

**Faculty of Health
Department of Psychology
PSYC 3140 3.0 M W(23)
ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY
Wednesdays 11:30am-2:20pm, in person
Vari Hall-B**

What sane person could live in this world and not be crazy? - Ursula K. Le Guin

Instructor and T.A. Information

Instructor: Alexandra Rutherford, PhD CPsych

Office: 215 BSB

Office Hour: by appointment (in general, I can be available in person before class, and by zoom on Tuesdays, but talk to me or email me to book a specific time)

Email: alexr@yorku.ca

T.A.	Talia Tissera (for students with last names starting with A-Le)	Stephanie McKenzie (for students with last names starting with Li-Z)
Email	tissera@yorku.ca	stephmck@yorku.ca
Office hour		
Location		

Course Prerequisite(s): Course prerequisites are strictly enforced

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology), with a minimum grade of C.
- Completed at least 54 earned credits

Course Credit Exclusions

Please refer to [York Courses Website](#) for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

Course website: <https://eclass.yorku.ca/course/view.php?id=74105>

Course Description

This course is designed to provide students with the skills to think critically about today's dominant definitions of and responses to psychological distress, and to consider alternatives grounded in anti-oppressive frameworks. Students will consider the historically, socially, and politically constructed nature of mental health and "illness". They will learn how people identified as "abnormal" or "disordered" have been understood and treated by the psychological and psychiatric establishments over time and across cultures, and how gender, race, class, and colonization have structured these understandings. They will also consider how those labelled "mentally ill" have understood their own experiences, and will reflect on how first-person and professional understandings relate to one another. This course takes an explicitly social and structural approach to mental health and considers how this approach differs from the biomedical model now prevalent in North America and increasingly around the world. We will take the current diagnostic system for defining and intervening in psychological distress not as an

ahistorical or factual given, but as the starting point for a critical interrogation of the nature and functioning of such systems in psychiatry, psychology, society, and the lives of individuals.

Program Learning Outcomes (formulated by the Psychology Department)

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of abnormal psychology.
2. Articulate trends in abnormal psychology.
3. Express knowledge of abnormal psychology in written form.
4. Describe and explain limits to generalizability of research findings in abnormal psychology.
5. Demonstrate ability to relate information in abnormal psychology to own and others' life experiences.

Specific Learning Objectives (formulated for this course)

- Students will be able to:
 - 1) define the medical model and the social model of mental health/illness and compare/contrast how each affects how we conceptualize and respond to people with mental health issues
 - 2) critically evaluate the concept of 'abnormality' and the practice of psychiatric diagnosis
 - 3) demonstrate familiarity with the current classification system for psychological disorders, be able to critically evaluate its use, contributions, and impact, and describe alternatives
 - 4) articulate the influence of culture, class, gender, 'race'/ethnicity, colonization, politics, and power on how we conceptualize, understand, label, and respond to psychological distress
 - 5) Compare and contrast "expert" understandings of mental distress with the firsthand experiences of people who interact with mental health professionals

Required Texts

Frances, A. (2013). *Saving normal: an insider's revolt against out-of-control psychiatric diagnosis, DSM-5, big pharma, and the medicalization of ordinary life*. New York: William Morrow.

[This book is available in the bookstore; one copy is on reserve in Scott. Note that I have only assigned the first three chapters.]

And a selection of articles and on-line resources available via the York Library system or on the internet, as outlined in the Course Schedule below and at the e-Class site

Course Requirements and Assessment

Your grade in this course is based on two in-class tests worth a total of 70%, one reflection exercise worth 10% and one final assignment worth 20%. Tests consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Tests cover assigned readings, lecture material, and any video or web material that is shown or discussed IN CLASS.

Component:	Date Due:	Percentage of Grade:
Test 1	February 1	35%
Test 2	March 8	35%
Reflection	anytime before March 22	10%
Assignment	April 7	20%

Description of Assignments

REFLECTION

Minimum 300 words, maximum 500 words; worth 10%; due at any time before 11:59pm on March 22nd

In this brief academic reflection, clearly articulate one assumption or belief you have held about the nature (definition), or cause, or most effective way to classify or “treat” a particular psychiatric “disorder.” Explain/describe where that assumption or belief came from (e.g., experience, formal education, first-hand observation, popular media, etc.). Then reflect on and write about how the material presented in this course (be specific) has provided another different perspective on this assumption or belief.

Here are some tips on how to write an academic reflection.

The Core Elements of Academic Reflective Writing

(reproduced from <https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/producing-reflections/academic-reflections/general-tips>)

Academic reflective writing is a genre and just like an essay has characteristics.

Academic reflective writing requires critical and analytic thought, a clear line of argument, and the use of evidence through examples of personal experiences and thoughts and often also theoretical literature.

