

Childhood Psychopathology Syllabus

Department of Psychology and Neuroscience

PSYO 3129 Winter 2025

Dalhousie University acknowledges that we are in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People and pays respect to the Indigenous knowledges held by the Mi'kmaq People, and to the wisdom of their Elders past and present. The Mi'kmaq People signed Peace and Friendship Treaties with the Crown, and section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 recognizes and affirms Aboriginal and Treaty rights. We are all Treaty people.

Dalhousie University also acknowledges the histories, contributions, and legacies of African Nova Scotians, who have been here for over 400 years.

Course Instructor(s)

Name	Email	Office Hours
Instructor: Dr. Rebecca Tucker PhD, Clinical Psychology	Rebecca.Tucker@dal.ca	Mondays 2:30pm – 4:30pm or by appointment Drop-in, Office 2330
TA: Mya Dockrill PhD Student, Clinical Psychology	myadockrill@dal.ca	By Appointment Only

Course Structure

Course Delivery

The course is primarily asynchronous – the **core lectures are pre-recorded, with each one posted on Brightspace on the dates listed in the content schedule on page 4.**

There will be **some synchronous (i.e., “live”) online: the first class, as well as one at the end of each of the four units.** These will be held at the time indicated in the academic calendar: **Mondays and Wednesdays, 1:05pm – 2:25pm using Brightspace Collaborate.** Live sessions will be recorded and posted to Brightspace within 48 hours of the class. Attendance at live sessions is not mandatory and is not generally tracked; however, I may look at attendance to live sessions and/or other measures of engagement with course content when considering some requests (e.g., rounding up of grades, etc.)

Despite not having a direct impact on grades, live classes provide the chance to ask questions and collaboratively complete activities (e.g., case studies) related to that unit. These learning opportunities, in my experience, tend to help with learning to apply the concepts in this course and prepare you for success on case study assignments. Also – Q&As and working through case studies are often the fun parts of these types of courses when we can learn from each other, so I do hope to “see” you there!

Course Description

This class examines a wide range of mental health disorders in children (e.g., autism, ADHD, anxiety). The goal is to gain a better understanding of the nature of these disorders, to learn about evidence-based assessment and treatment, and to review research findings in relation to children's mental health.

Course Prerequisites

PSYO 2000.03 or NESC 2007.03; PSYO 2220 is recommended.

Course Materials

Mash, Wolfe, & Nguyen Williams. (2023). Child Psychopathology, 8th Edition

Both digital and paper versions are available at the Dalhousie bookstore: bookstore.dal.ca/PSYO3129

Note: MindTap access is **NOT** required (though it is sometimes packaged with electronic copies by default). Don't worry about finding a copy that comes with an access code.

All required information and materials for the course can be found on the PSYO 3129 Brightspace page, including lecture videos, lecture slides, and assessments. It will be helpful to check the webpage often as that is where I will post all relevant news/updates and grades as well.

Assessment

Assessment Overview and Schedule

Component	Weight (% of final grade)	Date(s)
Case Studies	48% total (12% each)	Unit 1 available January 22 at 11:59pm → due by January 29 by 11:59pm Unit 2 available February 12 at 11:59pm → due by February 26 by 11:59pm
Unit Quizzes	32% total (8% each)	Unit 3 available March 17 at 11:59pm → due by March 24 by 11:59pm Unit 4 available March 31 at 11:59pm → due by April 7 by 11:59pm
Resource Assignment	20%	April 2 by 11:59pm

Assessment Details

1) Case Studies

After completion of each unit (which consists of the textbook chapters and recorded lectures) a case study related to that unit will be provided. These are assignments that require longer responses and test your ability to apply your learnings to a “real-world” context by having you evaluate a case study or video and answer a series of questions (e.g., identifying potential causal factors, determining a likely diagnosis, identifying a treatment that you may suggest, etc.) Each case study will only require you to consider concepts covered in associated

unit. Assignment descriptions, questions, and grading guidelines will be provided when the assignments open on Brightspace. The dates for these assignments are below:

2) *Unit Quizzes*

At 11:59pm on the last day of each unit, a unit quiz will become available on Brightspace. These quizzes are open book and will consist of 10-12 questions from each topic covered within that unit (e.g., if the unit covered 4 topics, then there will be 40-48 questions). The format of the questions may vary, with potential types including multiple choice, true/false, multi-select question, matching, and/or fill-in-the-blank. The tests are timed at *approximately* 1 minute per question (i.e., 40 questions = 40 min). If you have read the chapters and watched the lectures, as well as being ready to use your notes/textbook efficiently, you should be able to answer the questions within this time limit.

