

unit guide

Introduction to Atypical Psychology

PSY_1_IAP

<http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/psycho/teaching/atyp-psy-main.shtml>

Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences

2007/08

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1.0 UNIT DETAILS

Unit Title:	Introduction to Atypical Psychology
Unit Level:	1
Unit Reference Number:	PSY_1_IAP
Credit Value:	20
Student Study Hours:	150
Contact Hours:	36
Private Study Hours:	114
Pre-requisite Learning (If applicable):	NONE
Co-requisite Units (If applicable):	NONE
Course(s):	BSc Psychology (Hons)
Year and Semester	06/07, Semester 2
Unit Coordinator:	Dr. Nicky Rycroft
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Subject Area:	Psychology
Summary of Assessment Method:	1 x Short Essay (40%) 1 x Essay Exam (60%)

2.0 SHORT DESCRIPTION

This unit introduces students to how psychologists study atypical behaviour and the different models put forward for studying psychopathology by the various approaches to psychology. Topics to be covered are defining 'abnormality', diagnosis and classification of disorders, schizophrenia, anxiety disorders, degenerative disorders, childhood disorders, personality disorders and cultural variations in how mental health problems are conceptualised and treated. For each topic, issues surrounding diagnosing, explaining (i.e. identifying potential causes) and treating atypical behaviour will be discussed.

3.0 AIMS OF THE UNIT

- Introduce students to the different models of psychopathology
- Introduce students to the systems used by psychologists and psychiatrists to diagnose and classify psychopathologies
- Introduce students to the characteristics of selected disorders
- Introduce students to the various treatments available for disorders
- Evaluation of the different approaches contributions to psychopathology

4.0 LEARNING OUTCOMES

4.1 Knowledge and Understanding

- Outline and criticise the different approaches in regard to psychological disorders
- Describe and evaluate the DSM system
- Describe the nature of selected disorders and outline how the different approaches explain and treat them

4.2 Intellectual Skills

- Employ evidence based reasoning and examine the issues associated with different approaches (in practical work / in other sources);
- Apply multiple perspectives to psychological issues.

4.3 Practical Skills

- Retrieve and/or organise information effectively e.g. from electronic sources.
- Incorporate information from a variety of sources

4.4 Transferable Skills

- Retrieve and/or organise information effectively e.g. from electronic sources;
- Comprehend and use data effectively (includes reported data);
- Make critical judgements and evaluations about relevant research;
- Successfully apply multiple perspectives to issues in psychology;
- Communicate effectively using written and spoken language.
- Self-management of own study time

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

1. Short essay (40%)
 - a. This essay will be based on the content of the first four lectures
 - b. More details will follow in lectures and seminars
2. Essay Exam (60%)
 - a. This will be based on the disorders covered in lectures 5-10

Notes about submitting coursework

Coursework deadlines are published in Course/Field Guides and on Psychology notice boards. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are aware of these dates. All coursework must be submitted to the AHS Faculty Office in Borough Road (B266).

Occasionally, individual students may be asked, in writing, to also provide an electronic copy. Failure to supply electronic copy within two weeks of a written request will result in the coursework being deemed as an incomplete submission, hence given a mark of zero.

1. When handing in coursework, you must:

- complete the coursework submission form and attach it to the front of your coursework;
- take the coursework to the Faculty Office. Your submission form will be date stamped and a receipt issued. Please keep all receipts;
- keep a copy of your essay.

You must not hand coursework to your unit co-ordinator or other lecturer.

2. Unless you have obtained a formal extension from your year tutor, coursework submitted:

- up to two weeks after the deadline date will receive a maximum mark of the pass mark (40%);
- more than two weeks after the deadline will not be marked.

3. Extensions are only granted for valid reasons (see Course/Field guide). The Year Tutor will normally require concrete evidence (e.g. medical certificate). If you want an extension of the deadline date, you must:

- get a copy of the form for late submission from the Faculty Office;
- fill in Part A of the form, giving reasons why you cannot meet the existing deadline date;
- supply the Year Tutor with relevant documentary evidence;

- submit the form to the Year Tutor who will fill in Part B – the decision whether to agree the request rests with the Year Tutor;
- attach the form to the front of your coursework when you submit it (keep a copy for your records);
- each extension form is only valid for one piece of coursework;
- the maximum extension is two weeks.

