I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Psychology 3363, Abnormal Psychology, is an upper division undergraduate course in theories of psychopathology. This course will cover the various theories of the etiology and natural history of mental disorders. We will consider the history, categorization, diagnosis, causes and treatments of abnormal behavior. We will examine the value of research in the area and the applicability of the research findings in practice. Competency in personality psychology, such as that obtained by completing PSYC 3361, is assumed for this course.

Students will examine clinical issues in the field of applied psychopathology as well as their ethical implications. The course materials and lectures are such that students will be encouraged to integrate their existing knowledge of human development, psychosocial, political and public health issues into their course material.

Below are the specific Learning Outcomes for the course:

1. To recognize that definitions of psychological disorders and conceptions of abnormality vary across time and culture.

2. To learn how to identify multiple models of psychopathology and to recognize how they influence our treatment and understanding of psychopathology.

3. To recognize the different categories of psychological disorders in the DSM-IV and to gain an understanding of differential diagnoses within a specific category.

4. To gain an understanding of the causes, course, and treatment of psychological disorders.

5. To become familiar with mental status exams, intake interviews, and note-writing procedures.

II. TEXT (Required)

III. GRADING

1. Values of the grades

The grading of written work will be done according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59-0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Giving, assigning and receiving grades

As a professor, I do not “give” grades; rather I assign them according to a very precise rubric. Thus whatever personal difficulties students may encounter can play no role whatsoever in the grade they receive. Whether your work is assessed by me or by a grader, in all cases a precise rubric is employed to assess students’ performance in the most objective way possible.

- If you do not understand why you received a particular grade, you should meet me during my office hours. I will be happy to show you what you did wrong and offer advice on how to improve your performance in the future.

- If after meeting with me you still don’t agree with the grade you received, you are free to initiate a grade appeal.

3. Grade appeals

Grade Appeal Process. Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, cla.tamucc.edu/students/studentinfo.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

IV. ATTENDANCE

Regular class attendance is essential for success in this course and represents 10% of the final grade. Absences may be excused due to medical reasons, participation in athletic activities, and/or religious holidays. All absences must be supported by proper documentation in order to be excused.

Attendance will count for 10% out of the 100% of the final grade: You are permitted five unexcused absences, after which your final grade will be reduced by 10%. This policy is non-negotiable.
V. EXAMS (90%)

There will be four examinations worth 100 points each and 90% of the overall grade for the course. Exams will be given on the date announced unless you are notified of a change. When the exam calendar changes, the syllabus will be updated and posted on Blackboard. You will receive a notice by email to your Islander account if the exam schedule is modified.

1. **Exam # 1 will count for 20% out of the final grade.** It will be a written exam consisting of multiple choice questions (50%) and short essays (50%).

2. **Exam # 2 will count for 20% out of the final grade.** It will be a written *Take Home Exam* composed exclusively of clinical case studies.

3. **Exam # 3 will count for 20% out of the final grade.** It will be *Take Home Exam* composed of clinical case studies with essay questions about clinical concepts.

4. **Final Exam (Exam # 4) will count for 30% out of the final grade.** It will be *Take Home Exam* composed of clinical case studies with some essay questions about clinical concepts and notions. **Final exam is cumulative.**

Take Home Exams (Exams# 2, # 3 and #4) must be returned by the scheduled deadline in two different formats: (1) a **printed copy must be it has to be returned to my office** and (2) an **electronic/digital copy must be submitted via Blackboard as a Word document. Essays emailed to the professor will not be accepted.**

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**5 essential rules about exams…**

1. All take home exams have to contain at least 7 references to academic articles or books using APA quotation method. Five academic articles will be submitted by the professor on Blackboard at the beginning of the semester. A take home exam without academic references will not be accepted.

2. All take home exams must be submitted by the listed deadline in printed and digital formats. It is the students’ responsibility to ensure that digital essays have been properly uploaded to Blackboard. Thus please check your submissions twice.

3. Any essay that is not submitted in both print and digital form will receive a zero.

4. Make-up exams may only be arranged when the request is supported by acceptable and well-documented reasons (e.g., absences due to medical, athletic, and religious holidays). Undocumented absences will be counted as unexcused.

5. Printed or digital exams submitted without the student’s name will not be graded and will receive a zero.
VI. ETIQUETTE

In my class, the atmosphere tends to be friendly and relaxed. Discussions are engaging and shared laughter is very common. In order to preserve this atmosphere you must observe some basic rules of etiquette.

