

University of Waterloo
Department of Psychology
Psych 457: Honours Seminar in Personality and Clinical Psychology
Topic: Autism Spectrum Disorder
Winter 2019
Tuesdays 8:30 – 11:30 am, PAS 2086

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Tara McAuley Office: PAS 3016 (hours by appointment)
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Note: I will do my best to respond within 24 hours to emails and/or calls received Mon-Fri.

Course Description

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is arguably one of the most controversial and poorly understood disorders of neurodevelopment. This course will provide students with an in-depth examination of basic research and applied science that is relevant to understanding ASD, which will be accomplished via the integration of readings, in-class discussion, and knowledge translation activities. The course will begin with an historical overview of ASD and will then delve into specific topics including etiological factors, clinical assessment, brain and neuropsychological development, conventional vs. alternative treatments, and long-term prognosis.

Course Objectives

This course is structured to provide students with an in-depth examination of content that is specific to ASD coupled with an opportunity to hone the critical thinking and communication skills that are relevant to students across all areas of study. Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Describe ASD diagnostic features and associated clinical sequelae
- B. Identify factors relevant to the early detection, assessment, and treatment of ASD
- C. Understand controversies that currently characterize the ASD literature regarding prevalence, etiology, and neurodiversity/difference
- D. Think critically and independently about issues in ASD research
- E. Explain scientific facts, concepts, and theoretical perspectives verbally and in writing to individuals with varied backgrounds (e.g., fellow students, your instructor, a lay audience)

Required Readings

Students are responsible for all readings listed in the course outline, copies of which are available on Learn.

Student Evaluation

Attendance & Participation	10 x 2% = 20%
Small Group Presentation	20%
Group Discussion Facilitator	2 x 10% = 20%
Critical Reflection Papers	2 x 20% = 40%

Attendance & Participation. The Honours seminar is a participatory course, hence lecture attendance is mandatory and students should be prepared to discuss all of the assigned readings. Students will be given 1 mark for attending the entirety of each lecture and 1 mark for active participation (e.g., asking questions, participating in discussion, etc.). Students are not assigned attendance/participation marks in the first class and are allowed 1 “freebie” for a lecture they did not attend or did not fully participate in for whatever reason. Grading: 2% per lecture x 10 lectures = 20%.

Small Group Presentation. Groups of 2-3 students will work as a team to disseminate information regarding a select piece of applied material (indicated in bold in the course outline) that is relevant to the topic under consideration. Each team can decide how to best convey this information (e.g., use of power point slides, video clips, interactive activities, etc.) – keeping in mind that the presentation should be in-depth, draw connections to the identified topic, and be approximately 20 minutes in length with 5-10 minutes of questions from the audience. Grading: 20%.

Group Discussion Facilitator. Each week, 3-5 students will be responsible for generating discussion questions based on the assigned readings and using these questions to facilitate discussion amongst the class. Submitted questions must span more than 1 reading. Students will need to coordinate with one another in advance of lecture to ensure that there is adequate coverage of each of the assigned readings. Students are required to upload their questions to the course dropbox no later than 12 pm (noon) on the Sunday prior to lecture. Grading: 2 lectures x 10% = 20%.

Critical Analysis Papers. Twice during the course, students will critique select pieces of media that are relevant to our discussion of ASD. Students are required to upload their papers to the course dropbox no later than 11:59 pm on the designated due date (February 4th and March 4th for each paper respectively). Grading: 2 papers x 20% paper = 40%.

Course Outline

Date (week)	Topic	Readings
Jan 8 (1)	Course introduction A clinician’s perspective	None
Jan 15 (2)	Clinical conceptualization	Application: DSM-V Diagnostic Criteria Qualitative Research Paper: Kanner, L. (1943). Autistic disturbances of affective contact. <i>Nervous child</i> , 2(3), 217-250. Review Paper: Verhoeff, B. (2013). Autism in flux: a history of the concept from Leo Kanner to DSM-5. <i>History of Psychiatry</i> , 24(4), 442-458.
Jan 22 (3)	Early detection	Application: Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers – Revised (MCHAT-R)

