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Introduction to Clinical Psychology Syllabus (PSYCH 347)

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Clinical Psychology (Psychology 347)
UNDERGRADUATE
Queens College, CUNY
Fall 2025 Semester

INSTRUCTOR: Valentina Nikulina, Ph.D.
OFFICE: **Available by appointment**
EMAIL: vnikulina@qc.cuny.edu
OFFICE HOURS: Email me to set-up a time.
CLASS TIME: Mondays, 5:00 PM to 7:50 PM
CLASS LOCATION: Kiely Hall 264
CREDITS: 3 credits

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is intended to present the central concepts and techniques of clinical psychology. Students will learn about the historical foundations of clinical psychology as well as gain familiarity with the scope of modern clinical psychology practice. The course is divided into 4 broad themes: Introduction and History, Assessment, Interventions, and Clinical Specializations. By the end of this course students will be able to exhibit knowledge of the various types of clinical assessments and clinical interventions utilized in modern clinical practice, as well as gain exposure to the variety of clinical specializations. We will also consider issues of diversity and culture as they relate to the history and practice of clinical psychology.

REQUIRED MATERIALS:

This is a zero-textbook cost class. Everything you need for this course is available to you at no cost and linked on Brightspace. (The creation of this syllabus was funded in part by the CUNY OER Initiative.)

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COURSE FRAMEWORK:

I believe that all students are able to succeed in this class. No exceptions. I apply a competency framework and look for you to demonstrate mastery of knowledge before moving on to the next topic. To that end your competencies are assessed in part by quizzes. You can take each quiz as many times as you'd like to.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The course is geared to developing the following competencies:

1) Understand the basics of a career in clinical psychology. (Module 1)
2) Consider the difference between career paths related to clinical psychology. (Module 1)
3) Know the history of clinical psychology. (Module 2)
4) Consider clinical careers that may be a good fit for you. (Throughout the course)
5) Observe different approaches to clinical interviewing of three famous clinical psychologists. (Module 3)
6) Discuss the basic features of clinical assessment, including the use of diagnostic systems. (Module 4)
7) Understand the importance of psychometric considerations in selecting assessment approaches. (Modules 4 and 5)
8) Discuss the pitfalls and solutions for improvement of clinical judgement. (Module 4)
9) Describe the purpose of clinical interview and observation. (Module 4)
10) Reflect on your experience practicing non-directive interview and observational techniques. (Module 4 and 5)
11) Understand different approaches to psychotherapy. (Modules 6-10)
12) Get a general idea of the graduate school in clinical psychology application process. (Module 1)
13) Communicate your ideas effectively by contributing to group discussion and in-class presentation. (Throughout)
14) Understand the importance of clinical research for clinical practice. (Throughout)
15) Research a topic in clinical psychology. (Throughout)

TEACHING METHOD: This course meets in-person. Discussions and quizzes are administered on Brightspace.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY and INCLUSION

COURSE and GRADING REQUIREMENTS:

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(1) TECHNOLOGY: You need to have access to the internet and to Brightspace in order to participate in this class. Class materials will be provided via the Brightspace website.

(2) WEEKLY READINGS AND/OR VIDEOS: Each lecture is accompanied by required readings and materials. These materials need to be reviewed before the class meets.

(3) QUIZZES: There are 12 quizzes worth 15 points each. You can take each as many times as you'd like. They become available on Brightspace the week of the Topic. Total of 180 points.

(4) ONLINE ASSIGNMENTS: There will be 8 brief writing assignments to be completed online in response to the prompt. The discussions are worth 5 points each, 2 points for submitting the assignment and 3 points for the quality of the work. The topics for discussion are typically based on the current and past modules' content. Total of 40 points.

(5) CLASS PARTICIPATION: Class participation is essential to learning in this class. Each class you are expected to complete in-class assignments and participate in discussion. Each day of class participation is worth 2 points. Total of 28 points.

