

**Psychology 457
Anxiety Disorders
Fall, 2009**

1.0 COURSE INFORMATION

Time and Location: Fridays, 2-4:30pm, PAS 3026

Instructor: Dr. C. Purdon
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Office Hours: Mondays, 10:00-11:00am (or by appointment)

2.0 COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine current research on the phenomenology, development and persistence of anxiety disorders, as understood from a cognitive/learning perspective. We will first look at the role of learning and cognitive processes in anxiety. We will then cover specific anxiety disorders, including Panic Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Social Phobia, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Treatment will be mentioned in class, but will not be a primary focus of the course.

3.0 TEXTBOOK

There is no textbook for the course. Instead, you will be reading published articles from psychology journals, selected chapters from published books and manuscripts not yet published. These have been printed and bound for you, and are available at the Book Store for \$89.95.

4.0 COURSE OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this course is to familiarize students with the phenomenology, development and persistence of anxiety disorders.

5.0 EVALUATION

Attendance and Group Leadership

15% of your grade will be determined by attendance and your leadership of the weekly small group discussions, which you will do twice. Each week, the class will break into groups of three or four and one person will be designated group leader. Each group will be given a specific assignment to complete.

Short Essays

During weeks 2-9 you will be given a short essay question to complete in writing in the last 30 minutes of class. The best 7 of these 8 will count for **70% of your grade (10% each)**.

For weeks 2-9, you will be assigned 3 articles or chapters to read in preparation for class. I will provide you with questions to guide your reading each week. In the last 30 minutes of each class, you will be given an essay question based on those readings, my (brief) lecture and your group discussion. You will submit this essay at the end of class. This is a closed-book exercise, so you will answer the question without reference to your notes or the articles themselves. You will be given booklets in which to write your answer by hand. The essay questions will be evaluated on the strength of your understanding of the readings and the issues at hand, as well as the clarity of your written presentation and the strength of the argument or ideas you present. These questions will derive directly from the readings and class discussion; they are not meant to stump or surprise you, nor will I expect you to know the readings in fine detail. I am looking for the strength and quality of your understanding of the important issues presented in the articles, which in turn you can glean from the questions about the readings I give you each week. You are expected to write in formal style, with appropriate spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Please note that you will be graded on the best 7 of 8 essay questions, which allows you one “freebie” in the event of illness or other mishap that causes you to miss class. I expect that you will attend class, and that you will complete at least 7 of the 8 essay questions in class. Alternative arrangements will only be made on the basis that there has been a *major* disruption in your ability to function academically due to *documented* health reasons or personal problems.

Final Essay

In the second-last class, you will be **required to write a short essay worth 15% of your grade**. This question will be based on an article that you will be given at the end of Week 9.

The following are statements that I am required to include in all course outlines and/or websites:

Academic Integrity: in order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/ for more information.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances](#), Section 4, <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm> When in doubt, please be certain to contact the Department of Psychology Undergraduate Advisor, Ms. Heather Smith (888-4567, x32819).

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [check www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/], to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about 'rules' for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#), www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 (Student Petitions and Grievances) (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 (Student Discipline) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 \(Student Appeals\)](#) <http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>

Note for Students with Disabilities: The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the OPD at the beginning of each academic term.

Class Schedule

September 18	<i>Course overview</i>
September 25	<i>Classical and Operant Conditioning in Anxiety</i>
October 2	<i>The Neuropsychology of Anxiety</i>
October 9	<i>Information Processing and Memory in Anxiety</i>
October 16	<i>Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder</i>
October 23	<i>Post traumatic Stress Disorder</i>
October 30	<i>Panic Disorder and Agoraphobia</i>
November 6	<i>Generalized Anxiety Disorder</i>
November 13	<i>Social Phobia</i>
November 20	<u><i>Class cancelled</i></u>
November 27	<i>In-class final essay</i>
December 4	Talk by Purdon: <i>“Think unsexy thoughts, think unsexy thoughts, think unsexy thoughts...Doh!” What has 20 years of research on thought suppression taught us about psychopathology?”</i> <i>To be followed by (non-mandatory) field trip to the Grad House</i>