



## PSYC 3350/Abnormal Psychology

Jeanne M. Slattery, Ph.D.

**Class:** MWF 11am, 124 Harvey

**Student hours:** 232 Harvey: 9-10am & 12-1pm MW, 10-11am TH

Appointments are available throughout the day on Calendly or just drop by!

<https://calendly.com/jslattery176/30min>

**Zoom:** <https://pennwest-zoom.us/j/5588638289>

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**Office Phone:** (814) 393-2254

**Best way of getting me!** I generally read and respond to email quickly. No response in 24 hours? Try again; I missed it!

**Welcome!** I'm glad you're here! I want this place to be a safe place for people of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, sexual identities, races, religions, and other visible and invisible differences. Together, we can create a respectful, welcoming, and inclusive place for all of us to work and learn in.

I hope you will enjoy learning about abnormal psychology as much as I enjoy discussing these issues. I look forward to working with you this semester!

### What will I learn in this course?

**Catalog description:** *Surveys the most common behavior disorders across the lifespan including mood disorders, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, substance-related disorders, and schizophrenia. Ethical issues, sociocultural factors, diagnoses, causes, and treatment will be considered. (3 cr.)*

**What this means to me:** Many of us don't understand why people do things that don't make sense. In this course, we will explore psychological disorders, their causes, and their treatments, building a more sophisticated understanding of people experiencing problems, while acknowledging what we still don't know. We will be scientists, practitioners, and regular people as we seek to understand the science and experience of psychopathology. This is not a "therapy course," but we will also consider accepted treatment strategies for disorders, always emphasizing empathic, respectful treatment.

To do these things well, we will need to: (a) observe behavior carefully and objectively; (b) understand the behavior in context for that individual, setting and culture; (c) identify developmental and cultural norms and compare people's behavior to these; and (d) compare behavior with some overarching definition of mental health. Why? Sometimes it "makes sense" to be depressed. Sometimes it is "abnormal" to react with laughter.

As we explore these issues, we will examine major controversies in the field. Among these: What are the advantages and disadvantages of using labels? Can people with psychiatric problems be held "responsible" for their behavior? Why are people of one gender, age, race, or ethnicity more likely to be diagnosed with some disorders than others? Why have diagnoses been added or deleted from the DSM across time?

*How glorious it is—and also how painful—to be an exception. —Louis Charles Alfred de Musset*

### What are our class goals?

Taking General Psychology or Psychology of Personal Growth is a requirement for entering this course, knowledge gained in other Psychology courses will be useful, but is not required. This semester we will:

1. Use basic psychological terminology, concepts, and theories in psychology to explain abnormal behavior. (mc and case study sections, What is abnormal paper)
2. Apply DSM-5 criteria to recognize symptom clusters and diagnose cases. (case study section, papers)

3. Describe how sociocultural context can shape conclusions about behavior. (mc and case study sections, case analysis paper)
4. Identify key ethical principles governing psychological practice for the protection of clients and practitioners (mc test)
5. Build career skills consistent with success in graduate school and the workplace and take steps toward making your career goals happen. (résumé)

### How will we meet these outcomes?

**Text.** We will use Kearney and Trull's *Abnormal Psychology and Life: A Dimensional Approach* (3rd ed.) to meet these goals. I strongly recommend that you bring your text to class each day once we begin talking about the disorders. *Abnormal Psychology and Life* is available as a rental, in hardcover, and as an e-book. While the e-book is less expensive, not everyone reads well on a tablet; choose that option which works best for you. **I have a copy on reserve at the front desk in the library.**

You will also be reading a memoir (see the list on D2L). These can often be found in your library or on the Libby app, which accesses kindle books through your library. You can read these for two or three weeks at no cost.

**D2L.** This syllabus, study guides, grades and other useful information are available on D2L. Please check D2L regularly; I grade rapidly, leave considerable feedback on assignments, and frequently post updates and reminders under Announcements.

