

University of Toronto Scarborough  
Department of Psychology

# Abnormal Psychology

PSYB32 (L30 & L60)

ONLINE ONLY

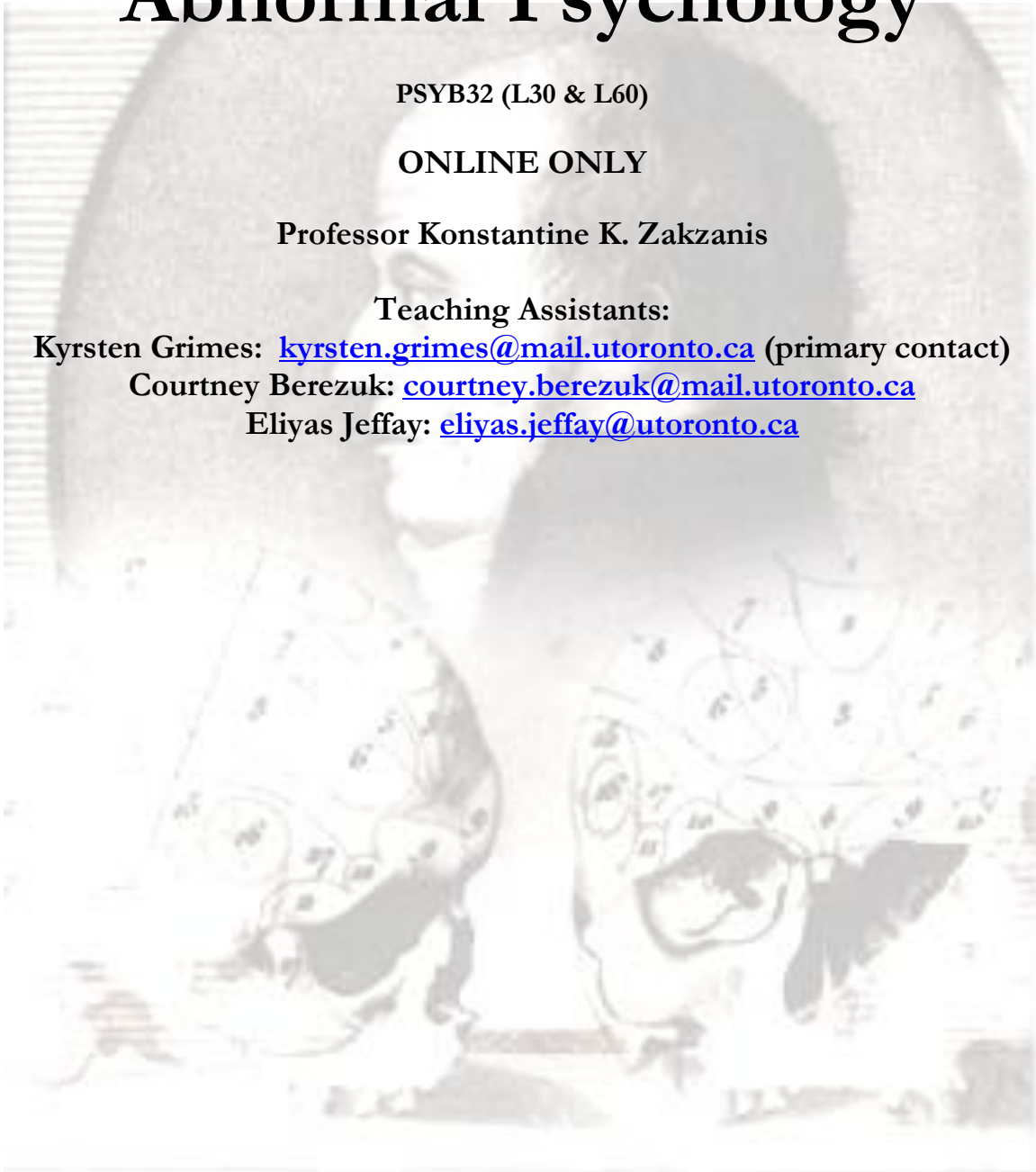
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# Course Overview

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?"

