

San José State University
Department of Psychology
PSYC 110, Sect. 01, Adult Psychopathology
Fall 2026

Instructor: Dr. Steven A. Del Chiaro
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Office Hours: Mondays, 6:00pm -7:00pm. Fridays, 8:00am – 9:00am
Appointments outside of office hours are available by request through Canvas Inbox.
Class Days/Time: Monday/Wednesday 7:30 am – 8:45 am
Classroom: Hugh Gillis Hall 116

Course Format

This is an in-person course. Regular attendance is expected, as class meetings include lectures, demonstrations, discussions, activities, and examples that build on the assigned readings and cannot be fully replicated through posted materials.

Course Website

Canvas will serve as the central hub for this course. Course materials, announcements, assignment instructions, grades, and other resources will be available through Canvas. Unless otherwise noted, all assignments are submitted through Canvas. Students are responsible for checking Canvas regularly for course announcements, updates, and due dates.

Logging Into Canvas

Canvas is available at <https://sjsu.instructure.com>. Students must activate their SJSUOne account before accessing Canvas. Your username is your SJSU ID (or employee ID), and your password is the one you created for your SJSUOne account.

Further Assistance with Canvas

Students experiencing technical issues with Canvas should first consult the Canvas Student Guides. If additional assistance is needed, contact the SJSU Information Technology Help Desk.

Course Description

This course is designed to introduce you to some of the major topics in clinical psychology. This course will help you begin to appreciate the complexity of thought, feelings and behavior through an examination of what can happen when these processes become dysfunctional. We will look at historical theories as well as new research and findings. Emphasis will be placed on psychological, biological, and environmental factors that interact to create symptoms and behaviors associated with specific disorders. Students are encouraged to think critically about stigmas and labels associated with the mentally ill. Societal and cultural norms influence what is considered “abnormal”; however, psychologists strive to empirically arrive at diagnostic criteria, etiology, prognosis, and treatments of mental disorders. Since many behaviors and symptoms we will address may seem familiar (e.g., checking to see if you locked your door 5x), you are forewarned NOT to self-diagnose. By the end of the course, you should be more sensitive to issues pertaining to psychological dysfunction, and more knowledgeable about the industry of mental illness and in modern America and its impact on individuals and society.

Course Goals

The two goals of the course are to provide students with a broad understanding of psychological problems and develop critical thinking skills applicable to the study of abnormal behavior.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. To understand the importance of history and context when examining and classifying psychological distress;

2. To familiarize students with diagnosable psychopathologies;
3. To be familiar with and critical of different types of assessment of abnormal behavior;
4. To present some theories of etiology and have students come to their own conclusions of the nature and causes of specific psychopathologies;
5. To introduce some clinical therapies that have been proven useful in the treatment of specific disorders.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirements...

PLO1 – Knowledge Base of Psychology – Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology. (test, quizzes, paper)

PLO2 – Research Methods in Psychology – Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations. (paper)

PLO3 – Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology – Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes. (paper)

PLO4 – Application of Psychology – Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues. (tests, paper)

PLO5 – Values in Psychology – Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society. (paper)

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

This course uses the McGraw Hill Connect eBook and online learning platform. Because many course assignments are completed through Connect, you must purchase Connect access. Purchasing a used or printed copy of the textbook alone will not provide access to the required online assignments. Instructions for purchasing and accessing the course materials will be provided during the first week of class and posted in Canvas.

Title Nolen-Hoeksema's Introduction to Psychopathology
 Author [Heather Jennings](#)
 Publisher McGraw-Hill Education, 2025

Library Liaison

Bailey, Christa
 Phone: 408-808-2422
 Email: christa.bailey@sjsu.edu

Course Requirements and Assignments

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Exams

Exams will be multiple-choice. The tests will have questions from the text, lectures and videos. Exams will be discussed in class. The first two exams will be administered in person during our regular class meeting. The third exam will be administered online through Canvas using Respondus LockDown Browser.

