# Psychology 360

# Abnormal Psychology

**Instructor:** David Schwartz, Ph.D.

**Office:** SGM 629

**E-mail:** [davschw@usc.edu](mailto:davschw@usc.edu)

**Office Hours without Appointment:** Monday 4 to 6 PM

Wed 4 to 6 PM

Additional office hours can be scheduled via ZOOM on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. In some cases, I can also make early morning and late evening appointment.

**Teaching Assistant:** Lai Xu

**Office:** SGM 714

**E-mail:** laixu@usc.edu

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 10 to 11 AM

Friday 10 to 11 AM

Or by appointments

Office hours will be held via Zoom

**General Comments:** The syllabus below is a contractual agreement between the students and the instructor. Please read this document carefully, and familiarize yourself with the class policies. Be aware that **none of the policies described are negotiable** and that **by agreeing to take this class, you are accepting the terms of the syllabus in full.**

Policies described in the syllabus will not be changed unless required by external circumstances (e.g., the pandemic). In that case, I will discuss any changes with students beforehand and will also solicit student feedback.

**Course goals:** This course will provide students with a broad overview of the scientific research on psychopathology, and will review current and historical perspectives on psychopathology. Controversies and areas of uncertainty will be highlighted. Interest in the study of psychopathology, and critical thinking about the relevant concepts, will be encouraged.

**Some of our main objectives:**

1. Students will understand, and be able to describe, major theoretical perspectives on psychopathology (e.g., Freud, Skinner and the Behaviorists, Beck and Cognitive theory, biological paradigm).
2. Students will be able to identify, and discuss, the limits of the Neo-Kraepelinian paradigm
3. Students will be family with the symptoms, course, etiology, and prognosis of common classes of disorder.
4. Students will be able to discuss controversies related to the nature of psychological disorder (e.g., Are disorders categorical or dimensional? When should a behavior be considered “abnormal” “Should psychological disorders be considered diseases?)

**COVID-19 Policies**: All university policies with regards to the pandemic will be strictly enforced in Psychology 360. Face coverings, social distancing, and any other procedures that the university establishes will be carefully observed. I encourage students to closely follow the situation at USC: <https://coronavirus.usc.edu/>

If you feel ill, or receive a positive diagnosis, you should not come to class. Please see class policies below for missed classes and illness.

In the unlikely event that lectures or other class activities are disrupted due to pandemic, I will contact you via e-mail with information on procedures. We will, again, follow university policies carefully.

**Text:** *Abnormal Psychology*, 18th Edition by Hooley, Nock, & Butcher

Please do not purchase earlier versions.

**Lectures:** I generally emphasize lecture material more than the text when I write exams. In fact, there have been some students over the years who managed to do well in my class without even purchasing the text (definitely not something I recommend). If you regularly miss class you will have a great deal of difficulty with the midterms.

At the present time, USC is relying on a live teaching format with no ZOOMcomponent. It may be possible for me to record lectures with ZOOM and make those lectures available online. If it is possible to record lectures on ZOOM, I will do so. However, I am not sure whether or not this will be technologically feasible and I encourage all students to plan on attending class at the regularly scheduled times.

I do not share my lecture notes with students. If you miss class, you may need to borrow notes from a classmate.

If you miss class, and have specific questions about material, I would be happy to setup an appointment with you.

**Office Hours:** If you cannot make my regular office hours please feel free to see me after class for an alternative appointment time. ZOOM is now widely available so that its possible for me to schedule appointments, even on days that I am not on campus.

It’s best to see me for an appointment after class rather than relying on e-mail. Also, no need to e-mail first before coming to my regularly scheduled office hours – open door policy (just come!).

You may not come to office hours without a face covering. Also, I will likely take precautions to increase ventilation in my office area during meetings with students (e.g., keeping windows and doors open).

I am available to discuss issues directly relevant to this class (e.g., questions about the text or lectures). Students are also welcome to come to my office hours if they have other questions about the psychology program here at USC, graduate school, career plans (psychology or otherwise), and other issues regarding psychological research and training. I am also happy to meet with students to talk about areas of personal interest or questions that have emerged in other psychology classes. I will even meet with you to discuss papers and assignments that you are working on in other classes. Basically, ***any topic that is remotely related to psychology, careers, your educational development, classes at USC, or academic interests, is fair game.***

I bolded, italicized, outlined, and underlined this point – so you know I really mean it – please come see me!

In the past, I have also set aside time for small groups of students who wanted to have additional help sessions or collaborative meetings. If there is interest this semester, we can schedule some times.

*I am not able to answer questions regarding your mental health, or the mental health of friends or family members*. If you feel that you need help with a personal issue, please contact Student Counseling Services at (213) 740-7711. For evening and weekend emergencies, contact the USC Department of Public Safety at (213) 740-4321.

