

## SOCPSY 3A03: MENTAL HEALTH Winter Term, 2023

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**Lecture:** Thursdays: 12:30-2:20pm, in person in BSB 120. Tuesdays: asynchronous online delivery (lectures will be recorded and posted on Avenue every Tuesday by 12:30pm).  
**Teaching Assistant:** Office hours by appointment.

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## **Course Description**

In this course, we will explore social psychological approaches to mental health. This course is divided into two parts: Part 1 provides an overview of mental health disorders, and Part 2 focuses on the role of social psychological phenomena in mental health.

### **1. Overview of mental health disorders**

We will review conceptualizations of mental health and illness, diagnosis and classification systems of mental disorders, and major theoretical perspectives (e.g., biological, psychoanalysis, behaviorism, cognitive, sociocultural). This overview will also emphasize the historical context of these perspectives. We will then review three major classes of mental disorder (mood, anxiety, psychotic).

### **2. Role of social psychological phenomena in mental health**

In this part of this course, we will examine the ways that the norms, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour of the social and cultural groups to which we belong influence our mental health. More specifically, we will focus on the influence of culture, our sense of self, social identity, close relationships, social networks, social roles, stigma, stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, cisheterosexism, and racism.

## **Course Objectives**

By the end of the course students should be able to demonstrate:

- General knowledge and understanding of key concepts, methodologies, theoretical approaches and assumptions in the study of mental health.
- Broad understanding of the study of mental health from a social psychological perspective.
- Ability to critically analyze the research methods of empirical papers published within the field of mental health.
- Clear and concise academic writing.

## **Required Materials and Texts**

The first two weeks of this course will be based on material that can be found in the following textbooks. Students are not expected to purchase copies of these textbooks; rather, free copies should be available online. These textbooks are recommended rather than required; material from these textbooks that are not discussed in lectures will not be included on the tests.

Comer, R. J. (2015). *Abnormal psychology* (9<sup>th</sup> edition). NY: Worth Publishers.

Nolen-Hoeksema, S. (2020). *Abnormal Psychology* (8th International Student Edition). McGraw Hill.

Journal articles are assigned for the remaining lectures (see reading list below). These articles can be accessed on Google Scholar or downloaded via the McMaster Library.

Some of these articles have complex Method and Results sections. You should focus on the introduction and the summary of results in the Abstract or Discussion. You will not be tested on the details of the method or analysis, but you will be responsible for learning the main pattern of results.

### **Class Format**

Thursday classes will be in person, and attendance is expected. Lectures will be recorded using Echo360 and posted on Avenue to Learn for you to review should you have to be absent from class.

Tuesday lectures will be online and asynchronous; we will not meet in person during the scheduled class time. The recordings and accompanying PowerPoint slides will be posted every Tuesday by 12:30pm, and it is up to you to listen to the recordings and take notes on your own time. The recordings go into the material in much greater depth than do the PowerPoint slides; to perform well in this course, it is necessary to attend to the recordings.

### **Course Evaluation – Overview**

1. Midterm – 35%, February 16<sup>th</sup>
2. Exam – 35%, date TBA
3. Essay – 30%, due April 11th
4. Lecture exercises – 5% bonus
5. Sona credit – 2% bonus

### **Course Evaluation – Details**

#### **1. Midterm (35%), Feb 16<sup>th</sup> from 12:30pm - 2:20pm**

The midterm will consist of multiple-choice questions only. It is an open book test that will take place in the Quiz section of Avenue to Learn and will be based on material covered in Weeks 1-5 (lectures and required reading). The material on social identity perspectives presented on Feb 14th will not be on the midterm; it will only be included in the exam. You will be tested on lecture material only for Weeks 1-3; for Weeks 4 and 5, you will not be tested on the details of the method or analysis of any studies reported in papers on the reading list, but you will be responsible for learning the main pattern of

results (focus on the summary of results in the Abstract or Discussion sections). You will not be tested on any material in the readings that is not covered during lectures.

As the midterm is worth 35%, is not eligible for an online MSAF. If the midterm is missed, please contact your respective Faculty office with appropriate documentation for the Faculty to review. If Faculty approval is obtained, **the exam will be reweighted to 70% of your final mark.** There is no make-up test for missing the midterm.

