Abnormal Psychology

Class code

PSYCH-UA 9051 - 001

Instructor Details

Professor Kate Loewenthal

Class Details

Abnormal Psychology Fall 2013

Tuesday 10am-1pm

Location to be confirmed.

Prerequisites

None

Class Description

This course provides an overview of the field of abnormal psychology. The focus is on forms of psychopathology, their causes, and diagnostic and treatment issues.

The course is delivered in a traditional lecture format, supplemented by DVD material, student presentations of specific papers and book reviews, and samples of psychological tests. Student participation and group discussion are encouraged and expected. Handouts will be provided. For most classes, one student presentation of material will be invited (organised at least a week in advance).

Desired Outcomes

1. Course participants will gain knowledge of the forms of mental disorder.
2. Course participants will develop a conceptual framework for understanding mental disorder and abnormal behavior. This includes learning about the history of the field, different explanatory models (e.g., biological, behavioral, psychodynamic, cognitive), current controversies in the field.
3. Course participants will develop understanding of diagnostic and treatment issues by analyzing case material.
4. It is hoped that the course will inspire some students to engage in further study of abnormal psychology; for example, by entering a graduate school program in clinical psychology or another mental-health-related field.

Assessment Components

1. One coursework essay (1,200 words), 30% of the final mark

2. EITHER a) A printed copy of a 15-20 minute class presentation (Note that a Turnitin receipt is not required for the printed presentation submission). The date and timing of the class presentation will be arranged individually with the course instructor. This may be presented as the first piece of coursework if it is ready in time.

   OR b) a further 1,200 word essay

30% of the final mark.
3. Examination: 40% of final mark.

Failure to submit or fulfil any required course component results in failure of the class.

**Assessment Expectations**

**Grade A:** Mastery of the issues and literature, and an ability to make some original contribution. Demonstration of original and independent thinking, and evidence of genuine insight, combined with a well-structured, fluent, and clear argument, backed by research evidence whenever appropriate and possible.

**Grade B:** Mastery of issues and literature, grasp of theory and research, but limited original contribution, evaluation and attempt to back up with evidence.

**Grade C:** Unsure grasp of the issues and material

**Grade D:** Failure to grasp issues but some attempt made

**Grade F:** Little or no attempt made.

**Grade conversion**

NYU in London uses the following scale of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

- A=94-100
- A-=90-93
- B+=87-89
- B=84-86
- B-=80-83
- C+=77-79
- C=74-76
- C-=70-73
- D+=67-69
- D=65-66
- F=below 65

Where no specific numerical equivalent is assigned to a letter grade by the class teacher, the mid point of the range will be used in calculating the final class grade (except in the A range, where 95.5 will be used).

**Grading Policy**

NYU in London aims to have grading standards and results in all its courses similar to those that prevail at Washington Square.

**Attendance Policy**

NYUL has a strict policy about course attendance. No unexcused absences are permitted. While students should contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work, you should NOT approach them for excused absences.

Excused absences will usually only be considered for serious, unavoidable reasons such as personal ill-health or illness in the immediate family. Trivial or non-essential reasons for absence will not be considered.

Excused absences can only be considered if they are reported in accordance with guidelines which
follow, and can only be obtained from the appropriate member of NYUL's staff.

Please note that you will need to ensure that no make-up classes – or required excursions - have been organised before making any travel plans for the semester. See also section 11.1 - Make up days.

**Absence reporting for an absence due to illness**

1. On the first day of absence due to illness you should report the details of your symptoms by e-mailing absences@nyu.ac.uk including details of: class(es) missed; professor; class time; and whether any work was due including exams. Or call free (from landline) 0800 316 0469 (option 2) to report your absences on the phone.

2. Generally a doctor’s note will be required to ensure you have sought treatment for the illness. Contact the Gower Street Health Centre on 0207 636 7628 to make an appointment, or use HTH general practitioners if you cannot get an appointment expediently at Gower Street.