**Web Resources:** Copies of PowerPoint slides from class and the syllabus midterm review sheets will be available on BLACKBOARD. Grades for the exams and assignments will be communicated via BLACKBOARD. BLACKBOARD likes to create all sorts of weird additional columns that I can’t control. Please ignore anything on the BLACKBOARD grading system (total columns, etc.) except for your actual grades.

I often communicate information about the class via messages generated by BLACKBOARD. It is a good idea to check your e-mail regularly during the course of the semester. Blackboard is not a two-way communication system. If you hit “respond” button when you receive a message via BLACKBOARD, your e-mail may end up in a spam folder somewhere.

When possible, I will also add links to online versions of the videos we see in class.

I would encourage you to see me after class or during office hours if you have questions, instead of relying on e-mail**. I will not respond to e-mailed lists of questions in the days before an exam.** I am happy to answer any questions that you have, but please see me (via ZOOM or in person). It’s quite difficult to discuss complex topics via e-mail exchange.

I do not check e-mail after work hours or on weekends. If you e-mail me on a Saturday night, do not expect to receive a quick response!

If you do e-mail me, try to use a USC account or GMAIL account so that my SPAM filters don’t remove your note.

**Sensitive Material Warning:** This course, by its nature, will cover sensitive topics (e.g., suicide, violence and victimization, substance abuse, eating disorders, psychosis). Some of the issues that we will discuss will likely have touched the lives of a subset of students quite directly. Our class discussions could prove to be challenging for those students as a result. We will also view case examples on video that past students have found to be intense.

I will not routinely issue “trigger warnings” before or during lectures. Because this is a course on abnormal behavior nearly every lecture will touch on material that could be a potential trigger to some students. It would not be practical (or useful) for me to continually issue such warnings. Moreover, existing evidence does not support that idea that trigger warnings effectively reduce stress.

The PowerPoints for all lectures for the full semester will be online by the time you start your first class. You can review PowerPoints before lectures so that you know exactly what information will be covered. If you are concerned that a topic might prove stressful, please download the PowerPoints ahead of time.

Over the years, there have been some instances in which students have challenged the appropriateness of particular labels or terms used during lectures, illustrations in slides, videos, etc. I very much appreciate students raising any related concerns with me. Some of the social themes we will discuss in class are continually evolving and I strongly encourage student to share any opinions that have about the presentation of potentially controversial material. You will find me VERY receptive to these discussions and I found students’ perspectives on these topics to be extremely helpful. Please share your opinions and views (especially in class discussions). Disagreement is valuable!

**Grade:** Your final class grade will be computed based on the follow:

Midterm 1: 25%

Midterm 2: 25%

Quizzes: 10%

Discussion Questions: 12% (4 X 3% each)

Final Exam: 28%

**Midterm Examinations:** There will be three midterm exams. If you complete all three midterms, the lowest of your scores will be dropped. Only your two highest scores will be included in the calculation of your final grade. If you miss an exam for any reason (e.g., illness or personal emergency) that exam score will be treated as a zero and dropped.

Note that the dropped exam provision is there to help students who have legitimate emergencies that cause them to miss a test (see make-up policy below). The dropped exam provision is specifically not there to give students an opportunity to do badly on one midterm. If you miss an exam because you are ill, you will receive a zero on the test and it will become your low score. There are no circumstances whatsoever under which a student will be allowed to drop two exam scores**.**

The exam format will emphasize multiple choice questions. The exams will focus on largely material covered in class. Each exam will also include questions based on videos seen in class.

I will provide students with some form of study guide prior to the exam. We will also schedule an in-class help session prior to each exam.

*There will be absolutely no make-ups, test postponements, or early test administrations offered, under ANY circumstances!* If you miss an exam because of any reason (personal, academic, Covid-19 related issues, health, illness, mental health issues, deaths or significant losses, family problems, job demands, applications for graduate school, etc.) that exam will be dropped as your lowest score. *There will be no special allowances made whatsoever*. The dates for the exams are listed in this syllabus.

Note that Covid-19 is not an exception to the above policy. If you contract Covid-19 (which I hope will not happen), you will need to drop any missed exams as your lowest score.

**Quizzes:** Throughout the semester, we will have short in-class quizzes. Depending on time limits, we may have between 10 or 15 quizzes over the course of the semester. The quizzes are designed to be interactive (encouraging students to discuss the material) and fun. If you are in class, participating, and paying attention, you will certainly get full credit for the quiz. You will receive one percentage point for each quiz you complete correctly.

For the quizzes, I set aside time in class for you to discuss with your neighbors. You will be given a thought question. Discuss as a group. Please submit your responses to Blackboard. Each student must submit their own response, but you can work on response with your classmates and there is no penalty for collaboration. In the past, groups of students have submitted the same answer that they worked on together, and that is definitely OK.

