

**NOVA COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY
PSY 215 - ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY (3 CR.)**

Course description

Explores historical views and current perspectives of abnormal behavior. Emphasizes major diagnostic categories and criteria, individual and social factors of maladaptive behavior, and types of therapy. Includes methods of clinical assessment and research strategies. Prerequisite PSY 200, 201, or 202. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose

This course provides the student with a basic understanding of symptoms, psychological disorders, and treatment methods within clinical psychology. The course will emphasize the application of scientific research to identifying and treating psychological disorders across a range of theoretical approaches.

Course Prerequisites/Corequisites

Prerequisites: PSY 200 or permission of instructor.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Broadly differentiate between abnormal and normal behavior and mental processes
- Describe the different research methods used in abnormal psychology
- Apply critical thinking skills to diagnosis and treatment of abnormalities
- Summarize how diagnosis and treatment has changed over time
- Apply the current version of the DSM as an assessment tool
- Identify major psychological disorders when major symptoms are provided
- Explain the biopsychosocial perspective and how disorders might have multiple causes
- Distinguish the different approaches to treating psychological disorders including psychotherapy and drug therapy, and analyze their utility in different cases.
- Apply knowledge of abnormal psychology to real cases presented by media
- Distinguish the role of cultural diversities in differentiating normal from abnormal and in treatment of disorders

Major Topics To Be Covered

- A. Historical Background
- B. Current Models and Perspectives
- C. Research Methods
- D. Legal and Ethical Issues
- E. Assessment, Classifications, and Diagnosis of Disorders
- F. Anxiety and Stress Disorders
- G. Mood Disorders and suicide
- H. Substance-related Disorders
- I. Schizophrenia
- J. Disorders of Childhood and Adolescence
- K. Personality Disorders

Optional topics

- A. Eating Disorders
- B. Sexual and Gender Identity Disorders
- C. Dissociative Disorders and Somatoform Disorders
- D. Impulse Control Disorders
- E. Cognitive Disorders and Disorders of Aging