3. At the end of your period of absence, you will need to complete an absence form online at http://bit.ly/NuCl5K. You will need to log in to NYU Home to access the form.

4. Finally you must arrange an appointment to speak to Nigel Freeman or Donna Drummond-Smart on your first day back at class. You must have completed the absence form before making your appointment.

Supporting documentation relating to absences must be submitted within one week of your return to class.

**Absence requests for non-illness reasons**

Absence requests for non-illness reasons must be discussed with the Academic Office prior to the date(s) in question – no excused absences for reasons other than illness can be applied retrospectively. Please come in and see us in Room 308, 6 Bedford Square, or e-mail us at academics@nyu.ac.uk.

**Further information regarding absences**

Each unexcused absence will be penalized by deducting 3% from the student’s final course mark. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

Unexcused absences from exams are not permitted and will result in failure of the exam. If you are granted an excused absence from an examination (with authorisation, as above), your lecturer will decide how you will make-up the assessment component, if at all (by make-up examination, extra coursework, viva voce (oral examination), or an increased weighting on an alternate assessment component, etc.).

NYUL also expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks) and to remain for the duration of the class. If timely attendance becomes a problem it is the prerogative of each instructor to deduct a mark or marks from the final grade of each late arrival and each early departure.

Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to arrive at an agreed meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.

Please refer to the Student Handbook for full details of the policies relating to attendance. A copy is in
Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor. Late work should be submitted in person to a member of NYU London staff in the Academic Office (Room 308, 6 Bedford Square) during office hours (Mon – Fri, 10:30 – 17:30). Please also send an electronic copy to academics@nyu.ac.uk for submission to Turnitin.

Work submitted within 5 weekdays after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 10 points on the 100 point scale.

Written work submitted more than 5 weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

Please note end of semester essays must be submitted on time.

Plagiarism: the presentation of another piece of work or words, ideas, judgements, images or data, in whole or in part, as though they were originally created by you for the assignment, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

Please refer to the Student Handbook for full details of the plagiarism policy.

All students must submit an electronic copy of each piece of their written work to www.turnitin.com and hand in a printed copy with the digital receipt to their professor. Late submission of work rules apply to both the paper and electronic submission and failure to submit either copy of your work will result in automatic failure in the assignment and possible failure in the class.

However for this course (Abnormal Psychology) note that if you have offered a class presentation as one piece of coursework, you do NOT need to submit this on Turnitin. Please hand a printout of the presentation (include notes pages if wished) to the course instructor in class.

Electronic Submission
The Turnitin database will be searched for the purpose of comparison with other students’ work or with other pre-existing writing or publications, and other academic institutions may also search it.

In order for you to be able to submit your work onto the Turnitin website, you will need to set up an account:

1) Go onto the Turnitin website http://www.turnitin.com
2) Click ‘Create Account’ in the top right hand corner
3) Select user type of ‘student’
4) Enter your class ID & Turnitin class enrolment password (these will be e-mailed to you after the drop/add period, or contact luke.harper@nyu.ac.uk if you have misplaced these).
5) Follow the online instructions to create your profile.

To submit your work for class, you will then need to:

1) Log in to the Turnitin website
2) Enter your class by clicking on the class name
3) Next to the piece of work you are submitting (please confirm the due date), click on the ‘submit’ icon.

4) Enter the title of your piece of work.

5) Browse for the file to upload from wherever you have saved it (USB drive, etc.), please ensure your work is in Word or PDF format, and click ‘submit’.

6) Click ‘yes, submit’ to confirm you have selected the correct paper (or ‘no, go back’ to retry).

7) You will then have submitted your essay onto the Turnitin website.

8) **Please print your digital receipt and attach this to the hard copy of your paper before you submit it to your professor** (this digital receipt appears on the website, immediately after you submit your paper and is also sent to your e-mail address). Please also note that when a paper is submitted to Turnitin all formatting, images, graphics, graphs, charts, and drawings are removed from the paper so that the program can read it accurately. Please do not print the paper in this form to submit to your lecturers, as it is obviously pretty difficult to read! You can still access the exact file you uploaded by clicking on the ‘file’ icon in the ‘content’ column.

