

Psyc 250: <b>Course Outline</b> Fall 2007
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**INSTRUCTORS:**

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## **I. Texts:**

Davison, G.C., Neale, J.M., Blankstein, & Flett (2005; 2nd Canadian Ed.) *Abnormal Psychology: Canadian edition*. N.Y.: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

## **Course Aims:**

This course provides an overview of the field of Abnormal Psychology including the basic methods of research used in this field, the current method of classifying disorders (DSM-IV), the nature of the most salient mental disorders and the current status of the treatment methods in use. The unique status of abnormal psychology in Canada and the relationship between this field and Canadian law will also be addressed.

## **Course Objectives:**

### **Intended Learning Outcomes**

A student who completes this course should, through discussion, tests, and written research, be able to demonstrate knowledge of the following topics:

1. The history of abnormal psychology and the Canadian Mental Health System.
2. The current paradigms and theories that aim at explaining the cause and treatment of mental disorders.
3. The nature of the DSM and the classification of mental disorders.
4. Procedures and methods of assessing mental health.
5. Current research methods used in the study of abnormal psychology.
6. Current models of cause and treatment for the following categories of mental disorders: anxiety, somatoform, eating, mood, schizophrenic, substance-abuse, personality, sexual and gender disorders.
7. The field of health psychology and psychoneuroimmunology.
8. The relationship between the field of abnormal psychology and the Canadian legal and criminal justice systems.



**Presumed Knowledge:**

## **Presumed Knowledge for Psychology 250**

In order to get the most out of Psychology 215, An Introduction to Biopsychology the following are recommended:

Knowledge

A basic understanding of the various fields and activities of psychology. See for example the homepage of the American Psychological Association <http://www.apa.org/>

or

the Canadian Psychological Association  
<http://www.cpa.ca/>

and the various divisions and activities listed there

Some basic understanding the structure of the brain would be useful. The brain is constructed of neurons, various centres of the brain perform different functions, etc. Have a look at:

<http://faculty.washington.edu/chudler/introb.html>

I know it says ♦ neuroscience for kids ♦ but it is a good foundation in biopsychology.

Some understanding of very basic chemistry would be very useful, ions, osmosis, etc. Again

Chem4kids <http://www.chem4kids.com/>

has all the basic background that you should need. A bit more advance is the

Chemistry Basics site:

<http://chem.neopages.com/tutorials/basc.shtml>

The whole field of psychology is based on the scientific method and its various research methods. For an introduction to the scientific method try here:

[http://teacher.nsrj.rochester.edu/phy\\_labs/AppendixE/AppendixE.html](http://teacher.nsrj.rochester.edu/phy_labs/AppendixE/AppendixE.html)

or

[http://home.xnet.com/~blatura/skep\\_1.html](http://home.xnet.com/~blatura/skep_1.html)

or

[http://koning.ecsu.ctstateu.edu/Plants\\_Human/simeth.html](http://koning.ecsu.ctstateu.edu/Plants_Human/simeth.html)

I would be good to have some basic understanding of several basic human functions that have been investigated by psychology: for example

Memory:

The San Francisco Exploratorium memory exhibit: <http://www.exploratorium.edu/memory/>

Perception:

# The Joy of Visual Perception

<http://www.yorku.ca/eye/noframes.htm>

Tutorials in Sensation and Perception

[http://psych.hanover.edu/Krantz/sen\\_tut.html](http://psych.hanover.edu/Krantz/sen_tut.html)

Disorders, etc.

This site has links to a variety of relevant topics including basic information of a number of mental disorders:

<http://cep.jmu.edu/psychology/neuro/>

For a basic on-line review of psychology including videos click here:


<http://cybersisman.com/aepsychology1a/>

For many links that preview topics taught in this course:

<http://www.univ.trieste.it/~brain/NeuroBio/Neuroscienze%20per%20tutti/ehceduc.html>

[These prerequisites would usually be covered by taking Camosun Psychology 110 and one of 120, 130, 150, or 164.]

