

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**COURSE OUTLINE (2023/2024, SEMESTER I)**

**1. Basic Course Information**

<b>Course Code</b>	PSYC7309/7319
<b>Course Title</b>	<b>Abnormal Psychology/Introduction to Psychopathology</b>
<b>Course Credits</b>	6
<b>Lecture Time &amp; Venue</b>	<b>Thursday 3:30pm-6:20pm; Venue: LE2</b>

**2. Course Instructor / Course Co-ordinator**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Office</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Consultation Hour</b>
Dr. Frances JIN, PhD, Clinical Psychology (Instructor)	6.61, JCT	<a href="mailto:frances.jin@hku.hk">frances.jin@hku.hk</a>	By appointment
Mr. Justin AU (Tutor and Course Co-ordinator)	6.19, JCT	<a href="mailto:justyno@hku.hk">justyno@hku.hk</a>	By appointment <a href="http://justyno.setmore.com">http://justyno.setmore.com</a>

**3. Course Description**

This course introduces the modern concepts of psychopathology and clinical sciences. It covers topics on the foundations of psychopathology, core features, conceptualization, and treatment models of major mental disorders. Relevance in everyday life, cultural issues and controversies will form part of the discussion.

**4. Course Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the basic concepts and models of psychopathology. Students will be able to critically evaluate scientific evidence on major forms of psychopathology and the theories behind interventions. Course assignments are also designed for students to think deeper about the conceptualization of psychological problems and apply acquired knowledge about evidence-based models. Students will also be encouraged to reflect on their own assumptions and biases regarding mental health issues.

## 5. Course Contents and Topics

Week	Date	Textbook chapter	Content
1	7/9	Ch. 1	Course Introduction and Psychopathology in Historical Context
2	14/9	Ch. 2-3	An Integrative Approach to Psychopathology
3	21/9	Ch. 4	Psychopathology Research (Guest speaker)
4	28/9	Ch. 7	Depressive and Bipolar Disorders (I)
5	5/10	Ch. 7	Depressive and Bipolar Disorders (II)
6	12/10	Ch. 5	<i>Mid-term Test</i> Anxiety, Stressor-Related, and Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders part I
7	19/10		Reading Week – No Class Public Information Hunt!
8	26/10	Ch. 5	Anxiety, Stressor-Related, and Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders part II
9	2/11	--	<i>Group Presentations</i>
10	9/11	Ch. 8	Eating Disorders (Guest speaker)
11	16/11	Ch. 13	Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders
12	23/11	Ch. 14 (ASD)	Autism Spectrum Disorder (Guest speaker)
13	30/11	Ch. 11	Substance Related Disorders
14	07/12	--	<i>End of Term Test</i> Round Table Discussion

## 6. Assessment Methods and Weighting

Assessment methods	Weighting in final course grade (%)
In-class group presentations	25
Public education article	35
Mid-term test	15
End of term test	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

### In-class group presentations (25%)

Each group will be responsible for **one** in-class presentation (topics will be provided at the beginning of the semester) and each presentation should last for no longer than 15 minutes. The purpose of the group presentation is to facilitate the application of knowledge learned in the course and expand on other mental health issues not covered directly in the lectures.

### Public education article (35%):

While the scope of duties for mental health professionals may commonly be associated with conducting assessments and providing treatments to patients, their role extends beyond that. It is not uncommon to see mental health professionals being interviewed in newspapers or on live TV shows, as they offer valuable insights and expertise on a range of topics. By providing accurate information and dispelling myths and misconceptions about mental health, we can help to reduce stigma and improve access to care for those in need.

During reading week, we would like to invite our student to perform a public information hunt to explore mental health awareness in Hong Kong. In this non-graded activity, students will explore Hong Kong to find public information materials related to mental health issues, such as ads at MTR stations or posters in public spaces. They will then analyse the materials from an information receiver's perspective, considering factors like message clarity, choice of target audience, visual appeal, and overall impact. Students will bring their findings to the following week's discussion session to share with the class, fostering a group discussion on the effectiveness of public education materials on mental health issues. This activity serves as a warm-up exercise for the upcoming public education article assignment.

