



**PSY 316.01W: Abnormal Psychology**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer II 2026**

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

**Instructor:** Dr. Curt Carlson, Professor

**University Email Address:** curt.carlson@etamu.edu

**Preferred Form of Communication:** email

**Communication Response Time:** 24 hours (excluding weekends)

**COURSE INFORMATION**

**Textbook(s) Required:**

Comer, R. J., & Comer, J. S. (2024). *Psychopathology: Science and Practice* (12th ed.). New York, New York: Worth Publishers.

**Supplemental Readings (Recommended, but not Required):**

American Psychiatric Association (2022). *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition Text Revision (DSM-5-TR)*. Washington, DC.

***Course Description***

Emphasis is placed first on a study of the fundamental principles of understanding and appreciating mental disorders. Secondary emphasis is placed upon the types of disorders, with regard for incidence, etiology (i.e., cause of), symptom presentation, therapeutic intervention(s), and prognosis (i.e., course of disease/disorder, recovery track expectation(s)).

Objectively, this course will serve as an introduction to the cognitive, behavioral, affective, and physiological symptomatology associated with psychological disorders. Students will have the opportunity to learn and discuss the historical foundations of abnormal psychology, assessment strategies, characterizations of current diagnostic systems, and contemporary psychological and psychiatric treatment procedures and approaches. Discussions and presentations will be guided through utilization of varying frameworks, with emphasis on the biological, social, and psychological determinants of psychopathology/psychological disorders; through analysis of psychopathology frameworks, students will actively interpret considerations for dynamic interplay between multiple causal and maintaining variables to pathological expression.

***Student Learning Outcomes***

- (1) Identification of commonly used standards for identification of abnormal/pathological behaviors.
- (2) Identification of issues that may propose complications in abnormal behavior/symptom

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expression identification.

(3) Discussion of the evolution surrounding historical trends in shaping identification and treatment of mental disease/disorder.

(4) Description of current broad theoretical frameworks utilized in characterizing the etiology and maintenance of abnormal behaviors/symptoms.

(5) Brief discussion of the nature of research surrounding the abnormal psychology concentration and emphasis put upon evidence-supported treatment approaches.

(6) Identification of strengths and limitations of current diagnostic system(s) utilized in the United States.

(7) Description of commonly used assessment methods, as well as associated strengths and weaknesses of assessment strategies for abnormal behaviors.

(8) Discussion on general affective, cognitive, physiological, and behavioral symptoms associated with varying psychological disorders.

(9) Identification of current etiological theories, assessments, and treatment strategies for psychological disorders.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### ***Minimal Technical Skills Needed***

This course will use D2L.

### ***Instructional Methods***

Video and textual lecture summaries and other supplemental course materials will be posted in D2L. Students will use these materials with the assigned reading to prepare for course assessments. Assessments will include quizzes, assignments, and a final exam. This online course contains the same content you'd expect in a traditional 15-week face-to-face version.

### ***Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course***

Read the textbook. View the online materials. Complete all quizzes, assignments, research exposure, and final exam. Start your assignments early and edit them before submission. Check you LeoMail and log into D2L EVERY DAY. Important class announcements will be made via email and posted on D2L.

**Broken Link Policy:** Online content is checked in advance, but in rare cases a link may stop working mid-week. If a link is no longer working, notify the instructor immediately and no later than 24 hours prior to the chapter due date. Any broken links will be remedied and announced in D2L, and therefore no adjustments will be made to student grades if this occurs.

## **GRADING**

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

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**Quizzes (5 quizzes at 5% each for 25% total)**

Quizzes will be scattered throughout the semester and are designed to help you become more familiar with the DSM-5 and psychopathology.

**Infographics/Brief Awareness Videos (2 at 25% each for 50% total)**

Students will develop 2 infographics and/or brief awareness video (1 can be an infographic and 1 can be a video or both can be infographics or both can be videos). One topic must be a disorder in the DSM-VTR (e.g., Autism, Borderline Personality Disorder, etc) and one topic must be related to an evidence-based intervention (e.g., Cognitive Behavior Therapy, psychological first aid, etc.). These will focus on topics chosen ahead of time (sign up will be on a first come, first serve basis).

