

PSYC431

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

Course Summary

Description

Course Description: This course focuses on the psychological and physiological human response to natural and man-made disasters. Using clinical research and case histories, students will examine normal and abnormal psychological reactions, the recovery process and principles of mental health care for victims of mass disasters. Differences between natural and man-made disasters are examined and factors that mitigate post-traumatic effects are reviewed. Psychological aspects of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) disasters are also considered.

Course Scope:

The student will develop an ability to use clinical research and case histories, theory and practice to think critically about procedures related to natural and man-made disasters.

Objectives

1. Examine the theoretical underpinnings of the psychology of disaster and how they relate to the general discipline and practice of psychology.
2. Identify and demonstrate knowledge of the expected biological, cognitive, emotional, behavioral and interpersonal responses to disaster
3. Identify and demonstrate knowledge of psychologically significant aspects of various natural and man-made disasters that predispose survivors to specific types of responses and symptoms.
4. Analyze the risk factors, & protective factors that predict the overall severity of psychological distress and disruption following a disaster.
5. Examine and articulate the impact of disaster and trauma upon children and adolescents as a special population at risk and their needs following disaster experiences.
6. Examine the types of mental health interventions employed following a disaster and articulate the general principles of effective preventive, short-term, and long-term psychiatric interventions.

Outline

Week 1: Introduction to Disaster Psychology

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the prevalence, types, and impact of disasters.
2. Review the psychological phases of a disaster.
3. Identify the “participants” in a disaster.
4. Recognize the social, historic, economic, strategic, emotional, and existential impact of disasters.

Required Readings

Quiz 1 Documents in the Resources Folder

Recommended Reading (required reading sources are in the resources folder);

Phases of Traumatic Stress Reactions in a Disaster:

<http://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/pages/phases-trauma-reactions.asp>

Assignments

Forum Assignment Week # 1 - Introduction

Quiz 1 (located in the Tests & Quizzes link)

Week 2: Overall impact of natural and man-made disasters

Learning Objectives

1. Identify and analyze the psychologically significant aspects of natural and man-made disasters
2. Review the definition and characteristics of a “traumatic stressor.”
3. Illustrate the intensity and magnitude of a significant disaster as demonstrated in the sinking of the Lusitania.

Required Readings

Quiz 2 Documents in the Resources Folder

Assignments

Forum Assignment Week # 2 – London Disaster

Quiz 2 (located in Tests & Quizzes link)

Recommended Optional Reading

Please review the Disaster Handbook- the directions for access to this document are as follows:

Please click on the "Resources" link in the navigation menu on the left hand side of your computer screen. It can be found under the section entitled "Course Tools." Once you open the Resources link, scroll down until you find the "disaster handbook" folder and left click it so that it will open. Once it is open you will be able to gain access accordingly.

Week 3: Bio-psycho responses to disasters

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the psychological response to disaster including cognitive, behavioral, psychodynamic, and existential mechanisms.
2. Identify the adaptive functions and maladaptive results of these mechanisms.
3. Describe the biological response to disaster including nervous system, cardiovascular, and neuro-endocrine mechanisms.
4. Evaluate the possible maladaptive results when these mechanisms do not return to baseline.

Required Readings

Quiz 3 Documents in the Resources Folder

Assignments

Forum Assignment Week #3 – Hurricane Katrina
Quiz 3 (Located in Tests & Quizzes link)

Week 4: Acute Stress Disorder & Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Learning Objectives

1. Articulate the etiology and definition of these clinical syndromes.
2. Identify the social costs and psychosocial impairments from PTSD.
3. Identify types of trauma often related to chronic (persistent) PTSD.
4. Identify the three axes of risk for these syndromes: event-related, individual, and environmental/situational variables.
5. Identify individual risk & protective factors along each axis that may exacerbate or mitigate the risk of PTSD developing.
6. Describe the basic principles of risk assessment and early intervention in traumatized populations at risk of PTSD.

Required Readings

Pg. 134-142 in "...Helping People Cope", In the Wake of 9/11: The Psychology of Terror

Assignments

Midterm Paper (Instructions Located in the Assignments tab)
NO QUIZ OR FORUM IN WEEK #4

Recommended Optional Reading

Recommended Reading (required reading sources are in the resources link):
Diagnosis of PTSD: <http://www.mental-health-today.com/ptsd/dsm.htm>

Week 5: Treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the cognitive schemata that show the relationship between stresses and adaptation.
2. Distinguish between behavioral self-blame vs. character self-blame as coping mechanisms.
3. Describe the pharmacological (medication) approaches to PTSD treatment.
4. Articulate the basic principles of cognitive-behavioral approaches to PTSD treatment.

