



PSYC 431-L01

Current Issues in Psychopathology

Fall 2013

<b>Instructor:</b>	Shervin Vakili, Ph.D.	<b>Lecture Location:</b>	SS 012
<b>Phone:</b>	403-836-1967	<b>Lecture Days/Time:</b>	M 17:00-19:45
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**Office:**

**Office Hours:** After class 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 fields of abnormal and clinical psychology as a basis for discussion and debate. Course format will be lectures with a strong expectation for student involvement in class discussions. Students will be expected to engage in a formal presentation/debate for this course

**Prerequisites**

Psyc 200 and 201 or Psyc 205 – Principles of Psychology I & II  
Psyc 312 – Experimental Design and Quantitative Methods for Psychology  
Psyc 385 - Abnormal Psychology

**Required Text**

Halgin, R. P. (2012). Taking sides: Clashing views in abnormal psychology (Seventh edition). McGraw Hill, Iowa. The text is available for purchase at the U of C bookstore

**Attendance**

Exam content will be based on the assigned readings from the textbook, and on any topic covered during lecture, this includes class presentations by your peers. This is a very compressed course; it is unlikely that students will be able to do well in this course if they miss lectures. Changes in the syllabus are *probable* at the discretion of the instructor, due to the fact that the schedule typically gets adjusted after students sign up for their debates, and if students miss classes being up-to-date on new deadlines and/or material is entirely their responsibility. If you must be absent, please arrange to get notes from other classmates. Lecture notes will be posted on the blackboard AFTER each lecture. Students are allowed to audio-tape record my lectures for this course.

**Evaluation**

Grades for the mid-term, presentation, and final examination will be combined as raw scores (out of 30, 35, and 35 respectively) to come up with a grade out of 100.

1. 30% of your mark will be based on a mid-term exam scheduled during class time. The exam will consist of short answer, essay, and multiple-choice questions.
2. 35% of your mark is based on a class presentation/debate. A team of 2 people will debate another team of 2 people on a contentious issue in abnormal or clinical psychology. Detailed information on the debate format and expectations will be provided on BlackBoard.  
A position paper must be submitted at the time of the presentation and will contribute to the debate grade. Late papers will result in a loss of 10% on the overall debate grade; late papers will not be accepted after the final exam date.
3. 35% of your mark is based on a final 2-hour exam scheduled by the Registrar during the final examination period. The exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions from the class presentations and lectures.

### **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**

Ideally in table format with date of class, topics to be covered, and chapters/readings to be read. Due dates for tests/exams and assignments should be included in this schedule as well.

Date	Topic / Readings	Readings
M Sept 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Course overview. Discussion of debate topics and debate format. Choosing of debate teams.</li> <li>➤ Should DSM-V have included video game addiction as a new category?</li> <li>➤ <b>Lectures begin</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>[Halgin, Issue 9]</b></p>
M Sept 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Debate Teams announce and get approval for topics (come prepared with two topics).</li> <li>➤ Presentation tips (or how not to be anxious when presenting)</li> <li>➤ Is alcoholism a disease?</li> </ul>	<p><b>[Halgin Issue 8]</b></p> <p><b>Leshner, A. (1997). Addiction is a brain disease, and it matters. <i>Science</i>, 28(3), 45-47.</b></p> <p><b>[Chapter 1: Why Addiction is Not a Disease. In Peele (1989). <i>Diseasing of America; Addiction treatment out of control.</i> (pp.1-29). Lexington Books, Toronto (class handout)</b></p>

F Sept 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b><i>Last day to drop full courses (Multi-term) and Fall Term half courses.No refunds for full courses (Multi-term) or Fall Term half courses after this date.</i></b></li> </ul>	
M Sept 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Should individuals with Anorexia have the right to refuse life sustaining treatment?</li> <li>➤ Are blocked and recovered memories valid?</li> <li>➤ <b><i>Last day to add or swap full courses (Multi-term) and Fall Term half courses.Last day for change of registration from audit to credit or credit to audit.</i></b></li> </ul>	[Halgin, Issue 13]
F Sept 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b><i>Fee payment deadline for Fall Term full and half courses.</i></b></li> </ul>	
M Sept 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Is Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder a real Disorder?</li> <li>➤ Projective Assessment techniques, theory and application (TAT, House/Tree/Person, Rorschach). Can inkblots be used to assess personality?</li> <li>➤</li> </ul>	<p>[Halgin, Issue 1]</p> <p>“What’s wrong with this picture?” Lilienfeld, Wood &amp; Garb. Online: <a href="http://www.psychologicalscience.org/newsresearch/publications/journals/sa1_2.pdf">http://www.psychologicalscience.org/newsresearch/publications/journals/sa1_2.pdf</a></p>
M Oct 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>***Midterm Exam***</b></li> </ul>	
M Oct 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b><i>Thanksgiving Day, University closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.</i></b></li> </ul>	Turkey
M Oct 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Are Prozac and Similar Antidepressants Safe &amp; Effective? <b>*** Debate 1***</b></li> </ul>	
M Oct 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Is forced treatment of mentally ill individuals justifiable?</li> <li>➤ <b>*** Debate 2***</b></li> </ul>	[Halgin, Issue 17]
M Nov 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What is abnormal Behaviour? How good is our current classification system?</li> <li>➤ <b>** Debate 3 **</b></li> </ul>	

	➤ <b>** Debate 4 **</b>	
Nov 9-12	➤ <b>Reading Days. No lectures.</b>	
M Nov 11	➤ <b>Remembrance Day (Observed). University Closed (except Taylor Family Digital Library, Law, Medical, Gallagher and Business Libraries). No lectures.</b>	
M Nov 18	➤ Is Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) ethical? ➤ <b>** Debate 5 **</b>	
M Nov 25	➤ <b>** Debate 6 **</b> ➤ <b>** Debate 7 **</b> ➤ <b>** Debate 8 **</b>	
M Dec 2	➤ Is pornography harmful to society? ➤ <b>** Debate 9 **</b>	[Halgin, Issue 10]
F Dec 6	➤ <b>Fall Term Lectures End. Last day to withdraw with permission from Fall Term half courses.</b>	
M Dec 9	<b>Final exam</b> – (scheduled by Registrar, date may change)	
Dec 9-19	➤ <b>Fall Term Exam Period.</b>	

### 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 **Dec 6, 2013**

### **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](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca)

**Student Union Faculty Rep.:** Phone: 403-220-3913

[socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca)

### **Student Ombudsman's Office**

The Office of the Student Ombuds 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](mailto: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 **September 20, 2013**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **September 23, 2013**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **December 6, 2013**.