DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

COURSE SYLLABUS

PSYO 2220 Adult Psychopathology
Faculty of Science | Department of Psychology & Neuroscience
Fall 2026 | Section 1

Dalhousie University operates in the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Peoples. These sovereign nations hold inherent rights as the original peoples of these lands, and we each carry collective obligations under the Peace and Friendship Treaties. Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Canada.

We recognize that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies, and contributions have enriched that part of Mi'kma'ki known as Nova Scotia for over 400 years.

Course Information

Course Description: This course provides an introduction to adult psychopathology. Diagnostic criteria and evidence on etiology and treatment of the major mental health disorders within adulthood are discussed. Historical, social, cultural, and contextual aspects of adult psychopathology are examined and current research in the field is highlighted. **Plan to spend approximately 5-7 hours per week on course work.**

Prerequisites

PSYO 1011/1021/1031 *Intro to Psychology and Neuroscience I* **AND** PSYO 1012/1022/1032 *Intro to Psychology and Neuroscience II* **OR** SCIE 1506/1507 *Integrated Science I.* You must have earned a final grade of B- or higher in all prerequisites.



Credit Value: 3.0



Learning Modality: Online asynchronous



Format: Self-paced readings & videos

Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Compare and contrast historical perspectives and current approaches to defining and treating adult psychopathology.
2. Describe the multiple causes of psychopathology (e.g., biological, psychological, social, and developmental) as viewed from a multidimensional model.
3. Describe the purpose of the DSM system for diagnosis and review DSM-5-TR diagnostic criteria.
4. Explain the purpose of clinical assessment in the diagnosis of psychopathology.
5. Identify the symptoms, causes, and evidence-based treatments for select psychological disorders.

Instructor Information



Instructor: Daniella Sieukaran

Pronouns: She/her

Email: daniella@dal.ca

Office: Killam Memorial Library, Suite G96

Student Support Hours: By appt (in-person or Teams call)

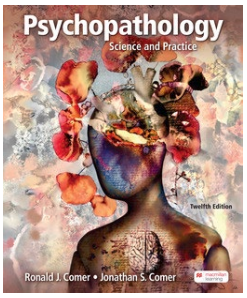
Communications

For effective email communications, use your Dalhousie email address and include the course code "PSYO 2220" in the subject line. Every effort will be made to reply to emails within 48 hours. Emails sent on weekends and holidays may be responded to on the next business day, even if exceeding 48 hours.

Course Resources & Tools

To successfully complete this course, you should have access to a computer with a reliable internet connection and Microsoft Office for Windows/Mac.

Required e-Textbook



Comer, R.J. & Comer, J.S. (2024). *Psychopathology: Science and Practice* (12th edition). Macmillan [eBook].
The course e-Textbook is available to purchase at the Bookstore for approximately $90. **You should purchase the textbook directly from the Dal Bookstore website as it has special reduced pricing and a Achieve platform access code needed for REQUIRED course assessments.** Due to how we will use the e-textbook, you cannot use older editions.

Brightspace Course Site

All course materials are available on Brightspace, including the syllabus, Lecture Bite micro-lecture videos, assessment details, and assessments. Weekly content, including Lecture Bite micro-lecture videos and accompanying PowerPoint slides, are posted on the Course Content page every Monday morning. **Micro-lecture videos provide a high-level summary of key points from the assigned textbook chapters; however, you are responsible for learning the whole chapters.** Brightspace is also where course announcements are posted and where you will complete your tests.

Only students registered in the course are permitted to view, download, upload, comment, or otherwise participate in the course site. You do not have permission to upload course materials to external/third-party websites.

While you may be able to access the course from your phone, a desktop computer or laptop is recommended. **Brightspace functions best when using Google Chrome.**

If you need assistance with Brightspace, submit an online ticket at https://service.portal.dal.ca or call 902-494-4357 (toll-free 1-800-869-3931). If you have difficulty accessing the e-textbook, contact support@willolabs.com.

Course Assessments

The following table outlines the assessments in this course. Refer to Brightspace for detailed assessment instructions.

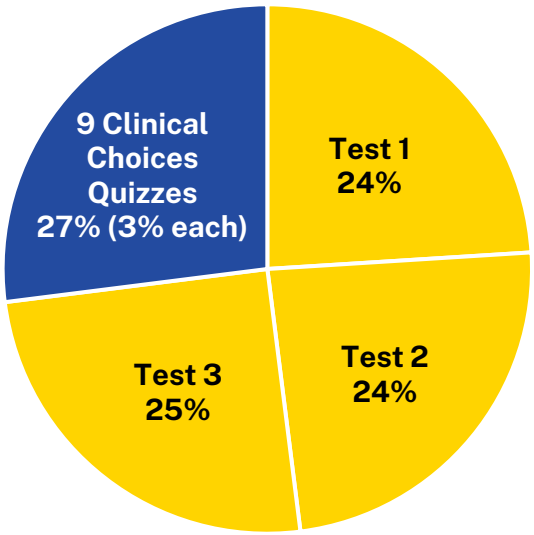
Assessment	Weight (%)	Description	Due Date
Test 1	24	Covers Chapters 1 & 3-6.	Sept 28th
Test 2	24	Covers Chapters 7-12.	Nov 2nd
Test 3	25	Covers Chapters 13-15 & 17-18.	Final Exam Period
9 Clinical Choices quizzes (3% each)	27	Complete an interactive clinical case presentation activity with written, video, and audio components (e.g., reading intake paperwork). The case presentation will be related to the psychopathologies covered in that week's textbook readings and micro-lecture videos. The graded component is multiple choice questions about how you arrived at your diagnosis and treatment recommendations.	Weekly, starting the week of Sept 21st