You should aim for a balance between personal experience, tone, and academic practice and rigor.

Academic reflective writing should:

- develop a perspective or line of reasoning
- develop a link between your experience or practice and existing knowledge (theoretical or personal)
- show understanding and appreciation of different perspectives to your own
- show recognition that your own understanding is likely incomplete and situations are rarely clear-cut and simplistic

- show learning resulting from the reflection (either by discovering something new or confirming existing knowledge) and how you plan to use it
- be written in an appropriate style with language relevant to your academic discipline
- sometimes, but not always, use theoretical literature to inform your understanding.

People can have misconceptions about academic reflective writing – some of the common ones are described below.

Academic reflective writing is NOT...	Instead...
Just descriptions of what has happened	Descriptions should be used as foundations for learning.
A personal diary where you can say anything and use any language	Academic reflective writing require structure and formal language.
A place where you get marks for self-disclosure – while reflection is personal, you will not get a good mark by merely sharing challenging experiences or personal trauma	The experiences you share must be used actively to promote learning AND be appropriate for the audience. An assessor will probably not be comfortable reading your darkest secrets. Private reflections may include such content, but for academic reflection it is unlikely to be appropriate. Reflections should be appropriate both for your boundaries and the boundaries of the person reading them.
A place where you get marks for complimenting the course or teacher assessing you	Include the course and the teacher if they have affected you, but be sure to uncover what about them worked or did not work for you, and how you can use this knowledge in other contexts.
A place where you reference learning uncritically	You should evidence how you have learned something, what it means for you, and how it will be used in the future.
A nuisance or waste of time	Done correctly, formalising and structuring reflection can help you surface and evidence your personal learning and development, which in turn can help you to communicate your abilities and experiences effectively.

ASSIGNMENT

Maximum 900 words; worth 20%; due by 11:59 pm on April 7th

This assignment is **non-cumulative** and will require you to answer three questions with responses of about 300 words each, on the material covered in weeks 9, 10, 11, and 12. I will make these questions available to you on March 23rd and you will submit your answers through Turnitin.

Your assignment must be double spaced, one-inch margins all around, 12-pt font. Do not exceed the word limit. Simply number your answers 1, 2, and 3. You may confer with your classmates,

but your work must be original to you and non-overlapping with other students. If significant overlap is detected, you run the risk of getting a zero on the assignment.

Save it as a Word doc (not .pdf) with the following file name: Lastname_Final Assignment

Missed Tests/Midterm Exams/Late Assignment

Students with a documented reason for missing a course test, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (Attending Physician Statement which can be found at: <http://registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf>) may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

Notification that you will or have missed a test must reach both the course instructor and your TA within 24 hours of the missed date, preferably via an e-mail cc'ed to both of us. Proper documentation, consisting of a note from a physician outlining the specific nature of the illness and dated within 2 days of the test, is required to excuse a student from a test. Students must procure this documentation but need to hold onto it until the makeup test. It must be physically presented to the TA at the makeup test.

****All students who miss any tests due to illness will be required to write a makeup test that may differ from the original in BOTH format and content on the date specified by the instructor towards the end of the semester. Failure to write the makeup on this date will result in a 0 on the exam.****

Assignments are to be submitted via the e-class site by the time and date specified. Late assignments will receive a 5% deduction for each day (24-hour period) they are late.

Important Information Regarding Missed Tests, Late Assignments

For any missed tests or late assignments, students MUST complete the following online form which will be received and reviewed in the Psychology undergraduate office. At this time, due to COVID-19 an Attending Physician's Statement (APS) is not required, however, a reason for missing an evaluated component in the course must be provided.

[HH PSYC: Missed Tests/Exams Form](#). Failure to complete the form within 48 hours of the original deadline will result in a grade of zero for the test/assignment.

Grading as per Senate Policy

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar – [Grading Scheme for 2022-23](#)

Add/Drop Deadlines

<https://registrar.yorku.ca/enrol/dates/2022-2023/fall-winter>

	WINTER (W23)
Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Jan. 22
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Feb. 6
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	March 17
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript – see note below)	March 18 - Apr. 11

Add and Drop Deadline Information

There are deadlines for adding and dropping courses, both academic and financial. Since, for the most part, the dates are **different**, be sure to read the information carefully so that you understand the differences between the sessional dates below and the [Refund Tables](#).

You are strongly advised to pay close attention to the "Last date to enrol without permission of course instructor" deadlines. These deadlines represent the last date students have unrestricted access to the registration and enrolment system.

After that date, you must contact the professor/department offering the course to arrange permission.

You can drop courses using the registration and enrolment system up until the last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (drop deadline).