PowerPoints are available on D2L and roughly outline where we are going. I will not talk about every slide, will spend more time on some than others, and will talk about things that are not on slides. I would choose to print them out and bring them to class, but do what makes sense to you. You can find these and additional readings and videos in each chapter's folder on the Content tab in D2L.

**Pro Tip:** You can use your computer to take notes, but people are also more likely to be tempted to multitask when their computers are open – which few people do successfully. If you use a computer or other device, please close or minimize your browser and apps.

**Papers.** It's one thing to memorize definitions or apply theory on a multiple choice exam; it's something else to begin to apply these in more complicated scenarios. The two papers in this class give you this opportunity. They ask you to (a) consider what we mean when we say something is normal, abnormal, or healthy, and to (b) consider a diagnosis and the justification for a diagnosis in a memoir. A list of possible memoirs is posted on D2L.

Papers should include citations and references, and be written in APA format. Need help? Check the Writing module on D2L, contact the Writing Center, or come see me!

**Quizzes and tests.** We will have three tests covering the text, lectures and discussions, handouts, and other materials. Tests will have both a multiple-choice section and a series of case studies to help you apply ideas from the course. Quizzes will help you prepare for test, although your scores on quizzes will not directly contribute to your course grade. At least 10% of material on later tests will come from earlier chapters, as there will be themes that we keep returning to over the course of the semester. This “interleaving” – mixing it up – strengthens your learning and recall (Lang, 2016). Don't just set “old material” aside, mix it up!

**Pro Tip:** In Fall 2021, students who considered whether they were understanding the material they were reading (metacognition), marked what they did not know, looked up terms, studied more, read the chapters regularly, and asked for help performed better on tests. Try these things yourself!

**Career skills.** Explore career options and prepare for your future throughout your college career. We will do this in several ways this semester, but most clearly with your résumé, which will help you consider where you are going and assess your readiness for the next steps. You can revise and resubmit your résumé if you are unhappy with your initial score. Late cancellations and no shows will earn a 10% penalty. Career Services will send me – and you – your rubric after your meeting with your career coach.

When I am talking about careers, however, I am not just talking résumés, but the whole kit and kaboodle. NACE (2021) has identified eight Career Readiness



Competencies for college students entering the workforce. Consider how you might communicate these to prospective employers.

Note *other assignments will help you build many of these skills this semester while working on other assignments, too!*

**Pro Tip:** You will get the most out of assignments when you make them your own. What are your goals? What do you want to learn? Where do you need help? (This tip applies to any assignment, not just your résumé.)

**Class attendance and participation.** We're a community: your presence matters to the success of this course and to your learning. Your active involvement enriches your learning and that of your classmates. As a result, your fellow students and I expect you will come to class regularly, read the material carefully before class, actively help your classmates learn, and listen to your classmates' questions and answers. I'll do the same.

As class participation is an important part of this class, you will gain up to 10 pts. if you attend regularly (3 or fewer absences other than university-sanctioned events, athletics, or the military) and are active, thoughtful, and involved in our class. *Ask questions and respond to mine.* Your free absences include migraines, sick children, car problems, funerals. In other words, use absences wisely. Coming late or leaving early may cause you to be marked absent. If I am ill or believe I have COVID, I will post under Announcements what we will do that day (either an activity or a Zoom link).

**Pro Tip:** Please don't text in class. The research suggests that even having your phone out interferes with your learning and that of your classmates (Ward et al., 2017).

### Can things be turned in late?

Late assignments – when accepted late – will receive a 10% penalty. Make-ups for in-class tests can be arranged up until the date of the test. If you miss an test without talking to me beforehand, you will receive a 10% penalty. This is fair to people who took the test or completed the assignment on time and who, presumably, would have performed better with several extra days' preparation. Bottom line, punctuality is an important and valued skill in the real world.

### How much time should I set aside to work on this course?

For every credit a course is worth, federal law requires a student to spend 3 hours each week working on the course. For a 3-credit course, that would be 9 hours, including time in class. Since we're in class 2.5 hours each week, plan on spending 6.5 hours outside of class working on your assignments. Five 3-credit classes is considered a full-time load. Since each 3-credit class requires 9 hours of time each week, 5 classes times 9 hours each equals 45 hours per week.

