

**San Bernardino Valley College
Course Outline for Psychology 110
“Abnormal Psychology”**

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

- A. PSYCH 110: Abnormal Psychology
3 hours lecture = 3 units

Survey of the field of mental and emotional disturbances, emphasizing causes and types of disorders. Special attention is paid to the variety of suffering in our culture and the issues raised over classifications of normal and abnormal behavior. This course qualifies for continuing education credit for nurses.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 100

- B. SCHEDULE DESCRIPTION: Survey of the field of mental and emotional disturbances, emphasizing causes and types of disorders. This course is approved for continuing education by the California Board of Registered Nursing provider no. 01480 for 45 contact hours.

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Identify the highlights of the history of abnormal psychology including aspects of the history of psychiatry and clinical psychology.
- B. Distinguish and describe major viewpoints used to explain abnormal behavior (e.g., medical, psychodynamic, behavioral, and humanistic).
- C. Compare and contrast the major mental disorders associated with the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition, Revised (DSM-IV).
- D. Describe the principal signs and symptoms of abnormal behavior.
- E. Explain the psychological processes associated with the major mental disorders.
- F. Describe the role of psychosocial stressors in mental disorders.

- G.** Evaluate the role of drug therapy, and other kinds of somatic therapy, in the treatment of mental disorders.
- H.** Evaluate the role of different kinds of psychotherapy in the treatment of mental disorders.
- I.** Use the terminology of abnormal psychology correctly.

IV. CONTENT

- A. Abnormal behavior in our times
 - 1. Popular view of abnormal behavior
 - 2. What do we mean by abnormal behavior?
 - 3. Classifying abnormal behavior
- B. Historical view of abnormal behavior
 - 1. Ancient times
 - 2. Humanitarian approaches
 - 3. Twentieth century views
- C. Viewpoints
 - 1. Biological
 - 2. Pyschodynamic
 - 3. Behavioristic
 - 4. Cognitive
 - 5. Humanistic
 - 6. Interpersonal
 - 7. Sociocultural
- D. Anxiety-based disorders
 - 1. What is meant by the term neurosis?
 - 2. Anxiety disorders
 - 3. Somatoform disorders
 - 4. Dissociative disorders
 - 5. Inhibition and “neurotic style”
- E. Psychological factors and physical illness
 - 1. The concept of autonomic excess
 - 2. The general adaptation syndrome (G.A.S.)
 - 3. Specific diseases an psychosocial stressors
 - 4. Etiological considerations
- F. Personality disorders
 - 1. Clinical features
 - 2. Types of personality disorders
 - 3. Causal factors in personality disorder
 - 4. The antisocial personality disorder

- G. Substance-use and other addictive disorders
 - 1. Alcohol abuse
 - 2. Abuse of other drugs
 - 3. Kinds of drugs abused
 - 4. Pathological gambling
 - 5. Compulsive eating
- H. Sexual disorders
 - 1. Sexual dysfunctions affecting males
 - 2. Sexual dysfunctions affecting females
 - 3. Gender identify disorders
 - 4. The paraphilias
 - 5. Incest and rape
 - 6. Homosexual behavior
- I. Mood disorders and suicide
 - 1. Depression
 - 2. Kinds of mood disorders
 - 3. Suicide and suicide prevention
- J. The schizophrenias and delusional disorders
 - 1. Kinds of schizophrenic reactions
 - 2. Explanations of schizophrenia
 - 3. Delusional (paranoid) disorder
- K. Organic mental disorders
 - 1. Brain damage
 - 2. Clinical features
 - 3. Organic mental syndromes
 - 4. Brain tumors
 - 5. Dementia of the Alzheimer type
- L. Mental retardation and developmental disorders
 - 1. Mental retardation
 - 2. Infantile autism
 - 3. Specific developmental disorders
- M. Clinical assessment
 - 1. Neurological examination
 - 2. Assessment interviews
 - 3. Clinical observation
 - 4. Psychological tests
- N. Biologically Based therapies
 - 1. Electroconvulsive shock therapy (ECT)
 - 2. Insulin coma therapy
 - 3. Psychosurgery
 - 4. Drug therapy

- O. Psychologically based therapies
 - 1. Psychodynamic therapy
 - 2. Behavior therapy
 - 3. Cognitive therapy
 - 4. Humanistic therapy
 - 5. Interpersonal therapy
 - 6. Multimodal therapy

V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

The course is designed under the lecture/discussion format. The instructional methods to be used include:

- A. Lecture
- B. Class and group discussions of significant issues and topics
- C. Relevant videotapes and films
- D. Written assignments on personal issues, both in and out of class
- E. Skill exercises
- F. Small group activities
- G. Research papers
- H. Field trips
- I. Computer-Assisted Instruction

VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Reading both in and out of class in preparation for exams and paper-writing on abnormal psychology issues, such as on the different axes in DSM
- B. Class and group discussion of significant issues and topics in preparation for exams and paper-writing on abnormal psychology issues, such as the current usefulness of Freudian diagnostic categories like psychosis and neurosis.
- C. View relevant videotapes and films in preparation for exams and paper-writing on abnormal psychology issues, such as adaptive and non-adaptive responses to stress.
- D. Written assignments on abnormal psychology issues frequently graded.
- E. Skill-development exercises either written or demonstrated
- F. Small group activities, such as appropriate DSM-IV labels for a variety of abnormal behavior
- G. Research papers on self-chosen, personally relevant topic
- H. Field trips to specific educational or career-skill workshop

VII. EVALUATION

A. **Methods of Evaluation:** This will vary from instructor to instructor, but may include true-false tests, multiple choice tests, or sentence completion tests. In addition, written components such as essay tests, writing tasks (i.e. journals, summary reviews, interpretive essays, and/or term projects) may be included. Telecomputing can include downloading and uploading reading and writing tasks, on-line discussion, and computer tutorials.

B. **Frequency of Evaluation:** This will depend on the type of evaluation (i.e. “objective” or essay). Evaluation will take place periodically throughout the semester with enough frequency to be sufficient to measure student progress and will be sensitive to the various learning styles of students. Typically, this could be weekly quizzes or papers or one or two midterm exams, plus a final exam and/or semester project.

Student assignments outside of class are assumed to be the equivalent of 6 hours per week and may include reading, computer-assisted instruction, writing tasks, preparing for exams, and/or study group discussions.

Grading may be comparative within a class or may be based on an absolute standard.

C. **Typical Exam Questions:** These might include essay questions asking for a description of the different stages of the general adaptation syndrome, or for a description of any five of the categories in DSM-IV, or could be multiple-choice questions asking which statement was not true of anti-social personality disorder.

VIII. TYPICAL TEXT:

Carson, Robert C. and Butcher, James N. Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life, 4th Edition. New York: HarperCollins, 2000.

IX. **OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:** None