

DEPARTMENT Humanities and Social Sciences

COURSE OUTLINE - Fall 2025

PY3500(A2): Psychological Disorders of Childhood and Adolescence - 3 (3-0-0)

45 Hours for 15 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land, and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Denise Nowicki **PHONE:** 780-539-2792
OFFICE: C401 **E-MAIL:** dnowicki@nwpolytech.ca
OFFICE HOURS: Monday and Wednesday, 11:30 am – 12:30 pm, or by appointment

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: Students will examine the developmental, cognitive, biological, and behavioural processes involved in the development of various psychological disorders of children and adolescents with emphasis on causality, assessment, and treatment.

PREREQUISITE(S):

Completed the following:

- PY1040 - Basic Psychological Processes (3)
- PY1050 - Social and Individual Behaviour (3)

COREQUISITE(S):

None

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

- Israel, A.C., Malatras, J.W., & Wicks-Nelson, R. (2020). Abnormal Child and Adolescent Psychology (9th ed.). Routledge.
- Other readings as assigned

DELIVERY MODE(S): On-Campus

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Identify the various research methods for studying and understanding child and adolescent psychopathology.
- Describe major concepts and theoretical perspectives in the causes of psychological disorders of children and adolescents.
- Identify and describe the symptoms associated with each disorder based on the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – 5th Edition (DSM-5) criteria and behavioral/research models of diagnosis.
- Summarize the process of diagnosis and associated concerns.
- Identify and describe how cognitive, social, and emotional factors impact the development and the treatment of the various disorders.
- Explain the role of the biology and the environment in the causality, sustainability, and treatment of psychological disorders.
- Explain formal and informal assessment strategies used in the psychological assessment of children and adolescents.

TRANSFERABILITY:

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page

<http://www.transferralberta.alberta.ca>

**** For courses with alpha (letter) grading, a grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability**

EVALUATIONS:

Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Case Studies	30% (Students complete 2 of 4 Case Studies, 15% each)
Final Exam	30%

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most institutions will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

Grading Chart

Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines	Alpha Grade	4-point Equivalent	Percentage Guidelines
A+	4.0	95-100	C+	2.3	67-69
A	4.0	85-94	C	2.0	63-66
A-	3.7	80-84	C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	77-79	D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	73-76	D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-72	F	0.0	00-49

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE

Important Note: These discussion topics may be modified and/or other topics may be added. Please always check myClass for the most up-to-date information.

Schedule	Textbook and Assigned Readings	Case Studies	Exams
Sept. 3 & 8	Chapter 1 & 2: Introduction & The Developmental Psychopathology Perspective		
Sept. 10 & 15	Chapter 3: Biological and Environmental Contexts of Psychopathology		
Sept. 17	Chapter 4: Research: Its Role and Methods		
Sept. 22	Chapter 5: Classification, Assessment, and Intervention		
Sept. 24	Case Studies		
Sept 29	Exam One Chapters 1 – 5 and In-Class Discussions		Exam 1
Oct. 1 & 6	Chapter 10: Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder		
Oct. 8	Chapter 9: Conduct Problems		
<i>Oct. 12</i>		<i>Case Study One Due</i>	
Oct. 15 & 20	Chapter 6: Anxiety and Related Disorders		
Oct. 22 & 27	Chapter 7: Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders		
<i>Oct. 26</i>		<i>Case Study Two Due</i>	
Oct. 29 & Nov. 3	Chapter 8: Mood Disorders		
Nov. 5	Exam Two Chapters 6 – 10 and In-Class Discussions		Exam 2
Nov. 17 & 19	Chapter 11: Communication and Learning Disorders		
<i>Nov. 23</i>		<i>Case Study Three Due</i>	
Nov. 24 & 26	Chapter 12: Intellectual Disability (Intellectual Developmental Disorder)		
Dec. 1 & 3	Chapter 13: Autism Spectrum Disorder and Schizophrenia		
<i>Dec. 10</i>		<i>Case Study Four Due</i>	
Dec. 8 & 10	Assigned Readings: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)		
Dec. 13 - 20	Final Exam Chapters 11 – 13, FASD, In-Class Discussions, and Case Study: Scheduled by Registrar		Final Exam

1. **Academic Performance:** The assigned readings for each class must be completed before attending that class, except for the first class. As this course depends heavily on in-class discussion, attendance at all sessions is required and is critical to the student's success in the course. In case of illness or emergency, notify me as soon as possible.

If you find yourself having difficulty in this course, please contact me immediately for assistance. If you simply want more discussion with me about any aspect of the course, please visit my office during office hours or at a more convenient pre-arranged time.