## **2. Exam (35%) – scheduled by the Registrar**

The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions only. It will take place as an open book test in the Quiz section of Avenue to Learn. It is a non-cumulative exam, so it will be based on material covered in Week 6 (social identity perspectives) to Week 12 only. Similar to the midterm, you will not be tested on the details of the method or analysis for any empirical papers on the reading list, just the summary of results. You will not be tested on any material in the readings that is not covered during lectures.

As the exam is worth 35%, is not eligible for an online MSAF. If the exam is missed, please visit your respective Faculty office with appropriate documentation for the Faculty to review.

## **3. Essay (30%), due April 11<sup>th</sup> (11:59pm)**

Essays will address social psychological influences on one of the following disorders:

- Eating disorders
- Disorders of trauma and stress
- Substance use and addictive disorders
- Personality disorders
- Dissociative and somatoform disorders
- Sexual disorders
- Childhood disorders
- Autistic spectrum disorder

For example, you may examine eating disorders (e.g., focusing on anorexia) from a social psychological perspective, focusing on the ways that the presenting symptoms, diagnosis, prevalence, etiology, and treatment of this disorder are influenced by one of the following: culture, self-esteem, social identity, social networks (offline), social technology, close relationships, cisheteropatriarchy, or racism. Please be specific at each stage, preferably focusing on one subtype if the class of disorders you choose is comprised of different subtypes (e.g., focus on anorexia or bulimia; choose a subtype of sexual or personality disorder).

Part of your essay should be devoted to briefly reviewing the presenting symptoms, DSM-5 diagnostic criteria, prevalence, etiology, and treatment of the disorder you choose, but please keep this review to a minimum – no more than one page. Your essay should focus on social psychological influences on the mental disorder and should not exceed 1,800 words (excluding the title page and references). There are no rules about how many references you should include, but as a loose guideline, aim for at least 10. These references should be primarily journal articles (e.g., empirical papers, reviews, meta-analyses). Do not include the title of any published articles in the body of your essay as this will deplete your word count unnecessarily. Your essay should be written in APA style (see the section on Submission of Assignments for more information on the formatting of your essay). **On the title page, please include your student number only – DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME.** Neither the professor nor the TA are able to read essay drafts before the due date.

As the essay is worth 30%, is not eligible for an online MSAF. If the essay is not submitted on time, please visit your respective Faculty office with appropriate documentation for the Faculty to review.

#### **4. Lecture exercises (5% bonus)**

You will have an opportunity to earn bonus marks for engaging in lecture exercises that will occur at random times throughout the term. Each exercise is worth 1% each (summing up to 5%). All you need to do is attend the in-person lectures and participate in short exercises. You will not be graded on your answers to these exercises (i.e., there are no “wrong” answers). To account for the bonus marks in your final grade, I will reweight either your midterm or final exam (whichever one had the lower mark) so that it accounts for less of your final grade, and the bonus marks will be added on to your final mark. For example, let’s say you received marks of 80% and 85% on the midterm and exam; if you completed all 5 bonus marks, I would reduce the weighting of your midterm to 30% (instead of 35%) and add 5% in bonus marks to your final grade.

For students who are unable to attend lectures in person due to SAS accommodations, there will be an opportunity to submit a short paper to earn up to 5 bonus marks. This short paper will consist of 200-word reflections on assigned readings of your choice. Each 200-word reflection is worth a 1% bonus mark and you can submit up to 5 reflections for a total of 5 bonus marks. Thus, for 5 bonus marks, your paper would be 1,000 words in total (consisting of 5 reflections on 5 different assigned readings of your choice). Half of each reflection should sum up what the reading was about and the other half should consist of your own thoughts and feelings about the reading. All you need to do is email it to me by April 4<sup>th</sup> to receive the marks; I will not be marking the content or style of what you have written. However, you will not receive any marks if your reflection(s) are less than 200 words each, if you engage in plagiarism, or if you submit the paper late. The bonus marks will be allocated in the same way as the in-person

lecture exercises (i.e., I will take up to 5% off the weighting of your midterm or exam and allocate this to bonus marks).

### **5. Sona credit (2% bonus)**

You may receive bonus marks in this course by participating in research studies conducted by faculty and students from the Social Psychology Program. You can receive up to 2.0 credits of research participation, which translates into an extra 2% in bonus marks (note: every 0.5 Sona credits – approximately 30 minutes of your time – translates into 0.5 bonus marks, so you can also get partial bonus marks). You will not only gain bonus marks by participating in these studies, but you will also learn about social psychological research in a hands-on, participatory way.