**** Make-up exams will be given ONLY when there is a documented excuse that must be approved by the professor (medical notes, etc.). A make-up exam will not be the same multiple-choice exam that is given in class. The make-**

up exam will consist of 5 to 8 essay questions on topics covered in the textbook and lecture, and it will be worth the same point value as the original exam. **

Connect Chapter Assignments: Complete the assigned Connect chapter assignments by selecting the McGraw Hill Connect link in Canvas. Assignments are graded based on completion and mastery of the assigned chapter content. There are no time limits, but assignments must be completed during the assigned availability window. No make-up assignments will be given. You will complete 10 Connect chapter assignments during the semester, each worth 5 points, for a total of 50 points.

Participation Activities: During class, there will be activities students will be graded on, and need to be present to receive points.

Madness: A History – Kill or Cure: is a documentary that explores historical and cultural responses to mental illness and the development of psychopathology treatments. You will watch this film and write a short reaction paper that ties your observations to concepts discussed in our Psychopathology unit. This assignment is worth 10 points and is designed to deepen your understanding of how history, culture, and science intersect in the study and treatment of mental disorders.

TED Talk Reflections: Psychopathology in Context: Throughout the semester, you will complete five TED Talk reflection assignments related to major topics in psychopathology. These talks provide real-world perspectives on mental disorders, treatment, stigma, and lived experience, and are designed to help you connect textbook concepts to broader social, cultural, and clinical contexts. Each reflection is worth 10 points, for a total of 50 points. Detailed instructions and prompts for each TED Talk are provided in Canvas.

Clinical Case Conceptualization: Fictional Character Analysis. 100 points total (80 points for final paper, 20 points are earned through two required rough drafts, each of which includes peer review)

This assignment is a major applied project in which students will analyze a fictional character as if the character were a real client presenting for psychological treatment. The purpose of the assignment is to move beyond memorization of diagnostic criteria and practice clinical thinking, including assessment, diagnostic reasoning, and treatment planning.

Students will select a fictional character they enjoy and assign the character a psychological disorder of interest. The paper is written as a “what if” clinical case, using the character as inspiration rather than retelling the original story. Students should not reference the movie, book, or television show in the paper and should write as if the character is a real client.

The paper includes three sections: Part A (Clinical Assessment), Part B (Diagnostic Justification and Psychopathology), and Part C (Treatment and Prognosis). The final paper is worth 80 points. In addition, students will complete two required rough drafts, each worth 10 points. Each rough draft includes **two required peer reviews**, which must be completed to receive full credit. Peer reviews must be substantive and constructive. Superficial or incomplete reviews may receive partial or no credit. The peer review process is designed to strengthen clinical writing, improve critical evaluation skills, and support revision prior to final submission. Detailed instructions, deadlines, and grading criteria are provided on Canvas.

Grading Information

Your grade will be determined by the total number of points you earn throughout the semester. Points will be assigned as follows:

Connect Chapter Assignments	10x 5 pts	= 50
3 Exams	3x 100 pts	= 300
Clinical Case Conceptualization	100 pts	= 100
Syllabus, Lockdown, Participation Activities	Up to 25 pts	= 25
TED Talk Reflections	5x 10 pts	= 50
Madness reflection:	10 pts	= 10
Total possible points		= 535

Letter grades will be assigned according to the grading table:

Table 1 - Grading Table

	A: 100 - 94	A-: 93-90
B+: 89-87	B: 86-84	B-: 83-80
C+: 79-77	C: 76-74	C-: 73-70
D+: 69-67	D: 66-64	D-: 63-60
F: < 60		

Grades are updated regularly on Canvas and are to be used for grade checks. Please ensure the accuracy of your grades. Final grades posted on Canvas will be uploaded to Peoplesoft as a final grade. As the semester concludes, do not email the instructor or TA asking for “extra points” to raise your grade.

Classroom Protocol

It is strongly encouraged that students exchange contact information with at least five classmates. When emailing the professor, please be mindful to do some research before emailing me with your questions. The answers to most of the questions you have are usually found within the syllabus. If it is not, I will be more than happy to help, however; if it is an answer that can be found in the syllabus, the email sent will not receive a response. Please indicate on the subject line of the email: class date and time.

Syllabus and Course Policies

This syllabus serves as the primary guide for the course and will be followed as closely as possible. However, the instructor reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the course schedule, assignments, policies, or procedures when necessary to support student learning or in response to unforeseen circumstances. Any changes will be communicated through Canvas Announcements and, when appropriate, discussed in class.