Required Readings

Quiz 4 Documents in the Resources link

Assignments

Quiz 4 (Week#5) (Located in "Tests and Quizzes link")
Forum Week #5 Assignment – Post Traumatic Growth Article

Recommended Optional Reading

Diagnosis of PTSD: <http://www.mental-health-today.com/ptsd/dsm.htm>:

Week 6: The psychological impact of a disaster on children and special populations.

Learning Objectives

1. Identify the extent of involvement of children and special populations in disasters.
2. Recognize the effects of various disaster types on children and special populations.
3. Describe the risk and protective factors in children of various ages.
4. Describe the psychological needs of children following a disaster.

Required Readings

Quiz 5 Documents in the Resources link

Pp. 129-133, "The Impact of Terror on Children", *In the Wake of 9/11: The Psychology of Terror*

Assignments

Week #6 Quiz 5 (Located in "Resources Link")
Forum Week #6 – Firefighters and Widows 9/11

Recommended Optional Reading

<http://www.mental-health-today.com/ptsd/dsm.htm>
<http://www.nmha.org/index.cfm?objectid=E2A880AE-1372-4D20-C886E4E4AA69EEA1>

Week 7: The psychological impact of terrorism, and the threat of weapons of mass destruction/disruption.

Learning Objectives

1. Articulate the principles of disaster psychology in acts of terrorism.
2. Describe the principles guiding the management of psychiatric consequences of terrorist acts.
3. Describe how people adapt to fears of premature death according to the principles of Terror Management Theory.
4. Identify the differences between WMD and 'conventional' terrorism and related psychological implications.
5. Explore culturally normative psychological assumptions ('schemata') of the American mind that aid or inhibit confronting a novel threat.
6. Examine the meaning and role of 'preparedness' in mitigating the psychological as well as material toll of WMD

Required Readings

Quiz 6 Documents in the Resources Link

In the Wake of 9/11: The Psychology of Terror:

Chapter One -- "Terror in America: The Day Our World Changed".

Chapter Two -- "Terror Management Theory: An Evolutionary Existential Account of Human Behavior"

Chapter Three -- "Terror Management Research: Coping with Conscious and unconscious death-Related Thoughts".

Chapter Four -- "Black Tuesday: the Psychological Impact of 9/11"

Assignments

Forum Week # 7 – Final Article and Take Away topics (2 part forum)
Week #7 - Quiz 6 (Located in "Tests & Quizzes Link")

Recommended Optional Reading

Week 8: Integration and application of new learning.

Learning Objectives

1. Demonstrate knowledge and integration of concepts presented in the course.

Required Readings

Review prior reading assignments.

Assignments

Final Exam (located in the "Tests and Quizzes" folder)

NO QUIZ OR FORUM THIS WEEK

Evaluation

Online Participation and Interaction - Successful completion of APUS courses requires online access and may require usage of PowerPoint, MSWord, and Adobe Acrobat Reader programs. Online communication tools such as Messages, Forums, and Email are available to students and instructors.

Readings and Written Assignments— Throughout the course, assignments will require reading, synthesis of, and response to course content. Commensurate with an upper level course, extensive reading, and high quality writing are required. Collaboration on coursework, unless so assigned by the instructor, is not allowed.

Weekly Online Quizzes: Students will complete online quizzes, located under the classroom "Tests & Quizzes" link each week with the exception of Midterm and Finals week. These quizzes are un-timed and open book. They are designed to facilitate student engagement with the course readings. All chapters of the textbook are open to assessment by the course quizzes.

Forums —This course includes discussion forum assignments. Each forum assignment requires one original thread and two substantive replies (see Forums for related details) to the postings of other classmates.

Midterm Paper — A 7 to 8 page Midterm paper is due during Week 4 of the course. The paper provides students with an opportunity to apply course concepts to a disaster occurring in the early 1900s and a more recent occurrence of their choice. The objective is to compare the psychological effect of a selected disaster (9/11, Hurricane Katrina, the London subway/bus bombings, the Pakistan/India earthquake, etc.) to the impact of the sinking of the R.M.S. Lusitania by a German U-boat in May, 1915; a disaster that took 1,198 civilian lives and played a significant role in our entry into World War I.

Final Exam—The comprehensive, open resource (course texts, articles in the "Resources" folder, and other properly credited sources used), non-proctored exam is located in the "Tests & Quizzes" folder. Students will not be allowed to access it until Week 8 of the course.

