Faculty of Arts. The Department monitors the grade distributions of 200-, 300-, and 400-level courses in the Faculty to ensure that the grade distributions in Psychology courses are comparable. Based on these reviews, students can expect that 1) up to 30% of grades in 200- and 300-level psychology courses will be “A” grades (A+, A, and A-), and 2) up to 40% of grades 400-level psychology courses will be “A” grades.

Department of Psychology Criteria for Letter Grades

Psychology professors use the following criteria when assigning letter grades:

A+ grade: *Exceptional Performance.* An A+ grade indicates near perfect performance on multiple choice and short answer exams. For research papers/essays/course projects/presentations, an A+ grade is awarded for exceptional work deserving of special recognition and is therefore not a common grade.

A, A- Range: *Excellent Performance.* Superior understanding of course material. Written work is very strong in terms of critical and original thinking, content, organization, and the expression of ideas, and demonstrates student’s thorough knowledge of subject matter.

B Range: *Good Performance.* Above average understanding of course material. Written work shows evidence of critical thinking and attention to organization and editing but could be improved in form and/or content.

C Range: *Satisfactory Performance.* Adequate understanding of course material. Knowledge of basic concepts and terminology is demonstrated. Written work is satisfactory and meets essential requirements but could be improved significantly in form and content. Note: All prerequisites for courses offered by the Faculty of Arts must be met with a minimum grade of C-.

D range: *Marginally meets standards.* Minimal understanding of subject matter. Written work is marginally acceptable and meets basic requirements but requires substantial improvements in form and content. Student has not mastered course material at a level sufficient for advancement into more senior courses in the same or related subjects.

F grade: *Course standards not met.* Inadequate understanding of subject matter. Written work does not meet basic requirements. Student has not demonstrated knowledge of course material at a level sufficient for course credit.

Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor’s discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades.

To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

Tentative Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic/Activity/Readings/Due Date (revise and add columns & rows as necessary)	
R Jan 9	Winter term lectures begin. Course overview; discussion of debate topics and format	
T Jan 14	Does Mental Illness Exist?	Introduction Chapter
R Jan 16	Does Mental Illness Exist?	Introduction Chapter
F Jan 17	Last day to drop Winter Term half-courses.	
M Jan 20	Last day to add or swap Winter Term half courses. Last day for change of registration from audit to credit or credit to audit.	
T Jan 21	Gender Bias in Assessment	No Chapter
R Jan 23	Does Attention Deficit Disorder Exist?	Issue 1
F Jan 24	Fee payment deadline for Winter Term fees.	
T Jan 28	Should psychologists prescribe medication?	Issue 5
R Jan 30	Is Gender Identity Disorder a Mental Illness?	Issue 3
T Feb 4	Is Addiction a Brain Disease? Must one have Abstinence?	Issue 8
R Feb 6	Should "Smart Drugs" be used to enhance Cognitive Functioning?	Issue 6
T Feb 11	Is Excessive use of Facebook a form of Narcissism?	Issue 18
R Feb 13	Forced Psychotherapy for schizophrenia?	Issue 17
Feb 16-23	Reading Week. No lectures. University open (except Family Day).	
M Feb 17	Alberta Family Day, University closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.	
T Feb 25	Does Evolution Explain Why Men Rape?	No Chapter
R Feb 27	Eating Disorders vs. Obesity	No Chapter
T Mar 4	Midterm Exam	
R Mar 6	Must mentally ill murderers have a rational understanding of why they are being	Issue 11