Students should note that extensions are only granted in exceptional circumstances. In order for an illness or other personal problem to be accepted as grounds for an extension, the Year Tutor will need to convince herself that the problem occurred at such a time, and was of such a duration, that a student's ability to complete the assignment to the best of their ability was significantly reduced.

6.0 INTRODUCTION TO STUDYING THE UNIT

6.1 Overview of the Main Content

Week	Lecture	Seminar
1	Introduction to and overview of the course (NR)	None
2	Models and theoretical approaches to studying psychopathology (NR)	Seminar 1 (Odd groups)
3	Assessment, Classification and Diagnosis 1 (NR)	Seminar 1 (Even groups)
4	Assessment, Classification and Diagnosis 2. (NR)	Seminar 2 (Odd groups)
5	Schizophrenia (NR)	Seminar 2 (Even groups)
6	Anxiety Disorders (JL)	Seminar 3 (Odd groups)
7	Personality Disorders (SJ)	Seminar 3 (Even groups)
	EASTER	BREAK
8	Degenerative Disorders (HK)	Seminar 4 (Odd groups)
9	Disorders of Development (CS)	Seminar 4 (Even groups)
10	Culture and Mental Health (PR)	Seminar 5 (Odd groups)
11	Revision Lecture (NR)	Seminar 5 (Even groups)
12	No Teaching – Bank Holiday	

6.2 Overview of Types of Classes

Lectures:

The first four and final lecture will cover topics relevant to the study of atypical behaviour in general. Each of the other lectures will focus on one disorder, describing the symptoms, aetiology

and treatments proposed by the different approaches. **Lectures start promptly at 1.15pm on Mondays**

Seminars:

Students will be required to attend on seminar once every fortnight beginning from weeks 2 and 3. Students will be notified of their seminar groups in due course. ***You must notify the unit coordinator if you have special circumstances for changing your seminar group, otherwise you will be expected to arrive for your seminar as directed.***

6.3 Importance of Student Self-Managed Learning Time

Self-managed learning is particularly important for this as the lectures provide the basic information required for the assessments, and further reading is crucial to obtain good marks in the coursework and the exam. One core text is recommended for this course, see below.

6.4 Employability

A large part of seminar time will be given to helping students develop their presentation skills. This will help to develop confidence when addressing a group and the ability to present information in a concise and accurate way. Assessment and treatment of psychological disorders is a core part of psychology and this course will be of use to students seeking work in this field.

7.0 THE PROGRAMME OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Lectures

Week 1: Introduction to the Unit

This lecture will provide students with an overview of this unit, the content of the lectures and how this unit will be assessed. This lecture will also give a brief history of how mental health problems have been conceptualised and treated in Western societies over the last century.

Week 2: Models and Approaches

Aims

- To further understanding of the different approaches to psychology;
- Application of each approach to psychopathology;
- To understand the limitations of each approach in psychopathology;

Lecture Synopsis

This lecture will describe the main approaches to studying atypical behaviour; the medical model (or biological approach), behaviourism, the cognitive approach, psychoanalysis/psychodynamic approach and the humanistic approach. Each approach will be evaluated in terms of its contribution to our understanding of atypical behaviour and how to treat disorders

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lectures and seminar, students should be able to:

- Understand why it is difficult to define 'abnormality'.
- Describe how each approach accounts for the causes of atypical behaviour
- Describe the treatment strategies proposed by each approach
- Critically evaluate the contribution of each approach to the study of atypical behaviour.

Core Reading

Kring, A.M., Davison, G.C., Neale, J.M. & Johnson, S.L. (2007) *Abnormal Psychology* 10th Ed. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Chapter 2 'Current Paradigms in Psychopathology'

Or

Halgin, R.P., Whitbourne, S.K. (2003) *Abnormal Psychology: Clinical Perspectives on Psychological Disorders*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Chapter 4 'Theoretical Perspectives'.

