

Psychology 3150 sec. 02
Abnormal Psychology
Spring, 2020
2:00 – 3:40 TR (this means Tuesday and Thursday)
Nursing 121

Instructor: Dr. Mark Kunkel

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Office Hours: By appointment (via e-mail or voice mail)

Course description and objectives:

We will consider various definitions of “abnormal” in the psychology of human experience, and explore diagnostic and classification schemes pertaining to each. Primarily the course will focus on two related sets of data: (a) agreed-upon descriptions and diagnostic criteria for various “abnormal” conditions, and (b) first-person chronicling of human experience as related to (but not contained by) these diagnoses. I hope that thereby we will explore both the map (the diagnostic guidelines) and the territory (the lived experience) and not commit the common mistaking of the former for the latter. Together we will aspire to appreciation for human experience and its variations. How do we struggle? Why don’t more of us struggle, more severely? How can we struggle and suffer **better**?

Texts:

Kunkel, M. A. (2018) *Introduction to introduction to general psychology*. Free, on-line text: <https://sites.google.com/westga.edu/intropsych>

I am immensely proud of, and grateful for, this text, and I hope it will be a true gift to you. You’ll find references to relevant chapters for readings in the tentative schedule that follows. And in our notes (you’ll see) I will also distribute LOTS of internet references and videos and demonstrations and supplementary readings and other things, via CourseDen.

and

LeCroy, C. W., and Holschuh, J. (eds.), (2012). *First person accounts of mental illness and recovery*. New York: Wiley.

Available most easily here:

<https://www.amazon.com/Person-Accounts-Mental-Illness-Recovery/dp/0470444525>

** Please order this inexpensive and good text at your soonest convenience.

Supplementary readings as assigned...(see CourseDen).

The readings, it turns out, will be only one of two primary data sources for the class. My perspective and preference on this point will be quite clear to you, I hope, after you read the *Sacred Shapings* chapter. We cannot only work in the hand of theory and

conceptualization, or hold only subjectivity, but we must cultivate an ambidexterity of theory and experience.

The readings, from the text and others that you and I uncover along the way, will give us an opportunity to attend to the “textbook” portrayal of human struggle and victory, and will introduce us to the rich and kind and precise language of clinical description and explanation around various categories of struggle and wellness.

The other emphasis of the class, and the other data source for our tour of struggles, will involve echoing, amplifying, and celebrating the generous and courageous perspectives of those struggling with life in various categories of suffering. We’ll do a lot of this each time we gather, and you will be doing some of this work individually in preparation for your “guest expertise” around selected topics. As we get acquainted deeply with the voices of those who suffer, or suffer better or worse, our class interactions will be much the richer as a result.

Class Activities and requirements:

Because we will be drawing on the human experience as the primary data source for the class, it is essential that each class member (including of course me as the instructor) attends and participates. This class will be mostly, it turns out, about **us**. *I will not waste your time, or mine, by summarizing the textbook (I wrote one of them!), but I will do everything possible to create the sort of classroom gathering that you will not want to miss.* Our meetings will include some organizational lecture material, but for the most part will be devoted to a meeting of minds around the intriguing issues raised in our readings and their reflections in our lives. Additional course activities will include:

1. **Participation:** Please prepare for each class by doing all the assigned readings, taking time to reflect on what is read, getting on the internet websites to which I will refer you, and mostly paying attention to your curiosity, its heart and soul and depth. Then, for each class period, **beginning with our first meeting on January 7th**, write a question on a 3X5 card that relates to stuff you’re thinking about. The questions ought to emerge from your readings and your thoughtful dwellings in the material, and I’ll try to answer them all during our gatherings each day. I’ll keep track of these questions, integrate them in our class discussions, and give you some participation credit at the end. More importantly, you’ll have the opportunity to get some of your questions answered along the way. I cannot accept tardy questions, or make-up questions for missed classes (you are hereby authorized to miss as many classes as I do, and I have missed precisely one, since 1983). If you are not here I will assume that you are somewhere else, and we’ll miss you. Through participation and attendance you may earn up to **50** points. I will not accept questions not written on a 3X5 card, with your name clearly written in the upper right-hand corner of the same side on which you ask the question. You’ll give these to me and the other teachers at the beginning of class and we’ll spend some time on a few. We’ll keep track of them and give you credit; more importantly, this process will give us as a class a chance to follow-up on what’s interesting to you. Up to 50 points of participation credit (a half of an exam, if you’re keeping track) is available. That is, if you want to make a good grade in the class, come to class and turn in a card every day.
2. **Guest expertise** in which each of you will help facilitate our discussion of selected topics. Following your review of the tentative meeting schedule, and lots of homework on your part, you will be asked to select one area of human struggle in