	sentenced to death?	
T Mar 11	Debate 1: Should Individuals with Anorexia Nervosa Have the Right to Refuse Life Saving Treatment?	Issue 13
R Mar 13	Debate 2: Does Research Confirm That Abortion is a Psychologically Benign Experience?	Issue 12
T Mar 18	Debate 3: Does Research Confirm that Violent Video Games Are Harmful to Minors?	Issue 9
R Mar 20	Debate 4: Is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Overdiagnosed and Overtreated?	Issue 2
T Mar 25	Debate 5: Psychological Debriefing for victims of trauma: helpful or hurtful?	Issue 4
R Mar 27	Debate 6: Is it Unethical for Psychologists to be Involved in Coercive Interrogations?	Issue 15
T Apr 1	Debate 7: Should Memory Dampening Drugs be used to Prevent and Treat Trauma in Combat Soldiers?	Issue 7
R Apr 3	Debate 8: Is Pornography Harmful?	Issue 10
T Apr 8	Optional Debate	
R Apr 10	Review for Final Exam Winter Term Lectures End	
M Apr 14	Last day to withdraw from full courses and Winter Term half courses.	
Apr 19-29	Winter Term Final Examinations. (scheduled by the Registrar)	

Psych 431 Debates and Position Paper

Rationale: Presentations at 400-level psychology courses is common. The experience can be invaluable in preparing you for future oral reports, whether for graduate school, medical school, law school or the business world. The material in Psych 431 lends itself to a debate-style presentation. You will notice the textbook is organized in a pro/con format. For every topic, there is compelling evidence on both sides of the issue. There is no right or wrong answer to each issue, so there will be no winner or loser to the debates. Rather, the debates provide the opportunity to review evidence in detail (i.e. sort out opinion/myth from fact), and promote discussion and critical evaluation of the issue.

Format: A team of 2-3 people will debate another team of 2-3 people on a contentious issue in abnormal or clinical psychology. Twenty to 25 minutes is allotted for each team's presentation and 5 to 10 minutes for each team's rebuttal. The order of speakers will be 1) Yes side – main presentation, 2) No side – main presentation, 3) Yes side – rebuttal, 4) No side – Rebuttal. Your main presentation can follow any style you think would work for the topic. The majority of students use PowerPoint slides; you can also use overheads. You don't need to provide an exhaustive background on the topic except how it pertains to your side of the issue. The debates are

intended to be enjoyable, so feel free to use cartoons, video clips, class demonstrations, or other ice-breakers. However, try not to let your presentations get too casual – these are still scientific presentations.

Please submit your powerpoint presentations and lecture notes by email by no later than 9 p.m. the evening prior to your debate so that the notes can be posted on Blackboard for your classmates to follow. Grade penalties may be assigned for late submissions.

In previous classes, the back and forth discussion during the rebuttal often become quite ‘spirited.’ Although I encourage this, it creates the frequent problem of going over time. Therefore, I will ask each side to limit their rebuttal comments to two major points. That is, chose two major points the other side presented and attempt to dispute them with your evidence or arguments. The debate will conclude with questions from the class.

Position Paper: A 10 to 12 page (double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman or 11 point Arial) position paper must be submitted at the time of the presentation. The paper gives you the opportunity to expand on your presentation points in greater detail. Please note that it is not sufficient to use the argument that the ‘research is flawed’ to support your side. All research is flawed in some way. Provide specific criticisms of why research on the topic is flawed, and how this affects the credibility of the evidence. Whenever possible, look at the preponderance of evidence (e.g. results form meta-analyses) and not just one or two studies that have findings supporting your position.

The paper should be double spaced, in APA format and have at least 10 references. Please review primary source material (original articles) in addition to secondary sources. Use headings to structure the text please! You can use tables, or point form to summarize arguments or specific evidence, however, the bulk of the paper should be written in complete sentences like a regular term paper. An electronic copy of the paper should also be submitted. I will post the file on the course web page for other students in the class to download. The purpose of this is to provide the rest of the class with notes from which to study for the final. It also allows you to focus on listening to your classmate’s presentations rather than frantically taking notes.

Choosing a Topic: I have pre-selected a sample of issues from the textbook for the debates. These topics include many interesting and controversial areas in the field of abnormal/clinical psychology. New findings are appearing on these issues almost every day. Once you have an idea of a topic that you are interested in (and/or have a group together), provide me with your 1st and 2nd choices for topic (name of the topic and whether you want pro or con side). You can also choose a topic that does not appear on the list but you will need to find another team of students willing to debate the other side of the issue. If there are too many students expressing interest in a topic, I will alert the class and invite students to offer to change topics if they do not have a strong preference. If this does not resolve the issue, the topics will be assigned by draw as needed.