Weeks 3 and 4: Assessment, Classification and Diagnosis

Aims

- To describe the methods used by psychologists and psychiatrists when assessing patients and conducting research into psychological disorders
- To outline the major classification system (DSM IV) and alternative systems
- To understand the limitations of DSM IV
- To understand how diagnosis of clinical disorders are made

Lecture Synopsis

These two lectures will introduce the methods available to health practitioners, such as clinical interviews, physical examinations and behavioural and neuropsychological testing. The main classification system in use today is DSM IV and these lectures will describe the development of and limitations of this system. The methods used and ethical issues raised by researchers of psychological disorders will also be discussed.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lectures and seminar, students should be able to:

- Describe and evaluate DSM IV
- Have knowledge of the alternatives to DSM IV
- Describe how a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist would go about making a diagnosis
- Understand how research into the causes and treatment of psychological disorders is conducted

Core Reading

Kring, A.M., Davison, G.C., Neale, J.M. & Johnson, S.L. (2007) *Abnormal Psychology* (10th Ed.): New York: John Wiley & Sons, Chapters 3 'Diagnosis and Assessment'.

Please note that the earlier editions cover this material over two chapters which are well worth reading if you don't have access to the 10th edition.

Or

Halgin, R.P., Whitbourne, S.K. (2003) *Abnormal Psychology: Clinical Perspectives on Psychological Disorders*. New York: McGraw-Hill, Chapters 2 'Classification and Treatment Plans' and 3 'Assessment'.

Further Reading

For a more detailed (and advanced) critique of classification systems – Bentall, RP (2003) *Madness Explained: Psychosis and Human Nature*. London: Allen Lane, Penguin, chapter 3.

Davey, G., Albery, I., Chandler, C., Field, A., Jones, D., Messer, D., Moore, S., & Sterling, C., (2005). *Complete Psychology*. London: Hodder & Stoughton. Chapter 33 p584-586

Week 5: Schizophrenia

Aims

- To describe the symptoms of schizophrenia
- To describe how the different approaches explain causes of schizophrenia
- To describe the treatment strategies offered by the different approaches

Lecture Synopsis

This lecture will describe the main symptoms of schizophrenia, and the distinction that has been made between positive, negative and disorganised symptoms. Potential causes of schizophrenia will be discussed, in particular genetic influences, neurobiological process that may be involved and psychological and social influences. Different treatment strategies will also be described. Diagnosis and efficacy of treatment of schizophrenia varies in different cultures, these issues will be mentioned here and the role of cultural influences will be discussed in more depth in week 10.

Learning outcomes

- Knowledge of the different types of symptoms of schizophrenia
- An awareness of the different subtypes of schizophrenia
- Knowledge of the genetic, neurobiological and psychological/psychosocial components to the disorder
- Ability to evaluate the different treatment strategies available.

Core Reading

Kring, A.M., Davison, G.C., Neale, J.M. & Johnson, S.L. (2007) *Abnormal Psychology* (10th Ed.): New York::John Wiley & Sons, Chapter 11 'Schizophrenia'

Kalat, J.W. (2006) *Biological Psychology* (9th Ed) CA: Wadsworth/Thomson chapter 15 p470-481

Further Reading

Bentall, R.P. (2004) *Madness explained: psychosis and human nature*. London: Penguin.

Week 6: Anxiety Disorders

Aims

- To describe the different types of anxiety disorders, with major emphasis placed upon generalised anxiety disorder (GAD) and phobias
- To describe how the different approaches explain the aetiology and maintenance of GAD and phobias
- To describe the contrasting modes of therapeutic intervention offered by the different approaches

Lecture Synopsis

This lecture will describe the various types of anxiety disorder, concentrating mainly on GAD and phobias. The symptoms of GAD and phobias will be discussed along with the aetiology and maintenance of such in light of the contrasting theories put forward by psychoanalytic, cognitive behavioural and biological approaches. The different strategies for therapeutic intervention for GAD and phobias will also be discussed, again based upon the alternative viewpoints of the aforementioned approaches.