**Final Exam (25%)**

There will be one final exam covering the course content as indicated in the Course Schedule.

**RESEARCH PARTICIPATION:**

A goal of this class is to help you become familiar with psychological research. One way to obtain this goal is to have you participate in research studies. Participating in research studies contributes to students and faculty at ETAMU, your understanding of how research is conducted, and human knowledge in general. **All students in this class will be required to participate in the psychology department's online participant pool or complete alternative assignments. Students must complete a total of 2 experiment credits.** Due to the online nature of this class, all credits can come from online studies. When you first sign into the experiment management system (EMS) you will be asked to take a prescreen. The prescreen takes about 20 minutes to complete. If you complete the prescreen in the first week of the semester you will receive ½ free experiment credit. This can be combined with later experiments that are worth ½ credit.

If you fail to complete this portion of the class your grade will be lowered by one full grade. In effect, if you have an 'A' in the class but fail to complete your research participation (either through participating in research studies, alternative assignments, or a mixture of both) your final grade in the class will be a 'B.' More information about participating in research, such as how to log in to the EMS, is given at the end of this syllabus. The alternative assignment is an article summary described in D2L.

**TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS****LMS**

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

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[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

[https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom\\_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu](https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu)

## **ACCESS AND NAVIGATION**

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@etamu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@etamu.edu).

**Note:** Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

## **COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT**

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

### **Technical Support**

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement**

It is best to communicate with me via email ([curt.carlson@etamu.edu](mailto:curt.carlson@etamu.edu)). I will respond to emails within 24-48 hours. Please do not re-send your email unless at least 48 hours have passed since your last email.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **Course Specific Procedures/Policies**

No quizzes, exams, or homework will be accepted after the deadline unless permission is provided in advance of the deadline by the instructor.

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## **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

## **University Specific Procedures**

### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

### **ETAMU Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

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## **Academic Integrity**

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

## **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

## **Nondiscrimination Notice**

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

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## Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and ETAMU Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all ETAMU campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

## ETAMU Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at ETAMU, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel)

## COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week	Topic/Readings	Work Due
Week 1 7/6 – 7/11	Introduction to Syllabus Comer Ch 1: Psychopathology: Past and Present Comer Ch 2: Research in Psychopathology Comer Ch 3: Models of Psychopathology	None
Week 2 7/12 – 7/18	Comer Ch 5: Anxiety Disorders, Obsessive-Compulsive and Related Disorders Comer Ch 6: Trauma-and Stressor-Related Disorders	Quiz 1 (Anxiety) Quiz 2 (Trauma)
Week 3 7/19 – 7/25	Comer Ch 7: Depressive & Bipolar Disorders Comer Ch 10: Eating Disorders Comer Ch 11: Substance Use and Addictive Disorders	Quiz 3 (Mood) Infographic/Video 1

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Week 4 7/26 – 8/1	Comer Ch 13: Schizophrenia and Related Disorders Comer Ch 15: Personality Disorders	Quiz 4 (Schizophrenia & Psychotic D/O's) Quiz 5 (Personality Disorders) Infographic/Video 2
Week 5 8/2 – 8/6	Comer Ch 16: Disorders Common Among Children & Adolescents Comer Ch 17: Disorders of Aging and Cognition	Final Exam over Chapters 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16 and 17.

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**Students' Guide to Research Participation**  
**Department of Psychology & Special Education**  
**East Texas A&M University**

- **What is Research Participation?**

Exposure to research is essential to your gaining a better understanding of the scientific study of psychology. It is how we add new knowledge in psychology. Being involved in research is a good way to experience first-hand and learn about the scientific enterprise. We believe there are two key ways to experience research activity at this level: 1) read about related scientific investigations; 2) experience research as a volunteer participant; or some combination of both. The class in which you received this information requires you to fulfill several research credits through one or both of these activities. Or, research participation is by extra credit – ask your instructor if you are not sure whether or not it is required.