If you did not attend a lecture, you may still get full credit for the quiz. In that case, you need to turn in the quiz prior to the following class. For example, if you miss class on a Monday, you need to do the lecture and turn in the quiz by the following Wed. Late quizzes will not receive credit (and there are NO exceptions to that policy).

You need only be present for ten of the quizzes in order to receive full credit. If you need to miss multiple quizzes due to COVID-19 or some other issue that is not within your control, you can still receive full credit.

If you enter the class via drop/add late in the semester, you will have one week from your first class to complete missed quizzes.

**Discussion Questions:** There will be four sets of discussion questions distributed through the semester. The discussion questions will only require four or five paragraphs in response. Due dates are in the syllabus. The questions must be submitted by the start of class on the date due. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Please submit your responses to Blackboard in WORD or GOOGLE DOC (not PDF) format.

If you enter the class via drop/add late in the semester, you will have one week from your first class to complete missed discussion questions.

**Final Examination:** There will be a cumulative final exam, which will also have some new material. The final will be administered in our regular classroom, unless I instruct you otherwise.

Consistent with university policy, you may not miss the final exam and the score from the final cannot be dropped. There will be no make-ups for the final whatsoever.

Please make sure and make a note of the scheduled time for this exam. If you have any scheduled conflicts with the final (i.e., three finals scheduled for the same day), you must let me know within the first two weeks of the semester. STUDENTS WHO DO NOT COMPLETE THE FINAL EXAM WILL RECEIVE A FAILING GRADE FOR THE CLASS.

In the past, I have been forced to fail students who missed the final because they overslept or made a scheduling error. Please do not allow this to happen to you.

**Grading disputes:** As part of regular scoring procedures, I will statistically analyze responses to each multiple choice item on the midterms and final. If the class as a whole has done poorly on a specific item, I will review the validity of the item. There will be no other appeals accepted regarding the correct answer to multiple choice questions.

*If you fall a percentage point or two short of the grade you desire at the end of the semester, I will not re-grade your final, midterms, quizzes, or discussion questions as you attempt to squeak out a slightly higher grade.*

**Extra Credit:** I am not planning on offering extra credit options in the class at the present time, although this may change. That said, I view it as a personal favor when students are willing to visit and chat with me during my office hours. Accordingly, if students are regularly stopping by for help with course material, questions about graduate school, or conversations about any issue related to psychology, I will respond by adding extra credit questions to each midterm for the full class.

**Grades:** Final grades will be based on the grading distribution summarized below.

Because there may be extra credit items on the midterms it could be possible to score greater than 100% on a midterm (I am thrilled when students do this). In this case, I will average the score into your final midterm grade. However, your final midterm average cannot be greater than 100%. For example, if your two highest midterm scores are 98% and 104%, you midterm average for the semester will become 100%.

In the very unlikely event of a legitimate grading error (e.g., your midterm and final average would indicate an “A” but you receive a “B” in the class) please contact me immediately. Grade changes at USC are an extremely complex process that requires the professor to write an appeal to the registrar’s office, get signatures from the Department Chair, and provide evidence that a legitimate error has occurred. So, it is best that we get the ball rolling quickly.

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| **Grade Distribution:** |  |
| To Get: | Your Need a Grade of at least: |
| A | 93 |
| A- | 90 |
| B+ | 87 |
| B | 83 |
| B- | 80 |
| C+ | 77 |
| C | 73 |
| C- | 70 |
| D+ | 67 |
| D | 63 |
| D- | 60 |
| F | 0  **For P/F options, you need a score of at least 70 to pass.** |

For P/F options, you need a score of at least 70 to pass.

**Letters of Reference:** My classes at USC can sometimes be large. If I have had no contact with you outside of class, I will probably not be a good person to ask for a letter of reference.

Even if I cannot write you a letter, I will definitely be available to meet with you at any time (before, during, or after the semester) to help you with admissions applications, etc. Please feel free to use me as a resource when you are completing graduate applications.

**Academic Honesty:** I do not expect academic dishonesty to be an issue in this class. However, the relevant University policies (see the SCAMPUS handbook) will be strictly enforced. Any student who is caught cheating on an assignment or exam (e.g., copying another student’s answers while taking a midterm, or plagiarizing a paper assignment), will receive a failing grade for that assignment. Students who engage in such behavior on more than one occasion will receive a failing grade for the course. Penalties for other

acts of academic dishonesty will be determined after consultation with the Office for

Student Conduct.

**Electronic Technology:** An emerging issue confronting all universities is the rapidly changing landscape with regard to electronic transmission of materials. Consistent with university policies, you may NOT share any course materials, including test items, PowerPoint slides, the syllabus, or readings with any commercial websites (websites that are not maintained directly by the University of Southern California) or electronic forum of any kind. If you post material from this class on any website, chatboard, mailing list, social networking site, or other electronic outlet, you will receive a failing grade for the class. If you are found to have posted such material after the semester has completed, you will be referred to the university for further action.

