**ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE**

**Social Sciences Division**

**PSY 225 – Child and Adolescent Abnormal Psychology**

**Course Outline**

**Course Number & Name:**  PSY 225 Child and Adolescent Abnormal Psychology

**Credit Hours:**  3 .0 **Contact Hours:**  3.0 **Lecture:** 3.0 **Lab:**  N/A **Other:**  N/A

**Prerequisites**:  Grade of “C” or better in PSY 101

**Co-requisites:** None **Concurrent Courses:** None

**Course Outline Revision Date:**  Fall 2010

**Course Description**: This course will focus on the etiology, classification, diagnosis, and treatment of childhood disorders. Emphasizing the developmental aspects of child psychopathology, how children’s and adolescents’ psychological disorders are distinguishable from those of adults will be examined. Particular attention will also be devoted to understanding how the mental health, education, health care, and juvenile justice systems provide services to children and adolescents with psychological disorders.

**Course Goals:** Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:

1. discuss the issues relevant to how abnormal behavior in children and adolescents;

2. describe the various research methods used in studying abnormal child psychology, as well as their advantages and disadvantages;

3. describe the major theoretical perspectives, paradigms, or models used to study abnormal child psychology;

4. describe the various clinical procedures used to assess mental disorders in infancy, childhood, and adolescence;

5. describe the multiaxial system of diagnosing mental disorders in children and adolescents in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – Text Revised (DSM-TR)*, its criticisms, pros and cons of diagnosing, and disorders of childhood and adolescence;

6. discuss foundational issues associated with interventions for children and adolescents;

7. discuss the importance of treatment outcome research and its relationship to the development of best practice guidelines; and

8. describe the respective roles and responsibilities of mental health, healthcare, social service, education, and juvenile justice professionals in working with children and adolescents with psychological disorders.

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs)**: Upon successful completion of this course, students should specifically be able to do the following:

1. Discuss the issues relevant to how abnormal behavior in children and adolescents:

1.1 *describe how psychological disorders in children and adolescents are defined;*

1.2 *describe the importance of children and adolescents adapting to their environment;*

1.3 *discuss how developmental psychopathology provides a framework for integrating different theoretical perspectives under one umbrella to produce an understanding of the development of the whole person;*

1.4 *describe the relationship between risk, vulnerabilities, and resilience in developmental psychopathology;* and

1.5 *describe key factors that affect how psychological disorders are expressed in children and adolescents (e.g., poverty, sex, race and ethnicity, culture, and abuse and neglect)*

2. Describe the various research methods used in studying abnormal child psychology, as well as their advantages and disadvantages:

2.1 *describe the various types of research designs, their advantages and disadvantages (e.g., case* *study, single case experimental designs, and cross sectional and longitudinal studies);* and

2.2 *describe the advantages and disadvantages of qualitative research*

3. Describe the major theoretical perspectives, paradigms, or models used to study abnormal child psychology:

3.1 *identify and discuss the medical model’s view that psychopathologies in children and adolescents result from organic dysfunctions;*

3.2 *identify and discuss the behavioral model’s view that: 1) psychopathologies in children and adolescents result from observable behavior; 2) behaviorists base their evidence on empirical research conducted under controlled conditions; and 3) behaviorists believe that the acquisition, maintenance, change, or elimination of human and animal behavior can be adequately and concisely accounted for in terms of learning principles;*

3.3 *identify and discuss the cognitive model’s view that psychopathologies in children and adolescents result from the development of various cognitive processes (e.g., Piaget’s theory of cognitive development or Bandura’s social-cognitive theory);*

3.4 *identify and discuss the psychoanalytic model’s view that psychopathologies in children and adolescents result from dynamics – the basic motives or prime movers of human behavior;* and

3.5 *identity and discuss the family systems model’s view that psychopathologies in children and adolescents result from the entire family as a unit of analysis*

4. Describe the various clinical procedures used to assess mental disorders in infancy, childhood, and adolescence:

4.1 *describe the use and types of clinical interviews*;

4.2 *describe the use and types of behavioral assessment;* and

4.3 *describe the use and types of psychological tests*

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs)** (continued):

5. Describe the multiaxial system of diagnosing mental disorders in children and adolescents in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders – Text Revised (DSM-TR)*, its criticisms, pros and cons of diagnosing, and disorders of childhood and adolescence:

