

San José State University
Department of Psychology
PSYC 110, Sect. 1, Adult Psychopathology
Spring 2026

Instructor:	Dr. Steven A. Del Chiaro
Office Location:	DMH 352
Email:	steven.delchiaro@jsu.edu
Office Hours:	Monday/Wednesday 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm and by appointment (make appointment via canvas email)
Class Days/Time:	Monday/Wednesday 9:00 am – 10:15 am
Classroom:	DMH 356

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 Format

This course will be an in person course meeting. All course materials are accessible through the LMS (canvas).

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as the syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the course [Canvas Learning Management System course login website](#). You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through canvas to learn of any updates. Announcements are regularly sent through canvas.

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.

Required Texts/Readings

We will cover this the first day of class.

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@jsu.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 2 exams are in person during our class time. The third exam will be over canvas.

**** 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. ****

LMS Completion: Complete the assigned LMS (Learning Management System) assignments through **Canvas**. From there click the **McGraw-Hill Connect** tab under the class, this will link you to the appropriate website to complete the LMS. There is no time-limit. The assignments are graded based on completion and mastery of the chapter. You must complete an assignment for each of the assigned chapters on the syllabus. There are **NO MAKE-UPS on LMS assignments** (NO EXCEPTIONS). You must do them during the time period they are assigned. You will complete 10 assignments throughout the semester. Each assignment is worth 5 points for a total of 50 points for the semester.

Participation Quizzes: 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:

Chapter LMS Completion	10x 5 pts	= 50
3 Exams:	3x 100 pts	= 300
Clinical Case Conceptualization	100 pts	= 100
Syllabus, Lockdown, Participation Quizzes	Up to 25 pts	=. 25
TED Talk Reflections	5x 10 pts	= 50
<u>Madness reflection:</u>	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 Policy

The course syllabus presented in this document will be followed as closely as possible. However, the course syllabus, schedule, policies, and procedures are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor or in the event of extenuating circumstances. This includes the tentative dates listed. The instructor will announce possible changes of the syllabus in advance. Since such announcements are typically made during class, it is the student’s responsibility to clarify any of these changes that may have been made when the student is absent.

Although you will be responsible for all of the material in the assigned readings, some of the information may not be covered in class. Therefore, if there is material that is unclear to you it is highly recommended that you discuss this material with me at an appropriate time (e.g., during office hours). It is your responsibility to read the syllabus and ask questions about it so that you have a clear understanding of the expectations. If you are unclear about any of the requirements/expectations, then please set up a time to speak with me. I will be grading as though you have a clear understanding of the course requirements and material.

Attendance

I will not be taking attendance, but we do have points for participation. You are adults and need to make your own decisions. Please realize that your decisions have consequences (If this makes no sense to you then you need to enroll in Psychology 155 Human Learning, because you will understand through operant conditioning that behaviors have consequences!). Students are responsible for everything that is said and done in class. I strive to make my classes not only educational but also enjoyable. It is important to note that it is the student's responsibility to withdraw from a course they do not wish to take. If you simply stop coming to the class and do not withdraw from the course, then you will still receive a grade that will be based on the completed work. Additionally, I encourage students to arrive on time for the class. However, I understand that extenuating circumstances do arise that can prevent your diligent efforts toward punctuality. I do have a small portion of your grade based on participation, tardiness can affect your grade. Many important pieces of information are discussed in class, and students are responsible for knowing and complying with this information including changes in assignments. Please make appropriate adjustments to your schedule to allow for arrival to the class on time.

Classroom courtesy and disruptions:

Class disruptions are not tolerated. Students will be removed from class if they are being disruptive to fellow students or the professor. Disruptions include but are not limited to not paying attention (e.g., reading the newspaper, sleeping), tuning off video, etc. In accordance with university policies on student conduct, it is expected that you will treat other students and the instructor with courtesy and respect. Being distracting on Zoom ARE ACTIVITIES THAT ARE NOT RESPECTFUL! Complete "Introduction to course" module in Canvas for Netiquette standards.

University Policies

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU's policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. See [University Policy S90-5](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S90-5.pdf>. More detailed information on a variety of related topics is available in the [SJSU catalog](#), at <http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgennarr/catalog/rec-12234.12506.html>. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not serve to address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as a next step.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](#) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](#) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](#) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](#), <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor’s permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material.”
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.”

Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](#) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

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](#) 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](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) 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](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) 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/>

Adult Psychopathology, PSYC 110, Sect. 2, Fall 2023

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Jan 26	Class Business/Syllabus
	Jan 28	Madness Movie Syllabus Quiz Due
2	Feb 2	Understanding Psychopathology Chapter 1 LMS Chapter 1 Madness Reaction Paper
	Feb 4	
3	Feb 9	Theories and Treatment of Psychopathology, Chapter 2 LMS Chapter 2 TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 1
	Feb 11	
4	Feb 16	Assessing and Diagnosing Psychopathology, Chapter 3 LMS Chapter 3 TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 2
	Feb 18	
5	Feb 23	Anxiety Disorders, Chapter 5 LMS Chapter 5
	Feb 25	<i>Rough Draft of Part A of Paper Due at 9:00 am.</i>

		<u>Two papers will be randomly assigned at 9:05 am.</u>
6	Mar 2	<u>Examination 1 Chapters 1,2,3, & 5</u> In person – Scantron 882-E
	Mar 4	Somatoform/Dissociative Disorders, Chapter 6 LMS Chapter 6
7	Mar 9	-
	Mar 11	Mood Disorders & Suicide, Chapter 7 LMS Chapter 7
8	Mar 16	Mood Disorders continued
	Mar 18	TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 3
9	Mar 23	Schizophrenia, Chapter 8 LMS Chapter 8
	Mar 25	TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 4
10	Mar 30	
	April 1	Spring Break
11	April 6	Personality Disorders, Chapter 9 LMS Chapter 9
	April 8	
12	April 13	<u>Examination 2 - Chapters 6,7,8, & 9</u> In person – Scantron 882-E
	April 15	Eating and Sleep Disorders, Chapter 12 LMS Chapter 12
13	April 20	<u>Rough Draft of Paper Due by 9:00 am</u> <u>Two papers will be randomly assigned at 9:05 am.</u>
	April 22	Sexual Disorders and Gender Diversity, Chapter 13 LMS Chapter 13 <u>Peer Reviews due by April 24, 11:59 pm</u>
14	April 27	Substance-Related and Gambling Disorders, Chapter 14 LMS not worth points, but material will be on exam 3 TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 5
	April 29	<u>Paper Due Submitted to Canvas by 9:00 am</u>
15	May 4	TED Talk Reflection: Psychopathology in Context 5
	May 6	Neurodevelopmental and Neurocognitive Disorders, Chapter 10 LMS not worth points, but material will be on exam 3 Lockdown Browser Practice Quiz
16	May 11	Review Day
		Exam 3 will be administered online using Respondus LockDown Browser. Chapters 10, 12, 13, 14