



Department of Psychology
Psychology 431(L01) – Current issues in Psychopathology
Fall 2010 – Course Outline

Instructor:	David Hodgins, Ph.D.	Lecture Location:	SH288
Phone:	403-220-3371	Lecture Days/Time:	Tues. 14:00-15:15 Thurs. 14:00-15:15
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Office:	Administration 264		
Office Hours:	After class or by appointment		

Course Description and Goals

Discussion of current developments and controversies in the assessment, etiology, and treatment of psychopathology. Emphasis will be on teaching students how to strengthen their critical thinking skills using controversial issues in the field of abnormal and clinical psychology as a basis for discussion and debate.

Prerequisites

Psyc 312 – Experimental Design and Quantitative Methods for Psychology, and
Psyc 385 – Abnormal Psychology

Required Text

Halgin, R.P. (2009). Taking Sides: Clashing views on controversial issues in abnormal psychology (5th Edition). Dushkin/MacGraw Hill. Available in the University Bookstore. Other reading are available to download through the University of Calgary Library.

Evaluation

1. 25% of your mark will be based on a multiple choice and short essay question mid-term exam scheduled during class time. The exam will cover all material covered in class prior to the exam date (up to, and including Oct 14), together with corresponding text chapters and assigned readings.
2. 35% of your mark is based on a class presentation/debate. A team of 2 people will debate another team of 2 people on a contentious issue in clinical psychology. A position paper must be submitted **at the time of the presentation**.
3. 30% of your mark is based on a final 2-hour exam scheduled by the Registrar during the final examination period. The exam will consist of multiple choice and essay questions from the text, class presentations and lectures. The exam will cover all material presented during the debates, together with information covered in team position papers (which will be posted on blackboard).

4. 10% of your mark will be based upon a 5- 8 page Positive Psychology assignment. This assignment will be described in class and on Blackboard. The assignment is due on November 2.

Points will be deducted for any papers handed in late. Late papers must be turned in to the Psychology main office, 275 Administration Building. Late papers will be subjected to a 10% penalty per day, including weekends.

Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor’s discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

Attendance

Exam content will be based on the assigned readings from the textbook, and on any topic covered during lecture, this includes class presentations by your peers. It is unlikely that students will be able to do well in this course if they miss the lecture component. Changes in the syllabus are *probable* at the discretion of the instructor, and if you miss classes being up-to-date on new deadlines and/or material is entirely your responsibility. If you must be absent, please arrange to get notes from other classmates. Lecture notes will be posted on the blackboard AFTER each lecture. Students are allowed to audio-tape record my lectures for this course.

Tentative Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic/Activity/Readings	Readings
Sep 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course overview Discuss debate topics, format, choosing debate teams Is Psychological debriefing a harmful intervention for survivors of trauma? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Halgin Issue 3
Sep 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debate teams announce topics (have 2 potential topics) and get scheduled Positive psychology Implications for treatment of psychopathology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigned readings
Sep 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Debate Schedule finalized Positive psychology- continued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigned readings
Sep 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should abstinence be the goal for treating people with alcohol problems? Where does harm reduction fit it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Halgin Issue 7 Assigned reading
Sep 24	Last day to drop a course with no W grade and	

	tuition refund.	
Sep 27	Last day for registration/change of registration.	
Sep 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What should the DSM-5 look like? Issues in diagnosis of mental disorders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned readings
Sep 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued 	
Oct 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is birth order effect on intelligence real? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned readings
Oct 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should psychologists prescribe medication? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Halgin Issue 11
Oct 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are some psychological therapies harmful? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned readings
Oct 14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is emotional intelligence really a form of intelligence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned readings
Oct 19	Midterm	
Oct 21	Video Game Addiction (Guest Lecturer – Dr. Vakili)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned reading
Oct 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gambling Addiction. Creating a problem and treating it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned readings
Oct 28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued 	
Nov 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued • Positive Psychology Assignment due. 	
Nov 4	Debate 1	
Nov 9	Debate 2	
Nov 11	Remembrance Day. No lecture.	
Nov 16	Debate 3	
Nov 18	Debate 4	
Nov 23	Cultural Issues (Guest Lecturer – Dr. Goghari)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assigned reading
Nov 25	Debate 5	
Nov 30	Debate 6	
Dec 2	Debate 7	
Dec 7	Debate 8	
Dec 8	Last day to participate in research and allocate research credits.	
Dec 9	Debate 9	
Dec 10	Last day to withdraw.	
	Final Exam to be scheduled by Registrar	

Rationale: Presentations at 400-level psychology courses are common. The experience can be invaluable in preparing you for future oral reports, whether for graduate school, professional school or work settings. Some of the material in Psychology 431 lends itself to a debate-style presentation. The textbook is organized in a pro/con format. For every topic in the text, there is compelling evidence on both sides of the issue. There is no right or wrong answer to each issue. Rather, the debates provide the opportunity to review evidence in detail (i.e., sort out opinion/myth from fact), promote discussion and critical evaluation of the issue.

