

Caltech, Humanities and Social Sciences
PSY 16: Understanding Psychological Disorders
Fall 2012
Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-12:00
Meeting Place: Baxter 25

Professor:

Lynn K. Paul, Ph.D.
lkpaul@hss.caltech.edu

Required Text:

Abnormal Psychology
Worth Publisher 2011
R.S. Rosenberg and S.M. Kosslyn

This class is designed to maximize participation and critical thinking, while minimizing busy-work. Attendance is required.

Course Description

This course introduces theoretical and practical knowledge regarding mental illness and “abnormal” behavior. Utilizing a scientist-practitioner perspective, we will explore the multidimensional nature of psychiatric diagnosis, understanding, treatment, and prevention.

Academic Dishonesty

Any student caught cheating on a quiz, plagiarizing in your presentations, or engaging in any other form of academic dishonesty, will receive a grade of “F” for the course.

Special Needs

Any student with disabilities or other special needs that may require special accommodations for this course should make this known to the instructor the first week of class.

FYI - Personal Counseling Available on Campus

Many students find that this course raises questions regarding their own behavior and/or the behavior of loved ones. If you are concerned about your own psychological stability or simply want to gain better self-understanding and coping skills, please contact the Health and Counseling Services program at Caltech (x8831). They offer excellent care that is covered by the Caltech health plan.

Course Assignments

In this course, assignments are handled differently: you select what work you complete, with three exceptions: all students must complete a Moodle profile, a syllabus quiz and weekly journals. Review the following options bearing these rules in mind:

1. In order to receive credit for an assignment, at least 50 percent of the total points for that assignment must be earned; otherwise, *no points* will be recorded for the assignment.
2. Once the due date for an assignment has passed, that assignment cannot be completed.

Moodle Profile & Syllabus Quiz (REQUIRED) – Join the PSY16 course on Moodle (use your access.caltech username and password) and complete your personal profile. Make sure to share a few details about yourself in the description section. (*10 points given to all who complete this before class on Wednesday September 29th.*) Within week 1 of Moodle, locate the Syllabus Quiz and take it online before class on Monday October 4th. You get 3 chances on the Quiz & maximum grade is 10 points.

Weekly Journal (REQUIRED) – Each week you will turn in 300 - 500 word reflection paper regarding the reading and class discussions from that week. This is a **confidential** place for personal reflection, which will only be read by Dr. Paul.

Journal assignments may include specific topics for the week as indicated in the Moodle assignment. Additionally, journal entries should include discussion of any of the following:

- a. your experiences with the conditions discussed and how the course has shaped your understanding,
- b. how key concepts from the week have impacted or challenged your worldview,
- c. personal insights gained, and
- d. questions or concerns that you would like to have addressed in class (or in private).

These will only be read by Dr. Paul, who will respond via written comments, addressing a topic in class (protecting your anonymity), and/or offering referrals to outside resources.

Journals must be completed in Moodle and submitted by 6pm each Friday. **Late submissions are not accepted.** Each weekly-journal is worth a maximum of 10-points (total 100 for quarter). Journal entries that exhibit particularly rich insights and/or thoughtful application of the course material will receive 10 points. Journal entries that simply summarize course material and offer no or very limited reflection will receive 5 points.

Chapter Quizzes Online – Quizzes are available to chapters 2 - 15. Each quiz is worth 25 points and involves 2 steps that must be completed within a 5-7 day time period prior to the class discussion (i.e. the dates/times during which the relevant agreement is available in Moodle).

1. Before you begin your quiz, you must complete an honor agreement with Dr. Paul for that specific quiz. Each agreement is located in Moodle, under the week in which that chapter will be discussed. Agreements are available for a limited time starting 5 - 7 days prior and ending one hour prior to the class discussion of that chapter. **You must complete your agreement BEFORE you take the quiz. If agreement is not completed, you will not receive credit for the quiz.**

Agreement Statement

I have elected to take the PSY16 on-line quiz x for Chapter y.