which to “specialize.” Read the texts (especially the “first person accounts” one) and your supplementary sources and gather any other material (films? song lyrics? paintings?) that grabs your interest or that might be helpful for the class, and feel free to meet with any of your teachers with any questions. When the time comes to discuss your chosen topic in class you will be expected to contribute to and facilitate class discussion. This presentation will be worth 50 points (another half test worth!) and will be graded generously.

- Examinations.** We will give three exams during the semester (the last one of these will be during the final examination period). You can find a “sample exam of mine” on CourseDen... take a look? Each exam will cover the material in the units preceding the test, **and will be based largely on what we learn in class together and how we bolster your external explorations**, the questions coming from our notes and websites and other class sources such as the text chapters. You won’t be able to do well on the examinations without coming to class (that’s the point, right?). Each exam will be worth 100 points. In my effort to accommodate your varied approaches to learning and meaning-making, we will use various question formats (e.g., multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer, essay). *You’ll find the tests to be very much like the class itself.* If you need to miss an exam for some justifiable and documented reason (such as serious illness or a catastrophic personal or familial event), you’ll need to let us know about that formally via e-mail or telephone **before the exam, and you’ll need to arrange for a make-up test before our next class meeting**....a huge mutual hassle. So, **make-up exams are strongly discouraged except in the most dire circumstances and will not be given except as outlined above.** Come to class and take the tests, okay? You’ll need a clear head, good heart, #2 pencil, and Scantron Form 229633 (it’s the large one with 100 items on the front in pink-orange ink....buy extras so you can pass them along for good karma on test day).
- Topical paper.** In ten double-spaced, 11-point font, word-processed pages or so we would like you to attempt an integration of the various data sources for the class. That is, in your chosen area of guest expertise, or perhaps in another area of interest that has been piqued by the class, you will summarize and critique the diagnostic and autobiographical perspectives you have read, and cast each within the context of the course material as a whole and of our classroom interactions. You will also want to evaluate the relation between the lived experience of life in your chosen category (e.g., what we term “depression”) and the diagnostic description of life in this category. We will discuss this assignment at greater length in class—the paper will be worth 50 points as well. (see the guidelines on CourseDen).

Evaluation: I will make every effort to ensure that your grades reflect adequately the quality of your work and the breadth of your involvement in the course. I’ll also give you periodic feedback to help you calculate your grade. A summary of course activities, points, and corresponding points follows:

Participation	50
Exams (three, 100 points each)	300
Guest Expertship	50
Topical Paper	50

450 total points possible

You may compute your grade along the way as I will at the end, using the customary 90/80/70 (=A/B/C) scale.

Exceptional circumstances: We support and honor various gifts and challenges people bring to academic work. Any student with a recognized disability requiring accommodations of any sort should feel free to contact me and we will discuss your circumstances and how to accommodate (it comes from the same word as comfortable, and commodious: it means to make room for!) them. Please see also the material in this link, considered part of the syllabus for the course:

<https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php>

Alas, it has become necessary to speak specifically to **academic dishonesty**. The UWG *Student Handbook* has a detailed and helpful section on how to do our work with integrity and care. Check it out, please. Here is this excerpt:

The Honor Code

At the University of West Georgia, we believe that academic and personal integrity are based upon honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility.

Students at West Georgia assume responsibility for upholding the Honor Code. West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to plagiarism*, cheating*, fabrications*, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.