(6) PRESENTATION: Each student will to the class on a topic related to clinical psychology. The topic must be approved by the instructor. You will have 10 minutes to present. The presentation is worth 32 points.

A NOTE ON AI:

I do not recommend using AI technology for quizzes and discussions in this class. I think it will hinder your learning and progress. The quiz content will be specific to the material in the text, the lectures, and any additional content I provide. AI will not be privy to this information and unable to critically think like you to answer the questions. You are better off without its assistance and, crucially, you will learn more.

COLLEGE RESOURCES AND POLICIES:

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Academic dishonesty is one of the most serious offenses within the academic community. CUNY's Policy on Academic Integrity is linked here. It is essential that you comply with this policy. Acts of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, obtaining an unfair advantage, and falsifying records or

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documents (including cheating on exams and papers, the purchase or sale of academic papers). Any student who engages in any activity that is academically dishonest is subject to academic and/or disciplinary charges and sanctions, as is any student who knowingly aids another who engages in such conduct. Students caught cheating on papers or exams will, at a minimum, receive a grade of zero for that assignment, and will be reported to the Psychology Department Chair and the College's Academic Integrity Officer. Additional penalties could include failure for the course and/or expulsion from the College.

ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS: Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should work with the Special Services Office, Kiely 171 to have documentation about their accommodations communicated to the instructor via CUNY Accommodate. For more information about services available to Queens College students, contact: Special Service Office; 171 Kiely Hall; 718-997-5870 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)

COUNSELING SERVICES FOR STUDENTS: If you need support with life difficulties or mental health challenges please reach out for free and confidential counseling services in the Counseling Center at QC. Other options for counseling are available through NYC Well (988: Call/Text/Chat 24/7). In an emergency, seek assistance by calling 911 or going to the emergency department. QC Counselling: Office Information Bldg.: Frese Hall Room: 1st floor (Enter through the back door closest to Klapper and Kiely Hall) Phone: 718-997-5420/ email: CounselingServices@qc.cuny.edu

CAREERS IN PSYCHOLOGY: The knowledge and skills gained in this class can be helpful in a range of careers. But, if you feel particularly passionate and excited about the material in this course, consider whether a career in Clinical Psychology, Social Work or Counseling is for you.

1) Follow this link to learn more.
2) Meet with a QC Career advisor and with a Psychology Department peer advisor to think about next steps in your educational and vocational paths.
3) To learn about yourself, take a personality assessment.
4) To learn about applying your Psychology Major to a future career, examine Focus to Career.
5) Unsure how to move forward with your Psychology Major Here are some excellent ideas.
6) The best way to learn if you like something is to try it. QC Center for Career Engagement and Internships may help you find experiential learning opportunities. Internship opportunities are listed on **HireQC**. (Internship experience is also likely to help you get a job in the field and earn a higher starting salary. And you can earn credit for your internship experience and maybe a stipend.)

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7) Sign up for the Psychology Department listserv to learn about career services events and job postings.
8) Getting involved in research is a great way to apply your skills and get relevant experience. Visit the community drive created by the Undergraduate Psychology Committee to learn about research opportunities and steps to joining a research lab.

GRADING:

12 QUIZZES – 15 POINTS EACH (12*15 = 180 points)
8 ONLINE ASSIGNMENTS – 5 POINTS EACH (8*5 = 40 points)
14 CLASSES FOR PARTICIPATION (14*2 = 28 points)
CLASS PRESENTATION (32 POINTS)
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280 TOTAL POINTS

GRADE (Percentage based on # points earned out of 280):

97-100 = A+	87-89 = B+	77-79 = C+	67-69 = D+
93-96 = A	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	60-66 = D
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	<60 = F

***See QC Grading Policy**

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE:

DATE/CLASS	Topic	Required Reading (due before each class)	Required Videos (due before each class)	Due on Blackboard before each class
SEPT 8 (1)	Introduction and syllabus review	N/A	N/A	N/A
SEPT 15 (2)	Clinical Psychology Past and Present	Chapters 1 and 2, Bernstein et al., 2020	**Should I get a PhD or a PsyD? by Dr. Ali Mattu** (~9 min)	N/A

