



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
SAN ANTONIO

Psych 3325

PSYC 3325: Abnormal Psychology

COURSE SYLLABUS

Texas A&M University- San Antonio
College of Arts and Sciences; Department of Health and Behavioral Sciences

Fall 2025
Hector A. Garcia, Psy.D.
E-Mail: hector.garcia@tamusa.edu
Office Hours: Wed 3:00-5:00

Thu 5:30-8:15 PM
Office: STEM 249A
Phone: (210) 784-2647
Class Location: Madla 236

Please make an appointment for office hours.

NOTE: *This syllabus is subject to revision as needed.*

Contact Guidelines:

I make every effort to be available to aid you in your learning process.

Email: Only use official university e-mail and include course and section (e.g., PSYC 3325) and full name in subject line. Please do not use Blackboard messages. My university email is my primary and preferred point of contact outside of the classroom. I check my email regularly on Monday – Friday from 8 to 5. Within that timeframe, I will generally respond within 24 hours. If you don't hear back from me, email again in the event your message went to my Junk email box. On the weekends, I am generally not available by email, but will reply on the subsequent Monday. If you need to contact me, plan ahead. In all communications, be specific. Your correspondence MUST include information as specified above. If you send an email without sufficient information, I likely won't reply. Additionally, *begin a new email thread* in lieu of responding back to one of my emails if you are beginning a new conversation unrelated to the previous email. Professional language and formatting is expected (i.e., avoid informal correspondence styles like text messaging).

Required Materials

- Sue, D., Sue, D.W., Sue, D., & Sue, S. (2021). *Essentials of Understanding Abnormal Psychology* (12th Ed.). Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
- Other readings or viewings as assigned/provided.

Course Description

Course Content: What society has deemed mentally *abnormal* (i.e., psychopathology) has varied over the ages as a function of time, place, culture and circumstance. Combining cutting

edge research in brain neuroscience with knowledge of psychological and sociocultural factors, this course will trace the history of the construct of mental illness, and culminate in a critical evaluation of current DSM 5 diagnostic categories. Topics include specific mental disorders as well as the role of psychological resilience and wellness. Integrated throughout the course will be discussion of the influence of sociocultural factors on mental health and the practice of psychology more broadly. The overall focus will be on the underlying science, etiology, and current treatment modalities, especially evidence-based practices (EBPs), for major mental illnesses.

Objectives—Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the historical development of the construct of 'mental illness' over time.
2. Integrate empirical research on mental illness with 'real-world' practice issues.
3. Identify key features, etiology, diagnostic criteria, and treatment for major categories and specific diagnoses of mental illness in the DSM-5 (2013).
4. Critically analyze the role of mental illness in families, communities, institutions.
5. Evaluate the impact of stigma and discrimination experienced by those diagnosed with mental illness, and formulate a more informed, reasoned, scientific, and compassionate response.

Course Mechanics

We will meet once weekly for 2 hours and 45 minutes. I expect punctuality. If you have to miss a class for any reason, please let me know by email as soon as you know you'll be absent. Unexplained absences will reduce your grade. **Because we only meet for 10 lecture days, three absences will potentially cost a letter grade.** Only rare exceptions will be made (for example, illness, with relevant documentation). *I also expect participation. Lack of contribution to class discussion will also impact your grade.* The course readings will require about 1 to 3 hours per week outside class.

Performance Expectations

Course content is intensive. There is a large amount of information to cover; *we will not have time to cover all assigned textbook material in class.* Students are nonetheless expected to master all assigned content (textbook, classroom discussion/lecture, Blackboard postings/articles/videos). All readings and tasks are assigned for a specific educational purpose—no assignments are irrelevant or frivolous. Therefore, be sure to read/view all assigned materials and make sure to take notes!

TIPS TO BE SUCCESSFUL:

1. *Read each chapter and take notes prior to scheduled class/week.*
2. *Attend scheduled classes.*
3. *Participate! It's much more fun that way.*
4. *Pay attention to deadlines. There are no "make-ups" for exams, except for an extremely limited set of circumstances, discussed with me prior, and with proper documentation.*
5. *Participate. Volunteer information. Ask questions. It's YOUR education.*
6. *As with all university courses, you should plan to commit a minimum of 9-12hrs per week (outside of class) reading, note-taking, and studying for course.*

By taking this course, students agree:

1. To maintain **reliable internet access** and **computer access**;
2. To regularly check **Jaguar email** accounts (all correspondence must be via this);
3. To regularly **check Blackboard** for any new posting, assignment, or announcement;
4. **Syllabus and course** docs have been **read in detail and acknowledged**;
5. **To attend** (participating, etc.). Attendance is required and monitored; students may be dropped for non-attendance per university policy;
6. **The *NEW* COVID policy addendum**, appended to this syllabus, has been read and acknowledged.

