

Yale University
Department of Psychology

Introduction to Clinical Psychology
(Psychology S180E; Course formerly titled: Abnormal Psychology)
Summer 2026

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Introduction to Clinical Psychology is concerned with identifying, understanding, and treating psychological disorders. Why do people have difficulties enjoying life and why do they experience sustained sadness which may even result in attempts to end their own lives? Why do war veterans who return from Iraq experience panic attacks in the middle of a supermarket even though they are out of harm's way? Why do adolescents starve themselves to death pursuing unrealistic ideals of thinness? Why do people hear voices and see things that are not there? When do these problems typically start, how can we understand factors that increase the risk of experiencing psychological problems, and what options exist for treatment? These topics and questions surround us every day and this course will try to answer some of these questions, providing an overview of the scientific study of thought, emotion, and behavior.

The course will explore psychological disorders from a variety of theoretical frameworks including psychological, biological, and sociocultural perspectives. After reviewing historical perspectives, current diagnostic approaches, and classification systems, the course will discuss specific disorders including mood and anxiety disorders, psychotic disorders, substance-related disorders, and eating disorders. The course will focus on current empirical studies that examine underlying factors as well as on empirically based treatments. Finally, we will briefly review other timely topics related to Clinical Psychology.

Course objectives include:

- Review contemporary psychological, biological and sociocultural perspectives on psychological disorders
- Examine multiple probable causes and correlates of psychopathology and human behavior
- Learn about etiological considerations, descriptions, theories underlying diagnostic classification of psychological disorders
- Review current empirical findings and trends relative to the development and description of psychopathological behavior
- Learn about demographic influences on the prevalence of disorders
- Learn and understand benefits, critiques, limitations, and implications of diagnosis and classification
- Provide an overview of current empirically supported treatments.

Readings:

Required Text: Hooley, Nock (2024, 19th edition). Psychopathology: A Clinical Science Approach. Pearson. There is a digital version of this textbook that you can access through the bookstore or on the Pearson website or you can get a physical copy – the Yale library purchased some copies. There will be other assigned readings and videos. I will provide links and make files available for download.

Instructor: Jutta Joormann

Dr. Jutta Joormann is the Richard Ely Foundation Professor of Psychology at Yale. Her research focuses on depression and anxiety disorders. She examines risk factors for the onset, maintenance and recurrence of these disorders using a multitude of methods including cognitive tasks, brain imaging, neuroendocrinology and genetic factors. In her work, she not only focuses on individuals who have been diagnosed with depression and anxiety but also on the children of depressed parents to better understand risk factors for these disorders.

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Teaching Fellow:

Martin Meyer

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Course website:

<http://canvas.yale.edu/login>

Log in with your net ID. This site will contain all sorts of relevant information, including an up-to-date syllabus, PDFs of the slides, copies of handouts, links to videos and assigned readings.

Online Virtual Classroom Meeting Time:

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 7:15-9:00pm

You will be required to participate in two online section meetings per week in our virtual classroom. During these sessions, you will participate in open discussions with Professor Joormann and Martin Meyer. It is expected that you will have already watched the lectures and done the readings listed before each online classroom meeting begins.

Lectures: You will be required to watch approx. 60 online lecture videos (each about 20 minutes long) on your own. You are expected to watch the lectures needed for each online discussion before the online meeting time. Some weeks you will be expected to watch 8-10 videos, so plan your schedule so that you can keep up with lecture viewing. Much of the information on the exams will directly come from what is presented in the lectures.

Date	Topic
Week 1	What is Clinical Psychology? Historical views
	<u>Readings:</u> Chapter 1 and 2 and NYT article, The Americanization of Mental Illness
	<u>Watch film:</u> <i>Kill or Cure</i>
	Live Discussion Section 1: 06/30 with Martin Meyer

Contemporary views of psychopathology

Readings: Chapter 3

Clinical assessment and diagnosis

Readings: Chapter 4

Live Discussion Section 2: 07/02 with Professor Joormann

Week 2 Anxiety disorders
 Specific Phobia, Panic Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder and GAD

Readings: Chapter 6 and Atlantic article, [Surviving Anxiety](#)