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SEPT 22 (3)	Clinical Assessment and Classification Systems	Chapter 7, Pomeranz, 2020	N/A	Career Path Quiz on Topic 1 and 2
SEPT 29	NO CLASS			
OCT 6 (4)	Interview and Observation in Clinical Psychology	The Interview Method in Psychology, **McLeod, Sept 10, 2024** Observation Method in Psychology, **McLeod, June 26, 2024**	**Interview Techniques: Attending, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing by Kelly Allison** (~ 7 min)	Quiz on Topic 3
OCT 13	NO CLASS			
OCT 14 TUESDAY (5)	Testing in Clinical Psychology	**Personality Assessment by Watson** **Chapter 3: Overview of Psychological Testing** **"A high IQ Makes you an Outsider, Not a Genius" by Lewis**	N/A	Mock Interview Quiz on Topic 4
OCT 20 (6)	Basic Features of Clinical Intervention	N/A	**The Gloria Films** (~1 hr. 45 min)	What is different? Quiz on Topic 5
OCT 24 FRIDAY (7)	Research on Clinical Intervention	**Huey et al., 2023 "Culturally Responsive Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Ethnically Diverse Populations"**	N/A	Quiz on Topic 6

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OCT 27 (8)	Psychoanalytic, Psychodynamic and Humanistic Psychotherapy	Gibbons et al., 2008; "The Empirical Status of Psychodynamic Therapies"	N/A	Seeking Psychological Treatment adult Quiz on Topic 7
NOV 3 (9)	Behavioral Therapies	N/A	**Psychodynamic Therapy Demonstration Instructor/Student Resources** (~1 hour) **Classical conditioning video by Sprouts Schools** (~6 min) **Operant conditioning video by Sprouts Schools** (~ 5 min) **Social Learning Theory video by Sprouts Schools** (~ 5 min)	Find a Provider Adult Quiz on Topic 8
NOV 10 (10)	Cognitive Therapy and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy	**Collins et al., 2024 "A meta-analysis of applied behavior analysis-based interventions to improve communication, adaptive and cognitive skills in children on the Autism Spectrum."**	**Anxiety, Trauma, Prolonged Exposure by Dr. Foa** (~ 30 min) **Should my child get ABA services? By Autistic and Thriving** (~ 6 min)	Quiz on Topic 9
NOV 17 (11)	Cognitive-Behavioral and Acceptance Based Psychotherapy	N/A	**Cognitive Therapy Demonstration with Dr. Beck** (watch first 35 min)	Quiz on Topic 10
NOV 24 (12)	Child and Adolescent Clinical Psychology	N/A	**Hexadancing: ACT demonstration by Dr. Hayes** (~ 1 hour)	Seeking Psychological Treatment (child)

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				Quiz on Topic 11
DEC 1 (13)	Student Presentations	N/A	**Solution-focused therapy with a child by Dr. Sklare** (~ 1 hour)	Find a provider (child) Quiz on Topic 12
DEC 8 (14)	Health Psychology Student Presentations	N/A	**Health Psychology Lecture (Biola University)** (~ 1 hour 6 min)	N/A
FINAL EXAM (15)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Course Reflection Quiz on Topic 14

References:

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Anxiety, Trauma and How Prolonged Exposure Therapy Works For PTSD ft. Dr. Edna Foa - YouTube. (n.d.). Retrieved June 8, 2025, from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6L-CCW85n0A

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Milton H. Erickson Foundation (Producer) (2018). Clinical Demonstration 09: Hexadancing: A Demonstration Of The Liberating Impact Of Process-focused Evidence-based Therapy. [Video/DVD] Milton H. Erickson Foundation. https://video.alexanderstreet.com/watch/episode-17-clinical-demonstration-09-hexadancing-a-demonstration-of-the-liberating-impact-of-process-focused-evidence-based-therapy

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