## Important Notes:

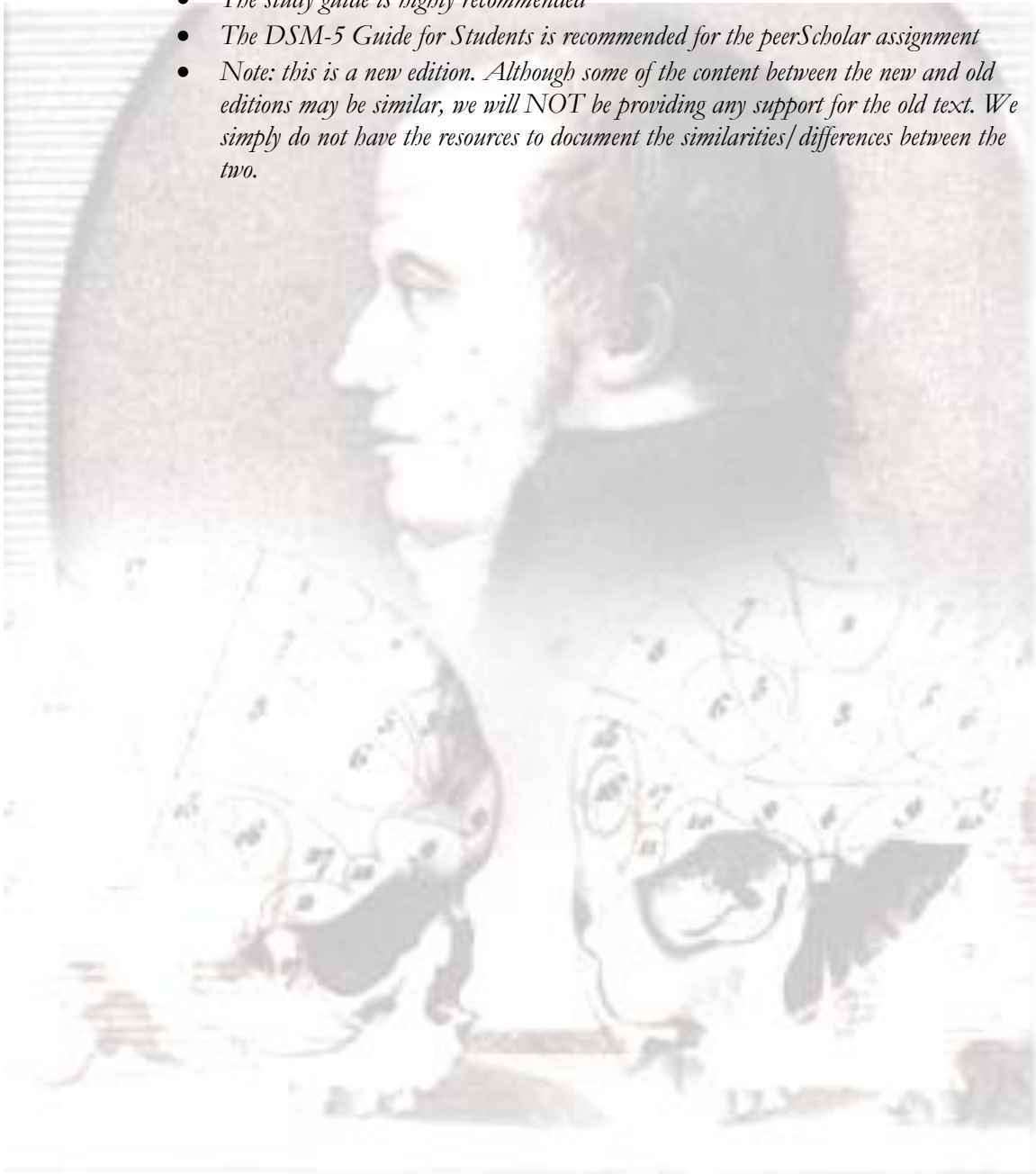
There will be a handful of persons invited to give brief talks/demonstrations of their work as it relates to course content. To this end, prior to each visit, I will announce the content of the talk/demonstration. These health care professionals and former students will join us to share their experience and understanding of specific course content. There may be some content that some individuals might find offensive—such is the case when our topic is abnormal psychology. Again, these talks/demonstrations are meant to help you answer the question "what is abnormality?"

## Textbook:

### **Abnormal Psychology (Fifth Canadian Edition)**

By: Davidson, Blankstein, Flett & Neal

- *The study guide is highly recommended*
- *The DSM-5 Guide for Students is recommended for the peerScholar assignment*
- *Note: this is a new edition. Although some of the content between the new and old editions may be similar, we will NOT be providing any support for the old text. We simply do not have the resources to document the similarities/differences between the two.*



## Grading Scheme:

### (1) First Examination worth 30% of your final grade

- *Your 1<sup>st</sup> examination will consist of 60 multiple-choice questions.*

### (2) Second Examination worth 30% of your final grade

- *Your 2<sup>nd</sup> examination will consist of 60 multiple-choice questions.*

### (3) Your Final Examination is worth 30% of your final grade

- *Your final examination will consist of 60 multiple-choice questions.*

### (4) peerScholar Assignments (10% of your final grade)

In this course, we will utilize peerScholar, which I trust you are all familiar with from your experience in Introductory Psychology.