Date (week)	Topic	Readings
		<p>Review Paper: Palomo, R., Belinchon, M., & Ozonoff, S. (2006). Autism and family home movies: a comprehensive review. <i>Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics, 27</i>(2), S59-S68.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Baron-Cohen, S., Cox, A., Baird, G., Swettenham, J., Nightingale, N. ... & Charman, T. (1996). Psychological markers in the detection of autism in infancy in a large population. <i>The British Journal of Psychiatry, 168</i>(2), 158-163.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Oosterling, I. J., Wensing, M., Swinkels, S. H., Van Der Gaag, R. J., Visser, J. C.,... & Buitelaar, J. K. (2010). Advancing early detection of autism spectrum disorder by applying an integrated two-stage screening approach. <i>Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 51</i>(3), 250-258.</p>
Jan 29 (4)	Gold standard assessment	<p>Application: KidsAbility Autism Spectrum Disorder Assessment Team Brochure</p> <p>Review Paper: Falkmer, T., Anderson, K., Falkmer, M., & Horlin, C. (2013). Diagnostic procedures in autism spectrum disorders: a systematic literature review. <i>European child & adolescent psychiatry, 22</i>(6), 329-340.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Goin-Kochel, R. P., Mackintosh, V. H., & Myers, B. J. (2006). How many doctors does it take to make an autism spectrum diagnosis?. <i>Autism, 10</i>(5), 439-451.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: McDonnell, C. G., Bradley, C. C., Kanne, S. M., Lajonchere, C., Warren, Z., & Carpenter, L. A. (2018). When Are We Sure? Predictors of Clinician Certainty in the Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. <i>Journal of autism and developmental disorders, 1</i>-11.</p>
Feb 5 (5)	Controversy 1: Is there an epidemic?	<p>CRITICAL ANALYSIS PAPER 1: Watch 'Is the Autism Epidemic Being Hidden?' DUE FEB 4.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Christensen, D. L., Braun, K. V. N., Baio, J., Bilder, D., Charles, J.,... & Lee, L. C. (2018). Prevalence and characteristics of autism spectrum disorder among children aged 8 years—autism and developmental disabilities monitoring</p>

Date (week)	Topic	Readings
		<p>network, 11 sites, United States, 2012. <i>MMWR Surveillance Summaries</i>, 65(13), 1.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Levaot, Y., Meiri, G., Dinstein, I., Menashe, I., & Shoham-Vardi, I. (2018). Autism Prevalence and Severity in Bedouin-Arab and Jewish Communities in Southern Israel. <i>Community mental health journal</i>, 1-5.</p>
Feb 12 (6)	Neurodevelopmental mechanisms	<p>Application: Autism Research Centre – Faux Pas Recognition Test (Adult)</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Baron-Cohen, S., Leslie, A. M., & Frith, U. (1985). Does the autistic child have a “theory of mind”? <i>Cognition</i>, 21(1), 37-46.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Baron-Cohen, S., Wheelwright, S., Hill, J., Raste, Y., & Plumb, I. (2001). The “Reading the Mind in the Eyes” test revised version: A study with normal adults, and adults with Asperger syndrome or high-functioning autism. <i>Journal of child psychology and psychiatry</i>, 42(2), 241-251.</p> <p>Review Paper: Gliga, T., Jones, E. J., Bedford, R., Charman, T., & Johnson, M. H. (2014). From early markers to neuro-developmental mechanisms of autism. <i>Developmental Review</i>, 34(3), 189-207.</p>
Feb 19	READING WEEK	
Feb 26 (7)	Neurodiversity perspective	<p>Application: Autistic Self Advocacy Network - Autism Acceptance Month (visit www.autismacceptancemonth.com)</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Kenny, L., Hattersley, C., Molins, B., Buckley, C., Povey, C., & Pellicano, E. (2016). Which terms should be used to describe autism? Perspectives from the UK autism community. <i>Autism</i>, 20(4), 442-462.</p> <p>Editorial: Baron-Cohen, S. (2017). Editorial Perspective: Neurodiversity—a revolutionary concept for autism and psychiatry. <i>Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry</i>, 58(6), 744-747.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Kapp, S. K., Gillespie-Lynch, K., Sherman, L. E., & Hutman, T. (2013). Deficit,</p>

Date (week)	Topic	Readings
		<p>difference, or both? Autism and neurodiversity. <i>Developmental psychology</i>, 49(1), 59.</p> <p>Perspectives Paper: Barnes, R. E., & McCabe, H. (2012). Should we welcome a cure for autism? A survey of the arguments. <i>Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy</i>, 15(3), 255-269.</p>
Mar 5 (8)	Controversy 2: Are vaccinations to blame?	<p>CRITICAL ANALYSIS PAPER 2: Watch 'Dr. Andrew Wakefield Deals with Allegations' DUE MAR 4.</p> <p>Review Paper: Wing, L. (1997). The history of ideas on autism: legends, myths and reality. <i>Autism</i>, 1(1), 13-23.</p> <p>Review Paper: Taylor, L. E., Swerdfeger, A. L., & Eslick, G. D. (2014). Vaccines are not associated with autism: an evidence-based meta-analysis of case-control and cohort studies. <i>Vaccine</i>, 32(29), 3623-3629.</p> <p>Review Paper: Kim, Y. S., & Leventhal, B. L. (2015). Genetic epidemiology and insights into interactive genetic and environmental effects in autism spectrum disorders. <i>Biological psychiatry</i>, 77(1), 66-74.</p>
Mar 12 (9)	Treatment considerations	<p>Application: Ontario Autism Program – Information Sheet</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Lovaas, O. I. (1987). Behavioral treatment and normal educational and intellectual functioning in young autistic children. <i>Journal of consulting and clinical psychology</i>, 55(1), 3.</p> <p>Review Paper: Makrygianni, M. K., Gena, A., Katoudi, S., & Galanis, P. (2018). The effectiveness of applied behavior analytic interventions for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A meta-analytic study. <i>Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders</i>, 51, 18-31.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Penner, M., Rayar, M., Bashir, N., Roberts, S. W., Hancock-Howard, R. L., & Coyte, P. C. (2015). Cost-effectiveness analysis comparing pre-diagnosis autism spectrum disorder (ASD)-targeted intervention with Ontario's autism intervention program. <i>Journal of autism and developmental disorders</i>, 45(9), 2833-2847.</p>

