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University of Toronto at Scarborough  
Division of Life Sciences

# ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

PSYB32H3 Section S

Thursday 7-10pm in lecture hall S 309

Professor K. Zakzanis

Office: S 564

Office Hours: Thursday 5-6pm  
(or by appointment)

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## Overview of Course

Throughout history, whether a person's behavior is labeled abnormal often has depended on the cultural norms for appropriate behavior and the gender and ethnicity of the person. Current definitions of abnormality focus on the person's ability to function in daily life and his or her level of distress and grasp of reality. Many biological and psychological tests are used to assess people's functioning and well-being. The information gathered in these tests is compared to criteria for diagnosing psychological disorders provided in guidebooks such as the DSM. Several modern biological and psychological theories provide different ways of understanding and treating people with psychological disorders. Most disorders appear to be influenced both by biological and psychosocial factors, and theories integrating these factors have proven most useful in understanding and treating abnormality.

The disorders that we will look at in detail involve maladaptive and distressing emotions, thoughts, cognitive deficits and behaviors, that are often chronic and pervade every aspect of people's lives. For example, people with

anxiety disorders and mood disorders frequently experience extreme emotional distress that severely interferes with their ability to function in life. Biology, stressful experiences, and maladaptive ways of thinking all appear to contribute to the anxiety and mood disorders. Fortunately, there are several effective biological and psychosocial treatments for these disorders. In addition, psychosis is a loss of touch with reality, and is the hallmark of the disorder called schizophrenia. Schizophrenia probably has strong biological roots, but can be influenced by environmental stress. Moreover, people with personality disorders maintain a consistent personality style, but it is a highly maladaptive style for them and for people around them. Substance use disorders similarly involve specific maladaptive behaviors and can have negative effects in many domains of life. Finally, cognitive disorders that are progressive in nature (e.g., Alzheimer's disease, frontotemporal dementia, progressive aphasia, Parkinson's disease, Huntington's disease, progressive supranuclear palsy, and multiple sclerosis) can have crippling effects and are becoming ever more prevalent given the burgeoning elderly population.

After reviewing the aforementioned disorders and understanding the nature of methodology, assessment, diagnosis, and treatment, it is hoped that this course will better able the student to answer the question "what is abnormality?"

## Readings

Abnormal Psychology (second edition)

By Susan Nolen-Hoeksema

\*note: there is a study guide available and is recommended

## Evaluation

**Four multiple-choice examinations. The first three examinations will each be worth 20% of your final grade and will be completed during the academic term. These examinations will include 80 multiple-choice questions. A final examination worth 40% of your grade will be scheduled during the final examination period. This exam will consist of 100 multiple choice questions. Absolutely no deferred examinations.**

# Lecture Dates

January 10, 2002

Readings: Chapter 1 Looking at Abnormality  
Chapter 2 Contemporary Theories of Abnormality

January 17, 2002

Readings: Chapter 3 The Research Endeavor  
Chapter 4 Assessing and Diagnosing Abnormality

January 24, 2002

Readings: Chapter 5 Treatments of Abnormality  
Chapter 6 Anxiety Disorders: Panic, Phobias and Generalized Anxiety

January 31, 2002 EXAM (Chapters 1-6)

February 9, 2002

Readings: Chapter 7 Anxiety Disorders: Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and  
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder  
Chapter 8 Mood Disorders  
Chapter 9 Suicide

February 14, 2002

Readings: Chapter 10 Schizophrenia

February 21, 2002 READING WEEK – NO CLASS SCHEDULED

February 28, 2002 EXAM (Chapters 7-10)

March 7, 2002

Readings: Chapter 11: Dissociative and Somatoform Disorders  
Chapter 12: Personality Disorders

March 14, 2002

Readings: Chapter 14: Eating Disorders

Chapter 15: Sexual Disorders and Gender Identity Disorder

March 21, 2002 EXAM (Chapters 11, 12, 14, 15)

March 28 2002

Readings: Chapter 16: Substance-Related Disorders  
Chapter 17: Psychology and Physical Health

April 4, 2002

Readings: Chapter 18: The Cognitive Disorders: Dementia, Delirium, and Amnesia

**YOUR FINAL EXAMINATION WILL TAKE PLACE DURING THE EXAM PERIOD APRIL 15-MAY 2 AND WILL INCLUDE QUESTIONS DERIVED FROM CHAPTERS 16-18 (50%) and Chapters 1-12, 14-15 (50%). The final exam is worth 40% of your final grade.**

**ALL LECTURE OVERHEADS ARE POSTED AT:**

**<http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~zakzanis/psvb32/>**

**\* DO NOT FOLLOW THE OUTLINE POSTED THERE HOWEVER...**