

Child Psychopathology
T/Th 2-3:15
Dr. Kathryn Goel
kgoel@uwsp.edu

Course Description and Goals:

This course is designed to provide you with an introduction to the field of abnormal child and adolescent psychology. In this course, we will study the causes, maintenance, and treatment of children's behavioral, social-emotional, and cognitive disorders from a developmental perspective. This developmental perspective examines the course of child and adolescent disorders over time, pays special attention to risk and protective factors that influence developmental processes and trajectories, and examines child psychopathology in the context of normal child development.

The topics covered in this course are loosely organized into four groups. First, we will examine the basic principles and methods used by researchers who study developmental psychopathology and clinicians who try to help children and families. Second, we will begin our study of specific childhood disorders by examining developmental and learning problems in young children. In the third section of this course, we will study disruptive behavior problems and substance use disorders in children and adolescents. Finally, we will consider internalizing disorders among youth, eating disorders in adolescents, and child maltreatment.

There are three broad goals for this course. First, *I want you to be able to appreciate the complexity of child development and maldevelopment.* There are rarely single causes for children's problems. Instead, child and adolescent psychopathology typically arises from a complex mix of genetic, biological, psychological, social-familial, and cultural factors. Each childhood disorder can be partially explained at each of these levels of analysis; however, we usually get the clearest picture of children's problems when we integrate evidence across multiple levels and over time.

Second, through your participation in this course, *I hope that you will begin to gain an understanding of treatment options and the importance of research and science in our understanding of how to best help children and adolescents achieve optimal development.*

Third, *I hope that your participation in this course will have relevance to your everyday life.* Although you may not become a professional therapist or mental health researcher, you will likely be called upon to help children and adolescents at some point in your life (if not already). For example, you may become a physician, nurse, teacher, librarian, or another professional who has immediate, frequent contact with children. Alternatively, you might volunteer as a coach, tutor, or mentor. Most importantly, you may become a parent where you witness the spectrum of child development first hand. I hope that this course will begin to provide you with the knowledge and critical thinking skills necessary understand the course of normal child development along with the various mental health challenges that children and adolescents may

face. I also hope you begin to understand the course of mental illness as well as treatment options.

Readings:

Text (Required):

Weis, R. (2013). [*Introduction to abnormal child psychology \(2nd Edition\)*](#). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. ISBN: 1452225257

Readings (Required):

Additional readings will be posted on the course site. Readings are journal articles for class discussion and reaction papers

Website (Optional):

Students may watch videos and obtain study guides, self-quizzes, and links to internet sites relevant to the text at www.abnormalchildpsychology.org. This website is based off of the textbook and does not include all the material that will be presented in class.

Class Attendance and Attention: Being absent does not excuse a student from meeting the requirements of the missed class. Students are expected to be present, on time, and participate until the class is dismissed. Students are responsible for all announcements, material and discussions that occur during our class. This includes, but is not limited to, information about assignment directions and due dates. You are expected to complete assignments according to the information I provide during class, regardless of whether you are present to hear it. If you miss a class for any reason, it is your responsibility to:

- ❖ follow-up on missed information, including arranging a time to retrieve any information distributed during the missed class session.
- ❖ prepare for the next class meeting and to hand in assignments on the assigned dates.
- ❖ obtain the class notes and assignments from someone in class. If you know you will be absent, arrange to have a friend pick up any material handed out in class. Extenuating circumstances exist and you may not be able to attend every class.
- ❖ You are strongly encouraged to attend all classes.
- ❖ Please be aware that Instructors in front of the class can see everyone in the room. Yes, I can see that you are texting, talking etc.

Powerpoint slides: Slides will be available at least 24 hours prior to class. It is strongly recommended that you download and/or print the slides in order to add notes during the class period. Please note that the posted slides will not cover all of the material presented in class.

Assignments:

The course grade will consist of the following

- ❖ 3 exams (60 points each)
 - Although these exams will cover specific sections of the course, it should be noted that the course builds on itself and therefore any material presented thus far is “fair game”.
- ❖ 1 Case Review Paper (60 points) Due 12/1/16
 - Students will be asked to select a character from a popular movie who exhibits symptoms/behaviors consistent with a disorder discussed in class. Background, symptoms, differential diagnosis and treatment options will be discussed in the context of the character.
 - If you are choosing a disorder that will not be covered before 12/1/16, please email me before 11/15/16 to request an extension (if desired)
- ❖ 3 reaction papers (out of 4 possible topics) (10 points each)
 - Throughout the semester there will be popular media articles about child psychopathology presented. Each student will be asked to complete 3 (1 page) reaction papers discussing the article.
- ❖ 1 debate on controversial topic in child psychopathology (30 points)
 - Individuals will be placed into groups and provided with a viewpoint on a controversial topic within the areas discussed in this course. Groups will be asked to formulate an argument based on scientific research regarding their topic. One class time will be provided to work on this project and arguments will then be presented to the class in a debate style.

Notes to Students: Your questions and relevant contributions to class discussions are welcomed. Please speak to me if you have any questions or concerns! It is better to meet early in the course, than to wait until you have a major challenge. No question or concern is too small to discuss together!

Tentative Schedule:

Date	Chapter/Assignment
9/6	Intro to class/Chapter 1: The Science and Practice of Abnormal Child Psychology
9/8	Chapter 1: The Science and Practice of Abnormal Child Psychology
9/13	Chapter 2: Causes of Childhood Disorders
9/15	Chapter 2: Causes of Childhood Disorders
9/20	Chapter 3: Assessing, Diagnosing and Treating Children’s Problems
9/22	Chapter 3: Assessing, Diagnosing and Treating Children’s Problems
9/27	Chapter 4: Intellectual Disability and Developmental Disorders
9/29	Chapter 5: Communication Disorders
10/4	Chapter 7: Learning Disorders
10/6	Review/ catch up
10/11	EXAM 1: Chapters 1-7 (except 6)
10/13	Chapter 6: Autism
10/18	Chapter 8: ADHD
10/20	Chapter 8: ADHD
10/25	Chapter 9: Conduct problems
10/27	Chapter 9: Conduct Problems
11/1	Chapter 10: Substance Abuse Disorders
11/3	Chapter 11: Anxiety Disorders
11/8	Chapter 11: Anxiety Disorders

11/10	Chapter 12: Trauma related disorders and PTSD
11/15	EXAM 2: Chapters 8-12
11/17	Chapter 13: Depressive Disorder and Self-injury
11/22	Chapter 13 Depressive Disorder and self-injury
11/24	Happy Thanksgiving!
11/29	Chapter 14: Bipolar Disorder and Schizophrenia
12/1	In class time for group presentation preparation <i>CASE REVIEW PAPER DUE</i>
12/6	Chapter 15: Feeding and Eating Disorders
12/8	Chapter 16: Health Related Disorders and Pediatric Psychology
12/13	Debates
12/15	Debates Day 2/review

FINAL EXAM 12/6/16 at 10:15am (Chapters 13-16, debates)