As noted, these are open-book quizzes, which means you are able to use your notes, slides, and/or textbooks. However, you are not permitted to collaborate with your classmates on quizzes, seek out direct answers to specific questions online (e.g., on websites students post class notes/exams to), or use generative AI tools to come up with your answers.

3) *Resource Assignment*

For this assignment you will choose one of the specific disorders covered in the course and create an informational product about that disorder. The product you create can be in any format: a handout/sheet, a pamphlet, an infographic/poster, a video, a proposed social media account/campaign (a proposal of what it will consist of, an example of a post, etc.), a proposed podcast (a proposal of what it will consist of, an example of a script, etc.), a newspaper or blog post, etc.—the possibilities are endless! The only stipulation is that the product is something that could be provided or suggested to a family with a child and/or adolescent who was recently diagnosed with the chosen disorder. This is a chance to be creative with how you choose to provide the information!

Regardless of format, you must at least include the following information as part of your product:

- i. A brief description of the disorder. The description should be short and easy for the general public to understand. It should clearly demonstrate the key features and/or difficulties/deficits for that disorder.
- ii. Two separate resources that would be helpful for a hypothetical family who has learned their child/adolescent has that diagnosis. The two resources should be freely available online, with one resource directed towards children and/or adolescents and one resource directed towards parents/

Accompanying the informational product, you are required to submit a second document that describes the following information about each of the two resources you have chosen to include:

- Location to access the resource (e.g., website)
- A brief description of the resource
- Your evaluation regarding the quality of the resource
- A brief explanation of why you chose that resource

A template for this second document, as well as information about how to appropriately evaluate the resources you choose and a rubric for each part of the assignment, will be provided on Brightspace.

Course Content

Date	Topic #	Topic	Readings
Jan 6	*LIVE CLASS* Getting Acquainted – Introduction to PSYO 3129!		
Unit 1: Understanding Child Psychopathology			
Jan 8	1	Introduction to Child Psychopathology	Chapter 1
Jan 13	2	Theories and Causes	Chapter 2
Jan 15	3	Research	Chapter 3
Jan 20	4	Assessment and Conceptualization	Chapter 4
Jan 22	5	Diagnosis and Treatment	
Jan 27	*LIVE CLASS* Unit 1 Q&A + Case Study		
Unit 2: Neurodevelopmental Disorders			
Jan 29	6	Intellectual Disability	Chapter 5
Feb 3	7	Autism Spectrum Disorders & Childhood Onset Schizophrenia	Chapter 6
Feb 5	8	Communication and Learning Disorders	Chapter 7
Feb 10	9	ADHD	Chapter 8
Feb 12	10	Motor Disorders	None
Feb 17	Winter Study Break – No Class		
Feb 19	Winter Study Break – No Class		
Feb 24	*LIVE CLASS* Unit 2 Q&A + Case Study		
Unit 3: Behavioural and Emotional Disorders			
Feb 26	11	Conduct Problems	Chapter 9
Mar 3	12	Depressive Disorders	Chapter 10
Mar 5	13	Bipolar Disorders	
Mar 10	14	Anxiety Disorders	Chapter 11
Mar 12	15	OCD and Related Disorders	
Mar 17	16	Trauma and Stress-Related Disorders	Chapter 12
Mar 19	*LIVE CLASS* Unit 3 Q&A + Case Study		
Unit 4: Problems Related to Physical & Mental Health			
Mar 24	17	Health-Related Disorders	Chapter 13
Mar 26	18	Substance Use Disorders	
Mar 31	19	Eating and Feeding Disorders	Chapter 14
Apr 2	*LIVE CLASS* Unit 4 Q&A + Case Study & Class Wrap-up		

Note. Some dates and some topics may change

Course Policies on Missed or Late Academic Requirements

Missed Evaluation Components

There is flexibility built into the evaluation structure of this course. The case studies and unit quizzes are both available for 7 days, providing some flexibility as you are not obligated to complete these evaluations on a certain day. However, once you start the multiple-choice component of the evaluation you must complete it within the time-limits. If you have concerns about completing a unit evaluation within the allowed time, please speak with me as soon as possible to come up with a possible solution. The resource assignment takes place over a number of weeks, again allowing for flexibility. If you cannot complete evaluations even with the built-in time flexibility, please speak with me and/or meet with Patricia Laws, Assistant Dean of Student Affairs to determine how to address long-term absences.