### Let's talk ethics...

Many of you plan on entering one of the helping professions. Given this—and our content—it is especially important for us to begin practicing ethical behavior. This means considering when Person First language or Identity language is appropriate (more on this in our first week of the semester), protecting people's privacy and talking about them in respectful ways, and listening to and respecting other ideas. This doesn't mean that you need to agree with everyone

else—you may often disagree—but you need to find ways to respectfully and professionally disagree (e.g., using good verbal and nonverbal listening skills, backing up your opinions with strong evidence).

In turn, I promise to listen carefully, encourage critical thinking about the topics we discuss, and work toward a safe, thoughtful, and respectful classroom. I will disguise the identity of the people in my case material and maintain their privacy, ask for my clients' consent before I talk about them in class, consider other explanations of symptoms, and stay current in my reading of the literature.

### What about plagiarism?

All work submitted through this course should be the student's original work, generated for the express purpose of completing the requirements of this course. All papers submitted in this course may be screened for originality using plagiarism detection software. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students should be familiar with the following definitions:

**Cheating.** The use of unauthorized materials, information, ideas, study aids, etc., in any academic exercise. May include, but is not limited to: copying answers from another student's exam; using notes, books, or other resources for an exam when not expressly permitted to do so; using electronic devices when not expressly permitted to do so; fraudulently obtaining or sharing an exam; submitting a term paper or other assignment written by someone else; plagiarizing the work of others; submitting the same term paper or other assignment to more than one instructor without obtaining prior permission to do so; or having someone else take an online course or online exam for you.

**Plagiarism.** Representing another's work as your own without proper credit and/or citation is plagiarism. When you submit work that includes others' words, ideas, or data, the source of that information must be acknowledged through complete, accurate and specific references, and if verbatim statements are included, through quotation marks or other accepted citation practices. This includes your use of AI such as ChatGPT, which can be used for brainstorming but not to write your responses.

Additional violations of academic integrity may be found in PennWest's Policy AC059: [Academic Integrity](#), which also includes potential sanctions faced by the student for violations of the policy.

**Pro Tip:** Prevent plagiarism by tracking your use of others' words and ideas, but also by checking your work in Turnitin (there's a video in D2L to help you). If you have time before the due date and identify a problem, you can revise and resubmit. There is a 10% penalty for revisions after the due date.

### What is PennWest University's policy on responding to sexual assault?

Pennsylvania Western University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to comply with the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the university's commitment to offering supportive measures in accordance with the new regulations issued under Title IX, PennWest requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the university's Title IX Coordinator, Amy Salsgiver [[salsgiver@pennwest.edu](mailto:salsgiver@pennwest.edu)]. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a university-approved research project. **Faculty members are obligated to report sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred to the person designated in the university's Protection and Supervision of Minors on Campus Policy.**

Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence are available on the [Office of Social Equity](#) website.

**Bottom line:** If someone hurts you, there are people who will listen to and help you. If you are able to do so, come talk to me after class or during my office hours. If you can't, send me an email. I will support you and help you get the support you need in whatever ways I can. I care. PennWest University cares.

### If you need accommodations for a documented disability

PennWest University offers services to meet the accommodation needs of students with many types of disabilities. The Office for Students with Disabilities provides services to students based upon documentation of a disability and a request for accommodations based on this disability. Please refer to PennWest's [Reasonable Accommodations for Students with](#)

[Disabilities Policy](#) for additional information. This policy complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

### What will help me do well in this class?

I want you to be successful this semester. Come to me with questions, go to the Writing Center, use the resources posted on the Content tab, or talk to your teammates. Asking for help – and using it – is a strength rather than a weakness. *Like any class, the more you put into our course, the more you will get out!*