Classroom Discussion: This course sometimes deals with complex, challenging, and sometimes controversial subject matter. Psychology intersects with every aspect of human existence: relationships, religion, emotions, beliefs, values, sexuality, culture and society itself. We will respect all of these different contributions; however, in the study of abnormal psychology – ***we will ultimately rely upon science and the process of scientific inquiry to answer questions about how and why humans suffer with mental disorders and how we might go about helping to alleviate such suffering.*** Every student's input is welcome; however, you must cultivate a style of responding that is respectful and informed. Lastly, choose to have fun in this course! You will learn things that might actually change your life!

Classroom Etiquette: Students are expected to attend class and participate regularly. **Please turn off all mobile phones during class; please do not text during class.** Unless approved as a DSS accommodation, **no electronic devices are permitted during class**, including laptops, iPads, netbooks, recording devices etc. Bring old-timey pens/pencils and notepaper to take notes! Students are expected to arrive with notes, having read the assigned readings **prior** to each class. Please be prepared to be called upon in class and engage in lively discussion.

DROP DEADLINE - Self-Monitoring Progress: Students are responsible for monitoring their own progress and performance in this course. Students are expected to note **the final day for dropping the course**, (i.e., last day to drop with a "W") and make decisions accordingly. **NOTE:** **Students will not be dropped from the course later (past the "W" deadline) simply due to failing grades.** Make drop decisions ***in advance of drop deadline, and unenroll yourself.***

Grading

All graded components must be completed in order to pass this course.

A. Unit Tests (4): 250 points each.

1000 points total
900 or better for an A
800-899 for B
700-799 for C
600-699 for D
599 and below F

Tests: Four (4) scheduled tests will be given in class and may include a combination of short answer, multiple choice, true-false, fill-in-the-blank, short essay questions.

There are no “make-up” tests, except for extreme situations, with proper documentation. You must contact me immediately if you miss an exam; otherwise a review of your performance will be conducted and you may be dropped from the course for non-attendance. *Tests may comprise between 50-100 questions and will include materials from assigned readings as well as information contained in lectures, readings, assigned articles/topics/videos (Blackboard) and class discussions.* Based on topic coverage, unless otherwise noted. You will be notified in class if anything changes (another great reason to make sure to not miss class!)

TEST RULES:

(a) **Arrive early.** You may be denied entrance if you are late. If any student has already completed and left the exam room you will not be allowed entry to take the exam. Take a restroom break **prior to** entering class; do not request to leave while in session. Once seated you are expected to complete the exam.

(b) **Bring an 882e Scantron form, #2 pencil, and artist's eraser** to all exams.

(c) No headphones allowed during exams.

Schedule (Subject to change):

Aug 28—Introduction to Abnormal Behavior (Ch 1)

Sep 4—Understanding and Treating Mental Disorders (Ch2)

Sep 11— Anxiety, Obsessive-Compulsive & Related Disorders (Ch 5)

Sep 18—Review/Exam I

Sep 25—Trauma & Stressor-Related Disorders (Ch 6)

Oct 2—Depressive and Bipolar Disorders (Ch 8)

Oct 9—Substance Related Disorders (Ch 11)

Oct 16—Review/Exam II

Oct 30— Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders (Ch 12)

Nov 6— Sexual Dysfunctions Gender Dysphoria, Paraphilias (Ch 14)

Nov 13— Personality Disorders (Ch 15)

Nov 20—Review/Exam III

Nov 27—Study day

Dec 4—Law and Ethics in Abnormal Psychology

Dec 6—Dec12—Finals

The complete academic calendar is available online:

<https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/academic-calendar/index.html>

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Support Services in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210, or at (210) 784-1335 or visit <https://www.tamusa.edu/index.html> or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *Tools* section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

Counseling/Mental Health Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment call 210-784-1331 or visit Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance).

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services.

Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option '2'). For more information and self-help resources, please visit www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling

Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>.

More information about Emergency Operations Plan and the Emergency Action Plan can be found here: <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-operations-plan.pdf> and <https://www.tamusa.edu/about-us/campus-information/safety/university-police-department/documents/emergency-action-plan.pdf>

Download the SafeZone App for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on "Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center" to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://bit.ly/WLDCCenter>.

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students (DOS@tamusa.edu) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to provide any resources they may possess.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to communicate, in advance if possible, and special circumstances (e.g., upcoming deployment, drill requirements, disability accommodations). You are also encouraged to visit the Patriots' Casa in-person room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees should be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the appropriate offices within their respective units.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex- or gender-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this

reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide reasonable accommodations to pregnant students that would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition and that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

Students' Rights

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.
3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, [Student Code of Conduct](#), on our website, University Catalog and to comply with them, as well as federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide an environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notification.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

No Use of Generative AI Permitted

Psych 3325 assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.