Please also see the Late Submission of Work policy, above.

Students must retain an electronic copy of their work for one month after their grades are posted online on Albert and must supply an electronic copy of their work if requested to do so by NYU in London. **Not submitting a copy of a piece of work upon request will result in automatic failure in the assignment and possible failure in the class.** NYU in London may submit in an electronic form the work of any student to a database for use in the detection of plagiarism, without further prior notification to the student.

Penalties for confirmed cases of plagiarism are set out in the Student Handbook.

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10) Enter your class by clicking on the class name.
11) Next to the piece of work you are submitting (please confirm the due date), click on the ‘submit’ icon
12) Enter the title of your piece of work
13) Browse for the file to upload from wherever you have saved it (USB drive, etc.), please ensure your work is in Word or PDF format, and click ‘submit’
14) Click ‘yes, submit’ to confirm you have selected the correct paper (or ‘no, go back’ to retry)
15) You will then have submitted your essay onto the Turnitin website.
16) Please print your digital receipt and attach this to the hard copy of your paper before you submit it to your professor (this digital receipt appears on the web site, immediately after you submit your paper and is also sent to your e-mail address). Please also note that when a paper is submitted to Turnitin all formatting, images, graphics, graphs, charts, and drawings are removed from the paper so that the program can read it accurately. Please do not print the paper in this form to submit to your lecturers, as it is obviously pretty difficult to read! You can still access the exact file you uploaded by clicking on the ‘file’ icon in the ‘content’ column.

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Required Text(s)


Supplemental Texts(s) (not required to purchase as copies are in NYU-L Library)


**BIOGRAPHICAL AND OTHER ILLUSTRATIVE CASE MATERIAL**

*The following are suggested as illustrative case material. It is not a complete list, and you may find other illustrative material which is just as good or better!*


Kesey, Ken. *One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest*. Picador, 1973 (or reprint).


Solomon, Andrew: *Noonday Demon*. Scribner, 2002


**DVDs** (we will watch excerpts of some, and discuss these during the course, and a copy of each is available in the library):


*One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest* (1975) Directed by Forman.

*Shine* (1997) Directed by Hicks.

*Sybil* (2007) Directed by Sargent

*A Beautiful Mind* (2002) Directed by Howard

*The Horse Boy* (2009) Directed by Scott

*The Secret Life of the Manic Depressive* (2005) Directed by Fry

Further illustrative material will be shown in class, and (optionally) you might wish to look at YouTube which can be a valuable source of personal accounts (search using the name of the psychiatric condition you are interested in). Also, the Royal College of Psychiatrists hosts a blog offering descriptions and discussion of some movies featuring psychiatric issues: [http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/discoverpsychiatry/mindsonfilmblog.aspx](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/discoverpsychiatry/mindsonfilmblog.aspx)

While the course books and articles will provide enough material to write your essays and case study adequately, the quality may be improved by reference to some relevant material from journals, books, and appropriate online sources. The most convenient way of doing this is by searching the internet. You
will get the most scholarly results from PsycINFO which can be accessible from NYUHome or Senate House Library (www.ull.ac.uk). MedLine, Web of Knowledge, http://scholar.google.com and http://books.google.com may also be helpful. Abstracts are almost always available from these sources, and often give sufficient information, and some full text articles are accessible.

Warning: books.google will not let you print the pages (they want to persuade you to buy the book)– so you will need to take notes, or get the book from a library if necessary. A regular Google (or other general search engine) search can sometimes be useful, but hits cannot always be used as scholarly sources. Note that Wikipedia is not always regarded as a reliable source for academic purposes (though for psychology and psychiatry it is normally good), and can point you to (normally) reliable sources.

If using an electronic copy of this syllabus, the links should all work if you are online (ctrl+click).

