
George Mason University

Course: PSYC 414 Behavior Disorders of Childhood
Instructor: Ellen W. Rowe, Ph.D. (703) 993-4266, erowe@gmu.edu
Lecture: Monday & Wednesday 10:30 - 11:45 (Robinson A, Rm. 123)
Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30 – 3:30 and by appointment
Office Location: GMU Center for Psychological Services, 10340 Democracy Lane, Fairfax
(off of University Drive; behind the Safeway in Old Fairfax)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The main goal of this course is to provide students with the opportunity to apply and expand their knowledge of clinical science within the context of childhood psychopathology. This course draws on past coursework in developmental, child, abnormal, and bio-psychology in order build a framework for the evaluation of current research and practice within the field of child clinical psychology. Specifically, we will explore the symptoms commonly displayed by children diagnosed with disorders that impair their cognitive, social, emotional, and behavioral functioning. We will also examine the potential etiological explanations and various treatment options associated with these conditions.

By the end of this course, students should have a more comprehensive understanding of child mental health, the characteristics of the major disorders covered, and the issues that surround diagnosis and treatment. We will discover together that mental illness is, by nature, a spectrum, with individual children exhibiting to varying degrees different symptoms that may or may not lead to a diagnosis.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

We will cover most disorders over the course of two class periods. The first will typically involve review of the important elements from the text. The second class period will consist of in-class exercises or a presentation of information not covered, or not covered thoroughly, in the text.

TECHNOLOGY:

Students will be expected to access and use Blackboard on a regular basis. Important information, such as the syllabus and articles, will be posted here. To access Blackboard 9.1, log in at: <http://mymason.gmu.edu>, click on the Courses tab and locate your course link in the 9.1 Course List.

In addition, students should check their GMU email account regularly. Be sure to check that new messages can be received and that you are not over the message limit. You also have the option for your GMU account to be forwarded to another email address.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

You are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings and should come to class prepared to discuss and apply the material. Attendance is important because exam material will include content presented only in class such as articles reviewed from empirical journals and the media, as well as class exercises and discussion. You are responsible for acquiring any notes (from fellow students) from classes missed.

Class attendance will not be taken on a regular basis, but I will make note of class participation. Class participation includes active involvement in group discussion and quality work on in-class activities. Class participation will also count toward a portion of your final grade.

EXAMS:

There will be **4 exams** for this course and all will be non-cumulative. Each exam will be worth 100 points. Only **three** of the four exams will count toward the overall course grade. There will be **NO make-up exams** offered for this course. In the event that you are absent the day of an exam, that exam will count as your dropped score. Because there are four scheduled exams and only three of them count toward the overall course grade, you may choose to either:

- A) Take all four of the exams and drop your lowest exam grade
- OR
- B) Take only three of the four exams

The exams will cover material from class discussions/lecture and from the assigned readings from the textbook. Exams can include some combination of multiple choice and short answer questions. If GMU cancels classes on a test day for any reason, then the test will be given on the first day that classes resume.

ARTICLES:

Relevant journal articles will be assigned throughout the course. Articles must be read prior to the day of the class discussion. It is expected that students will come to class prepared to discuss the articles and have questions and comments about the articles. You will be responsible for the material from the articles and discussion for the exam. Articles will be available on blackboard or the information will be given for students to find it through the Library website.

You will be required to write two **two-page summaries** (a full two pages) of related articles. Options for these articles will be posted on Blackboard. The summaries must be submitted on the day they are due. They must be submitted by the beginning of class. **No Late Summaries will be accepted for any reason.** Remember that these articles are a substantial part of your grade and they will hurt your grade if they are not submitted. Be sure to attend class to get the latest information.

The summary must be typed (double-spaced), with 12-point font in Times New Roman, with 1-inch margins. If another font is used, points may be deducted. Each summary will be worth 30 points. The summary should include the main topic of the article, the author's main points, method (if applicable), and the authors' suggestions for future work. Also include at least a paragraph of your ideas and thoughts on the article (what you agree/disagree with) and what changes you would make. The rubric is available on blackboard.