5.1 *discuss the relationship between the five dimensions of the DSM IV-TR and how they are used to comprehensively evaluate the child*;

5.2 *describe the pros and cons of the DSM IV-TR from a developmental psychopathology perspective;* and

5.3 *describe the main features of the DSM IV-TR diagnostic criteria for disorders of infancy, childhood, and adolescence*

6. Discuss foundational issues associated with interventions for children and adolescents:

6.1 *describe interventions such as prevention, treatment, and maintenance;*

6.2 *discuss the importance of culture in developing and implementing interventions;*

6.3 *describe the typical goals of treatment;*

6.4 *discuss ethical and legal considerations in assessing and treating children and adolescents;* and

6.5 *describe the major approaches used for treating children and adolescents*

7. Discuss the importance of treatment outcome research and its relationship to the development of best practice guidelines:

7.1 *recognize that treatment outcome research is designed to address the question of whether therapy works;*

7.2 *discuss the importance of empirically-supported treatment in providing best practice guidelines to assist practitioners and consumers to make decisions regarding appropriate treatments for specific clinical conditions;* and

7.3 *summarize the findings regarding the effectiveness of different therapeutic interventions with children and adolescents*

8. Describe the respective roles and responsibilities of mental health, healthcare, social service, education, and juvenile justice professionals in working with children and adolescents with psychological disorders:

8.1 *describe the role and responsibilities of mental health professionals (e.g., psychiatrists; clinical, counseling, or school psychologists; and drug and alcohol counselors);*

8.2 *describe the role and responsibilities of healthcare professionals (e.g., physicians and nurses);*

8.3 *describe the role and responsibilities of social workers (e.g., case managers or psychiatric social workers);*

8.4 *describe the role and responsibilities of teachers (e.g., special education teachers);* and

8.5 *describe the role and responsibilities of juvenile justice professionals (e.g., attorneys, probation and parole officers, and juvenile detention officers)*

**Methods of Instruction**: Instruction will consist of, but not be limited to, a combination of lectures, class discussion, demonstrations and exercises, and media/audiovisual or educational videos. Specific choice of instructional methods is left to the discretion of the instructor.

**Outcomes Assessment:** Quiz and exam questions (if applicable) are blueprinted to course objectives. Checklist rubrics are used to evaluate non-test type assessment instruments (e.g., logs, reaction papers, theme papers, oral/written presentations, and projects), for the presence of course objectives. Data collected will be analyzed to provide direction for the improvement of instruction, viability of class assignments, relevancy of assigned literature, and evaluation of instructional time spent on specific topics.

**Course Requirements:** All students are required to:

1. Maintain regular and prompt attendance to all class sessions.

2. Participate in class discussions.

3.    Complete all assignments and take all quizzes and exams that are scheduled.

4. Follow any specific class requirements mandated by the instructor.

**Methods of Evaluation:** Final course grades will be computed as follows:

**% of**

**Grading Components final course grade**

* **Attendance/Class Participation** **5 – 15%**

Attendance points will be computed based on the ratio of the number of days attending the course during a regular semester (i.e., 28 contact days). A similar procedure will be used to determine participation points.

* Logs 10 – 15%

Logs are written exercises designed to heighten student’s awareness of various psychological phenomena that is experienced, observed, read, or viewed on television. Student must relate experiences to chapters either discussed/not discussed throughout the semester.

* **Reaction Papers 15 – 20%**

Reaction papers are 2 – 3 page written exercises in which students read outside sources (e.g., newspapers, magazines, or “self-help” books in psychology), discuss their “emotional” reaction to the issue or author’s point of view, yet use critical thinking guidelines to assess claims made augmented by scholarly literature.

* **Theme Papers 20 – 25%**

Theme papers are 3 – 5 page written exercises in which students discuss how taking the course has been personally meaningful, beneficial, and relevant to their future professional aspirations. References can be cited using scholarly journals, psychologically-based magazines, or internet sites.

**Methods of Evaluation** (continued):

**% of**

**Grading Components final course grade**

* **Literature Reviews/Research Papers 10 – 20%**

Literature reviews/research papers are written exercise in which students must investigate a particular topic either in the textbook or assigned by the instructor that is related to the course objectives and conduct a review of the psychological literature. Based on the literature review, students are required to develop a thesis/theme and draw conclusions on the topic researched.