Remember that cutting and pasting material into an essay is regarded as plagiarism, unless you make clear that you are quoting, and acknowledge the source. It is normally preferable to summarise and paraphrase, again acknowledging the source/s of the points being made. Only use quotations where these enhance the points you are making. Remember to use quotation marks.

### Additional Required Equipment

None

### Session 1

**Sept 3**

**Introduction to abnormal psychology: Overview of past and present views on the nature of psychiatric illnesses, their causes, treatment and diagnosis.**

**Supplementary reading:** you are unlikely to be able to read before this session. If you wish to do supplementary reading, try to look at least one of the following. Note. Case material is marked C - other sources may cite some case material. In future weeks, seminar presentations will be invited - these may focus on case material, or specific conditions, or any other relevant focus of interest.

- Butcher et al, chapter 2 (history) chapter 3 (models/viewpoints)
- **C** Barnes & Berke: *Mary Barnes (or an alternative)*
- **C** Kesey: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* (and/or the DVD of the same title)
- Szasz et al: *Is Depression a Disease?* (use link) [http://www.szasz.com/isdepressionadiseasetranscript.html](http://www.szasz.com/isdepressionadiseasetranscript.html) (on www.szasz.com). *(This highlights an important concern in abnormal psychology and psychiatry: are we really dealing with illnesses?)*
- Watters: The Americanization of mental illness (use link) [http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/10/magazine/10psychet.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/10/magazine/10psychet.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0) *This discusses the question whether culture-specific disorders are disappearing, and modern American disorders such as anorexia are increasing in prevalence with American-led globalization, homogenizing “the way the world goes mad”.*

### Session 2

**Sept 10**

**Anxiety – its varieties, causes and treatments**

**Essential reading:**

- Butcher et al, chapter 6 (Panic and anxiety disorders)

**Supplementary reading:**

- Butcher et al.
Session 3
Sept 17

Unipolar Depression

Essential reading: Butcher et al, chapter 7 (sections on unipolar disorders)

Supplementary reading Select from:

- Brown & Barlow case 9: Major depressive disorder
- Sanghera: Shame
- Solomon: Noonday Demon
- Wurtzel: Prozac Nation.

Session 4
Sept 24

Disorders related to anxiety and depression: PTSD, suicide, eating disorders, alcohol abuse

- Essential reading: Butcher et al, chapter 5 (PTSD section) chapter 7 (suicide section), chapter 9 (eating disorders), chapter 11 (alcohol abuse and dependence section)

Supplementary reading Select from

- Brown & Barlow one or more of cases 4, 11, 12, 15
- Grahame: Dying to be Thin.
- Hornbacher: Wasted
- Sanghera: Shame

Session 5
Oct 1

Somatic disorders

Essential reading: Butcher et al, chapter 8 (somatoform disorders section)

Supplementary reading Select from:

- Brown & Barlow case 6

  Salmon et al: Patients' perceptions of medical explanations for somatisation disorders, British Medical Journal, 1999 (use the link) [http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/318/7180/372](http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/318/7180/372)
- Feldman & Ford: Patient or Pretender
  Loewenthal: chapter 6
**Session 6**
Oct 8

**Dissociation and dissociative identity disorder**
Essential reading: Butcher et al: Chapter 8 (dissociative disorders sections)

**Supplementary reading** select from

- Brown & Barlow case 8
- Schreiber Sybil. (and/or the DVD of the same title)
- Oltmanns et al: Chapter 6
  Loewenthal. Chapter 7

**Session 7**
FRIDAY Oct 11, 10-1 (Make-up class)

**Borderline and other personality disorders**
Essential reading: Butcher et al: Chapter 10 (Personality disorders)

**Supplementary reading** select from

- Brown & Barlow case 15
- Kesey: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*. (and/or the DVD of the same title)
- Kaysen: Girl Interrupted (and/or the DVD)

**DEADLINE FOR COURSEWORK** 1 (Essay, or printed copy of presentation)

**Session 8**
Oct 15

**Psychosis: Schizophrenia**

Essential reading: Butcher et al, chapter 13 (Schizophrenia)