- **What if I am not yet 18 years old?**

In order to participate in research you must be at least 18 years old. If you are not yet 18 years old, please see your instructor, and ask him/her about alternative ways of earning research credit.

- **In what type of research studies will I participate?**

All studies you will participate in have been reviewed and approved by the East Texas A&M University Institutional Review Board (IRB) and by the Department of Psychology & Special Education. Studies vary widely. Many involve completing questionnaires or carrying out tasks on the computer. Some are even fun, and you'll learn something from all of them.

- **What are my rights as a research participant?**

Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from any study at any time. Your data will be kept confidential. If you have any further questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB (IRB@etamu.edu). More information about your rights will be provided to you prior to each study for which you sign up.

- **How will my research participation credit be calculated?**

You will receive 1 credit for each hour of research participation. Studies lasting 15 minutes or less are worth 0.25 credit. For example, a 15 min. study = 0.25 research credits; 30 min. = 0.5 credits; 45 min. = 0.75 credits; 60min = 1 credit; 1½ hours = 1.5 credits... etc.

- **How many research credits may I complete?**

You are encouraged to participate in as much research as you wish, but at a minimum you must complete the number of research credits specified by your instructor (by participating in research, or alternative assignments, or a mixture of both).

- **What if I cannot go to a study I signed up for?**

If for whatever reason you cannot attend a study that you have signed up for you need to cancel your appointment before the start of the study. There are two ways to cancel an appointment. First, if you cancel 24 hours before a study you can do this online through the Experiment Management System (EMS) website. Second, if it is the same day of the study you can call or email the experimenter – their contact information will be available in the EMS.

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- **What if I sign up for a study but forget to go?**

If you fail to show up for a study (without canceling prior to the start of the study) you will receive an email alerting you that you were listed as a “no show” for that study. Additionally, on the EMS website you will see a “failure to appear” message in your list of studies completed.

- **What will happen if I fail to participate in studies or do the alternative assignments?**

You will be penalized if participation is required, and this penalty is up to your instructor.

- **What if I do not wish to participate in research studies?**

If you do not wish to participate in research studies, you may utilize the alternative assignment option. You must consult your instructor for information about this option.

- **What is the difference between an online study and a laboratory study?**

There are two types of studies that are conducted through the EMS system. You can sign up for both online studies and laboratory studies through the EMS system, however you are only allowed to complete 50% experiment credits through online studies (the system will not allow you sign up for more than 50% credits of online studies) if you are taking a face-to-face course. For online courses or those taking place far from the Commerce campus, all of your credits can come from online studies. A laboratory study requires that you attend the experiment at a specific time and place.

- **How do I find and sign up for research participation opportunities?**

Throughout the semester, researchers in the Psychology Department will post their research studies in the Experiment Management System (EMS) online. It is up to you to check the EMS regularly to find and sign up for research studies that fit into your schedule. Detailed instructions for how to use the EMS are listed in the following pages of this handout.

## How do I use the Experiment Management System (EMS)?

(Create a new participant account unless you already have one and your login information works. If you do not remember your login information click on the “lost your password?” on the front page of the EMS website and follow the directions on the site, and if that does not work email [curt.carlson@etamu.edu](mailto:curt.carlson@etamu.edu). A list of courses will be presented, from which you must select the courses you are taking this semester for which you will receive credit for participation. If your course is not listed, see the instructor for that course.)

### A. How to create a participant account on the EMS

1. Go to <https://etamu.sona-systems.com>



- a. Click on New Participant “request an account here” link on the left of the screen.
- b. This takes you to a screen on which you must enter your name, a unique User ID, your University ID number, and primary email address (reminders of studies you sign up for will be sent to that email address). You will also need to highlight the course(s) in which you are enrolled, and for which you will be earning credits. If more than one, highlight all that will be involving you in research participation. However, each study in which you participate will only provide you credit for ONE course. In other words, there is no “double-dipping” allowed. **BE CAREFUL TO SELECT THE CORRECT COURSE AND SECTION # – IF YOU CHOOSE THE WRONG ONE, YOUR INSTRUCTOR WILL NOT BE INFORMED OF YOUR CREDITS!** After you submit your information, you will be emailed your login information. (After you have received your login information, I recommend that you login into EMS and go to your “Profile” and change your password to something that you can remember.)