HONOR CODE:

Compliance with the GMU Honor Policy is expected. All of the work that you do in this class is expected to be your own. Please refer to the University Honor Code if you have further questions about what is expected of you and your level of academic integrity:

<http://www.gmu.edu/departments/unilife/honorcode.html>

SPECIAL ISSUES:

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations (i.e. extended time, large type, etc.), please see me during the first week of class and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Because this course will touch on a variety of sensitive topics, it is expected that students will be respectful of one another in class discussions. If you find yourself experiencing difficulty associated with the content of this class, free

counseling services are available to all students through the **George Mason University Counseling Center** (SUB I, Room 364; 703-993-2380).

IMPORTANT DATES:

Last day to add - Jan. 31st

Last day to drop - Feb. 24th

REQUIRED TEXT:

Mash, E.J., & Wolfe, D.A. (2010). *Abnormal Child Psychology*, (4th ed.), Wadsworth Publishers, CA: Belmont

GRADING:

The final grade you receive for the course will be based on the following point delineation:

Exams (best 3 out of 4)	300
Article Reviews (30 points each)	60
Participation	<u>40</u>
Total	400

The total points earned will be divided by the total points possible, and then multiplied by 100 to establish the final grade. For example, if a student earns 340 points: $340/400 = .85$; student would earn a B.

The final grade will be determined on the following scale:

A+ = 97-100%

A = 93-100%

A- = 90-92%

B+ = 87-89%

B = 83-86%

B- = 80-82%

C+ = 77-79%

C = 73-76%

C- = 70-72%

D = 60-69%

F = <60%

COURSE OUTLINE*

*The schedule below is *tentative*. Dates/topics are subject to change. All modifications will be addressed in class with sufficient notice.

Date	Topic	Assignments/Readings Due
Jan. 23	Introduction, Orientation, Syllabus	
Jan. 25	Introduction to Normal & Abnormal Behavior	Chapter 1
Jan. 30	Theories and Causes	Chapter 2
Feb. 1	Research	Chapter 3
Feb. 6	Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment, Part 1	Chapter 4

Feb. 8	Assessment Diagnosis and Treatment, Part 2	TBA
Feb. 13	Exam 1, Chapters 1-4	
Feb. 15	Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Part 1	Chapter 5
Feb. 20	ADHD, Part 2	TBA
Feb. 22	No Class ; National Association of School Psychologists Annual Convention	Article Summary 1
Feb. 27	Conduct Problems, Part 1	Chapter 6
Feb. 29	Conduct Problems, Part 2	TBA
Mar. 5	Anxiety Disorders, Part 1	Chapter 7
Mar. 7	Anxiety Disorders, Part 2	TBA
Mar. 12	SPRING BREAK	
Mar. 14	SPRING BREAK	
Mar. 19	Mood Disorders, Part 1	Chapter 8
Mar. 21	Mood Disorders, Part 2	TBA
Mar. 26	Exam 2, Chapters 5-8	
Mar. 28	Intellectual Disability	Chapter 9
April 2	Autism Spectrum/PDD, Part 1	Chapter 10, pp. 300-328
April 4	Autism Spectrum/PDD, Part 2	TBA
April 9	Communication & Learning Disorders, Part 1	Chapter 11
April 11	Communication & Learning Disorders, Part 2	Article Summary 2
April 16	Childhood-onset Schizophrenia	Chapter 10, pp. 328-333
April 18	Exam 3, Chapters 9-11	
April 23	Health Related and Substance Abuse Disorders, Part 1	Chapter 12
April 25	Health Related and Substance Abuse Disorders, Part 2	TBA
April 30	Eating Disorders & Related Conditions	Chapter 13
May 2	Last Class-wrap up; Child Maltreatment & Non-accidental trauma	Chapter 14
Wednesday, May 5, 10:30-11:45	Final Exam, Chapters 12-14	