Each student will then turn in a written document designed for public education. The student chooses one topic covered by the lecture (but not by the group presentations). The assignment will be submitted via Moodle.

The goal of this public education article assignment is to train your ability to educate the public about a mental disorder of your choice. How you would approach to creating public education material would be very different from how you would approach an academic writing assignment. The document should include the following two parts: (a) the plan of the information to be included in the article, organised into sections, and the rationale behind your plan - this is your proposal outlining your strategy for effective communication. This includes identifying your target audience, explaining why you have chosen this particular group, and detailing how you plan to select and present relevant information to them. Essentially, this section of the assignment is where you outline your communication plan.; and (b) the actual article - executing the plan outlined in part (a) to create the final product. The word limit of this assignment is strictly 2500 words, 1000 words for part (a) and 1500 words for part (b). **The deadline for submission is 11:59 pm on Dec the 11<sup>th</sup> 2023.** Late submission will have 1% deducted for every 24 hours.

### Mid-term test (15%)

Mid-term test will take the format of multiple-choice questions. The time is 1 hr at the beginning of that day's class time. It will cover the required textbook chapters and/or required research papers if apply, as well as materials covered in the lecture.

### End of term test (25%)

End of term test will take the format of both multiple-choice questions and short answer questions. The time is 2 hr starting at the beginning of that day's class time. It will cover the required textbook chapters and required research papers if apply, as well as materials covered in the lecture. The end of term test is cumulative, with a higher weight on the materials covered after the mid-term test.

## **7. Required/Recommended Readings & Online Materials**

- Textbook: Barlow, Durand, and Hofmann. (2023). Psychopathology: An Integrative Approach to Mental Disorders (9<sup>th</sup> Ed.).
- Selected journal articles and additional readings for specific topics will be recommended for further understanding of specific topics.

## **8. Feedback Policy**

Please note that the course includes an in-class discussion (about 1 hr) during which students are encouraged to ask questions and actively engage in the discussion. In addition, *consultation hours* are set up for individual meetings by appointment. Students are welcome to set up appointments with the teaching team shall you require individual progress check.

## **9. Important Notes**

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in any form of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating on exams, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, interfering with grading, falsification and fabrication of data in any academic exercise etc.) will receive a grade of F on the component(s) of assessment concerned or in this course and will be reported to the Department/Faculty Office/University Disciplinary Committee for further disciplinary action. There will be no exceptions. If you are not sure what constitutes the academic offense of plagiarism, checkout the webpage at <https://tl.hku.hk/plagiarism/>. Department of Psychology has formulated departmental policies/guidelines on student misconduct. Visit the website at <https://psychology.hku.hk/useful-information-to-current-students/> for more information.

### **Plagiarism**

A softcopy is required for all written assignments. The softcopy will be checked for plagiarism against a database of articles, books, webpages, and essays submitted by students at HKU and other universities. No credit will be given for an assignment that contains plagiarized materials. Further penalties will also be applied. These penalties include a zero mark for participation in course tutorials and a zero mark for the course. Plagiarism will also be reported to Department/Faculty Office/University Disciplinary Committee for consideration of possible disciplinary action.

### **Student Etiquette**

Your cooperation is necessary in maintaining a productive environment for everyone's learning. By taking this course, you agree to abide by these classroom expectations:

- Be punctual in lectures and tutorials so that the teaching/learning process will not be disrupted.
- If you have a question or a comment, share it with the whole class or within your group in designated discussion times.
- Keep your electronic devices on silent mode.

### **Academic difficulties**

Some students may regularly experience academic difficulty because of trouble managing time effectively, an inability to adequately prepare for exams, or anxiety associated with test-taking. Centre of Development and Resources for Students (CEDARS) offers programs to enhance study effectiveness and stress management. Students experiencing difficulties due to sensory or physical handicaps should notify the instructor; an attempt will be made to accommodate the special learning needs. Students in this situation are also encouraged to contact CEDARS for supportive services.

### **Make-up exam policy**

If you were too sick to write a test, and you have a valid medical certificate stating explicitly that you are unable to write the test on the date, you may be given the opportunity to write a make-up test in a format that may differ from the test taken by the class **within 1 week** after the supposed date of the test.