

Course Objectives/Course Outline
Spokane Community College

Course Title: Abnormal Psychology
Prefix and Course Number: PSYCH& 220

Course Description:

This course provides a comprehensive overview of the complex phenomena of mental disorders and abnormal behavior. Relevant terminology, etiology, diagnosis and treatment will be examined.

Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, a student should be able to:

- Provide students with an understanding of “psychopathology” that includes
- an articulation of a definition and knowledge of its place in historical and current society
- Familiarize students with multiple causes of abnormal behavior as viewed from a number of different theoretical perspectives
- Offer a framework for understanding assessment, classification and diagnosis of mental disorders
- Discuss intervention strategies and appreciate legal and ethical issues relevant to professionals who provide services to persons with mental disorders

Course Outline:

- I. Understanding Abnormal Behavior
 - A. Definition & history/milestones in the field
 - B. Research methods
 - C. Human experience - stigma, family and community impacts
 - D. Current trends in the field toward understanding abnormal behavior
- II. Classification and Diagnosis
 - A. Development and history of DSM classification system
 - B. Medical model
 - C. Multi-axial system
- III. Assessment
 - A. Mental status exam
 - B. Clinical interviews
 - C. Neurological assessment
 - D. Assessment tools and instruments
 - E. Psychological testing
- IV. Perspectives on abnormal behavior
 - A. Theories and approaches
 - B. Physiological
 - C. Psychodynamic

- D. Neo-Freudians
- E. Family Systems
- F. Humanistic and Existential
- G. Behavioral
- H. Cognitive
- I. Socio-cultural
- J. Neurosis vs. psychosis
- V. Treatment approaches to abnormal behavior
 - A. Individual
 - B. Marital & family
 - C. Group therapy
 - D. Biological treatment approaches – psychosurgery, medications, ECT
Community approaches – therapeutic community, partial hospitalization, case management
- VI. Disorder categories
 - A. Child, adolescent and developmental disorders
 - B. Cognitive disorders
 - C. Substance-related disorders
 - D. Psychotic disorders
 - E. Mood disorders
 - F. Anxiety disorders
 - G. Somatoform disorders
 - H. Factitious & dissociative disorders
 - I. Sexual and gender identity disorders
 - J. Eating & sleeping disorders
 - K. Personality disorders
 - L. Impulse control disorders
 - M. Adjustment disorders
 - N. Miscellaneous – V codes, medical-related disorders, other clinical issues
- VII. Law & ethics within the profession
 - A. Commitment processes (civil and criminal)
 - B. Confidentiality
 - C. Pt rights
 - D. Professional boundaries
 - E. Malpractice
 - F. Duty to warn
- VIII. Critical issues in abnormal behavior
 - A. Suicide
 - B. Domestic violence
 - C. Sex crimes
 - D. Child abuse
 - E. Culture & special populations
 - F. Overview of local resources & issues