By checking yes below, I am agreeing to:

- a. complete the quiz within a single continuous 30 minute period,
 - b. not consult any resource outside the text (i.e. no other websites, no classmates, no other textbooks, etc ...) while taking the quiz,
 - c. not copy any quiz items,
- and*
- d. not talk about the quiz outside of in-class discussions.

If I violate either of these agreements, I agree not to not submit my quiz for credit (or if it is accidentally submitted, I will notify Dr. Paul that this quiz should not be added to my grade).

2. After completing the agreement, you will take online quizzes. You may use your book during the quiz. However, you are expected to read the chapter before taking the quiz and abide by all elements of the agreement.

In-Class Presentation – Students make a 10 - 15 minute presentation in class on a topic of interest related to any of the topics covered in the syllabus. To select this activity, you must begin your Individual Presentation Checklist by October 7th and complete all 5 aspects of the assignment.

1. Topic Selection (Due by October 5 at 6pm, in Moodle, 20 points). Presentation plans will be done in dialogue with Dr. Paul.
2. Presentation Outline (Due 1 week prior to your presentation, in Moodle, 60 points). Dr. Paul will provide feedback on your presentation plan and you can revise this for a final grade prior to your presentation.
3. Pre-presentation Essay (Due within the week prior to your presentation, in Moodle, 40 points). See Moodle for details.
4. Presentation (Given in class on scheduled date. Worth 140 points.) Grading will be based on organization of the presentation, mastery of the topic / critical thinking, implementation of activities / class involvement, selection & use of additional media / powerpoint slides, presentation style, and time management.
5. Post-presentation Essay (Due within the week after your presentation, in Moodle, 40 points). See Moodle for details.

Presentation Response Paper (due one week after the presentation, in Moodle) - Students may write up to 2 responses to other students' presentations. Response papers of 400 - 800 words should include critical discussion of the topics presented, including alternative perspectives or enhancement of points made in the presentation. They should also include constructive feedback for the student presenter. These will be graded by based on criteria above and will be given to the student presenter as feedback. (15 points each)

Online Discussion Forum – Each week, Dr. Paul will post a discussion forum assignment related to the current topic. You will receive a maximum of 16 points for your discussion post (criteria may include appropriateness of resource selections, completion of additional requirements such as posting to class wiki, thoughtfulness & critical thinking in discussion post and clarity of writing). This assignment also requires that you respond to two other original postings within this forum. 7 points are possible for each of your responses (a good response must address the content of the main post, add additional insights or information, raise additional perspectives or questions, or in some other manner enrich the conversation).

All components of the discussion forum must be completed by the due date in order to receive credit. *For most weeks, original posts are due before class on Monday and responses are due before class on Wednesday.* Check Moodle to confirm dates for each week.

Attendance - will be taken at each class to help decide a grade when the numbers are on the border between two grades. You are expected to attend class. *5 points will be subtracted from your final grade for every 2 unexcused absences. 10-points will be subtracted from your final grade for each unexcused absence on days when guest presenters.*

Developing a Game Plan for the Course

For the purposes of planning, identify the assignments you are considering and the total points possible. Be realistic. It is highly unlikely that you will get all the points possible for the assignments. Check your total with point totals needed for each grade. Be sure that you are planning to do enough assignments to get the grade you desire in the course. Keep track of your points as the course progresses so that you will know if you need to add more assignments. You will have access to your current grade total in Moodle.

	Points for Each	Total Points Possible
(Required) Moodle Profile	10	10
(Required) Syllabus Quiz	10	10
(Required) Journal – 1 each week	10	100
Online Quizzes - 14 total	25	350
Online Discussion - 10 total	30	300
Presentation	300	300
Presentation Response	15	30
Attendance (-5 for every 2 unexcused absences & -10 for unexcused absence for guest presenter)		
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Total Possible		1100

Tentative guide of grades

- A: 850-1100 points
- B: 750-849 points
- C: 650-749 points
- D: 570-649 points