Students will be expected to complete FIVE (5) peerScholar assignments in this course. Each assignment corresponds to a specific lecture. See Lecture Dates, Readings and Assignments section of this outline.

For each assignment, students will be presented with a Clinical Case. Your peerScholar assignment will require you to comment on the case in terms of your diagnostic impression. Your peers will grade your assignment. You will be expected to outline a clinical diagnosis and why you have made it. For example, you should speak to what symptoms were evident and how they fit into the clinical diagnosis you come up with and moreover, what other clinical diagnoses you ruled out and why (i.e., state your differential diagnosis if there is one to make, and select your clinical diagnosis and state why).

**At the end of the course, your TAs will grade one of these five peerScholar assignments. One will be chosen at random and will be marked by the TAs. This will be worth 10% of your final grade. If you are late or miss a phase, you will lose marks (NO EXCEPTIONS). For the assignment, the actual diagnosis and treatment recommendations will be 5% and the justification will be the remaining 5%. So be sure you put your best effort into each one of them and complete them in a timely manner (please see the peerScholar website for individual deadlines).**

Here is how it works:

Firmly grounded in published research, peerScholar is a powerful online pedagogical tool that helps develop your students' critical and creative thinking skills. peerScholar facilitates this through the process of creation, evaluation and reflection. Working in stages, students

begin by submitting a written assignment. The system then circulates their work for others to review, a process that will be anonymous. Students receive peer feedback and evaluations immediately, reinforcing your learning and driving the development of higher-order thinking skills.

### **Phase 1: Writing**

In the first phase, students log into the system and are presented with a given assignment. This assignment will require a written response to a case evaluation as per above. During this stage, students are also provided with a grading rubric for evaluating their peers' assignments in Phase 2. You will have one week for the writing phase of the assignment.

### **Phase 2: Evaluating**

When the writing phase closes, students begin the evaluation phase. It is during this stage that students can develop their critical-thinking skills and increase their ability to perform quality-based discrimination.

The first time students log into peerScholar within Phase 2, they see their own submissions presented alongside those of a set number of their peers. These peer submissions will be anonymous. The immediate juxtaposition of the students' own work with that of their peers helps them to better understand their own strengths and weaknesses more deeply than simply receiving feedback from me.

During the evaluation phase, students must review their peers' work and provide them with an evaluation and some critical feedback within one week (i.e., before the next lecture).

### **Phase 3: Reflecting**

As soon as the evaluation phase closes, students can log back into peerScholar and immediately receive their peers' evaluations and written feedback. They don't have to wait for weeks to receive marks and feedback, at which point the opportunity for learning might be lost.



## Important Dates: 2016 Summer Session

<i>UTSC DATES</i>			
	<i>F Section</i>	<i>Y Section</i>	<i>S Section</i>
Classes Begin	May 2	May 2	June 20
Classes End	June 13	August 2 <i>Classes held on this date are ONLY for courses that normally meet on a Friday</i>	August 2 <i>Classes held on this date are ONLY for courses that normally meet on a Friday</i>
Reading Week	N/A	June 14 - 18	N/A
Study Break	N/A	August 3 - 5	August 3 - 5
Final Exam Period	June 14 - 18	August 6 - 20	August 6 - 20
2016 Winter Deferred Exam Period	N/A	August 3 - 20	August 3 - 20
University Closures	May 23 - Victoria Day; July 1 - Canada Day; August 1 - Civic Holiday		

**\*NOTE:** Students with a disability/health consideration are encouraged to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office @ 416-287-7560. They can also drop by the office, S302B, inside the Resource Centre. The Coordinator is available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations.

# Lecture Dates, Readings & Assignments:

## Week of May 2:

Welcome; Course Description and Requirements & Questions Answered

**Readings:** Chapter 1: Introduction, Definitional and Historical Considerations

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## Week of May 9:

**Readings:** Chapter 2: Current Paradigms and the Role of Cultural Factors

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## Week of May 16:

**Readings:** Chapter 3: Clinical Assessment

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## Week of May 23:

**Readings:** Chapter 4: Classification and Diagnosis  
Chapter 5: Research Methods in the Study of Abnormal Behaviour

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**Week of May 30: proposed date – see blackboard announcement**

**First Examination worth 30 % of your final grade**

The exam will consist of 60 multiple choice questions from chapters 1-5. Details regarding the time, location and room assignments will be posted on Blackboard one week prior.