1. Use of electronic devices

   The use of electronic devices (computers, tablets, cell phones, recorders, etc.) is forbidden in my class. If you have any of these items with you, please switch them off and leave them inside your bag during class. **There will be no exceptions to this rule; those who violate it will be asked to leave class and will be marked as absent (unexcused) for that class meeting.**

2. Punctuality

   All students are expected to arrive to class at the designated time. If for professional or personal reasons you feel you are unable to be on time you must inform me at the beginning of the semester. Otherwise students who regularly arrive in class more than fifteen minutes late may be marked as absent (unexcused) and asked to leave.

3. Classroom behavior

   3.1 Discretion about Personal Issues

   As my classes tend to be very interactive, I encourage students to share their thoughts about ideas or clinical situations discussed in class. However I will not accept any discussion of family, personal and/or intimate problems, even if I understand that the content of psychology lectures may encourage such personal reflection. In my opinion, learning to adopt emotional distance and discretion about one’s private life is part of psychological training. A class in psychology is thus not a group psychotherapy session and should not be understood as such.

   3.2 Professional Opinions About Personal Issues

   As a professor of psychology my role is to teach rather than to act as a clinician, and according to the code of conduct in psychology it is unethical for me to treat students as patients. Thus I will not give you any professional advice. In concrete terms this means that I will not comment on diagnoses or treatments that you, your family members or friends may have received. Nor will I conduct any clinical analysis of your personal situations.

   3.3 Silence versus Participation

   Discussions will be very encouraged when comments and discussions are expressed in front of the class, allowing other students and myself the opportunity to be part of them. When conversations are not shared, students will be asked to keep quiet. **Students having private conversations during lectures will be politely asked to leave the class.**

   3.4 Respect for other Students’ Opinions

   Respecting other people’s points of view is the required emotional position in a class where academic demonstration is privileged to the detriment of emotional and affective expression or value judgment. **Students showing disrespectful behavior towards others will be politely requested to leave the class.**
Please note that, according to TAMUCC policies of academic misconduct, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. Additionally, possessing, using, buying, stealing, transporting, selling or soliciting in whole or in part items including, but not limited to the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solutions or possession at any time of current or previous test materials without the instructor’s permission will be considered academic misconduct.

VII. ABOUT ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Definitions of academic misconduct according to TAMUCC policies

Academic Misconduct is engaging in an act that violates the standards of the academic integrity policy as described in the Student Code of Conduct and Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases.

1. **Cheating**: Cheating is intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, notes, study aids or other devices or materials in any academic exercise.

2. **Plagiarism**: Intentionally and knowingly presenting the work of another as one’s own with the exception of information that is generally accepted common knowledge. The current University Catalog and Student Handbook discuss plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Any student violation of these codes will be held responsible. For more information, go to: [http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~students/handbook.html](http://falcon.tamucc.edu/~students/handbook.html)

3. **Multiple Submissions**: The submission of substantial portions of the same work (including oral reports) for credit more than once without authorization from instructors of the class for which the student submits the work.

4. **Collusion**: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to commit an act of academic dishonesty. This includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another individual in progressing forward on academic assignments.

5. **Fabrication, Falsification, or Misrepresentation**: The intentional altering or inventing of any information or citation that is used in assessing academic work.

Any of these acts of academic misconduct will result in a zero for this class.

VIII. LECTURES AND CLASS MATERIALS

1. **Availability of lectures**

PowerPoint slides of all my lectures will be posted on Blackboard and you will always be informed by email of any updates. These slides are a summarization of most important aspects of the textbook. In any case they do not replace the textbook.
All PowerPoint lectures will be posted on Blackboard and you will always be informed by email of any update.

I may travel during the semester. In such case, all of my lectures will be recorded and posted on Blackboard.

Other class materials like methodological orientations for Take Home Exams, key recommendations to write the research paper, theoretical/conceptual schemes, recorded lectures, syllabus updates will be posted on Blackboard.

2. Content of the lectures

This class contains information about psychiatric disorders as per the DSM-V. The implications of these disorders in people’s lives, their relationship to crime, violence, discrimination and other social problems may be described and discussed within the DSM-V context. As such, the content of these lectures may contain violent, sexual and/or criminal scenarios.