Grading:

Name	Grade %
Midterm Paper	26.00 %
Midterm Paper	26.00 %
Forums	40.00 %
Week 1 Forum	5.00 %
Week 2 Forum	5.00 %

Week 3 Forum	5.00 %
Week 4 Forum	5.00 %
Week 5 Forum	5.00 %
Week 6 Forum	5.00 %
Week 7 Forum	5.00 %
Week 8 Forum	5.00 %
Final Exam	22.00 %
Final Exam	22.00 %
Quizzes	12.00 %
Quiz 6	2.00 %
Quiz 5	2.00 %
Quiz 4	2.00 %
Quiz 3	2.00 %
Quiz 2	2.00 %
Quiz 1	2.00 %

Materials

Book Title: In the Wake of 9/11: The Psychology of Terror - eBook available via the APUS online library.

Author: Pyszczynski, T

Publication Info: American Psychological Association

ISBN: 9781557989543

Book Title: To find the library e-book(s) req'd for your course, please visit <http://apus.libguides.com/er.php> to locate the eReserve by course #. You must be logged in to eCampus first to access the links.

Author: N/A

Publication Info: N/A

ISBN: N/A

Course Guidelines

Citation and Reference Style

- Students will follow APA format as the sole citation and reference style used in written assignments submitted as part of coursework in the Psychology Department.
- Please note that no formal citation style is graded on forum assignments in the School of Arts & Humanities—only attribution of sources (please see details regarding forum communication below).

Tutoring

- [Tutor.com](http://www.tutor.com) offers online homework help and learning resources by connecting students to certified tutors for one-on-one help. AMU and APU students are eligible for 10 free hours of tutoring provided by APUS. Tutors are available 24/7 unless otherwise noted. Tutor.com also has a SkillCenter Resource Library offering educational resources, worksheets, videos, websites and career help. Accessing these

resources does not count against tutoring hours and is also available 24/7. Please visit the APUS Library and search for 'Tutor' to create an account.

Late Assignments

School of Arts & Humanities Late Policy

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals, we understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment, please contact your instructor before the due date so you can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution.

Work posted or submitted after the assignment due date will be reduced by 10% of the potential total score possible for each day late up to a total of five days, including forum posts/replies, quizzes/tests, and assignments. Beginning on the sixth day late through the end of the course, late work, including forum posts/replies, quizzes/tests, and assignments, will be accepted with a grade reduction of 50% of the potential total score earned.

Turn It In

Assignments are automatically submitted to Turnitin.com within the course. Turnitin.com will analyze an assignment submission and report a similarity score. Your assignment submission is automatically processed through the assignments area of the course when you submit your work.

Academic Dishonesty

- Academic Dishonesty incorporates more than plagiarism, which is using the work of others without citation. Academic dishonesty includes any use of content purchased or retrieved from web services such as CourseHero.com or Scribd. Additionally, allowing your work to be placed on such web services is academic dishonesty, as it is enabling the dishonesty of others. The copy and pasting of content from any web page, without citation as a direct quote, is academic dishonesty. When in doubt, do not copy/paste, and always cite.

Submission Guidelines

- Some assignments may have very specific requirements for formatting (such as font, margins, etc.) and submission file type (such as .docx, .pdf, etc.). See the assignment instructions for details. In general, standard file types such as those associated with Microsoft Office are preferred, unless otherwise specified.
- It is the student's responsibility to ensure the all submitted work can be accessed and opened by the instructor.

Disclaimer Statement

- Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of a particular group or class.

Communicating on the Forum

- Forums are the heart of the interaction in this course. The more engaged and lively the exchanges, the more interesting and fun the course will be. Only substantive comments will receive credit. Although there is a final posting day/time after which the instructor will grade and provide feedback, you are strongly discouraged from waiting until the due date to contribute your comments/questions on the forum. The purpose of the forums is to actively participate in an on-going discussion about the assigned content.
- "Substantive" means comments that contribute something new and important to the discussion. Thus a message that simply says "I agree", even if wordy and thus, meets the length requirement, is not substantive. A substantive comment contributes a new idea or perspective, a good follow-up question to a point made, offers a response to a question, provides an example or illustration of a key point,

points out an inconsistency in an argument, etc.

- As a class, if we run into conflicting view points, we must respect each other as colleagues. Hateful, aggressive, or hurtful comments towards other individuals, students, groups, peoples, and/or societies will not be tolerated.
- Students must post a response to the weekly forums prompt and post the required number of replies to other students – refer to the grading rubric and/or forum instructions for specific expectations on number of replies and word count requirements.

Quizzes and Exams

- Quizzes and exams may consist of true/false, multiple choice, and short essay questions. Each quiz/exam is accessible only once. Once a quiz/exam is accessed, you will not be able to access it again if you disconnect. Therefore, allocate time to complete your assessments.

University Policies

[Student Handbook](#)

- [Drop/Withdrawal policy](#)
- [Extension Requests](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Appeals](#)
- [Disability Accommodations](#)

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