Definitions:

Cheating: 'using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids'

Fabrication: 'falsification or unauthorized invention of any information or citation'

Plagiarism: 'representing the words or ideas of another as one's own. Direct quotations must be indicated and ideas of another must be appropriately acknowledged'

Examples of Academic Dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Submitting the same work, or essentially the same work, for more than one course without explicitly obtaining permission from all instructors. A student must disclose when a paper or project builds on work completed earlier in his or her (*or their*, italics mine) academic career.
- Requesting an academic benefit based on false information or deception. This includes requesting an extension of time, a better grade, or a recommendation from an instructor.
- Making any changes (including adding material or erasing material), without the expressed permission of the instructor, on any test paper, problem set, or class assignment being submitted for re-grade.
- Willfully damaging the efforts or work of other students.
- Stealing, defacing, or damaging academic facilities or materials.
- Collaborating with other students planning or engaging in any form of academic misconduct.
- Submitting any academic work under someone else's name other than your own.

Here is a very helpful guide prepared by the English Department on how to avoid plagiarism (using the words and/or ideas of another without giving proper credit).

In short:

- Do your own work.
- Don't borrow or steal others' ideas and pass them off as your own.
- DON'T cheat on papers or exams. In this class you will have all of the information you need to do well without resorting to dishonesty.

I will reluctantly but firmly assign a zero for any assignment in which academic dishonesty is evident. Please be aware too that "...the University of West Georgia maintains records of plagiarized assignments and those who prepare and/or submit them." Just don't, okay?

***Tentative Schedule:**
Abnormal Psychology
Spring, 2020

Tentative Schedule

The topical schedule that follows reflects my initial sense of how I might be helpful to you in (a) grounding our discussion about various psychological disorders in relevant theories of health and struggle, (b) spending some time on models of diagnosis and classification (one or two meetings), and (c) acquainting you with various categories of disorders (most of the semester, really).

<u>Date(s)</u>	<u>Topical Question(s)</u>	<u>Reading(s)</u>
1/7	<i>What is suffering? What is wellness? 3 Ds...</i>	<i>Sacred Shapings</i> Kunkel Ch. 16 L&C, pp. 14-19
1/9	<i>The T: Theory, suffering, and wellness</i>	Kunkel Ch. 1, 2
1/14	<i>Stories about suffering: Biology</i>	Kunkel Ch. 3 CourseDen
1/16	<i>Stories about suffering: Behaviorism</i>	Kunkel Ch. 4 CourseDen
1/21 1/23	<i>Stories about suffering: Psychoanalysis</i>	Kunkel Ch. 5 CourseDen
1/28	<i>Stories about suffering: H/E/T</i>	Kunkel Ch. 6 CourseDen
1/30	<i>Stories about suffering: Critical, Cultural</i>	Kunkel Ch. 7 CourseDen
2/4	<i>Assessment and Diagnosis</i>	CourseDen
2/6	Exam 1	
2/11 2/13	<i>Anxiety sufferings, Guest Expertships</i>	L&C Ch. 3
2/18 2/20	<i>Mood sufferings, Guest Expertships</i>	L&C Ch. 2
2/25 2/27	<i>Somataform sufferings, Guest Expertships</i>	L&C Ch. 9
3/3 3/5	<i>Substance Sufferings, Guest Expertships</i>	L&C Ch. 5
3/10	<i>Sexual Sufferings, Guest Expertships</i>	L&C Ch. 6
3/12	Exam 2	
3/17 3/19	Spring Break	

Tentative schedule (continued)

3/24	3/26	<i>Eating sufferings, Guest Expertships</i>	L&C Ch. 6
3/31	4/2	<i>The Schizophrenias, Guest Expertships</i>	L&C Ch. 1
4/7	4/9	<i>Personality sufferings, Guest Expertships</i>	L&C Ch. 4
4/14	4/16	<i>Developmental sufferings, Guest Exp.</i>	L&C Ch. 13
4/21	4/23	<i>Resilience and Catching Up</i>	

5/5 **Final** (*tentatively scheduled, the university's exam calendar, for 2:00*)

* Our schedule is "tentative" because we'll follow the path of our interest and bliss. "Life doesn't happen along interstates, it's against the law" (William Least Heat Moon).