My clinical experience has been conducted in different countries. For this reason, this class will contain ethnographic and clinical information about psychiatric diagnoses and treatments from other continents (Asia, Africa, Europe). The very fact that I describe and analyze some of these practices does not mean that I agree with them or that I recommend their implementation in the U.S.

3. Assignments

Four assignments will be proposed during the semester. The aim of these assignments is to help students learn the methodology of the clinical case study. Assignments are neither mandatory nor graded.

IX. CONTACTING ME

1. Questions or requests from students

When you have a question, need an explanation or want to meet with me for any reason, you are very welcome to send me an email or come to one of my scheduled office hours.

When sending me an email, please write the topic of your message in the subject line of your email.

Please check the syllabus or Blackboard to see if your question has already been answered.

2. Sending & receiving emails

To ensure that your email has been received and read I strongly recommend that you enable the delivery and/or read receipt options in your email program.

I tend to respond quite quickly to my emails, but if you have not received a response after one week please contact me via my office phone number during office hours or come directly to my office.
We are connected by a professional relationship. Please respect a certain level of courtesy when you write me. I will do the same with you.

For any communication with me or for the updates that I will send through Blackboard, I will contact you on your Islander email account. **Please be sure that you have activated your Islander account before starting my class and that you check it regularly. I will not be responsible if you do not received essential information because your islander account is not activated.**

3. **Student’s Privacy**

To protect your privacy I will not respond to any email that does not include your name as part of the address.

In accordance with FERPA policies, I do not display or comment grades by phone or by email.

**X. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Corpus Christi Hall #116, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations for this directed independent study, please see the instructor as soon as possible.

**XI. ACADEMIC ADVISING**

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and department chair. The College’s Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 101 E, and can be reached at 825-3466. For more information, go to: [http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/academic_advising.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/academics/academic_advising.html)

**XII. ASSIGNED READINGS**

The majority of assigned readings will be the textbook listed above. Five academic articles will be uploaded to Blackboard site for this course.
XIII. SEMESTER SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08/28/2014</td>
<td>(1) Introduction to the course&lt;br&gt;(2) Time for student’s questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/02 &amp; 09/04/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 1 (Part I)&lt;br&gt;- Thinking Normal and abnormal through the Prism of Science and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/09 &amp; 09/11/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 1 (Part II)&lt;br&gt;- Historical and Modern Perspectives on Psychopathology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/16 &amp; 09/18/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 4 - Anxiety Disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/23 &amp; 09/25/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 5 - Somatoform, Dissociative, and Factitious Disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09/30/2014</td>
<td>Exam #1 – In-Class Exam - Multiple choice test with two short essays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/02/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 6 – Mood Disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/07 &amp; 10/09/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 7 – Eating Disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/14 &amp; 10/16/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 8 - Gender and Sexual Disorders (Part I &amp; II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/21/2014</td>
<td>Exam #2 – Submission in Blackboard of the Take Home Exam with Case Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/28/2014</td>
<td>Exam #2 – Deadline to submit Exam #2 on Blackboard and return printed copy to the professor’s office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/21 &amp; 10/23/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 9 - Substance Use Disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/28 &amp; 10/30/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 10 - Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/04 &amp; 11/06/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 11 - Personality Disorders (Part I)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/11 &amp;11/13/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 11 - Personality Disorders (Part II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/11/2014</td>
<td>Exam #3 – Take Home Exam with Case Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/18/2014</td>
<td>Exam #3 – Deadline to submit Exam #3 on Blackboard and return printed copy to the professor’s office</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/18 &amp; 11/20/2014</td>
<td>Chapter 12 - Disorders of Childhood and Adolescence (Part I &amp; II)</td>
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<td>Thanksgiving week - The 11/25/2014 class is cancelled</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/02/2014</td>
<td>Last day of class - Class Based on Practice of Clinical Case Studies &amp; Questions of students before the exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/04/2014</td>
<td>Exam #4 FINAL- Take Home Exam with Case Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/09/2014</td>
<td>Exam #4 FINAL – Deadline to submit Exam # 4 FINAL on Blackboard and return printed copy to the professor’s office</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

NOTE (1): *Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 will not be taught as per the textbook. Essential concepts about research methods, diagnosis and assessment will be defined and widely described during the course.

NOTE (2) Semester schedule may be subject to changes.