If you encounter any problems with creating your account (e.g., login information not sent to you), contact the EMS administrator, [curt.carlson@etamu.edu](mailto:curt.carlson@etamu.edu) with your full name and a detailed description of the problem.

2. When you first log into the EMS at the beginning of the semester you will be asked to take a prescreen survey. This is a short survey that researchers will use to decide if you meet the specified requirements for some studies (e.g., as a researcher I may only allow participants who are female. If you do not complete the prescreen you will not be eligible to participate in this study). In other words, if you do not complete the prescreen you will have fewer studies that you are eligible to participate in. **IF YOU COMPLETE THE PRESCREEN IN THE FIRST WEEK OF THE SEMESTER YOU WILL GET 0.5**

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**CREDIT.** Take it even if you have done it before – it has probably changed, and you will still earn the 0.5 credit.

3. You are now ready to use the EMS to sign-up for research studies.

### **B. Sign-up for studies—login to the EMS with your User ID and password that was emailed to you after creating your account**

1. Click **Study Sign-Up**. A list of all available studies for which you qualify will appear. You can sign-up by clicking on either the study name or **Timeslots Available**, and you will go to a new screen showing more information about the study, with a link to **View Time Slots for This Study**.
2. Click the **Sign-Up** button to schedule your time. Online studies will generally have just one timeslot with a set max number of students who can participate. Simply select that timeslot, and it will inform you how long you have to participate in the study.

### **C. Canceling a Sign-Up**

1. If you need to cancel a timeslot you have signed up for, you can do this from the **My Schedule and Credits** page. Choose the **My Schedule and Credits** option from top toolbar.
2. You will see listed all of the studies for which you have signed up, as well as those you have completed (see the Tracking Your Progress section below for more information).
3. Studies for which you have signed up that you are allowed to cancel will have a **Cancel** button next to them.
4. If you cancel the first part of a two-part study, the second part will also be cancelled. If you cancel the second part of a two-part study, the first part will *not* be cancelled, but you will need to ask the researcher to sign you up for the second part again, if you would like to participate in it at a later date. However, this is up to the researcher.

### **D. Tracking Your Progress**

1. You may track your progress at any time by choosing the **My Schedule and Credits** option from the top toolbar.
3. When you view this page, you will see at the top a list of the number of credits you are required to earn, and how many you have earned so far. Below that, if you have signed up for any studies, those are listed as well. In the list of studies, you will see information about your credit status.

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Note: Your login session will expire after a certain period of inactivity, usually 20-60 minutes. This is done for security purposes. If this happens, you can always log in again. When you are finished using the system, it is better to explicitly log out, to prevent any problems that may arise if someone uses your computer before the session expires. This is especially important if you are using a public computer lab.

## E. Frequently Asked Questions

*1. Immediately after I login, as soon as I click on any menu option, I am taken back to the login page and I see a message that my authentication has expired. What does this mean?*

Your web browser is not properly configured to accept cookies. You should turn on cookies in your web browser, use a different web browser (for example, try Firefox if you are currently using Internet Explorer), or try a different computer. Detailed instructions can be found if you go to the site and enter the URL “cookie\_help.asp” in place of “default.asp” in the address bar of the browser, when you are on the front page of the site.

*2. I participated in a study, but I have yet to receive credit. How do I receive credit?*

The researcher must grant you credit. This is usually done within a few days after your participation. If it has been some time and you have still not received credit, contact the researcher (his or her contact information should be listed when you click on the study name within the system).

*3. How do I change the email address where email notifications from the system are sent?*

You can change the email address where notifications are sent by going to **My Profile** and editing the email address you see there.

*4. Should I keep some sort of record of my participation and credits earned?*

The system will keep track of the credits you earn and your instructor will have access at the end of the semester to a report of credits earned by students enrolled in the class. It is a good idea, however, to occasionally print a personal copy of your credits earned and hold on to that printout as a back up to the system.

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