

PSY 303 Adult Psychopathology
Section 04: Tues/Thurs 11:30-12:45 PM, MAK D1123
Section 03: Tues/Thurs 1:00-2:15 PM, MAK D1117
Section 05: Tues/Thurs 2:30-3:45 PM, MAK D1209
Fall 2025

Instructor: Mary Bower Russa, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: 12-1 AM Monday, and 2-3 PM Wednesday.

You may stop by at any time during my office hours and I will be happy to talk with you. If you wish to meet with me and are unable to come during office hours, please let me know so that I can arrange another time to meet with you. Email is also a good way to reach me, and remote office hours are available upon request (email me and I will send you a link).

If there is any student in this class who has special needs because of learning, physical or other disability, please contact me and Disability Support Resources (DSR) at 616-331-2490. If you have a disability and think you will need assistance evacuating this classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make me aware so I can develop a plan to assist you.

Text: Durand, V.M & Barlow, D.H. (2019). **Essentials of Abnormal Psychology** (8th edition). Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.

Other Sources: Packback (electronic discussion board platform). See information at the end of this syllabus.

Description: This course is intended as an overview of Abnormal Psychology for advanced undergraduate students. Introductory Psychology (PSY 101) is a prerequisite for taking this course. The course will provide a description and analysis of a wide range of adult problems for which people may seek professional treatment (via counselors, psychiatrists, or clinical psychologists). Special emphasis will be placed on understanding the complex interplay of biological, cognitive, and social/cultural factors that may lead to the development of these various types of problems. Evidence based treatments will also be discussed. Because this course focuses on problems of adulthood, if your interest is primarily in children, you may wish to consider PSY 324, Developmental Psychopathology, as an alternative to this course. However, be sure to check the requirements for your particular program.

If we are forced to go completely on-line at any point during the semester, lectures will convert to synchronous on-line classes via BB Collaborate. The syllabus topics, assignments, and grading expectations will not change. There are a few days already noted that will be

asynchronous rather than having in person class, and asynchronous recordings may occasionally be added to keep us on track if we fall behind in content leading up to an exam.

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the current system of classifying psychological disorders
2. Decide when you or someone you know may need evaluation by a professional by using the diagnostic criteria of specific psychological disorders
3. Identify and explain the biological, psychological, social, and cognitive factors underlying etiology and maintenance of a range of psychological disorders.
4. Explain major theoretical models and their contribution to the understanding of psychological disorders.
5. Explain how the research process and research findings influence the conceptualization and treatment of psychological disorders.
6. Explain and evaluate competing view on a series of controversial topics in the area of psychopathology.

Students are expected to complete the assigned readings in the text before class, attend class, and participate in class discussions. Grades will be based on:

- 1) Three noncumulative examinations (50 points each). These exams will include multiple choice and short essay items drawn from the text, lecture, and class discussion. Exams will be taken IN PERSON IN CLASS (not on-line).
- 2) A case analysis (50 points). This will be comprised of both a section completed in pairs and a group section. You will be given more information on the case analysis as the semester progresses, but your attendance on the day of the group work is mandatory. BE AWARE that failure to work with your partner/group and make a quality contribution to the final group product will result in an individual reduction in your grade on this activity.
- 3) 7 Packback weekly discussions (49 points total--each week is worth 7 points). Packback will be open for discussion for 9 weeks of the semester (not the first or last week of the semester). However, you will only need to contribute to 7 of the weeks (thus, you can pick 2 weeks to skip). Information on how to register for Packback is at the end of this syllabus.

In sum, then, the total points available will be as follows: 3 exams (50+50+50), one case study analysis (50), and 7 weeks of Packback participation (49), for a total of 247 points.

Grades will be assigned according to the following formula:

93-100%	A
90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
77-79%	C+
73-76%	C

70-72%	C-
65-69%	D+
60-64%	D
59%	F

Based on the actual distribution of final grades these criteria might be relaxed, but not stiffened. Please be aware if you are taking this course credit/no credit that GVSU considers a grade of C- to be NO CREDIT. Because of this, if you choose the credit/no credit option and you receive a C- or below in the class, you WILL NOT get credit for the class.

You are responsible for attending all examinations and make-ups generally will not be given. In the event of extreme circumstances that will prevent you from attending an examination, you should contact me before the examination, unless this is impossible. I reserve the right to require appropriate documentation before scheduling of a make-up examination.

Absences: I do not take attendance, but participation in class will enhance your understanding of the material, and you are responsible for all material covered in class. Lectures will parallel (but not simply duplicate) text, and information video clips may also appear on examinations. Therefore, if you miss a lecture, I strongly advise you to obtain notes from at least two different classmates. If you are absent due to documented COVID circumstances, recorded lectures MAY sometimes (but not always) be available. I will allow you to take exams or turn in assignments late if you have documented COVID circumstances. If you miss consistently, you are likely to fall behind and not do well in the class.

