

**J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College**  
**Course Content Summary**

**Course Prefix and Number:** PSY 215

**Credits:** 3

**Course Title:** Abnormal Psychology

**Course Description:** Explores historical views and current perspectives of abnormal behavior. Emphasizes major diagnostic categories and criteria, individual and social factors of maladaptive behavior, and types of therapy. Includes methods of clinical assessment and research strategies. Prerequisite: Placement in ENG 111 or placement in co-requisites ENG 111 and ENF 3. Prerequisites: PSY 200, PSY 201, PSY 202, or PSY 230. Lecture 3 hours per week.

**General Course Purpose:**

**Course Prerequisites and Co-requisites:**

**Prerequisite:** Placement in ENG 111 or placement in co-requisites ENG 111 and ENF 3

**Prerequisites:** PSY 200, PSY 201, PSY 202, or PSY 230

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completing the course, the student will be able to:

- a. Demonstrate an ability to select from the materials offered in this course the relevant information needed to explain their own interpretation of abnormal behavior to western society.
- b. Develop an appreciation of mental disorders and understand how these influence human behavior.
- c. Cultivate a historical perspective on mental disorders and how the view of these behaviors has changed over the years.
- d. Understand some of the problems that confront a person with emotional problems and difficulties.
- e. Demonstrate a knowledge of theories which explain different mental disorders.
- f. Demonstrate knowledge of the effectiveness and side effects of different methods of treatment.
- g. Demonstrate knowledge of significant trends of abnormal behavior to political, economic, social, and psychological aspects of human behavior.
- h. Integrate knowledge and demonstrate competency in the content areas of abnormal behavior.

**Major Topics to Be Included:**

- a. Historical views of abnormal behavior
  1. Prehistory-spirit possession and exorcism
  2. Classical age
  3. Middle ages
  4. Modern era
- b. Models and perspectives in scientific approaches
- c. Major research strategies
- d. Classification and assessment (DSM-III-R)
- e. Anxiety, somatoform, and dissociate disorders

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- f. Affective disorders and suicide
- g. Psycho physiological disorders
- h. Schizophrenia, organic disorders, and autism
- i. Causes of Schizophrenia
- j. Personality disorders
- k. Psychosexual dysfunction and paraphilias
- l. Substance use disorders
- m. Therapies
  - 1. Insight
  - 2. Dynamic
  - 3. Humanistic-existential
  - 4. Behavioral
  - 5. Biological and psychiatric treatments
  - 6. Group and family treatment
  - 7. Community based
- n. Ethics and the law in the treatment of mental disorders.

**Effective Date of Course Content Summary:** Spring, 2014