The nine Clinical Choices quizzes will be completed via the connected Achieve online platform (where you access the e-textbook). Each Clinical Choices activity and quiz will open Mondays at 12:01am and close the following Sunday at 11:59pm. **There are no make-ups or extensions for Clinical Choices quizzes unless there is an extenuating circumstance or related academic accommodation.**

The three tests will be completed via Brightspace. **Tests are closed-book**, non-cumulative, and include multiple choice and matching questions. The first two tests open at 9am and are available until 9pm of the same day. The day and time for the third test will be scheduled by the Registrar's Office. Once you begin a test, you will have 2 hours to complete it. **All three tests require the use of Respondus LockDown Browser + Monitor.** The internet browser component locks down your computer's testing environment, while the monitor component

is online proctoring software that uses your webcam and microphone to record you during test writing. Both of these components are used to support academic integrity. Students may opt out of using Browser + Monitor for legitimate reasons and discuss alternative assessment modalities with the instructor.

If an assessment may result in a barrier or doesn't align with your formal academic accommodations, reach out to me to find a solution that meets your needs.



Course grades reflect your demonstrated achievement in meeting the course learning outcomes. Numerical grades will be converted to final letter grades following Dalhousie's undergraduate grading scale. This scale also indicates the passing course grade of 50%, and GPA values that correspond with each letter grade. Refer to the Grading Practices Policy for more information.

Use of Generative AI:
In order to successfully complete this course, you need to achieve the outlined learning outcomes (page 1) as demonstrated by your own knowledge acquisition and skill development. In addition, this course follows principles of adult learning that include completing assessments that require application and reflection.

As assessments are all quizzes and tests to be completed independently, the use of generative AI is prohibited in this course. Using generative AI in this course constitutes an academic integrity offence, and if used, you will be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective measures.

Accessibility: Refer to the Student Accommodation Policy for information on how Dalhousie instructors and staff work collaboratively with students to create and sustain an accessible educational environment.

- **If there are aspects of this course, including but not limited to its design, teaching approaches, learning activities, and assessments, that result in barriers to your learning or do not align with your formal academic accommodations, reach out to me to collaboratively find a solution that meets your needs.**
- You are eligible for accommodations based on protected characteristics such as religion. If you have religious, cultural, or community-significant observances that

conflict with course requirements, reach out to me to collaboratively find alternatives for completing the course requirements.

- To begin the process of requesting a formal academic accommodation, contact the Student Accessibility Centre.

Academic Integrity: Dalhousie expects all students to be responsible learners, demonstrating the values of intellectual honesty, trust, fairness, and respect in your work. Key aspects of academic integrity include, but are not limited to: avoiding plagiarism, not engaging in cheating, submitting original work, and acknowledging sources of information and ideas when they are not your own. Refer to the Statement on Intellectual Honesty for definitions of various academic offences. Failure to meet Dalhousie's academic integrity standards will result in appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective measures.

Missed and Late Assessments: **There are no make-ups or extensions for Clinical Choices quizzes unless there is an extenuating circumstance or related academic accommodation.** If you experience an illness or extenuating circumstance that results in a missed test, email the instructor within three (3) days of the test date to discuss your options. Student Declaration of Absence (SDA) forms are **NOT** accepted for this course. Alternative/makeup assessments are granted at the discretion of the instructor. If you do not contact the instructor within three (3) days, you will receive a zero on the assessment.

Tentative Course Schedule*

Refer to Dal Important Dates for add/drop dates etc.

Week #	Week of:	Topics	Readings	Assessments
1	Sept 8	Intro to Adult Psychopathology & Clinical Approaches	Chapters 1 & 4	None
2	Sept 14	Theoretical Models of Psychopathology	Chapter 3	None
3	Sept 21	Anxiety and Trauma	Chapters 5 & 6	Clinical Choices Quiz 1 (Priya)
4	Sept 28	Depression & Suicide	Chapters 7 & 8	Clinical Choices Quiz 2 (John) **AND Test 1 (Sept 28)**
5	Oct 5	Somatic Disorders	Chapter 9	Clinical Choices Quiz 3 (Joanne)
6	Oct 12	Eating Disorders	Chapter 10	Clinical Choices Quiz 4 (Jenny)

Week #	Week of:	Topics	Readings	Assessments
7	Oct 19	Addictions	Chapter 11	Clinical Choices Quiz 5 (Jorge)
8	Oct 26	Sexual Disorders	Chapter 12	Clinical Choices Quiz 6 (Michael & Sarah)
9	Nov 2	Schizophrenia & Psychosis	Chapters 13 & 14	Clinical Choices Quiz 7 (Randy) **AND Test 2 (Nov 2)**
10	Nov 9	**FALL STUDY BREAK**		
11	Nov 16	Personality Disorders	Chapter 15	Clinical Choices Quiz 8 (Alicia)
12	Nov 23	Psychopathology in Older Adults	Chapter 17	Clinical Choices Quiz 9 (Fred)
13	Nov 30	Law and Ethics of Psychopathology	Chapter 18	None
Final Exam Period				**Test 3**

*Current as of 2026.09.08. Schedule subject to change.



This course discusses topics that may be distressing. If you would like to debrief and/or receive support, you may contact any of the following services. All are free, confidential, and available 24/7. If you are concerned you may hurt yourself or others, contact 911.

- Good 2 Talk (specifically for post-secondary students): call 1-833-292-3698 or text GOOD2TALKNS to 686868
- Provincial mental health support line: 1-888-429-8167
- Kids Help Phone: call 1-800-668-6868 or text CONNECT to 686868

Syllabus Appendix: Student Supports & University Statements, Policies, and Guidelines