Group work: The majority of students have few problems working together in preparing for the presentations. However, occasionally a team experiences problems within their group. The most common concern I hear is that one person is not doing their share. A few suggestions to prevent this from happening are:

1. Divide the work up logically with clear expectations on length and quality. Label who was responsible for what sections of the paper.
2. Set deadlines in advance of the presentation date to review the material within your group. For example, if you are writing a section of the paper, have it ready at least one week before the due date to review, edit, and condense the material to everyone’s satisfaction.
3. Have open discussions on how the work is going and who in the group should be doing more or less. Electing a team leader is not a bad idea provided the individual delegates work equally and is not expecting to do everything themselves.

4. Please be mindful of individual strengths and weaknesses. Some students are better writers, while others are better at public speaking. Divide up the work according to the strengths of your group members.

If you are experiencing problems within your group and cannot resolve them internally, please talk to me BEFORE the presentation date. We can probably work out a solution. Please do not wait until after the presentation is done and the paper submitted to tell me about the problem. At that point, there is little I can do grade-wise.

Grading: Your overall grade will be based on quality of the presentation, soundness of arguments, and use of supporting material. The total 40 marks for the debate break down as follows:

-20 marks for the paper (writing, organization, consistent use of APA style)

-10 marks for the quality of the presentation (e.g. use of A/V aids, organization, clarity of speakers, flow of presentation, rebuttal comments)

-10 marks for soundness of arguments (use of empirical evidence vs. opinions, use of material outside of textbook chapter).

In addition, the class will rate each team on quality of presentation, soundness of arguments, and use of supporting material using a 1-10 scale. They can also provide written comments. The rating will not be used in your mark, but I'll provide each team with average class ratings, summary of comments, and instructor grades and feedback.

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class; no reappraisal of term work is permitted after the 15 days. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Absence From A Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam.

Travel During Exams

Consistent with University regulations, students are expected to be available to write scheduled exams at any time during the official December and April examination periods. Requests to write a make-up exam because of conflicting travel plans (e.g., flight bookings) will NOT be considered except under exceptional circumstances. Students are advised to wait until the final examination schedule is posted before making any travel arrangements.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act

The FOIP legislation disallows the practice of having student's retrieve tests and assignments from a public place. Therefore, tests and assignments may be returned to students during class/lab, or during office hours, or via the Department Office (Admin 275), or will be made available only for viewing during exam review sessions scheduled by the Department. Tests and assignments will be shredded after one year. Instructors should take care to not link students' names with their grades, UCIDs, or other FOIP-sensitive information.

Course Credits for Research Participation (Max 2% of final grade)

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. **A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to the student's final grade. Students earn 0.5% (0.5 credits) for each full 30 minutes of participation.** The demand for timeslots may exceed the supply in a given term. Thus, students are not guaranteed that there will be enough studies available to them to meet their credit requirements. Students should seek studies early in the term and should frequently check for open timeslots. Students can create an account and participate in Departmentally approved research studies at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. The last day to participate in studies and to assign or reassign earned credits to courses is **April 14, 2014**.

Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS).

They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic: Phone: 403-220-3911 suvpaca@ucalgary.ca

Student Union Faculty Rep.: Phone: 403-220-3913 socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Student Ombudsman's Office

The Office of the Student Ombudsmen provides independent, impartial and confidential support for students who require assistance and advice in addressing issues and concerns related to their academic careers. The office can be reached at 403-220-6420 or ombuds@ucalgary.ca

(<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/services/student-services/student-rights.html>).

Safewalk

The safewalk program provides volunteers to walk students safely to their destination anywhere on campus. This service is free and available 24 hrs/day, 365 days a year.

Call 403-220-5333.

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course with no "W" notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund** is **January 17th, 2014**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **January 20th, 2014**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **April 14th, 2014**.