

PSYC 261: Psychology of Adjustment (3 Credits)

Course Description

In this course we will learn what psychological research says about improving adjustment and overall quality of life. Factors affecting adjustment include gender, personality, self-esteem, ability to communicate effectively, health, experience of stress, changes with aging, and coping processes. Factors also include things like social influence and pressure, relationships with others, career preparation, work, and stages of life. The desired outcome is for students to use this knowledge to actively take charge of their own lives, effectively adjusting to an ever-changing world.

Course Prerequisites-None

Textbooks Psychology Applied to Modern Life:

Psychology Applied to Modern Life. Weiten, Dunn, Hammer. 10th edition. Copyright 2011. ISBN: 978-1-1111-8663-0.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Explain factors that are related to happiness
2. Describe several effective strategies for improving academic performance
3. Summarize and evaluate theories about personality.
4. Explain the nature and consequences of stress (positive and negative).
5. Describe factors that increase stress tolerance.
6. Discuss coping strategies that people employ: defensive and constructive.
7. Create an effective behavior modification program.
8. Understand what self-concept, self-esteem, self-attributions, self-regulation, and self-presentation are and how each affects adjustment.
9. Describe factors influencing our perceptions of others.
10. Discuss factors involved in social conformity and compliance, summarizing social influence (compliance) tactics.
11. Describe components of effective verbal and nonverbal communication.
12. Discuss factors that affect the establishment and growth of personal relationships (of friendship, of love).
13. Describe the process of mate selection and factors in marital adjustment.
14. Discuss the incidence, causes, and effects of abuse in families.
15. Describe gender similarities and differences, gender roles, and gender stereotypes.
16. Identify changes that commonly occur in adolescence and in adulthood, noting factors that improve adjustment to these changes.

17. Describe factors in making a career choice and strategies for obtaining that chosen job.
18. Discuss factors that create job stress, identifying at least 3 productive ways to deal with it.
19. Understand sexual identity, human sexual expression, and related issues.
20. Explain the impact of coping skills and lifestyle upon physical and mental health.
21. Understand psychological disorders: types of disorders, causes, and the law.
22. Be aware of therapy options for adjustment problems and for psychological disorders.

Textbook

Required: Psychology Applied to Modern Life: Adjustment in the 21st Century -- Wayne Weiten/
Margaret A. Lloyd Thomson Wadsworth, 7th Edition (2003)

Course Policy

Assignments- Students will be required to come into the course each week, at least twice, for attendance and completion of discussion board assignments. Discussion board assignments are due on Wednesday evenings and on Friday evenings before midnight.

A) Discussion boards: You will be asked to respond online in the discussion area each week. This is the interaction component of the class. It is important to respond in a timely manner, according to the schedule that is provided. The success of the course depends upon all students participating in current discussions! Usually you will be asked to answer four questions for each chapter before midnight on Wednesday evenings. Then, after reading online responses from your peers and from your instructor, you will be asked to respond to at least 2 of your peers and/or your instructor (per question) before midnight on Friday evenings. Also, you will need to give your conclusions about the chapter before midnight on Friday evenings. You will earn full credit for your responses if they are written before the deadlines each week. If you miss one or both of the deadlines for a good reason (accident, hospitalization of self or family member, computer crashing, etc.) and notify me quickly of the facts, you may be able to earn full or partial credit for missed responses that week. You will not be able to earn any points for missed assignments without a good reason and notification within a reasonable amount of time (24-48 hours). You may contact me via e-mail or by telephone. Weekly attendance and participation in the Discussion Boards (interactivity with peers) is worth twenty-five (25) points weekly. Total discussion board points available: 400 points.

B) Completion of four examinations, in the presence of a proctor, is worth up to 300 points (75 points per examination). The first examination will cover chapters 1-4. The second exam will cover chapters 5-8. The third exam will cover chapters 9-12. The fourth exam will cover chapters 13-16. Each exam will consist of 75 multiple choice and true false questions. Further information concerning exams can be found at the left hand side of your screen: exam one under week 4, exam two under week 8, exam three under week 12, and exam 4 under week 16.

C) Behavior Modification Paper: You will be asked to complete a Behavior Modification paper, to be entered into your journal in pieces between the 5th and the 10th weeks of the course. Please refer to the DocSharing section of the course for specific requirements. Download and print a copy for use as you write. The Behavior Modification paper will be worth up to 100 points. Note: Please check the announcements section for updated information each time you enter the course. This is where I will let you know about any changes in the course, help aids, or clarification of course material. At times I may give information regarding the previous week's discussion in the announcements section (further information, my responses, etc.). The announcements section is also where I will let you know of times that I will be off-line and unavailable (times when I will not check in online due to other commitments). Important details: You will need to obtain a proctor, to witness you in taking your exams. Please download the proctor form from the DocSharing section of the course, have your proctor fill out the information, and mail it to me at the address on the proctor form before the 3rd week of the course. You will also be taking each exam using the Exam Guard function. This will be available to you within the course, online for downloading, before you are to take your exam.

Grading Policy

Your course grade will be based upon your performance in the weekly discussion boards, on four examinations, and on the quality of your Behavior Modification paper. You can earn up to 25 points per week by responding in a timely manner to 5 discussion board topics. You will have four discussion board topic questions to answer before Wednesday at midnight each week. Each initial response is worth 3 points. You will then respond before midnight on Friday to at least 2 peers on each discussion board question, for an additional 2 points per question. Total: 5 points possible for each of the first four discussion board questions. Your conclusion is due before midnight on Friday and is worth a total of 5 points. (Total discussion board points possible = 400).

You can earn up to 75 points per examination. There are four course examinations... to be taken at the end of weeks 4, 8, 12, and 16. (Total exam points possible = 300).

You can earn up to 100 points for a Behavior Modification paper. The grade on this paper will be determined by the quality of your behavior modification program (following of steps outlined in chapter four of your textbook, including all essential details) and by the quality of your writing (good grammar, spelling, and punctuation; good flow of ideas and transitions). Please submit your paper on time, according to details listed under weeks 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10 of the course. Your grade will be reduced by 5 points for each day that it is late.

800 - 720= A

719 - 640= B

639 - 560= C

559 - 480= D

Please check Grade Book weekly for updated scoring of points. I will be grading assignments and entering them into the course on a weekly basis much of the time. My goal is to enter

grades for assignments that were due on Friday by the next Friday evening. If you have a question about whether I received an assignment, please e-mail me.

Tuition/Fees

See tuition and fee information, Refund Policy and Withdrawal Schedule information in the NDSCS Online site under Financial Information. Tuition and fee costs do not include books, software, supplies and other program or course fees which may vary by program.

Instructor Information

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