Format: A team of 2 people will debate another team of 2 people on a contentious issue in

abnormal or clinical psychology. Twenty to 25 minutes is allotted for each team's presentation and 5 to 10 minutes for each team's rebuttal. The order of speakers will be 1) Yes side – main presentation, 2) No side – main presentation, 3) Yes side – rebuttal, 4) No side – rebuttal. 5) Class discussion.

Your presentation should be delivered via powerpoint. A copy of your powerpoint presentation will be posted on blackboard for your classmates to study from. You don't need to provide extensive background on the topic selected except how it pertains to your side of the issue. The debates are intended to be enjoyable, so feel free to use cartoons, video clips, class demonstrations, etc. However, it is important to keep them professional. During the Rebuttal, choose a few major points the other side presented and attempt to dispute them with your evidence or arguments. Your rebuttals should be based on logic, and opposing data, not just on opinion that is not based on evidence. During the Class discussion, questions from the class can be directed at one or both groups. At the end of each debate the class will evaluate each team on the quality of presentation, soundness of arguments, and use of supporting materials on a 10 point scale, with space for comments. These ratings will not be used for the grade assignment. Each team will be provided with the class rating averages, a summary of the comments and feedback

Paper: A 10 to 12 page (double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman) position paper must be submitted at the time of the presentation (each team hands in ONE paper, which you have both contributed to writing). The paper gives you the opportunity to expand on your presentation points in greater detail. Please note that is not sufficient to use the argument that the "research is flawed" to support your side. All research is flawed in some way. Provide specific criticisms of why research on the topic is flawed, and how this affects the credibility of the evidence. Whenever possible, look at the preponderance of evidence (e.g., results from meta-analyses) and not just one or two studies that have findings supporting your position. The paper should be in APA format and have at least 8 to 10 references. Please review primary source material (original articles) in addition to secondary sources. Use headings to structure the text please! You can use tables to summarize arguments or specific evidence, however the bulk of the paper should be written in complete sentences like a regular term paper. An electronic copy of the paper should also be submitted. It will be posted on Blackboard for the other students to download and study from.

Choosing a topic: You may choose any of the topics from your textbook for your presentation, EXCEPT for the topics that have been chosen for lectures. New research is published on these topics on a regular basis, so don't restrict your coverage of the issue to data presented in the chapters. Selection of the topic is first come, first served. Once you have your group together, provide me with your 1st and 2nd choices for topic (name of topic and whether you want pro or con side). You can also choose a topic that does not appear on the list but you will need to find another team of students willing to debate the other side of the issue. All topics are finalized on the date listed in the lecture schedule.

Group work: The majority of students have no problems working together in preparing for the presentations. However, occasionally a team experiences problems within their group. The most common concern I hear is that one person in the group is not doing his or her share. A few suggestions to prevent this from happening are:

1. Divide the work up logically with clear expectations on length and quality.
2. Set deadlines in advance of the presentation date to review the material within your group. For example, if you are each writing a section of the paper, have it ready at least one week before the due date to review, edit, and condense the material to everyone's satisfaction.
3. Have open discussions on how the work is going and who in the group should be doing more or less. Electing a team leader is not a bad idea provided the individual delegates work equally and is not expecting to do everything him or herself.
4. Please be mindful of individual strengths and weaknesses. Some students are better writers, while others are better at public speaking. Divide up the work according to the strengths of your

group members. I do suggest, however, that both teams members participate in the presentation. If you are experiencing problems within your group and can not resolve them internally **please talk to me well before the presentation date!** We can probably work out a solution. Please do not wait until after the presentation is done and the paper is submitted to tell me about the problem.

Grading for debate portion:

Your overall grade will be based of quality of the presentation, soundness of arguments, and use of supporting material. The total 30 marks for the debate breaks down as follows:

- 20 marks for the paper (writing, organization, consistent use of APA style)
- 5 marks for the quality of presentation (e.g., use of A/V aids, organization, clarity of speakers, flow of the presentation, rebuttal comments)
- 5 marks for soundness of arguments (use of empirical evidence vs. opinions, use of material outside of textbook chapter).

Failing to present on the scheduled date would result in a loss of 5% of the total course mark. Papers not handed in at the time of presentation would result in a loss of 1% of the total course mark for each day late.

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Absence From A Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam.

Course Credits for Research Participation (Max 2% of final grade)

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in Departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. **A maximum of two credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to the student's final grade. Students earn 0.5% (0.5 credits) for each full 30 minutes of participation.** The demand for timeslots may exceed the supply in a given term. Thus, students are not guaranteed that there will be enough studies available to them to meet their credit requirements. Students should seek studies early in the term and should frequently check for open timeslots. Students can create an account and participate in Departmentally approved research studies at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>. The last day to participate in studies and to assign or reassign earned credits to courses is **Dec 8th, 2010**.

Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>. Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic: Phone: 403-220-3911 suvpaca@ucalgary.ca

Student Union Faculty Rep.: Phone: 403-220-3913 socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course with no "W" notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund** is **Sep 24th, 2010**. Last day for registration/change of registration is Sep 27th, 2010. The last day to withdraw from this course is **Dec 10th, 2010**.