Providing no other course policies are violated, students are free to share materials from the class with EACH OTHER. It is fine for students to e-mail course notes or copies of readings to each other. However, students may not collect course materials on external storage sites for group use. Please do not share notes with multiple classmates on a DROPBOX, Google Drive folder, etc.

Students are welcome to set up discussion boards for the class (e.g., GroupMe or otherwise). I will not moderate external discussion boards but I will support those forums insofar as appropriate. For example, if students wanted me to make announcements in class or distribute links, I’d be happy to do so.

Students with wearable technology (iWatch, Gear, Fitbit, Android Wear, etc) will be asked to remove their devices prior to midterms. You may not have access to any form of electronic communications device during examination.

Laptops, recording devices, tablets, and smartphones may be used any other time during lectures. You are welcome to film or record lecture in anyway that helps you with the material.

**Student athletes:** Arrangements will be made for student athletes who are unable to attend more than one midterm because of scheduled games. At my discretion, we will either arrange for the athletic department to proctor an alternative form, or arrange for you to take the exam before or after the rest of the class. *Within the first two weeks of class*, you must provide written documentation to me regarding legitimate conflicts (e.g., a letter signed by the relevant team official). The conflict must involve

athletic activities that are formally scheduled by the university. If you will miss an exam because of an activity that has not been scheduled yet (i.e., a particular game or tournament that is dependent on the team’s standing during the year), you should provide written documentation of this possibility during the first two weeks of class.

**Student disabilities:** Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for the approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me or the TA as early in the semester as possible. DSP is open Mon-Fri 8:30 -5:00. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213)740 -0776.

**Religious observance:** It is the policy of the University of Southern California to respect the religious practices of all students. Accordingly, if you l need accommodations related to religion (i.e., missing class or an assignment because of a specific holiday or ceremony), you should contact me within the first two weeks of the semester. Please look at the syllabus carefully, and alert me to any potential conflicts as soon as possible.

**Discrimination, Harassment, or Violence:** Students in Psychology 360 have generally been quite respectful toward each other (as I would expect from USC Trojans!). Nonetheless, any instances of harassment or discrimination will be met with zero tolerance.

As a faculty member, I am a mandated reporter. I am required by law and university policy to report any disclosure of sexual violence, discrimination, or harassment to the appropriate authorities. This responsibility is one that I take quite seriously. Students who have experienced any such difficulties – even if they occur outside the context of my course – are welcome to come see me at any time. I will do whatever I can to help.

# The [Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX](https://eeotix.usc.edu/) is an important resource for students who have encountered any relevant issues at USC: <https://eeotix.usc.edu/>

# I have consulted with this office in the past and have found them hugely helpful. If you would like assistance contacting staff at [Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX](https://eeotix.usc.edu/), please feel free to involve me.

**Date Topic Reading**

Jan 10 Introduction to Course Chapter 1 (up until

section 1.2)

Jan 12 Current Paradigms Chapter 2

Jan 17 MLK Day

Jan 19 Paradigms/Classification

Discuss Questions # 1 Assigned

Jan 24 Classification/Assessment Chapter 3

Jan 26 Assessment

Jan 31 Research methods Chapter 1 (Section 1.2 –

Chapter end)

Discuss Questions # 1 Due

Feb 2 Research methods

Feb 8 Anxiety Disorders Chapter 6

Feb 9 **MIDTERM 1**

Feb 14 OCD, PTSD Chapter 5 (section 5.5 to

end of chapter)

Feb 16 Mood Disorders Chapter 7

Feb 21 Mood Disorders

Discuss Questions # 2 Assigned

Feb 23 President’s Day

Feb 29 Substance Abuse Disorders Chapter 11

Mar 2 Substance Abuse Disorders

Discuss questions # 2 due

Mar 7 Dissociative Disorders Chapter 8

Mar 9 **MIDTERM 2**

Mar 14-16 Spring Break

Mar 21 Eating Disorders Chapter 9

Mar 23 Personality Disorders Chapter 10

Mar 28 Personality Disorders

Discuss Questions # 3 Assigned

Mar 30 Schizophrenia Chapter 10

Apr 4 Schizophrenia

Discuss Questions # 3 Due

Apr 6 **MIDTERM 3**

Apr 11 Childhood disorders Chapter 15

Apr 13 Childhood disorders

Apr 18 Childhood disorders/Aging and Psychological Disorders

Apr 20 Aging and Psychological Disorders Chapter 14

Discuss Questions # 4 Assigned

Apr 25 Legal and ethical issues Chapter 17

Apr 27 Legal and ethical issues

Discuss Questions # 4 Due

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| **FINAL EXAM MONDAY MAY 9 2-4 PM** |