Learning outcomes

- Knowledge of the different types of anxiety disorders, particularly of GAD and phobias.
- Knowledge of the symptoms of GAD and phobias.
- An understanding of the aetiology and maintenance of GAD and phobias and the contrasting viewpoints concerning these put forward by the various approaches, and the ability to compare, contrast and critically evaluate these.
- An understanding of the various strategies for therapeutic interventions put forward by the different approaches, and the ability to compare, contrast and critically evaluate these.

Core Reading

Kring, A.M., Davison, G.C., Neale, J.M. & Johnson, S.L. (2007) *Abnormal Psychology* (10th Ed.): New York::John Wiley & Sons, Chapter 5 'Anxiety Disorders'.

Also:

Davey, G., Albery, I., Chandler, C., Field, A., Jones, D., Messer, D., Moore, S., & Sterling, C., (2005). *Complete Psychology*. London: Hodder & Stoughton Chapter 33 p558-568

For the biological basis of anxiety in general:

Kalat, J.W. (2004) *Biological Psychology* (8th Ed) CA: Wadsworth:Thomson Chapter 12 p377-384.

Please note that the information on anxiety is not in the more recent editions of the Kalat textbook. However there are many copies of the 8th edition in the library and you could photocopy the relevant pages.

Week 7: Personality Disorders

Aims

- Identify the difficulties in classifying and diagnosing personality disorders
- Identify the different clusters of personality disorders
- Describe the symptoms that are characteristic of some personality disorders
- Describe potential aetiologies and treatments for personality disorders

Lecture Synopsis

This lecture will introduce students to the classification and diagnosis of personality disorders and reasons for coding them on a separate axis (Axis II) will be examined. Personality disorders have been grouped into three clusters in DSM IV and the different symptoms of each cluster will be described. Biological and psychosocial theories as to the causes and potential treatments of personality disorder will be described and evaluated

Learning outcomes

- Describe the symptoms and clusters of personality disorders
- Understand why they occupy their own axis on DSM IV
- Evaluate the contribution of the major approaches to psychology to our understanding of the causes and treatments for personality disorders

Core reading

Kring, A.M., Davison, G.C., Neale, J.M. & Johnson, S.L. (2007) *Abnormal Psychology* (10th Ed.): New York::John Wiley & Sons, Chapter 12 'Personality Disorders'.

Week 8: Degenerative Disorders

Aims

- To define and describe neurodegenerative disorders
- To describe possible causes of these
- To describe psychological manifestations of each disorder
- To consider the relation to normal ageing processes
- To consider strategies of treatment

Lecture Synopsis

Degenerative disorders provide the opportunity to consider biological causes of atypical behaviour. The lecture will focus on several common progressive disorders, for example, Alzheimer's, Huntington's and Parkinson's diseases, reviewing the aetiology of each, its developmental course and manifestation in terms of physical and psychological degradation and possible protective measures and treatments. Key concerns will be how different diseases compare and the extent to which the alterations they involve can be distinguished from those of normal ageing.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the lectures students should be able to:

- Describe the pattern of symptoms associated major neurodegenerative disorders
- Describe the underlying degradation of the nervous system taking place
- Summarise factors relating to the onset of the disorders
- Describe the use of and rationale for possible treatments and prevention
- Distinguish abnormal from normal process relating to ageing

Core Reading

Kring, A.M., Davison, G.C., Neale, J.M. & Johnson, S.L. (2007) *Abnormal Psychology* (10th Ed.): New York: John Wiley & Sons, Chapter 15, pages 502-513 on 'Delirium and Dementia'.

Kalat, J.W. (2004) *Biological Psychology* (9th Ed) CA: Wadsworth/Thomson pages 399-401 on Alzheimer's Disease

Week 9: Developmental Disorders

Aims

- To introduce students to a range of developmental disorders
- To describe developmental disorders in relation to typical development
- To outline in more detail the characteristics and possible explanations for ADHD and Autism

Lecture Synopsis

The lecture will begin by introducing a range of developmental disorders. It will outline the characteristics of each disorder and identify possible explanations. Having done this it will go into more depth about the characteristics and explanations of Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder and Autism.

