Abnormal Psychology

Anita Pedersen, Ph.D.

**Psychopathology Research Paper – Description**

This paper is worth a total of 48 points, and is worth 15% of your grade. Final papers are due **Wednesday, December 7 at 11:59 PM**. **The paper should be 5-10 pages, Times New Roman 12 point font, double-spaced, 1-inch margins on all sides.** You will see that you will be graded not only on your final paper, but also on your successful completion of various aspects of the paper preparation. See the grading rubric for details on how your final paper will be graded.

This paper is a chance for you to explore, in depth, an aspect of psychopathology. There is a certain amount of freedom to choose a particular topic that is interesting for you. Possible topics include:

* A detailed description one aspect of a particular disorder: unusual symptoms; associated features; prevalence, culture, gender, and race factors; or empirically-supported treatments.
	+ Note: this **cannot** be a disorder we have already discussed at length in class.
	+ Though the DSM-IV-TR should be a guide, you should not copy the text.
* A controversial aspect of diagnosis, associated features, or treatment for a specific disorder
	+ Are people with bipolar more creative and artistic than typical people?
	+ Can people be “cured” of autism?
	+ Can people manage severe mental illness without use of medication?
* Come to me with other ideas!

The length of your paper is less important than your ability to clearly state and support your arguments. That said, a paper less than 5 pages is unlikely to fully explore your subject, and a paper more than 10 pages is overly long. **Critical thinking** is essential to writing a good paper. This includes weighing pros and cons of different approaches, identifying similarities and differences between different constructs, and synthesizing information from different sources in a meaningful and novel way that shows your full comprehension of the topic.

Empirical sources are crucial in this paper. You are required to cite at least **10 primary empirical sources** in your paper. Use proper APA format for all citations, and include a Reference section at the end of your paper. For more information about APA format, this link may be helpful: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>