Skills:

The most important skill in any science course is being able to find current information about what is going on in the field from primary sources. This used to be called  library

research ♦ and now would be called  
Internet/library research I guess.

Here is a tutorial that includes video from the Cornell library:

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/tutorial.html>

Here are some hints from the APA site:

<http://www.apa.org/science/lib.html>

And here are tips for using PsycInfo  
from their web site:

<http://www.apa.org/psycinfo/training/>

Writing a Research Paper:

Hopefully you will have written a  
research paper with some guidance  
in an English course. For review try  
here:

A Guide for Writing Research Papers  
based on Styles Recommended by  
The American Psychological Association

[http://webster.commnet.edu/apa/apa\\_index.htm](http://webster.commnet.edu/apa/apa_index.htm)

Writing a Research Paper Purdue Univ.

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/ResearchW/>

Ten steps in writing a research paper

<http://library.ust.hk/serv/skills/ibskill.html>

### **Dr. Gwen's Research Paper Information Page**

<http://www.fccj.org/LearningResources/DrGwen/research.htm>

[These prerequisites would usually be met by taking an English course in which a research paper is written (Camosun English 150), or another course where such a paper is produced]

### **Computer and Internet Skills**

Much that is helpful for this course is online. We don't do anything that you can't learn as we go, but it would be very helpful if you knew how to use a keyboard with 10 fingers (type); find information on the Internet, and create and send files using a word processor and email system.

[These days many of these skills are picked up by having an Internet linked computer in the home, or taking a course such as Camosun Comp 156.]

Attitudes:

To get much out of a course like this you need to possess the basic attitudes of science. You need to be open to new ideas, willing to subject your beliefs to testing, you need to see learning new stuff as just about as much fun as a person can have and you need to be willing to do all this publicly.

See also:

Values and attitudes in science:

<http://isis.csu Hayward.edu/ALSS/soc/NAN/scivals.htm>

American Scientist site:

<http://www.americanscientist.org/>



## **II. Course Description**

For the calendar description of this course click [here](#).



**Psychology 250, Psychopathology, is a second year course designed for university transfer students who intend to continue their education in psychology, social science or related fields. It could also prove interesting and useful to anyone with an interest in human behaviour and its vicissitudes. This course looks at various models of the cause of "abnormal" behaviour, methods of diagnosing and classifying abnormal behaviour, several syndromes and various methods of treating and preventing them.**

### **III. Course Requirements:**

Psychology 250 is a second year course so we will make certain assumptions about your background in psychology and your intellectual and research skills. We will assume that you have a general grounding in psychology including methods of research, the basics of schools or approaches to psychology, and an overview of the content areas of psychology such as sensation, perception, learning, abnormal, developmental, social, etc. If we mention the difference between correlational research and experimental research or the relationships between sensation and perception we will assume that no explanation is needed, but don't hesitate to ask

questions about these or other topics that are not clear to you.

**We also assume that you have written a research paper, are somewhat skilled at finding primary source material in a library or on the Internet and understand the rules of citing sources in research papers. You may not be familiar with the intricacies of APA (American Psychological Association) style, but we assume that you are familiar with some style and can adapt to APA style. For a quick overview of APA paper style try [Psych Web by Russ Dewey](#).**

#### **IV. Course Organization**

This course is organized around two methods of teaching and learning. The first is quite traditional involving lectures, seminars, written assignments, and tests. The second involves using computers and the Internet to facilitate research, self study and communication with the instructor, me, other students and perhaps others in other parts of the world who are researching similar topics.

**We will offer you the opportunity to use computers extensively in this course. All of you will be registered in the WebCT resource facility for this course where you will find learning aids.**

For some basics on computer ethics have a look at the [Camosun Computer Users Ethic Policy](#)

Perhaps the most important tool in psychology, in science in general, is critical thinking. We live in a world that is virtually awash with ideology, propaganda and general bs. Science is a tool that offers some suggestions for ways to clean your lenses so you can have a better look at the world as it is rather than the way you have been conditioned to believe it is.