Learning outcomes

- Ability to list the main disorders of development
- Identify some characteristics and explanations for each
- Describe the characteristics of ADHD and Autism
- Describe, with criticisms, the potential explanations of ADHD and Autism

Core Reading

Kring, A.M., Davison, G.C. & Neale, J.M. & Johnson, S.L. (2007) *Abnormal Psychology*. 10th edition. Chapter 14. Disorders of Childhood.

Davey, G, Albery, I.P., Chandler, C. Field, A., Jones, D., Messer, D., Moore, S. & Sterling, C. (2004). *Complete Psychology*. Chapter 33, especially p 590-593

Week 10: Culture and Mental Health

- To explore cultural variation in terms of the causes, maintenance and recovery rates for mental health problems
- To provide examples of different cultural expressions of mental distress
- To examine cultural variations in the treatment of mental distress, by the family, the community and professionals

Lecture Synopsis

Are mental illnesses universal? Do different cultures have different expressions of the *same* underlying illness or are they completely different experiences that should not be confused? These are some of the questions we will be exploring in this lecture on cultural variation and experience. Using examples from a range of cultures, from Malaysia, Bangladesh and Zanzibar, amongst others, we will examine how displays of 'madness' are experienced, understood, treated and received by professionals and the community. The importance of culture becomes clear when recovery rates are examined. Despite access to a wide range of medications and psychological therapies, rich industrialised nations compare poorly with less wealthy countries in terms of their recovery rates. This is partially due to the lack of support systems, within the family and community and the way in which the 'illness' is perceived. In India, for example, where the recovery rates for 'psychosis' (a severe mental illness) are good, families are reluctant to release their family members into the hands of medical experts. Instead, they embrace the problem as a whole family and provide care and employment for the family member who has lost their way. In India, isolated psychotic episodes are much more common, and the development of a long term problem less so. These 'facts' are important for a psychological understanding of mental distress, as the emphasis is not only the individual, and the reasons for his/her 'problem' but the variety of ways in which that person experiences it and the support systems that may or may not be in place.

Learning outcomes

- Knowledge of different expressions of mental distress across a wide range of cultures
- An awareness of the different ways of coping with mental distress in the community and in psychological terms
- Knowledge of the recovery rates across cultures
- Ability to evaluate the different treatment and social strategies available.

Core Reading

Bentall, R.P. (2004) *Madness explained: psychosis and human nature*. London: Penguin.

Recommended reading

Fernando, S. (2003) *Culture, mental health and psychiatric diagnosis*. London: Routledge.

Jenkins, K.H. & Barrett, R.J. (2004) *Schizophrenia, culture and subjectivity: the edge of experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Week 11: Revision Lecture

Aims

- To recap information covered in the course
- To help students prepare for the exam
- To cover general revision tips and hints

Lecture Synopsis

This lecture will outline the format and structure of the exam, using last year's paper as guide. Students will have the opportunity to ask questions about the material covered throughout the course. This will be a student-led session covering course material, exam preparation, essay writing in exams and revision techniques.

Learning outcomes

- Understanding the format of the exam
- Greater understanding of what is required in an exam-essay
- Improved knowledge of the many different methods used by students when revising

8.0 LEARNING RESOURCES

8.1 Core Materials

The main textbook, and recommended purchase, for this course is

Kring, A.M., Davison, G.C., Neale, J.M. & Johnson, S.L. (2007) Abnormal Psychology, 10th Ed. New York: John Wiley & Sons

While the 10th edition is recommended for this course, the 9th edition (first author of which is Davison, G.C.) is not too out of date and may be cheaper to buy. The library contains many copies of the 8th and 9th and 10th editions.

The library contains other books that cover broadly the same material, for example:

Halgin RP, Whitbourne SK (2003) Abnormal Psychology: Clinical Perspectives on Psychological Disorders. New York: McGraw-Hill

The Halgin & Whitbourne text provides more detailed information on the psychodynamic and humanistic approaches and more criticism of the medical model and classification systems.

Please feel free to use the library catalogue to find other textbooks on Abnormal, Atypical or Clinical Psychology.

8.2 Optional Materials

Bentall, R.P. (2004) Madness explained: psychosis and human nature. London: Penguin.

This book provides in depth and more advanced critiques of the dominant, westernised, medical model view of atypical behaviour