Your participation in these studies is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. It is also possible to earn Sona credit by observing studies if you don't wish to participate for any reason. Please email the Sona coordinator, Dr. Tara Marshall (marsht6@mcmaster.ca) if you choose this option.

If you wish to participate in research studies, you will need to sign up for Sona, the software we use to keep track of study participation. To sign up for Sona, please visit <https://mcmaster-socpsy.sona-systems.com/> and choose "Request Account" on the right side of your screen. You will need to enter your name, student number, and McMaster email address, then select SOCPSY 3A03 from the list of courses. You will then receive an email from Sona that assigns a username and temporary password that you will need to use to login to Sona. Please change your password by selecting "My Profile".

To sign up for a study, go to the Sona home page and select "Study Sign-Up." Please look through the list of studies for any you might wish to participate in, taking note of any eligibility criteria in the short description of the study. Select "View Time Slots for this Study" for a study you wish to participate in and select "Sign-Up". Sona will send you a confirmation email that lists the study name and number, researcher, and any other relevant details.

Most of the studies listed on Sona will be online. You can complete the study at any time before the deadline, but please take note of any studies that may be multi-part and require a period of time to complete. It's a good idea to take a screenshot of the debriefing information at the end of the online study as proof that you completed it. The researchers will award the Sona credit after the study deadline, but you can present the screenshot if for whatever reason you haven't been awarded the credit.

It is also possible that some studies listed on Sona will be conducted in person. The researcher will award your credits on Sona after you've completed the study, but they

will also give you a receipt of participation that you can present as proof that you completed the study if for whatever reason you haven't been awarded the credit.

If you fail to complete two online studies by the deadline or do not show up for two in-person studies, you will lose the opportunity to obtain bonus marks. Please contact the researcher if you know in advance that you won't be able to complete a study. You can find the researcher's email address on the study information page.

## **Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings**

**Week 1 (January 10, 12): Introduction**

**Week 2 (January 17, 19): Mood disorders**

**Week 3 (January 24, 26): Anxiety disorders; Schizophrenia**

**Week 4 (January 31, Feb 2): Cultural perspectives**

### **Readings:**

Bauer, S. M., Schanda, H., Karakula, H., Olajossy-Hilkesberger, L., Rudaleviciene, P., Okribelashvili, N., ... & Stompe, T. (2011). Culture and the prevalence of hallucinations in schizophrenia. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 52, 319-325.

Ryder, A. G., & Chentsova-Dutton, Y. E. (2012). Depression in cultural context: "Chinese somatization," revisited. *Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 35, 15-36.

**Week 5 (February 7, 9): Self-esteem and self-verification**

### **Readings:**

Leary, M. R. (2005) Sociometer theory and the pursuit of relational value: Getting to the root of self-esteem. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 16, 75-111.

North, R. J., & William B. Swann, W. B. (2009) Self-verification 360°: Illuminating the light and dark sides. *Self and Identity*, 8, 131-146.

**Note:** I will post a Test 1 review session this week.

**Week 6 (February 14, 16): \*\*Midterm\*\*; Social identity perspectives**



**The midterm will be held on Avenue on Thursday, Feb 16<sup>th</sup> from 12:30pm - 2:20pm.**

**February 14<sup>th</sup>: I will post a lecture recording, but you will not be tested on this material for the midterm, only Test 2.**

**Readings for February 14<sup>th</sup>: The “Social Cure”- Social identity perspectives**

Cruwys, T., Dingle, G. A., Haslam, C., Haslam, S. A., Jetten, J., Morton, T. A. (2013). Social group memberships protect against future depression, alleviate depression symptoms and prevent depression relapse. *Social Science & Medicine*, 98, 179-186.

Bowe, M., Wakefield, J. R. H., et al. (2022). The mental health benefits of community helping during crisis: Coordinated helping, community identification and sense of unity during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 32, 521-535.

**Week 7 (Feb 21, 23): Reading Week – no classes**

I will not be posting any lecture recordings this week, and there are no readings.

**Week 8 (Feb 28, Mar 2): Close relationships**

**Readings:**

McIntyre, K., Mattingly, B., Stanton, S. C. E., Xu, X., Loving, T., & Lewandowski, G. (2022). Romantic relationships and mental health: Investigating the role of self-expansion on depression symptoms. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*. Access the paper here: <https://psyarxiv.com/3jc4y>

Navarro, R., Larrañaga, E., Yubero, S., & Villora, B. (2020). Psychological correlates of ghosting and breadcrumbing experiences: A preliminary study among adults. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 17, 1116.

