

DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

COURSE OUTLINE – WINTER 2026

PY4390 (A3): Abnormal Psychology – 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. Ali M. AL-Asadi, R.Psych (AB)	PHONE:	780-539-2061
OFFICE:	C311B	E-MAIL:	aalasadi@nwpolytech.ca
OFFICE HOURS:	By appointments		

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION: This course focuses on understanding the concepts and theories underlying assessment, diagnosis and treatment modalities of various psychological disorders, with emphasis on the multimodal treatment approach.

PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE:

PY3330 - Personality (3) or permission of the instructor

REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:

- Hooley, J. M., Nock, M. K., & Butcher, J.N. (2021). Abnormal Psychology (18th Edition). Pearson Publishing.
- A collection of reading materials, articles, and other resources based on Open-Sourced texts, posted on this course's D2L site at: <https://myclass.nwpolytech.ca/d2l/home>
- Publication Manual of the APA 7th Edition (use this online site: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_changes_7th_edition.html)

DELIVERY MODE(S): On-Campus

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As a result of taking this course, students will be able to:

- define, describe, and evaluate the methods of assessment of normal and abnormal behaviours
- identify the critical periods and describe the historical evolution of our understanding of psychological disorders
- describe the DSM classification system and its general and specific criteria for diagnosing mental illness
- identify the advantages and disadvantages of using the DSM classification system
- identify the diagnostic criteria for each class of psychological disorder/mental illness broadly
- articulate how various theories and schools of thought explain the development of mental illness
- identify and explain the relationships between mental illnesses and persons' biological, personal, familial, and social aspects
- identify and explain the various treatment modalities for the various psychological disorders

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://transferalberta.alberta.ca/transfer-alberta-search/#/audienceTypeStep>

**** 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	25%	
Exam 2	25%	
Exam 3	30%	
Research Essay	20%	Due on April 10 th

* The nature, scope, and depth of the written essay will be discussed in class.

* Remember, all exams may include questions from lectures that the textbook and reading materials may not cover.

Research Essay (Value: 20% of course grade)

The research essay shall focus on a topic of interest to the student, upon the instructor's approval. It may be related to any topics covered in class, texts, or reading materials. Once you have selected a topic(s), please email me for approval. The research paper will be based on at least 8 peer-reviewed publications, plus other sources. The paper shall be about 3000 words in length (typed and double-spaced APA style). The word limit does not include a title, abstract, or reference page. Papers must be

written and typed in proper and current APA format (7th Edition), 12-point font and approximately a one-inch margin on all sides of the text. Many websites are devoted to the APA writing style (for example, <https://apastyle.apa.org/>). The paper should be checked to ensure correct spelling, grammar, and sentence structure. The grade of the essay will be based on: a clear and concise introduction that indicates the overall structure of the essay and the purpose of the work; a concise integrative synthesis of research articles and references while illustrating the ability of critical thinking; a good structure, logical flow and clarity of style; a good conclusion that summarizes the main themes and findings of the work; and the overall presentation of the work and the appropriateness of the selected references.

GRADING CRITERIA:

Please note that most universities 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	66-69
A	4.0	90-94		C	2.0	63-65
A-	3.7	85-89		C-	1.7	60-62
B+	3.3	80-84		D+	1.3	55-59
B	3.0	75-79		D	1.0	50-54
B-	2.7	70-74		F	0.0	00-49

*This grading criterion is specific to this course and differs from the general criteria.

COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:

Week	Topics*	Evaluation
Week 1	Clinical Research, Assessment, Classification and DSM	
Week 2	Historical and Contemporary Views	
Week 3	Personality Disorders	
Week 4	Personality Disorders	
Week 5	Mood Disorders	Exam 1 25%
Week 6	Mood Disorders	
Week 7	Psychotic Disorders	
Week 8	Psychotic Disorders	
Week 9	Somatoform & Dissociative Disorders	Exam 2 25%
Week 10	Sexual Disorders	
Week 11	Panic & Anxiety Disorders	
Week 12	Cognitive Disorders	

Week 13	Eating Disorders	
Week 14	Stress & Adjustment. Health Disorders	
Week 15	No Classes. Final Exam Period. The Registrar's Office schedules the exam	Exam 3 30% Final

***Note: These discussion topics/dates may be modified, and/or other topics may be added.**

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Each class's assigned readings and exercises should be completed before attending. As this course depends heavily on discussion, at times practice exercises, and illustrations, attendance at all sessions is required and critical to the student's success in the course. In case of illness or emergency, notify the instructor as soon as possible. If you have difficulty in this course, please contact me immediately for assistance. Please let me know if you would like to discuss any aspect of the course or your aspirations.

You are accountable for attending to the delivered lectures, assigned readings, and any announcements made in class. If you are unable to attend a particular class, it is your responsibility to find out what was missed. For optimal learning and readiness for class participation, you are expected to attend class regularly (no less than 80% attendance) and read the assigned chapters/topics before coming to class on the dates indicated on the timetable, except for the first session. Past course records show that class attendance is highly correlated with the final grade.

If you are unable to write a test or exam at the scheduled time due to illness or an emergency, you should notify me immediately, preferably at least 1 day in advance. A message may be left on my voicemail (780-539-2061) or e-mail (aalasadi@nwpolytech.ca), including a phone number where you may be reached, to arrange an alternative date to write the test, if feasible. Failure to notify the instructor will result in a grade of zero for the missed tests unless proof is presented that you were physically or mentally unable to do so due to a sudden illness, emergency, or unavoidable circumstances beyond the student's control.

All students are expected to display a professional attitude and behaviour in the classroom. This includes reliability, respect for and cooperation with fellow students and the instructor, attention to fellow students' questions and the instructor's response, determination to achieve first-class work while meeting deadlines, and constructive response to criticism.

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/administration/policies/index.html>.

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

Additional Information:

MOST IMPORTANT: Instructors reserve the right to use electronic plagiarism and AI detection services on written assignments. **Instructors also reserve the right to ban the use of any form of electronics (cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, tablets, scanning pens, electronic dictionaries, etc.) during class and exams.**

Cell phones, tablets, notebooks, laptops, and other electronic devices are strictly forbidden in my classes and exams. Also, I use plagiarism and AI detection software for all written assignments

and essays. A score greater than 10% on these detectors will result in a mark of 0 on the assignment.

In Addition:

1. The format of each exam will be discussed in class.
2. Exam grades are final, and there is no substitute work for your poor exam grade.
3. The nature and topics of your written paper will be discussed in class
4. It is your responsibility to read each and every chapter and assigned reading (if any) and attend all lectures.
5. Lectures will not always cover the reading materials. Lectures may cover topics and include information not covered in your reading materials. Therefore, you must attend every class, as your exams may include materials from the lectures that are not covered by the reading materials.
6. Students are expected to 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.
7. Talk to me if you have concerns or if you are experiencing difficulties that may have a negative impact on your academic performance.

Please keep this course information sheet for future reference.