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**Week of June 6:**

**Readings:** Chapter 7: Somatic Symptom Disorders and Dissociative Disorders  
Chapter 6: Anxiety, Obsessive Compulsive Disorder & Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Guest: Christopher Rodriguez, Gestalt Institute

***\*peerScholar Assignment\****

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**Week of June 13:**

Reading Week (no class)

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**Week of June 20:**

**Readings:** Chapter 14: Sexual Disorders and Gender Dysphoria

Guest: James Cantor, Ph.D., CAMH Scientist. (\*Please note the content of this lecture may offend some. You have been forewarned).



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**Week of June 27:**

***Readings:*** Chapter 8: Mood Disorders  
Chapter 10: Eating Disorders

Guest: Nancy / Luc

***\*peerScholar Assignment\****

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**Week of July 4: proposed date – see blackboard announcement**

**Second Examination worth 30% of your final grade**

The exam will consist of 60 multiple choice questions from chapters 6, 7, 8, 10 and 14. Details regarding the time, location and room assignments will be posted on Blackboard one week prior.

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**Week of July 11:**

***Readings:*** Chapter 11: Schizophrenia

***\*peerScholar Assignment\****

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**Week of July 18:**

**Readings:** Chapter 12: Substance Related Disorders  
Chapter 13: Personality Disorders

***\*peerScholar Assignment\****

**Week of July 25:**

**Readings:** Chapter 16: Aging and Psychological Disorders

***\*peerScholar Assignment\****

**August 6-20:**

Final Examination Period

**Your Final Examination is worth 30% of your final grade and will consist of 60 multiple-choice questions. You will be tested on material from chapters 11, 12, 13 and 16.**

As soon as they are finalized, examination schedules are posted on the web at:  
<http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/registrar>

## ***Missed Term Work due to Medical Illness or Emergency:***

All students citing a documented reason for missed term work must bring their documentation to Course Coordinator, Ainsley Lawson as soon as possible upon return to campus (and within 3 business days from the date of term test or assignment due date). All documentation must be accompanied by the department [Request for Missed Term Work form](#). In the case of missed term work due to illness, **only an original copy of the official [UTSC Verification of Illness Form](#) will be accepted.** Forms are to be **completed in full**, clearly indicating the start date, anticipated end date, and severity of illness. The physician's registration number and business stamp are required as is the course information. In the case of emergency, a record of visitation to a hospital emergency room or copy of a death certificate may be considered. Forms should be dropped off in SW427C between 9 AM - 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday. Upon receipt of the documentation, both you and your instructor will receive email notification within 2 business days, containing a stamped departmental document detailing the affected date(s), along with a copy of the original document(s). The stamped departmental form should be brought to the make-up exam or submitted with late assignments. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations (if any) will be made for the missed work.



## ***Frequently Asked Questions:***

***Q: I missed the midterm, can I write the makeup?***

**A:** Only those with a [Request for Missed Term Work form](#) stamped by the department and a [UTSC Verification of Illness Form](#) signed by a licensed physician explaining why you were absent for the midterm ON THE DAY OF THE EXAM will be permitted to write the makeup examination. Carefully read the information located under ***“Missed Term Work due to Medical Illness or Emergency”*** on the previous page.

***Q: I will be outside of the country during the test, can I write the makeup?***

**A:** No. As a responsible student, you are expected to plan excursions accordingly. As soon as the registrar sends us a copy of the midterm/final examination schedule, we will post an announcement.

***Q: I don't have all of the pre-requisites for this course, can I still be enrolled?***

**A:** No. Pre-requisites are in place for a reason; many of the concepts build upon the content learned from prior courses. Allowing an exception would be unfair to the other students who took the pre-requisites.

***Q: I am not happy with my mark; is there anything I can do to improve it – like an extracurricular assignment?***

**A:** The best way to improve a mark is to study, study, study. The more you review the material, the more you will be able to ‘speak the language’ of abnormal psychology. Ask us questions – we’re here for you. Sorry, no extracurricular assignments.

***Q: I missed the makeup; can I write another exam or can I have my marks reweighed?***

**A:** If you have another valid medical reason for missing the makeup, please follow the instructions outlined on the previous page for missed term work.

***Q: I am on academic probation and I need a bump up my final mark; otherwise, I will be kicked out of school! Can you please bump my mark?***

**A:** This situation is unfortunate and as much as we would like to help, it would be unethical and unfair to the rest of the students to bump a mark for an individual.

**Q: *Is the study guide required? What does it contain?***

**A:** The study guide is optional. It contains review and practice questions designed to complement the material from the text.

**Q: *I forgot that one of the phases for peerScholar was due! Can I have an extension?***

**A:** No. It is your responsibility to keep up with the peerScholar schedule by way of the peerScholar website, Blackboard announcements, and lecture announcements and synchronizing this with your schedule.