* **Introspective Theme Paper/Case Study Analysis 30 – 40%**

The introspective theme paper/case study analysis is a 7 – 10 page written exercise in which students integrate and synthesize concepts to perform an in-depth analysis and demonstrate relevance of various theories to oneself as an emerging theoretical orientation or professional identity. If a child or teenager, adult person(s) or professional is interviewed, students must analyze, synthesize, integrate, and demonstrate relevance of concepts to course objectives.

* **Written/Oral Presentation of Child, Teenager, Adult, 15 – 25%**

**Agency, or Professional in the Field**

The written/oral presentation of the interview of a child, teenager, adult, agency, or professional requires the student to gather information and to determine its relevance to concepts and theories presented in class and related to course objectives.

* **Oral Presentations 15 – 20%**

Oral presentations are based on a topic either discussed/not discussed during the semester, that is relevant to the study of psychology and related to course objectives. The instructor may require a written outline to augment the oral presentation.

* **Quizzes 10 – 15%**

Quizzes will provide evidence of the extent to which students have met course objectives.

* Exams (number of exams and dates specified by the instructor) **20 – 30%**

Exams will provide evidence of the extent to which students have mastered and synthesize course material and have met course objectives.

**Note**: The instructor will determine the specific components appropriate for the course and provide specific weights which lie in the above given ranges at the beginning of the semester.

**Academic Integrity:** Dishonesty disrupts the search for truth that is inherent in the learning process and so devalues the purpose and the mission of the College.  Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* plagiarism – the failure to acknowledge another writer’s words or ideas or to give proper credit to sources of information;
* cheating – knowingly obtaining or giving unauthorized information on any test/exam or any other academic assignment;
* interference – any interruption of the academic process that prevents others from the proper engagement in learning or teaching; and
* fraud – any act or instance of willful deceit or trickery.

Violations of academic integrity will be dealt with by imposing appropriate sanctions.  Sanctions for acts of academic dishonesty could include the resubmission of an assignment, failure of the test/exam, failure in the course, probation, suspension from the College, and even expulsion from the College.

**Student Code of Conduct:** All students are expected to conduct themselves as responsible and considerate adults who respect the rights of others. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. All students are also expected to attend and be on time all class meetings. No cell phones or similar electronic devices are permitted in class. Please refer to the Essex County College student handbook, *Lifeline*, for more specific information about the College’s Code of Conduct and attendance requirements.

**Course Content Outline:** based on the following textbooks:

Kerig, P. K. & Wenar, C. (2006). *Developmental Psychopathology: From Infancy through Adolescence* (5th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill

American Psychiatric Association (2000). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders—Text Revised: Desk Reference* (4th ed.). Washington, DC: Author

**Note:** It is the instructor’s discretion to recommend other references, as appropriate (e.g., student handbooks, textbooks, resources pertaining to careers in psychology, or style/writing manuals).

**Unit Topic**

1 Introduction – Understanding abnormal child psychology (e.g., definitions, theoretical perspectives/paradigms, classification and diagnosis, clinical assessment procedures, and methods of treatment, prevention, and maintenance

2 Developmental Psychopathology – The relationship between developmental periods and psychopathology

3 Behavioral Disorders (e.g., attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorders and conduct disorders)

4 Emotional Disorders (e.g., anxiety and mood disorders)

5 Developmental and Learning Disorders (e.g., mental retardation, autism, spectrum disorders, childhood-onset schizophrenia, and communication and learning disorders)

6 Problems Related to Physical and Mental Health (e.g., health-related and substance use disorders, eating disorders, and child maltreatment and non-accidental trauma)

7 (optional) Mental Health, Healthcare, Social Services, Education, and Juvenile Justice Professionals – Roles and responsibilities in working with children and adolescents with psychological disorders

8 (optional) Legal and Ethical Issues (e.g., conducting research and therapy with children and adolescents)

9 (optional) Research Methods in the Study of Abnormal Child Psychology

Note: In PSY 225, the instructor must cover the 6 units listed above minimally in any reasonable order throughout the duration of the semester/term. Also, the instructor may include additional areas based on his/her expertise and/or interest. However, the instructor should strive **NOT** to devote attention to disorders usually diagnosed in adulthood since these are covered more extensively in PSY 209 Abnormal Psychology.