Date (week)	Topic	Readings
		<p>Review Paper: Brondino, N., Fusar-Poli, L., Rocchetti, M., Provenzani, U., Barale, F., & Politi, P. (2015). Complementary and alternative therapies for autism spectrum disorder. <i>Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine, 2015</i>.</p>
Mar 19 (10)	Prognosis	<p>Application: TRANSITIONS: Care and support for adults with autism (visit www.eopcn.ca/services/transitions-care-support-adults-autism)</p> <p>Qualitative Research Paper: Kanner, L. (1971). Follow-up study of eleven autistic children originally reported in 1943. <i>Journal of autism and childhood schizophrenia, 1(2)</i>, 119-145.</p> <p>Review Paper: Seltzer, M. M., Shattuck, P., Abbeduto, L., & Greenberg, J. S. (2004). Trajectory of development in adolescents and adults with autism. <i>Mental retardation and developmental disabilities research reviews, 10(4)</i>, 234-247.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Fein, D., Barton, M., Eigsti, I. M., Kelley, E., Naigles, L., Schultz, R. T., ... & Troyb, E. (2013). Optimal outcome in individuals with a history of autism. <i>Journal of child psychology and psychiatry, 54(2)</i>, 195-205.</p>
Mar 26 (11)	Educational considerations	<p>Application: WRDSB Special Education Plan (Updated 2018) – sections relevant to ASD only</p> <p>Perspectives Paper: Lynch, S. L., & Irvine, A. N. (2009). Inclusive education and best practice for children with autism spectrum disorder: An integrated approach. <i>International Journal of Inclusive Education, 13(8)</i>, 845-859.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Ashburner, J., Ziviani, J., & Rodger, S. (2010). Surviving in the mainstream: Capacity of children with autism spectrum disorders to perform academically and regulate their emotions and behavior at school. <i>Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders, 4(1)</i>, 18-27.</p> <p>Empirical Research Paper: Robertson, K., Chamberlain, B., & Kasari, C. (2003). General education teachers' relationships with included students with</p>

Date (week)	Topic	Readings
		autism. <i>Journal of Autism and developmental disorders</i> , 33(2), 123-130. Qualitative Research Paper: Falkmer, M., Anderson, K., Joosten, A., & Falkmer, T. (2015). Parents' perspectives on inclusive schools for children with autism spectrum conditions. <i>International journal of disability, development and education</i> , 62(1), 1-23.
Apr 2 (12)	Invited Panel	None

Electronic Device Policy

Research suggests that students are better able to retain information that is presented in lecture when they hand-write notes and are not tempted by the distractions that are inherent in technology. Though it is preferable for students to attend lectures without electronic devices, students may use a laptop as long as it is used responsibly and does not cause a distraction to the instructor or other students. Use of cell phones is not permitted in class.

Information on Plagiarism Detection

Text matching software (Turnitin®) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

Academic Integrity

In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the [Office of Academic Integrity webpage](#) for more information.

Discipline

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. Check [the Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

Concerns about a Course Policy or Decision

Informal Stage. We in the Psychology Department take great pride in the high quality of our program and our instructors. Though infrequent, we know that students occasionally find

themselves in situations of conflict with their instructors over course policies or grade assessments. If such a conflict arises, the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Affairs (Richard Eibach) is available for consultation and to mediate a resolution between the student and instructor: Email: reibach@uwaterloo.ca; Ph 519-888-4567 ext. 38790

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. When in doubt, please be certain to contact Richard Eibach, the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Affairs who will provide further assistance; reibach@uwaterloo.ca.

Appeals. A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than 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](#).

Note for Students with Disabilities

The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (NH 1401), 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 AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Accommodation for course requirements for Psychology courses.

Policies of the Psychology department pertaining to course requirements are available on the [department website](#).