

**SYLLABUS**  
**PSY 251.H82 Abnormal Psychology**  
**Clyde LeTarte Center**  
**Winter, 2020**  
**Dr. Walraven**

**PSY-251 Abnormal Psychology (3 Credits)**

Survey of those behaviors that do not fit the norm of society, including causal factors, specific disorders & treatment methods.

**Requisites:**

PSY 140 - Must be completed prior to taking this course.

This course provides a natural science approach to those aspects and classifications of human behavior which are considered outside the normal range. As our guide for the course, we will read Whitbourne's outstanding text, ***Abnormal Psychology: Clinical perspectives on psychological disorders*** (ninth edition), according to the following schedule: (TEXTBOOK ZERO: an electronic form of the text is available at the bookstore.)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Thoughts &amp; questions to consider</u>
1/16	1&2	How do we know that abnormality exists?
1/23	3	People see all kinds of things in these inkblots...
1/23	4	What would Freud say to Skinner?
1/30	5	Sometimes development does not go well.
1/30	6	If reality exists, how will we recognize it?
1/30	7	How do you feel about your moods?
2/6	8	How much anxiety is too much or too little?
2/6	9	Are the mind and body really the same thing?
2/13	10	Is some behavior really not under our control?
2/13	11	Some disorders get more attention than others do.
2/20	12	Reality is for those who can't make it on drugs.
2/20	13	What do you think about attempts to assess thinking?
2/27	14	How do you explain behavior unchanged by experience?
2/27	15	Guidelines, principles, and laws: do they work?
2/27		Wrap up; course evaluations; farewells.

**Note:** The schedule above is subject to change if necessary.

**It is imperative** that you read the chapter(s) before coming to class, so that the lectures, discussions, and activities will be meaningful. The text can easily impart information; the class sessions deal with how to understand and use the information, and the implications of those understandings and applications of the information.

**General Education Outcomes:** Essential goals of the course include the achievement of an important measurable outcome defined by the college as vital to the educated individual at the Associate Degree level. This General Education Outcome is:

- The ability to provide alternative interpretations of specific patterns of human behavior, consistent with current research and theories (GEO #5, Understanding Human Behavior and Social Systems).

**Measures of success in this course:** To complete the course successfully, you must demonstrate both acquisition and understanding of the information contained in the course. You are expected to do this in four specific ways:

1. **Reaction papers:** At the beginning of each class meeting, you are expected to submit a written reaction to the assigned reading. This very brief (about one page, typed, typically) reaction must reflect both your feelings and your thoughts about at least one element in the chapter(s) assigned. Each reaction paper is worth a maximum of 10 points. Only on-time reaction papers are accepted.
2. **Tests:** Each week we will have a brief test over the material assigned for that week, including material presented and covered in class. Usually, the test is given in the last 30 minutes of our scheduled time. All tests count. Each question is worth one point; most tests contain 20 questions (280 points total).
3. **Comprehensive requirement:** You have your choice of one of the following opportunities to demonstrate your ability to integrate the information from this course. Each option is worth a maximum of 100 points.
  - You may write a term (research) paper, using APA style and at least ten professional references. If you choose this option, you must have your topic approved by the instructor not later than January 30, and the paper is due at the start of class on February 20.
  - You may complete a comprehensive final examination, consisting of both objective and short essay questions. If you choose this option, you will receive the exam February 6, and it is due at the start of class on February 20.

4. **Class participation:** Most class meetings will include structured activities and discussions. Your active participation will make learning and remembering the technical information much easier.

**Late Work:** Unless arrangements are established in advance, work submitted late will be discounted 50%.

**Grades:** Your final course grade will be determined by summing points earned in the reaction papers, tests, and comprehensive requirement detailed above.

Grade	Pct of max
4.0	90
3.5	85-89
3.0	80-84
2.5	75-79
2.0	70-74
1.5	65-69
1.0	60-64

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend every scheduled class meeting. Your grade will be based on your actual performance, not your attendance. Realistically, you should understand that there is a high positive correlation between attendance and grades. If for some **good** reason you cannot attend (illness, accident, ill child, etc.), please call or leave word for the instructor. Usually, some arrangements can be made for making up tests, if the absence was due to a reasonable cause beyond your control.

**Classroom Expectations:** This course is designed in a seminar/discussion format. In order to facilitate the best learning possible, each student is asked to comply with the following expectations:

- Only one person will speak at a time, so all can hear clearly.
- Cell phones and pagers will be silenced during class meetings.
- We will speak to each other with respect and civility.
- Each student will prepare at least one discussion question for each class meeting.

**JC Academic Honesty Policy:** Academic honesty is expected of all students. It is the ethical behavior that includes producing their own work and not representing others' work as their own, either by plagiarism, by cheating, or by helping others to do so. (Please see the complete and detailed text of this policy in the student handbook.)

**Assistance:** Tutors (plus additional services for academic success) can be accessed by calling or by stopping by the Center for Student Success, Bert Walker Hall, or asking the staff at any campus center. Students requiring special assistance (including those affected by the Americans with Disabilities Act) should also contact the Center for Student Success.

**Office Hours:** You are encouraged to consult with the instructor should you have a problem with any aspect of the course, or a question you can't find an answer to. I am available either before or after class. You can also reach me by email: [mgwalraven@jccmi.edu](mailto:mgwalraven@jccmi.edu). If you are requesting a return phone call, please indicate a phone number and time at which you can be reached. Thank you.