You may [withdraw from a course](#) using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as 'W'. The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.

Information on Plagiarism Detection

Plagiarism is a serious breach of academic honesty (see below). Simply put, plagiarism is presenting the words and ideas of someone else as your own and without attribution. We use Turnitin software for the writing assignments in this course to help detect plagiarism.

Electronic Device Policy

Course-related use of laptop computers (e.g., for note-taking or in-class activities) is allowed in this course. Please be considerate of your classmates and do not "surf the net," engage in social media, shop, or check your email during class time. This is distracting to other students and, of course, disrespectful to those trying to maximize their learning in the course. If you are being

negatively affected by your classmates' misuse of laptops, please feel free to report it to the instructor. Please mute cell phones and refrain from using them during class time.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected at all class meetings. Substantial material and activities will be presented that are not covered in your assigned readings, and we will engage in active learning that will enhance your experience of this course. Active learning via note-taking and class participation is more effective than reading posted powerpoints or passively listening to/watching a recorded lecture.

If you must miss a class for unavoidable reasons, borrow notes from a classmate, or if you know in advance that you must miss a class, have a classmate audiotape the class (with my permission) for you to listen to and take notes on. Powerpoint slides will be posted on the course website in advance of the class meeting.

If a student has a documented disability that requires accommodation involving notetaking, please contact the professor immediately to arrange accommodation.

Academic Integrity for Students

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

It is recommended that you review Academic Integrity by completing the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and [Academic Honesty Quiz](#)

Test Banks

The offering for sale of, buying of, and attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers), or any course specific test questions/answers is not permitted in the Faculty of Health. Any student found to be doing this may be considered to have breached the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as "Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation" (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or "encouraging, enabling or causing others" (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

Electronic Devices During a Test/Examination

Electronic mobile devices of any kind are not allowed during a test or examination. Students are required to turn off and secure any electronic mobile device in their bag which is to be placed under the chair while a test/exam is in progress. Ear buds are to be removed and stowed. **Any student observed with ear buds or otherwise consulting an electronic device during a test/exam may be reported to the Undergraduate Office for a potential breach of Academic Honesty.**

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The university encourages

students with disabilities to register with *Student Accessibility Services (SAS)* to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors as necessary. **Please let me know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course.**

<https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>

Excerpt from Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

1. Pursuant to its commitment to sustaining an inclusive, equitable community in which all members are treated with respect and dignity, and consistent with applicable accessibility legislation, York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. This policy aims to eliminate systemic barriers to participation in academic activities by students with disabilities.

All students are expected to satisfy the essential learning outcomes of courses. Accommodations shall be consistent with, support and preserve the academic integrity of the curriculum and the academic standards of courses and programs. For further information please refer to: [York University Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities Policy](#).

Course Materials Copyright Information

These course materials are designed for use as part of the 3140 M course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#).

Course Schedule:

<u>Date:</u>	<u>Topic:</u>	<u>Materials:</u>
1) Jan. 11	Troubling “abnormal” psychology: Key concepts and frameworks	-Frances, Chapter 1 -Schrader, Jones, & Shattell (2013) -Hogan (2019)
2) Jan. 18	What can we learn from history?	-Frances, Chapter 2 -Ussher (2014) -Lane (2010) -“A residential school survivor...” (2016)
3) Jan. 25	Diagnosis and its discontents	-Frances, Chapter 3 -Lafrance & McKenzie-Mohr (2013) -Read & Harper (2022)
4) Feb. 1	TEST 1 (35%)	
5) Feb. 8	What does culture have to do with it?	-Watters (2010) -Kleinman (2004) -Schulz (2004)
6) Feb. 15	‘Race,’ racism and class	-Williams et al. (2022)
WINTER READING WEEK February 18-24		
7) March 1	Culture in practice	-Kirmayer (2013) -Metzl & Hansen (2014)
8) March 8	TEST 2 (35%)	
9) March 15	Gender and distress	-Ussher (2013) -Olliffe & Phillips (2008) -Levitt et al. (2022)
10) March 22	(De)Medicalizing sex and sexuality	-Hart & Wellings (2002) -Hartley & Tiefer (2003) -King (2019)
LAST DAY TO SUBMIT REFLECTION IS MARCH 22nd		
11) March 29	Troubling trauma	-Tseris (2015) -Burrage et al. (2022)

12) April 5

Beyond “treatment”

-Beyond Possible video
-Gone (2022)
-Read & Harper (2022)

ASSIGNMENT DUE BY 11:59PM ON APRIL 7th

MATERIALS BY WEEK (listed in the order in which they should be read/consulted):

1) Jan. 11th: Troubling “abnormal” psychology: Key concepts and frameworks

Frances, A. (2013). *Saving Normal*, Chapter 1.

