



UNSW Course Outline

PSYC1023 Abnormal Psychology - 2024

Published on the 06 Sep 2024

General Course Information

Course Code : PSYC1023

Year : 2024

Term : Term 3

Teaching Period : T3

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 Test • Essay Skills • 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 Test • Essay Skills • 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 Test • Essay Skills • 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 Test • Essay Skills • 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 Skills

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System

Additional Course Information

Psychology Student Guide: The [School of Psychology Student Guide](#) contains School policies and procedures relevant for all students enrolled in undergraduate or Masters psychology

courses, such as:

- Attendance requirements
- Assignment submissions and returns
- Assessments
- Special consideration
- Student code of conduct
- Student complaints and grievances
- Equitable Learning Services
- Health and safety

It is expected that students familiarise themselves with the information contained in this guide

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Mid-Term Test Assessment Format: Individual	20%	Start Date: Available from 9am Friday Week 5 Due Date: 11:59pm Friday Week 5
Essay Skills Assessment Format: Individual Short Extension: Yes (1 day)	40%	Start Date: Week 4 Due Date: Typically due end of Week 8
Final Examination Assessment Format: Individual	40%	

Assessment Details

Mid-Term Test

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 test 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 test will cover all material presented in Weeks 1-3 and Week 5 including textbook readings. Marks and feedback will be available within 10 days after the completion of the test.

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.

Assessment Length

20 multiple-choice questions

Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable

Generative AI Permission Level

No Assistance

This assessment is designed for you to complete without the use of any generative AI. You are not permitted to use any generative AI tools, software or service to search for or generate information or answers.

For more information on Generative AI and permitted use please see [here](#).

Essay Skills

Assessment Overview

This task will develop and assess skills required for essay writing and will relate to topics broadly addressed in the course. It is typically due in Week 8. Further details will be released in Week 4. 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 (i.e. 10 days after the essay due date) will not receive a mark. Marks and feedback will be available within 10 days from the due date.

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.

Assessment Length

500 words

Submission notes

.doc or .docx format only please, no PDFs

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Generative AI Permission Level

Simple Editing Assistance

In completing this assessment, you are permitted to use standard editing and referencing functions in the software you use to complete your assessment. These functions are described below. You must not use any functions that generate or paraphrase passages of text or other media, whether based on your own work or not.

If your Convenor has concerns that your submission contains passages of AI-generated text or media, you may be asked to account for your work. If you are unable to satisfactorily demonstrate your understanding of your submission you may be referred to UNSW Conduct & Integrity Office for investigation for academic misconduct and possible penalties.

For more information on Generative AI and permitted use please see [here](#).

Final Examination

Assessment Overview

There will be an examination held online during the University examination period. The examination will include 80 multiple choice questions that you need to answer in 1 hour (+ 15 minutes reading time). The exam will cover all lecture material and textbook readings. Feedback on your exam performance is available after the course results are released via direct consultation with your Course Convenor.

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.

Assessment Length

80 multiple-choice questions

Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable

Generative AI Permission Level

No Assistance

This assessment is designed for you to complete without the use of any generative AI. You are not permitted to use any generative AI tools, software or service to search for or generate information or answers.

For more information on Generative AI and permitted use please see [here](#).

General Assessment Information

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 via myUNSW 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.

Grading Basis

Standard

Requirements to pass course

Achieve a composite mark of at least 50 or more out of 100.

Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 9 September - 15 September	Topic	Introduction to Psychopathology
	Lecture	Lecture 1: What is "abnormal"? Lecture 2: DSM classification and assessment Lecture 3: The who's who of mental health
	Reading	Chapter 1 (custom textbook pg 2 - 7); Chapter 2 (custom textbook pg 33 - 44; 47 - 54) Appendix (custom textbook pg 81 - 98) - N.B. Appendix is not examinable 26 pages; approx. 2.5 hrs
Week 2 : 16 September - 22 September	Topic	History of Psychopathology: The good, the bad and the ugly
	Lecture	Lecture 1: Early approaches to studying the mind Lecture 2: The 20th Century and beyond Lecture 3: The scientific method Lecture 4: From research to treatment
	Reading	Chapter 1 (custom pg 7 - 25) Chapter 2 (custom pg 44 - 46; 55 - 66) 34 pages; approx. 3.5 hrs
	Other	Optional Activity Group Discussion Point: Conditioning in everyday life
Week 3 : 23 September - 29 September	Topic	DNA to Society: Biological, psychological and social aspects
	Lecture	Lecture 1: Genetics Lecture 2: Neuroscience Lecture 3: Emotions, learning and cognition Lecture 4: The individual and society
	Reading	Chapter 2 (custom pg 67 - 74) Chapter 3 (custom pg 100 - 120; 125 - 133) 34 pages; approx. 3.5 hrs
Week 4 : 30 September - 6 October	Topic	Essay Week!
	Lecture	Lecture 1: Understanding Plagiarism Lecture 2: Paraphrasing and Summarizing (YouTube video) Lecture 3: Secondary Citation (YouTube video) N.B. This week's content is not examinable but it will help you to research and write your essay skills assessment.
	Reading	Chapters 4 - 9 N.B. This week's content is not examinable but it will help you to research and write your essay skills assessment.
Week 5 : 7 October - 13 October	Topic	Anxiety disorders
	Lecture	Lecture 1: What are anxiety disorders? Lecture 2: Models of specific phobias Lecture 3: Treating anxiety
	Reading	Chapter 3 (custom pg 123 - 124) Chapter 11 (custom pg 340 - 346; 357 - 362) 14 pages; approx. 1.5 hrs
	Assessment	Mid Term Test - Friday Week 5
Week 6 : 14 October - 20 October	Topic	Flex Week
Week 7 : 21 October - 27 October	Topic	Depressive Disorders
	Lecture	Lecture 1: What is depression? Lecture 2: Models of depression Lecture 3: Treating depression
	Reading	Chapter 3 (custom pg 122 - 123) Chapter 10 (depressive disorder sections) NB Suicide content (custom pg 326 - 322) is not examinable Approx. 2.5 hrs
Week 8 : 28 October - 3 November	Topic	Bipolar Disorders
	Lecture	Lecture 1: What is bipolar? Lecture 2: Models of bipolar Lecture 3: Treating bipolar
	Reading	Chapter 10 (bipolar disorder sections) Approx. 2 hrs NB Suicide content (custom pg 326 - 322) is not examinable
	Assessment	Essay Skills Assessment is typically due 11:59pm Sunday Week 8 (TBC)

Week 9 : 4 November - 10 November	Topic	Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
	Lecture	Lecture 1: What is OCD? Lecture 2: Models of OCD Lecture 3: Treating OCD
	Reading	Chapter 11 (custom pg 375 – 380; 384 - 385) 8 pages; approx. 1 hr
Week 10 : 11 November - 17 November	Topic	Substance use and abuse
	Lecture	Lecture 1: Substances and substance abuse Lecture 2: What causes substance abuse? Lecture 3: Treating substance abuse
	Reading	Chapter 12 (custom pg 396 – 427; 430) 33 pages; approx. 3.5 hrs

Attendance Requirements

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

Course Resources

Prescribed Resources

Content from the weekly readings will be on the Mid term test and Final examination

CP1245 - PSYC1023: Abnormal Psychology 1st Edition (custom eTextbook)

Gouldthorp/Bernstein/Roy/Cranney/Pooley

or

Essentials of Abnormal Psychology 8th Edition (7th Edition is also permitted)

Durand/Barlow/Hofmann

or

Abnormal Psychology: An Integrative Approach 8th Edition (7th Edition is also permitted)

Barlow/Durand/Hofmann

N.B. only one of these texts is required.

Additional Costs

The textbook readings will be on the Mid term test and Final examination. You will need to access the textbook either via the UNSW Library (High Use Reserve) or purchase your own copy.

Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Equitable Learning Services Contact	Primary Contact
	Natalie Rogers					No	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](#)