Students are responsible for reading this syllabus, reviewing course announcements, and understanding the course expectations and policies outlined in this syllabus and the supporting information provided in Canvas. Detailed assignment instructions, grading rubrics, submission requirements, due dates, and additional course resources are available in the corresponding Canvas modules. Students are responsible for reviewing both this syllabus and the applicable Canvas materials throughout the semester.

If you have questions about any course policy, assignment, or expectation, please seek clarification before the applicable deadline.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to the learning process and is expected of every student enrolled in this course. Unless otherwise specified, all work submitted must represent your own understanding and effort. Students are expected to comply with the San José State University Academic Integrity Policy and all applicable university standards.

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of information, and the unauthorized use of artificial intelligence or other technologies. Suspected violations may be addressed in accordance with university policy and may be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

This syllabus establishes the general academic integrity expectations for the course. Additional course policies, expectations, examples, assignment-specific requirements, and guidance regarding academic integrity, plagiarism, artificial intelligence, late work, communication, and other course procedures are provided in the **Class Policies** module and other applicable modules in Canvas. These Canvas materials are incorporated into this syllabus and are considered part of the course requirements. Students are responsible for reading, understanding, and following both this syllabus and the applicable Canvas materials throughout the semester.

Students remain responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of all work they submit, regardless of the tools or resources used. If you are uncertain whether a particular action or resource is permitted, ask for clarification before submitting your work.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](#) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed. See [University Policy S14-7](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf>.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit [Peer Connections website](#) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the [Writing Center website](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit [Counseling Services website](http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

University Resources

SJSU offers many resources to students for basic needs. Talk to me, or visit the website: <https://www.sjsu.edu/sjsucares/>

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Aug 19	Class Business/Syllabus
2	Aug 24 Aug 26	Madness Movie Syllabus Quiz Due Understanding Psychopathology Chapter 1 LMS Chapter 1 Madness Reaction Paper
3	Aug 31 Sept 2	Theories and Treatment of Psychopathology, Chapter 2 LMS Chapter 2 TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 1
4	Sept 7(No Class) Sept 9	 Assessing and Diagnosing Psychopathology, Chapter 3 LMS Chapter 3 TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 2
5	Sept 14 Sept 16	Anxiety Disorders, Chapter 5 LMS Chapter 5
6	Sept 21 Sept 23	<u>Rough Draft of Part A of Paper Due at 9:00 am.</u> <u>Two papers will be randomly assigned at 9:05 am.</u> <u>Examination 1 Chapters 1,2,3, & 5</u> In person – Scantron 882-E
7	Sept 28 Sept 30	Somatoform/Dissociative Disorders, Chapter 6 LMS Chapter 6
8	Oct 5 Oct 7	Mood Disorders & Suicide, Chapter 7 LMS Chapter 7 TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 3
9	Oct 12 Oct 14	Schizophrenia, Chapter 8 LMS Chapter 8 TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 4

10	Oct 19 Oct 21	Personality Disorders, Chapter 9 LMS Chapter 9
11	Oct 26 Oct 28	<u>Examination 2 - Chapters 6,7,8, &9</u> In person – Scantron 882-E Eating and Sleep Disorders, Chapter 12 LMS Chapter 12
12	Nov 2 Nov 4	Sexual Disorders and Gender Diversity, Chapter 13 LMS Chapter 13 <u>Rough Draft of Paper Due</u>
13	Nov 9 Nov 11 (No Class)	Substance-Related and Gambling Disorders, Chapter 14 LMS not worth points, but material will be on exam 3
14	Nov 16 Nov 18	<u>Paper Due Submitted to Canvas by 9:00 am</u> Neurodevelopmental and Neurocognitive Disorders, Chapter 10 LMS not worth points, but material will be on exam 3 Lockdown Browser Practice Quiz TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 5
15	Nov 23 Nov 25 (No Class)	
16	Nov 30 Dec 2	Comprehensive Review: Assessment, Diagnosis, and Differential Diagnosis Case Conceptualization Workshop: Integrating diagnosis, assessment, and treatment planning
17	Dec 7	Final Exam Review
		The third exam will be administered online through Canvas using Respondus LockDown Browser. Chapters 10, 12, 13, 14 Due Friday Dec 11 at 11:59 pm.