Schrader, S., Jones, N. & Shattell, M. (2013). Mad pride: Reflections on sociopolitical identity and mental diversity in the context of culturally competent psychiatric care. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 34, 62-64.

Hogan, A. J. (2019). Social and medical models of disability and mental health: Evolution and renewal. *CMAJ*, 191(1), E16-E18.

2) Jan. 18th: What can we learn from history?

Frances, A. (2013). *Saving Normal*, Chapter 2

Ussher, J. (2014). Madness. In T. Teo (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Critical Psychology* (pp. 1111-1117). New York: Springer SBM.

Lane, C. (2010, May 5). [How schizophrenia became a Black disease: An Interview with Jonathan Metzl](#). *Psychology Today: Side Effects*.

[A residential school survivor shares his story of trauma and healing](#), *The Globe and Mail* (2016)

3) Jan. 25th: Diagnosis and its discontents

Frances, A. (2013). *Saving Normal*, Chapter 3

Lafrance, M.N. & McKenzie-Mohr, S. (2013). The DSM and its lure of legitimacy. *Feminism & Psychology*, 23, 119-140.

Read, J. & Harper, D. (2022). The Power-Threat-Meaning Framework: Addressing adversity, challenging prejudice and stigma, and transforming services. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 35(1), 54-67. **READ PAGES 54-61 (to end of Alternatives section)**

4) Feb. 1st: TEST 1 (35%)

5) Feb. 8th: What does culture have to do with it?

Watters, E. (2010, January 8). The Americanization of mental illness. *New York Times Magazine*. Retrieved from: http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/10/magazine/10psychet.html?_r=0

Kleinman, A. (2004). Culture and depression. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 351, 951-953.

Schulz, K. (2004), August 22). Did antidepressants depress Japan? *New York Times Magazine*, retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/22/magazine/did-antidepressants-depress-japan.html>

6) Feb. 15th: ‘Race,’ racism, and class

Williams, M. T., Khanna, R. A., MacIntyre, M. P., Faber, S. (2022). The traumatizing impact of racism in Canadians of colour. *Current Trauma Reports*, 8(2), 17-34.

7) March 1st: Culture in practice

Kirmayer, L. J. (2013). Rethinking cultural competence. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 49, 149-164.

Metzl, J. & Hansen, H. (2014). Structural competency: Theorizing a new medical engagement with stigma and inequality. *Social Science and Medicine*, 103, 126-133.

8) March 8th: TEST #2 (35%)

9) March 15th: Gender and distress

Ussher, J. (2013). Diagnosing difficult women and pathologising femininity: Gender bias in psychiatric nosology. *Feminism & Psychology*, 23, 63-69.

Oliffe, J. L. & Phillips, M. J. (2008). Men, depression, and masculinities: A review and recommendations. *Journal of Men's Health*, 5, 194-202.

Levitt, H. M., Kelsey A. K., and Ally, B. H. (2022) Beyond minority stress: Toward a multidimensional psychology of trans/nonbinary gender. *Current Opinion in Psychology*. Online first. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/10.1016/j.copsyc.2022.101515>

10) March 22nd: (De)Medicalizing sex and sexuality

Hart, G. & Wellings, K. (2002). Sexual behaviour and its medicalisation: In sickness and in health. *BMJ*, 324, 896-900.

Hartley, H. & Tiefer, L. (2003). Taking a biological turn: The push for a “female viagra” and the medicalization of women’s sexual problems. *Women’s Studies Quarterly*, 31, 42-54.

King M. (2019). Stigma in psychiatry seen through the lens of sexuality and gender. *BJPsych Int*, 16(4), 77-80.

11) March 29th: Troubling trauma

Tseris, E. (2015). Trauma and women’s rights ... According to whom? Decolonizing the psychological trauma narrative. *Feminism & Psychology*, 25(1), 34–38.

Burrage, R. L., Mompers, S.L. & Gone, J.P. (2022). Beyond trauma: Decolonizing understandings of loss and healing in the Indian Residential School system of Canada. *Journal of Social Issues*, 78, 27-52. **READ PAGES 27-32 and 42-49**

12) April 5th : Beyond “Treatment”

[Beyond Possible: How the Hearing Voices Approach Transforms Lives](#)

Gone, J. P. (2022). Re-imagining mental health services for American Indian communities: Centering indigenous perspectives. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 69, 257-268.

Read, J. & Harper, D. (2022). The Power-Threat-Meaning Framework: Addressing adversity, challenging prejudice and stigma, and transforming services. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 35(1), 54-67. **READ PAGES 61-67**

ASSIGNMENT DUE BY 11:59PM APRIL 7TH