2. **Case Studies:** Students will complete **two of the four provided** Case Studies. Each Case Study is worth 15% of the final grade, with a total of 30% of the final grade. The Case Study assignments will be discussed in class. Due dates can be found on the Course Schedule/Tentative Timeline on this course outline and on myClass.

DSM-5 diagnostic criteria for relevant disorders will be provided on myClass. It is **not** necessary for students to purchase a copy of the DSM-5.

3. **Exam Accommodations:** Exam accommodations are used by any number of students who struggle with processing and comprehending printed material, learning, and/or concentration (either due to the condition itself, or the effects of the medication which is used to treat the condition). Accommodations can also be sought by students with conditions that include but are not limited to mental health conditions, chronic illness, neurological disorders, visual disabilities, and motor disabilities.

If you require exam accommodations due to a disorder or condition, you must contact Accessibility Supports (in the Learning Commons (aka Library)). More information is available at: <https://libguides.nwpolytech.ca/learningcommons/AccessibilityServices>

Please note that when you contact an advisor, you will be asked to provide them with documentation supporting your request for accommodation(s). The advisors will inform me of your need for accommodation(s), and you will be responsible for arranging your exam session with Accessibility Supports at the scheduled exam time.

4. **Respectful Behavior:** It is expected that all students will display a professional attitude and behavior in the classroom. This includes reliability (e.g., arriving on time), respect for and cooperation with your fellow students and me, attention to questions and responses, determination to achieve first-class work while meeting deadlines, and constructive response to criticism.
5. **Missed Exams:** Exam dates are included on Course Schedule/Tentative Timeline on this course outline.

According to NWP policy, deferring a missed Exam is at the discretion of the instructor. In my courses, students who miss an exam because of illness, emergency,

or NWP obligation (verified) may write the exam at a later date (set by me - I will choose a date that is mutually convenient for me and the student). You will be required to provide documentation for your illness/emergency/NWP obligation.

When students miss the exam for reasons that do not include verified illness, emergency, or NWP obligations, a "0%" is assigned to that exam. Students who miss the exam without explanation will receive a "0%" on the exam.

Absences from a registrar-scheduled Final Exam fall under the NWP Examination Policy. It is the responsibility of the student to be informed about these policies prior to the final examination period:

If you miss the Final Exam due to illness, emergency or NWP obligation, you will be required to submit an application to the Registrar's office for permission to write a deferred exam and must do so within 48 hours of the scheduled exam time. You may defer the final exam for up to 20 days from the end of the examination period. You will be required to provide documentation for your illness.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/about/polytechnic-leadership/policies-directory>.

**Note: all Academic and Administrative policies are available on the same page.

- Instructors reserve the right to use electronic plagiarism detection services on written assignments. **Instructors also reserve the right to ban the use of any form of electronics (cell phones, iPods, tablets, scanning pens, electronic dictionaries, etc.) during class and during exams.**
- Machine learning systems, commonly referred to as "AI," are useful tools, but must be used appropriately and with caution. Students are developing knowledge and skills and should not outsource these to machines. In this course, you are encouraged to consider how these systems can help you find information and refine the presentation of your thoughts, but you will also be required to demonstrate that you have verified this information and are responsible for what you present.

All written work submitted for this course, unless otherwise noted, requires academic referencing in the most recent APA Style. This includes both in-text referencing and a source list (bibliography or references).

In-text referencing additionally requires specific page references for all paginated sources (sources with page numbers or in documents with identifiable page numbers, such as pdfs). APA does not normally require this unless it is a direct quotation, but this course requires it for all references.

Students are further required to submit representative images, photographs or scans of printed work and screenshots of the sources referenced. This should include a minimum of the title page and one page referenced in the student's work.

Works not meeting these requirements will be returned to the student ungraded. Students will be permitted to revise the work subject to a 10% penalty for the first revision and a 25% penalty for the second revision. Revised work which still fails to meet the requirements after a second revision will receive a 0% grade.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

1. The format of each exam will be discussed in class.
2. It is your responsibility to read each assigned chapter and assigned reading(s) (if any) before each class.
3. Lectures will not always cover material in your chapters. Lectures will cover topics and include materials that are not covered by your textbook. It is therefore imperative that you attend every class as your exams and Case Studies will include materials from the lectures that are not covered by your textbook.
4. It is expected that students will display a professional attitude and behaviour. These attitudes and behaviours are many and will be discussed in class. Any violation or misconduct may result in dismissal from the class.
5. Please come and talk with me if you have concerns or you are experiencing difficulties that may have a negative impact on your academic performance. I am here to support you towards the successful completion of this course.