Live Discussion Section 3: 07/06 with Martin Meyer

OCD and PTSD

Readings: Chapter 5

Live Discussion Section 4: 07/09 with Professor Joormann

Review online lectures and readings as needed for Midterm exam

Week 3 **Live Discussion Section 5 – Midterm Exam: 07/14**

Major Depressive Disorder and Bipolar Disorder

Readings: Chapter 7

Live Discussion Section 6: 07/16 with Professor Joormann

Week 4 Personality disorders and suicide

Readings: Chapter 10 and NYT article, [Can You Call a 9-Year-Old a Psychopath?](#)

Live Discussion Section 7: 07/21 with Martin Meyer

Eating disorders

Readings: Chapter 9

Substance-related disorders and addiction

Readings: Chapter 11

Live Discussion Section 8: 07/23 with Professor Joormann

Week 5 Schizophrenia

Readings: Chapter 13 and TED Talk, [Elyn Saks: A Tale of Mental Illness – From the Inside](#)

Live Discussion Section 9: 7/28 with Martin Meyer

Review online lectures and readings as needed for final exam

Public Information project due at 5pm (EST)

Live Discussion Section – Final Exam: 07/30

Grading:

Source	Weight	Date
Exam 1	30%	07/14
Exam 2	30%	07/30
Public Information Project	10%	07/28 at 5pm (EST)
Discussion questions	10%	before each discussion section
Class participation	20%	weekly

Your final grade will be based on a 100-point weighted average.

A = 93 and above

A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89

B = 83-86

B- = 80-82

Etc.

Exams (60%). Class and book material will not entirely overlap; you are responsible for both sets of material. There will be two exams for the course: Each exam covers about half of the course material. The exams will be non-cumulative and will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions and will cover all assigned readings, lecture material, and videos. The course material should not be too difficult but there is a large amount of information to understand and remember. Don't try to cram at last minute! The midterm exam will take place during online discussion times on Tuesday, July 14th. The final exam will be during the final online discussion section on Thursday, July 30th. You must take the exams during the assigned time slots.

Public Information (TikTok) Project (10%): There will be 1 public information project due on 7/28 at 5pm. The goal is to bring our classroom topics into the real world, and practice communicating scientific findings to a lay audience.

- Mental health is widely discussed in the news and on social media. This is especially true with mental health “influencers” (e.g., TikTok, Instagram). However, not all public information about mental health is evidence-based, and there can be serious implications of misleading or false information (negative impacts on stigma, help-seeking, public opinion, legislation, etc.).
- In this assignment, you will use what we have learned in class and in the readings to “fact check” a TikTok/YouTube or other short online video on mental health. You will summarize their arguments/perspectives, and evaluate the accuracy of their claims by referencing empirical research. **You can choose between the following two formats.** Please note you do NOT need to post these anywhere (only upload to Canvas), though you are certainly welcome to share them online if you wish!
 - i. 1,000 – 1,500 word response, in the format of a blog post
 - ii. 2 – 3-minute TikTok response video

Online Discussion Section Participation (20%): There will be eight discussion sections (worth 2.5% each). To receive full credit, we expect you to 1) be promptly online at the section starting time, 2) have completed the viewing of the assigned lectures, 3) completed the assigned readings, and 4) participate in the discussion and 5) post two discussion questions/comments – see below. The goal of these sessions is to review the material covered in the lectures and the readings, but also to allow you to ask questions and discuss the topics presented in the lectures. In preparation for the section, we would like you to post short comments/questions in an online discussion forum before the section meeting.

Discussion comments/questions (10%): Comments and/or questions are due by noon (EST) on the day of each discussion section. Please note that this is a firm deadline. We ask that you prepare two thoughtful questions/comments per discussion section (worth 2.5% each) based on the assigned readings and lectures. Your questions/comments should demonstrate careful consideration of and engagement with the material. Please upload your questions to the discussion forum created on Canvas.

Academic Honesty

All exams are closed book. Use of any written materials or any form of collaboration is forbidden. For the written assignments, *any* use of words or ideas from other sources—including *online sources such as Wikipedia*—has to be clearly acknowledged.

For a useful discussion, see:

<http://yalecollege.yale.edu/content/cheating-plagiarism-and-documentation>

Any case of suspected cheating will be referred to the Executive Committee of Yale College. The consequences can be severe, including suspension and expulsion.