**Supplementary reading**

- Brown & Barlow case 16
- Lopez: *The Soloist* (or DVD)
- Nasar: *A Beautiful Mind* (or DVD)
- Helfgott & Tanskaya: *Love you to bits and pieces* (or DVD: Shine)

**Session 9**
Oct 22

**Psychosis: Bipolar disorder**

Essential reading: Butcher et al, chapter 7 (bipolar disorders sections)

**Supplementary reading**

- Brown & Barlow case 10
- Cheney: *Manic*
**Session 10**

**Childhood disorders**

**Essential reading:** Butcher et al, chapter 15 (Child and adolescent disorders)

**Supplementary reading**

- C Brown & Barlow case 17
- C Oltmanns et al, chapter 21
- C Isaacson: *The Horse Boy* (or the DVD)

**Session 11**

**Treatments and their efficacy: Psychodynamic therapies**

**Essential reading:** Butcher et al, chapter 16 (Therapy)

**Supplementary reading** select from

- C Freud: Case Histories 1: Dora
- C Barnes & Berke: Mary Barnes

Freud Life & Work: [http://www.freudfile.org/](http://www.freudfile.org/)  *This website is a convenient source of basic Freudian psychoanalytic concepts for those who would like an introduction or overview.*

**Session 12**

**Treatments and their efficacy: CBT, positive psychology and other approaches.**

**Essential reading:** Butcher et al, chapter 16 (Therapy)

**Supplementary reading.** Select from

Seligman, M. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. Positive Psychology (use link:)
[http://www.msu.edu/~dwong/CEP991/CEP991Resources/Seligman-PositivePsych.doc](http://www.msu.edu/~dwong/CEP991/CEP991Resources/Seligman-PositivePsych.doc)

Authentic happiness websites for tests, examples, training (use links):
[http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/Default.aspx](http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/Default.aspx)

**Session 13**

**Religious and spiritual coping.**

**Essential Reading:** Hill, P. & Pargament, K. (2003) Advances in the Conceptualization and Measurement of Religion and Spirituality: Implications for Physical and Mental Health Research

**Supplementary reading:** select from:

Loewenthal chapter 4 pp 60-67.


**Session 14**  
Dec 3

Applying what you have learned (class discussions of case histories and other examination topics)

**Essential Reading:** Brown & Barlow: cases 18, 19, 20.

**DEADLINE FOR COURSEWORK 2** (PRINTED COPY OF PRESENTATION, OR AN ESSAY)

**Note NO CLASS ON MAY 17**

**Session 15**  
Dec 10

EXAMINATION

**Classroom Etiquette**

Toilet breaks should be taken before or after class or during class breaks.

Food & drink, including gum, are not to be consumed in class.

Mobile phones should be set on silent and should not be used in class unless in emergencies.

Laptops, IPads and Tablets are only to be used with the express permission of the teacher.

Please kindly dispose of rubbish in the bins provided.

**Required Co-curricular Activities**

None. It will be understood that there are significant ethical problems involved with groups of students entering and observing psychiatric treatment facilities, so unfortunately such visits cannot be arranged. Illustrative video material will be shown in class, and (optionally) you might wish to look at YouTube which can be a valuable source of personal accounts.

**Suggested Co-curricular Activities**

Students will be advised of any public lectures, exhibitions and seminars of interest, as they come to the attention of the course leader. These will be optional.

**Your Instructor**

Kate Loewenthal: Kate taught psychology at Royal Holloway (formerly Bedford College) for over thirty years, and has also taught in the University of Wales at Bangor, the City University, and Kings College London. Her research has focused on social factors in mental health. She is interested in how religious factors can affect mental health. She has been involved a range of community work. She has published several books (the last to appear was Religion, Culture and Mental Health: Cambridge) and numerous articles, edits the journal Mental Health, Religion and Culture, and is frequently invited to speak at conferences and professional training sessions.