

**SYLLABUS\***  
**PSYCHOLOGY 405**  
**Mystery, Madness, and Murder**  
**Fall 2012**

Instructor: John Graybeal (jgraybea@masonlive.gmu.edu)

Class Hours/Location: June 3<sup>rd</sup> – July 25<sup>th</sup> 4:30 – 7:10 Tuesdays/Thursdays  
Robinson Hall A106

Office Hours: Tuesdays 7:20 - 8:20  
Also available by appointment.

Office Location: David King Hall 2064. If possible, tell me in advance to let me know you are coming, although drop-ins are always welcome. The door to this office is often closed – this does not mean that I am not available – please knock.

***REQUIRED TEXT:***

Kelley, Graybeal, & Mahoney, 2012. Substance Abuse Across the Lifespan – A Biopsychosocial Approach 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

\*This is a textbook that I coauthored, utilizing a case study approach to drug abuse. It is an easy read, designed to introduce the topic to beginners while covering advanced material. Many of the assignments, in addition to exam material, will come directly from the text. I will provide access for all additional readings.

***COURSE OBJECTIVES AND GOALS:***

The purpose of the synthesis course is to provide students with the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge, skills and values gained from the general education curriculum. Synthesis courses strive to expand students' ability to master new content, think critically, and develop life-long learning skills across the disciplines. Assigned readings and the independent research required for engaged participation will utilize and expand on research, communication, and writing skills acquired in other courses. The content of this course spans many disciplines and will allow students to begin to understand addiction's implications for the neuron, the mind, and society.

***TECHNOLOGY:***

Students will be expected to access and use Blackboard on a regular basis (<https://courses.gmu.edu/>). Important class information, such as the syllabus and assignment rubrics, will be posted here. To access Blackboard, students should use their George Mason email ID and password.

Official Communications via GMU E-mail: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of

university communication sent to their mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly. Be sure to check that new messages can be received and that you are not over the message limit. If anything important occurs (such as information about assignments, class cancellation, etc.) you will be notified via your GMU email.

#### *ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION:*

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss and apply the material. In order to make the most out of your learning experience, it is imperative that you are not only present at each class meeting, but are alert, attentive, and ready to learn. Students are required to read (before class) any texts that may be assigned for that week.

Throughout the semester we will have class discussions. You are responsible for being prepared to discuss the material and are expected to actively participate in discussion with your classmates about the material.

#### *GRADES:*

Grades will be based on your performance on a variety of academic work that will fall into the following categories:

**Exams:** This course will include two exams during the semester and one cumulative final exam. Some of you may have to miss an exam for legitimate reasons. In order to avoid deciding between what is a legitimate reason and what isn't, I will drop everyone's lowest exam score. Consequently, make-up exams will not be given except in extreme and well documented circumstances. Under *no* circumstances will a student be allowed to make up their first missed exam, this will *always* count as your dropped score.

**Formal Presentation:** As per university requirements, this class will include a formal presentation. More information will be given as the semester progresses, but know that this will require research and significant preparation.

**Formal Research Paper:** Students will turn in a formal research paper that follows APA format.

**Miscellaneous Activities:** Regular learning activities will be assigned, including short writing assignments, group discussions/practice debates and simple multiple choice assessments at the end of assigned chapters. While pop quizzes are not planned, I reserve the right to give them if I think the class is not actively participating (i.e. doing the readings, engaging in classroom discussion). Since every semester is different, I don't set a firm number of assignments that will be given in advance, but expect an activity about once a week and regular multiple choice questions about the readings. Make-up activities will only be allowed if you contact me prior to missing class or have documentation demonstrating the reason for your absence. Points possible in this category will slightly exceed the number of points you are responsible for, so you can still earn a 100% in this category if you miss one assignment. Completing all of the activities is the only way to earn extra credit.

#### *GRADE CALCULATION:*

*The following weights will be used to calculate final grades:*

Miscellaneous Activities	(30%)
Formal Research Paper	(15%)
Formal Presentation	(15%)
Exam 1	(20%)
Exam 2	(20%)

*Grade Breakdown:*

A+ 97 and up	B+ 89 – 87	C+ 79 – 77	D 69 - 60
A 93 – 97	B 86 – 83	C 76 – 73	F 59 and below
A- 92 – 90	B- 82 – 80	C- 72 - 70	

**HONOR CODE:**

All provisions of the GMU Honor Code will be followed in this class. Information regarding the Honor Code and what constitutes academic dishonesty can be found in the 2012-2013 University Catalog or online at the following website: <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/>.

*Late Work/Turning in Assignments*

Under normal circumstances, you will be expected to turn in assignments at the beginning of class in person. In the event that you cannot attend class, emailing me the assignment *prior to the start of class* is acceptable. I do accept late work via email, a flat rate of one letter grade (10%) per day late will be deducted, regardless of the assignment.

**DISABILITY HELP:**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES:**

\*Topics subject to change as needed to ensure that the majority of students are comfortable with material covered prior to moving to the next topic.

Date	Topic
<b>Week 1</b> June 4th	Syllabus, Course Introduction, Expectations, Start Chapter 1
June 6th	Finish Chapter 1, Start Chapter 2
<b>Week 2</b> June 11th	Finish Chapter 2, Start Chapter 3
June 13th	Finish Chapter 3, Review
<b>Week 3</b> June 18th	Exam I, Start Chapter 4
June 20th	Finish Chapter 4, Start Chapter 5
<b>Week 4</b> June 25th	Finish Chapter 5, Start Chapter 6
June 27th	Miscellaneous Material