- **Put time and energy into this course.** For a 3000-level course, plan on spending a minimum of 2-3 hours outside of class for every hour you spend in class, an additional 6-9 hours on this course each week.
- **Attend class and participate.** Attending class is essential to doing well. We will discuss ideas not in your book, see videos of people with the disorders, and discuss the disorders, which will make the material come alive, help you understand the disorders more effectively, and develop your empathy for others.
- **Read the text *before* coming to class.** Our class time will be lecture/discussion based. When you read the chapter first you'll have a better understanding of class material, and you will get more out of class. In fact, McGuire (2015) says that reviewing 10 minutes before and after every class can make a big difference!
- **Quiz yourself.** The quizzes will help you become familiar with the test format, practice the material – and succeed! I don't give you the answers, because thinking about errors seems to improve understanding (Lang, 2017).
- **Get involved!** As you read the text or listen to class discussions, get involved! Relate ideas to real world examples, including class videos and movies you watch. Wonder about what puts people at risk, as well as what makes others resilient. Actively read by thinking about, applying, and using the material. Evaluate your understanding of the ideas.
- **Get together with other students to study.** Helping someone else learn is an excellent way to learn yourself (McGuire, 2015). And, if you get lost along the way, it's helpful to have folks who can help you out. Besides, it's fun and can increase your motivation for the course.

### What about grades?

You can determine your grade by comparing points earned with the following scale (491 pts available). I've also included our course learning outcomes (CLOs), which you can find on the first page of this syllabus. Plus and minus grades will be given for the bottom and top 2% of a grade scale (e.g., 88 and 89% will earn a B+, 90 and 91% an A-).

Assignment	Points	Total	CLO
Quizzes (14)	0	0	1, 2, 3, 4
Profile picture	2	2	
Résumé (3)	5, 25, 10 (bonus)	30 + 10 ec	5
Test review	10	10	5
Papers	50, 100	150	1, 2, 3, 4
Tests (3)	100	300	1, 2, 3, 4

Grade	Points earned
A	442 and up
B	393 - 441
C	344 - 392
D	295 - 343
F	294 and down

Because your participation matters – to your learning and the class process – you will gain up to 10 pts. if you attend regularly (3 or fewer absences) and are active, thoughtful, and involved in our class. Ask questions and respond to mine!

I would be happy if our class received only As and Bs. and will be happy to help you when you need it. If you want more help, make an appointment with the Student Success Center (x2249). If you have test anxiety or if this course raises issues that you want to work on, call the Counseling Center (x2255).