#### V. Marking

<b>ASSIGNMENTS A</b>	
Weekly Assignments + Practice Tests	20%
Article Review	10%
Mid-Term Exam	20%
Second Exam	20%
Research Paper	30%

## Marking System

<b>A+</b>	<b>90%-100%</b>	<b>B-</b>	<b>70%-72%</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>85%-89%</b>	<b>C+</b>	<b>65%-69%</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>80%-84%</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>60%-64%</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>77%-79%</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>50%-59%</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>73%-76%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>0-49%</b>

## ASSIGNMENTS

In general all work and assignments must be handed in on the due date. If an emergency or serious problem comes up prior to the exam or due date you may apply for an extension. This must be done in person before, preferably well before, the date in question. All written work should be typed, preferably on a word processor. Work occasionally goes missing at an institution so you are responsible for keeping a copy of all work handed in. All work must be handed to me in person. Work will be handed back during class. All written work must be in APA format.

## WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS

Each week there will be an assignment that can usually be done in a variety of ways. To obtain credit for the weekly assignments you need to bring the results of your work to seminar (typed in advance), hand it in and participate in the discussion about the assignment. If you have posted this on the WebCT bulletin board you don't need to print it as we can access it from class. Sometimes the weekly assignment is as simple as reading the assigned chapter, writing a

question or two about what you have read, and bringing it to seminar. Some weeks there are several options. Some assignments involve doing some research either in the library or on the Internet and sharing that information with others. Each assignment will be posted in WebCT.

## ARTICLE REVIEW

The basis of most research in psychology is in knowing the nature of what has come before. Most research is designed to test a theory (explanatory model) by devising an experiment or set of observations that would develop in a particular direction if the theory is correct. But a theory is never created wholly out of the present, it is based on the past, on previous thinking and experimentation. Most research reports begin with a review of previous literature. This assignment involves obtaining some previous literature, from a psychological journal, and summarizing it briefly. This involves reading something about a topic, searching an index, usually "Psychological Abstracts", obtaining a copy of the article, reading it, and summarizing it. You don't need to summarize every aspect of the article. We are only interested in the "theory" or explanatory model the study is investigating. The authors won't label the theory, but they will usually present their thinking on what causes what in the introduction and conclusion. You can set it to search for only "full text" articles in "academic journals." In either case this assignment will run to about 250 words. Note: Make sure that your article has to do with the topic of this course: "Abnormal Psychology."

## EXAMS

There will be two exams during the course. The midterm exam, about half way through, will cover the material to that point. It will include multiple choice questions, charts, short answer and essay questions. Use of the study guide and the "goals" linked to each lecture will prove useful in studying for these exams. At the end of the course there will be a second exam that covers the second half of the course material.

# RESEARCH (REVIEW) PAPER

A review paper is one that gathers the most recent relevant information about a topic, organizes it and presents a summary of findings. A typical topic would be the current state of theories or models of the cause of schizophrenia. A writer would find several primary source articles, organize their content and present a summary that basically answers the question: "what is the current state of the field with regard to a model of the etiology of schizophrenia?" There may be several competing theories in which case the paper would be organized along the lines of a compare and contrast paper that draws conclusions. This paper should be a minimum of five pages or about 1200 words exclusive of the title page, abstract, and reference list. It should include several sources, mostly primary sources. Textbooks, encyclopedias, and the like are not appropriate sources for research papers and would be used only in rare circumstances. The reference list should contain only sources actually used for the paper, no filler please.

The library also offers a course in doing library research that includes an on-line component. This will include the very valuable skill of how to do a Psychological Abstracts search via the computer. I highly recommend this course.



To: [Psychology Home Page](#)



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