All assignments will be submitted electronically, so look for an upload for the assignment in BB.

Academic dishonesty: If I have evidence of any form of academic dishonesty (cheating on an exam, giving or receiving information about what is asked in the exam, or any other form of cheating such as plagiarism), you will receive a failing grade in that activity and other consequences as dictated by GVSU policy. Plagiarism is presenting work, ideas or words that are not your own as though they were your own—this includes work of other students or work that is in a published source (the textbook, a journal article). To avoid plagiarism be sure to do your own work, and put information in your own words or use quotes (although paraphrasing is always preferred to use of quotes in psychology), with appropriate reference to the original source from which you got the information or ideas. **Evidence of inappropriate use of AI, such as submitted fully generated AI text, will result in a zero for the assignment.** Examples of appropriate use of AI would be generation of study guides, creating review questions, idea generation, or proofreading for spelling, grammar or clarity. **All work you submit must be your own.**

(The below language taken from David Joyner [@davidjoyner@fediscience.org](mailto:davidjoyner@fediscience.org))

Use of AI in this course: I treat AI-based assistance, such as ChatGPT and Copilot, the same way I treat collaboration with other people: you are welcome to talk about your ideas

and work with other people, both inside and outside the class, as well as with AI-based assistants.

However, all work you submit must be your own. You should never include in your assignment anything that was not written directly by you without proper citation (including quotation marks and in-line citation for direct quotes).

Including anything you did not write yourself in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as an academic misconduct case. If you are unsure where the line is between collaborating with AI and copying from AI, I recommend the following:

1. Never hit "Copy" within your conversation with an AI assistant. You can copy your own work into your conversation, but do not copy anything from the conversation back into your assignment. Instead, use your interaction with the AI assistant as a learning experience, then let your assignment reflect your improved understanding.
2. Do not have your assignment and the AI agent open at the same time. Similar to above, use your conversation with the AI as a learning experience, then close the interaction down, open your assignment, and let your assignment reflect your revised knowledge. This includes avoiding using AI directly integrated into your composition environment: just as you should not let a classmate write content directly into your submission, so also avoid using tools that directly add content to your submission.

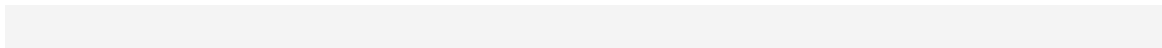
This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>

Tentative Lecture Syllabus

DATES	TOPICS	ASSIGNMENT	DUE BY (always 11:59 PM)
8/26	Introduction to the Course	(No Packback)	
8/28	Historical Context (Chapter 1) Integrative Approach (Chapter 2) Biological Factors	(No Packback)	
8/31-9/1	LABOR DAY BREAK		
9/2, 9/4	Integrative Approach (Chapter 2) Behavioral and Cognitive Factors	Packback Trial OPTIONAL	EXTRA CREDIT FIND A PERSON DUE 9/2
9/9	Behavioral and Cognitive Factors	Packback #1	Posts due on 9/10 and 9/13
9/11	Research Methods, Assessment,		

	Diagnosis (Chapter 3) (Some additional Research Methods material asynchronous)		
9/16, 9/18	Physical Disorders and Health Psychology (Chapter 7)	Packback #2	Posts due on 9/17 and 9/20
9/23	Exam 1 (Chapters 1,2,3,7)	NO PACKBACK	
9/25,	Anxiety, Trauma Related and OCD (Chapter 4)		
9/30, 10/2	Anxiety, Mood Disorders (Chapter 6)	Packback #3	Posts due on 10/1 and 10/4
10/7, 10/9	Depression Bipolar Disorder	Packback #4	Posts due on 10/8 and 10/11
10/14, 10/16	Suicide	Packback #5	Posts due on 10/15 and 10/18
10/19-10/21	FALL BREAK	NO PACKBACK	
10/23	Substance Related, Addictive and Impulse Control Disorders (Chapter 10--read text mostly on own— minimal lecture), Some additional Substance Abuse material asynchronous		PAIRS PORTION OF GROUP ACTIVITY DUE 10/25
10/28	Exam 2 (Chapters 4,6,10)	Packback #6	Posts due on 10/29 and 11/1
10/30	Eating Disorders (Sleep disorders on own, basics only)—Chapter 8 (Plus asynchronous introduction to DID)	Meet with case study group in class for about 15 minutes	