**Tentative schedule of dates, readings, and assignments**

Dates	Topic, Readings and Resources	Assignments
<b>Unit 1: Setting the stage (and our first set of disorders)</b>		
8/21-8//25	<i>What is abnormal behavior?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapter 1</li> <li>▪ Think people first</li> <li>▪ Balt (2011)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 8/25: Post your profile pic in D2L (2 pts)</li> <li>▪ Chapter 1 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
8/28	<i>Are there other ways to see psychopathology?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapter 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Watch <i>One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest</i> or <i>Atypical</i> to begin thinking about what "abnormal" means</li> <li>▪ Chapter 2 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
8/30	<i>What puts people at risk of psychopathology? What prevents it?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapter 3</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 8/29: Take the ACE Survey</li> <li>▪ Chapter 3 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
9/6-9/11	<i>How can we assess behavior, diagnose it, and perform research about it?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapter 4</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>No class on Labor Day (9/4)!</b></li> <li>▪ 9/8: Email your résumé draft to <a href="mailto:nobili@pennwest.edu">nobili@pennwest.edu</a> (with header "PSYC 3350 draft"). (5 pts)</li> <li>▪ 9/8: What is abnormal? paper (50 pts.)</li> <li>▪ Chapter 4 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
9/13-9/22	<i>Anxiety, OCD, and trauma: Are these adaptive responses to a crazy world? How does normal differ from abnormal anxiety?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapters 5 &amp; 2, pp. 36-41 (behavioral and cognitive models)</li> <li>▪ Gorman (2022)</li> <li>▪ 9/15: Bridgett Nobili &amp; Abraxas on résumés</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 9/15: We will meet with Bridgett and Abraxas over Zoom: <a href="https://pennwest-edu.zoom.us/j/8011290595">https://pennwest-edu.zoom.us/j/8011290595</a>. Have a good draft of your résumé available.</li> <li>▪ 9/20: Test 1, both mc and cases (Ch. 1-5, focus on psychoanalytic, behavioral, cognitive, &amp; humanistic models in Ch. 2) (100 pts.)</li> <li>▪ Chapter 5 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
<b>Unit 2: The disorders</b>		
9/25-9/27	<i>Somatoform &amp; dissociative disorders: Why separate from our feelings, thoughts, body?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapter 6</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 9/24: Take the PILL</li> <li>▪ Chapter 6 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
9/29-10/9	<i>Depression: Why depression? Why some people rather than others? Why women more than men?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapters 7 &amp; 2 (cognitive &amp; biological models)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 9/29: Test Review: WWYDD? (10 pts)</li> <li>▪ <i>Have you chosen your memoir yet and begun reading?</i></li> <li>▪ 10/2: Send your résumé to <a href="mailto:nobili@pennwest.edu">nobili@pennwest.edu</a> (with header "PSYC 3350 résumé"). Bridgett will send both of us your rubric (25 pts)</li> <li>▪ <b>No class 10/6 – Midsemester break!</b></li> <li>▪ Chapter 7 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
10/11 - 10/13	<i>Eating disorders: What is the role of culture?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapters 8 &amp; 2 (sociocultural model)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapter 8 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
10/16 - 10/25	<i>Substance abuse: Why more men than women?</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapters 9 &amp; 2 (risk, sociocultural model)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chapter 9 Quiz (opt.)</li> <li>▪ 10/25: Test 2, mc and cases (Chapters 6-9, plus cognitive, biological, and sociocultural models in Chapter 2) (100 pts.)</li> </ul>

<b>Unit 3: More disorders (and a quick overview of psychotherapy)</b>		
<b>10/27-11/1</b>	<p><i>Personality disorders: Why is approaching the world flexibly helpful? Why gender differences?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapters 10 &amp; 2 (risk &amp; sociocultural model)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review the ACE survey</li> <li>10/26: Take the Big Five personality assessment</li> <li>10/30: Update your résumé based on Bridgett's feedback. Post her feedback, your summary of her feedback, <u>and</u> your revised résumé <b>in the Dropbox</b> (10 pts. extra credit)</li> <li>Chapter 10 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
<b>11/3-11/8</b>	<p><i>Schizophrenia: How do biological and systemic factors interact?</i></p> <p>Chapters 12 &amp; 2 (biological model)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11/3: Case summary and analysis paper (100 pts)</li> <li>Chapter 12 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
<b>11/10 - 11/15</b>	<p><i>Childhood disorders: What puts children at risk?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapters 13 &amp; 2 (risk &amp; behavioral model)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider watching <i>Crip Camp</i> (Netflix) to think about what you can do to empower clients</li> <li>Chapter 13 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
<b>11/17 - 11/21</b>	<p><i>Problems with aging and the nervous system: When and why? Is dementia inevitable?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapters 14 &amp; 2 (risk &amp; biological model)</li> <li>Jim &amp; Geri Taylor, Fighting Alzheimer's Disease with Courage and Resilience (especially 11-12:30 minutes)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Class meets on T11/21, but not W11/22. Happy Thanksgiving! (I'm grateful for you!)</b></li> <li>Chapter 14 Quiz (opt.)</li> </ul>
<b>11/29 - 12/1</b>	<p><i>How can you become a good consumer of psychotherapy?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapters 15 &amp; 2 (humanistic model)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chapter 15 Quiz (opt.)</li> <li>W12/6, 10am: Test 3, mc and cases (Chapters 10, 12-15, plus sociocultural, behavioral, biological, and humanistic models in Chapter 2) (100 pts.)</li> </ul>