Seraj, S., Blackburn, K. G., & Pennebaker, J. W. (2021). Language left behind on social media exposes the emotional and cognitive costs of a romantic breakup. *PNAS*, 118 (7), e2017154118.  
<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2017154118>

**Week 9 (Mar 7, 9): Social technology and social networking**

**Readings:**

Orben, A., & Przybylski, A. K. (2019). The association between adolescent well-being and digital technology use. *Nature Human Behaviour*, 3, 173-182.

Twenge, J. M., Joiner, T. E., Rogers, M. L., & Martin, G. N. (2018). Increases in depressive symptoms, suicide-related outcomes, and suicide rates among US adolescents after 2010 and links to increased new media screen time. *Clinical Psychological Science*, 6, 3-17.

**Week 10 (Mar 14, 16): Mental health stigma and mental health literacy**

**Readings:**

Corrigan, P. (2004). How stigma interferes with mental health care. *American Psychologist*, 59, 614-625.

Jorm, A. F. (2012). Mental health literacy: Empowering the community to take action for better mental health. *American Psychologist*, 67, 231-243.

**Week 11 (Mar 21, 23): Gender roles, cisheterosexism, and LGBTQ+ discrimination**

**Readings:**

Meyer, I. H. (2003). Prejudice, social stress, and mental health in lesbian, gay, and bisexual populations: Conceptual issues and research evidence. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129, 674-697.

Rosenfield, S., Mouzon, D. (2013). Gender and Mental Health. In: Aneshensel, C.S., Phelan, J.C., Bierman, A. (eds) *Handbook of the Sociology of Mental Health. Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research*. Springer, Dordrecht. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-4276-5\\_14](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-4276-5_14)

**Week 12 (Mar 28, 30): Ethnicity and racism**

**Readings:**

Chen, J. A., Stevens, C., Wong, S. H. M., & Liu, C. H. (2019). Psychiatric symptoms and diagnoses among U.S. college students: A comparison by race and ethnicity. *Psychiatric Services*, 70, 442-449.

West, L. M., Donovan, R. A., & Daniel, A. R. (2016). The price of strength: Black college women's perspectives on the Strong Black Woman stereotype. *Women & Therapy*, 39, 390-412. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02703149.2016.1116871>

Williams, D. R., & Williams-Morris, R. (2000). Racism and mental health: The African American experience. *Ethnicity and Health*, 5, 243-268.

**Week 13 (April 4, 6): Review**

**Week 14 (April 11): Essay due April 11<sup>th</sup> by 11:59pm**

## **Course Policies**

### **Submission of Assignments**

Please submit an electronic copy of your essay by 11:59pm on April 11<sup>th</sup> via the dropbox in Avenue to Learn (Assessments → Assignments → SOCPSY 3A03 Essay). This dropbox is Turnitin-enabled. Emailed assignments will NOT be accepted. Your essay should be typed and double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman font with one-inch (2.54cm) margins on all sides. Please include a title page with your essay title, student number (**DO NOT INCLUDE YOUR NAME**), date submitted, course number, page number (upper right corner), and word count, and a References section at the end. References should adhere to APA style conventions. I will review these conventions in a subsequent document, but they should take the following form:

John, J. B., & Joe, M. L. (1998). Gratitude interventions enhance subjective well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 27, 254-260.

Tip: do not include the title of any papers in the body of your essay as this will deplete your word count unnecessarily (i.e., include the title in the References section only). In-text citations should only include the authors' last names and the date of publication (e.g., "Smith & Lee, 2019").

### **Late Assignments**

Extensions for course assignments will only be granted under conditions of medical, family, or other extraordinary circumstances. All other late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day (including weekends). Late assignments will not be accepted after 7 days beyond the original deadline without appropriate documentation from the Office of the Associate Dean of Social Sciences.

### **Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such

## **University Policies**

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION**

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. Avenue to Learn, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

### **COURSES WITH AN ON-LINE ELEMENT**

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn, LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available

information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

## **ONLINE PROCTORING**

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

## **CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS**

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

## **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

## **REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK**

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.<sup>3</sup>

## **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)**

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## **COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING**

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

## **EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES**

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn and/or McMaster email.

## **Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

## **Course Modification**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

## Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90-100	A+
85-89	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F