11/4, 11/6	Continue Eating Disorders (Sleep disorders on own, basics only)—Chapter 8 Somatic, Related, and Dissociative Disorders (DID)-- Chapter 5 (pp. 187-194)	Packback #7	Posts due on 11/5 and 11/8
11/11, 11/13	Schizophrenia and Psychotic Disorders (Chapter 12)	Packback #8	Posts due on 11/12 and 11/15 FINAL GROUP CASE STUDY AND PEER EVALUATION DUE 11/13
11/18, 11/20	Schizophrenia and Psychotic Disorders (Chapter 12) Personality Disorders (text on own, Chapter 11)	Packback #9	Posts due on 11/19 and 11/22
11/26- 11/30	THANKSGIVING BREAK	NO PACKBACK	
12/2, 12/4	Finish Forensic Psychology and Ethical Issues (Chapter 14) Competency to Stand Trial (CST) Mental State at Offense (MSO)	NO PACKBACK	
FINAL EXAM IN SAME CLASSROOM WE TYPICALLY MEET IN	<u>Final Exam</u> (Chapters 8,5 (portion), 11,12,14) SECTION 04: Tues Dec. 9th 10 AM SECTION 03: Tues Dec. 9th 12 PM SECTION 05: Thurs Dec. 11th 2 PM		



Using "Packback Questions" for Online Class Discussions

Packback Questions

The Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class-related topics. Packback Questions is an online community where you can be fearlessly curious and ask open-ended questions to build on top of what we are covering in class and relate topics to real-world applications.

There are 9 weeks of Packback available and you are required to contribute to seven of those 9 weeks (see syllabus for details). The weeks that you do NOT contribute may appear as a zero in BB but will not count against you on your final grade. Extra posting weeks are invited but they will NOT count for extra credit and if you post more than 7 weeks, the first 7 weeks that you post all or in part will be used as one of your seven Packback weeks, so if you begin to post during a week you should be sure to post for the full week.

Packback Requirements: (check this)

Your participation on Packback will count toward 21% of your overall course grade.

Topics will open each Monday at 12:01 AM, and there will be a Weekly Saturday at 11:59PM EST deadline for submissions. In order to receive full credit, you should submit the following:

- One question by Wednesday night at midnight with a minimum curiosity score of 80 and the inclusion of a relevant peer reviewed reference that informed your post attached. This is worth 3 points. Be sure to label your question clearly so people who are interested in that topic will see it and reply. Then describe and explain how the question arose and your process of investigating the question. Be sure to incorporate content from the article that you have attached to demonstrate its relevance.
- Two responses by Saturday night at midnight with a curiosity score of at least 80 and the inclusion of a peer reviewed article that informed your post. These are worth 2 points each. All replies should begin with a claim/thesis and then include evidence, and end with your reasoning. All should incorporate information from the attached article to demonstrate its relevance and what you learned from it and should move the conversation forward in meaningful ways.

In sum, total points each week are 7. Half credit will be given if the posts are late or do not meet the criteria (e.g., curiosity score is too low).

Some weeks will not include Packback (see the syllabus), and you can skip 2 of the 9 scheduled Packback weeks without penalty. See the schedule outline in the syllabus for details.

Packback is available through the GVSU SAVE program and once you purchase your access, it will be linked through the BB course site.

Note: Only access Packback through **Blackboard** in order to ensure your grades sync properly

1. Click "Packback" within **Blackboard** to access the community.
2. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

How to Get Help from the Packback Team:

If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at help.packback.co. If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at help@packback.co.

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OV7QmkrD68>

GVSU STUDENT RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

Psych Friends Peer-to-Peer Mentors: Psych Friends mentors are upper-level psychology and behavioral neuroscience students who are trained to provide support in many areas, such as: effective studying and time management techniques, exam preparation and reflection skills, understanding the PSY and BNS major requirements, potential jobs and careers in the field, the process of applying for graduate school, and how to maintain physical and mental health as a student. Visit <https://www.gvsu.edu/navigate> to schedule an online or in-person meeting today!

The Knowledge Market (Located in the Library: Assistance with Research, Writing and Presentations) <https://www.gvsu.edu/library/km/>

The Tutoring and Reading Center <https://www.gvsu.edu/trc/>

Mental Health Needs (Counseling Center) <https://www.gvsu.edu/counsel/>

Financial Wellness (Money Smart Lakers) <https://www.gvsu.edu/moneysmart/>

Financial Aid Issues <https://www.gvsu.edu/financialaid/>

COVID information <https://www.gvsu.edu/lakerstogether/>

Career Services (Career related events, resume writing, sample interviews):
<https://www.gvsu.edu/careers/>

Professional Advising (for major and graduation requirements, etc.):
<https://www.gvsu.edu/clasadvising/>