Student Declaration of Absence

Ideally, the flexibility built into the course timelines should help with working around situations that come up and can impact your ability to complete assignments on a specific date. However, I know things come up even with flexibility built in—life happens! As such, we will use SDAs for this course to help in cases of illness, distress, and/or other extenuating circumstances (e.g., caregiving duties; immediate family illness, injury or death; involvement in an accident; legal proceedings or being a victim of a crime).

Note that student declaration of absence forms cannot be used to reschedule assessments for leisure activities (e.g., going to the beach, leaving town on vacation). They also cannot be used to cover up lack of planning/preparation (e.g., forgetting to study, procrastinating on a paper). Using a student declaration of absence form for these purposes constitutes academic dishonesty and may make you subject to University discipline.

Here is the procedure you should follow if you experience short-term illness, distress or other extenuating circumstances that affects your ability to complete assessment components:

- a) The Student Declaration of Absence form must be submitted to the course instructor through Brightspace within three (3) calendar days following the last day of absence. I only accept forms submitted via Brightspace, not in person or by email.
- b) The Declaration may **only be used a maximum of 2 times** throughout the term and may only cover 3 consecutive days of absence per form.
- c) If you are **hoping to use the SDA to extend the date on a unit quiz**, you need to reach out to me by email in addition to submitting the form on Brightspace. Note, there are unique considerations with extending the availability of quizzes – **it may not always be possible to do extend the quiz deadlines even with the SDA and typically deferring tests works differently than receiving assignment extensions so make sure you reach out to Dr. Tucker ahead of time to discuss potential options.**

Late Penalties

If you submit an assignment late without an approved SDA or other agreed-upon extension, a late penalty of 2% per day will be applied to the late assignment. To illustrate, if an assignment is due at 11:59pm on January 29 and is submitted...

- at 12:30am on January 30 (i.e., 30 minutes late), it will receive a 2% late penalty
- any time before 11:59pm on January 30, it will receive a 2% late penalty
- at 12:00am on January 31, it will receive a 4% late penalty

Course Policies Related to Communication and Grades

Communication

Communications related to concerns with grades, accommodations/accessibility needs, and extensions should all be sent to the instructor, Dr. Rebecca Tucker (Rebecca.Tucker@dal.ca). If you have a specific question related to assignment feedback, you can email the TA, Mia Dockrill (myadockrill@dal.ca) first. All efforts will be made to answer emails within 48 hours after your message is received; however, at certain times of the term this may be more difficult to guarantee, and emails should not be expected in the evenings or on weekends. When emailing about the course, please indicate the course code in your subject line (PSYO 3129). Please do not send messages to the TA or instructor via Brightspace.

Letter Grades

Conversion of numerical grades to final letter grades follows the Dalhousie Grade Scale (as per below) and final grades are not typically rounded up to the next letter grade.

A+ (90-100)	B+ (77-79)	C+ (65-69)	D (50-54)
A (85-89)	B (73-76)	C (60-64)	F (0-49)
A- (80-84)	B- (70-72)	C- (55-59)	

Concerns About Grades

If you have a concern with a grade on an assignment, please document your concern(s) in writing and submit to Dr. Tucker. A meeting will be scheduled to address your concerns. All concerns must be raised within three weeks of the time when the mark is provided by the course instructor.

Course Policies related to Grades and Academic Integrity

While students are allowed to discuss the assignments in this class and you are able to ask/answer questions amongst your peers, written assignments should be submitted individually and represent your own work.

I do not use plagiarism software in this course.

Please note, due to the nature of the assignments and the skills/knowledge they are assessing, I do not allow the use of generative AI and large language models (e.g., ChatGPT) in this course. If the use of these tools is suspected, we will investigate that possibility and, if necessary, further steps in line with academic integrity policies may be taken.

Learning Objectives

1. Be able to recall and compare different types of research designs, types of validity and types of reliability for both qualitative and quantitative studies.
2. Be able to critically review the literature and develop hypotheses on a selected topic in clinical psychology.
3. Be able to design a research study to test a self-generated hypothesis and be able to write up a research proposal testing that hypothesis in APA style.

4. Be able to identify what sorts of statistical tests would be required in order to test for power, reliability, validity and hypothesis testing. The goal is primarily conceptual, rather than mathematical expertise.
5. Be able to effectively communicate your understanding of a selected specialty of clinical psychology in both written assignments and an oral presentation.

University Policies and Statements

Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel, and support. Visit or e-mail the Indigenous Student Centre at 1321 Edward St or elders@dal.ca. Additional information regarding the Indigenous Student Centre can be found at:

https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html

Internationalization

At Dalhousie, 'thinking and acting globally' enhances the quality and impact of education, supporting learning that is "interdisciplinary, cross-cultural, global in reach, and orientated toward solving problems that extend across national borders." Additional internationalization information can be found at: <https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/internationalization.html>

Academic Integrity

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility, and respect. As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity. Additional academic integrity information can be found at:

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html

Accessibility

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for matters related to student accessibility and accommodation. If there are aspects of the design, instruction, and/or experiences within this course (online or in-person) that result in barriers to your inclusion, please contact the Student Accessibility Centre (https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html) for all courses offered by Dalhousie with the exception of Truro. For courses offered by the Faculty of Agriculture, please contact the Student Success Centre in Truro (<https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/agricultural-campus/student-success-centre.html>)

Conduct in the Classroom – Culture of Respect

Substantial and constructive dialogue on challenging issues is an important part of academic inquiry and exchange. It requires willingness to listen and tolerance of opposing points of view. Consideration of individual differences and alternative viewpoints is required of all class members, towards each other, towards instructors, and towards guest speakers. While expressions of differing perspectives are welcome and encouraged, the words and language used should remain within acceptable bounds of civility and respect.

Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2).

Additional diversity and inclusion information can be found at: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>

Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner - perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution. The full Code of Student Conduct can be found at:

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/student-life/code-of-student-conduct.html

Fair Dealing Policy

The Dalhousie University Fair Dealing Policy provides guidance for the limited use of copyright protected material without the risk of infringement and without having to seek the permission of copyright owners. It is intended to provide a balance between the rights of creators and the rights of users at Dalhousie. Additional information regarding the Fair Dealing Policy can be found at:

https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/fair-dealing-policy-.html

Originality Checking Software

The course instructor may use Dalhousie's approved originality checking software and Google to check the originality of any work submitted for credit, in accordance with the Student Submission of Assignments and Use of Originality Checking Software Policy. Students are free, without penalty of grade, to choose an alternative method of attesting to the authenticity of their work and must inform the instructor no later than the last day to add/drop classes of their intent to choose an alternate method. Additional information regarding Originality Checking Software can be found at: <https://www.dal.ca/about/leadership-governance/academic-integrity/faculty-resources/ouriginal-plagiarism-detection.html>

Student Use of Course Materials

Course materials are designed for use as part of this course at Dalhousie University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as books, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law. Copying this course material for distribution (e.g. uploading to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law.

Faculty of Science
Student Resources and Support

University Policies and Programs

Important Dates in the Academic Year (including add/drop dates):

http://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html

Classroom Recording Protocol: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/classroom-recording-protocol.html

Dalhousie Grading Practices Policies: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html

Grade Appeal Process: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/grades-and-student-records/appealing-a-grade.html

Sexualized Violence Policy: https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/health-and-safety/sexualized-violence-policy.html

Scent-Free Program: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scent-free.html>

Learning and Support Resources

General Academic Support – Advising (Halifax): https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html

General Academic Support – Advising (Truro): <https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/agricultural-campus/ssc/academic-support/advising.html>

Student Health & Wellness Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness.html

On Track (helps you transition into university, and supports you through your first year at Dalhousie and beyond): https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/On-track.html

Indigenous Student Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html

Indigenous Connection: <https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/indigenous-connection.html>

Elders-in-Residence (The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel, and support. Visit the office in the Indigenous Student Centre or contact the program at elders@dal.ca or 902-494-6803: <https://cdn.dal.ca/content/dam/dalhousie/pdf/academics/UG/indigenous-studies/Elder-Protocol-July2018.pdf>

Black Student Advising Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html

International Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/international-centre.html

LGBTQ2SIA+ Collaborative: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/vpei/edia/education/community-specific-spaces/LGBTQ2SIA-collaborative.html>

Dalhousie Libraries: <http://libraries.dal.ca/>

Copyright Office: <https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office.html>

Dalhousie Student Advocacy Services: <https://www.dsu.ca/dsas?rq=student%20advocacy>

Dalhousie Ombudsperson: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html

Human Rights and Equity Services: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/hres.html>

Writing Centre: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html

Study Skills/Tutoring: http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html

Faculty of Science Advising Support: <https://www.dal.ca/faculty/science/current-students/undergrad-students/degree-planning.html>

Safety

Biosafety: <http://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/biosafety.html>

Chemical Safety: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/chemical-safety.html>

Radiation Safety: <http://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/radiation-safety.html>

Laser Safety: <https://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/radiation-safety/laser-safety.html>