

PSYCHOLOGY OF TRAUMA
PSY 472/572
FALL TERM, 2008
MW 8:30-9:50
146 Straub

(Check <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu/> for updates)

Instructor: Pam Birrell

Office: 205 Straub Hall

e-mail: pbirrell@darkwing.uoregon.edu

Teaching Assistant: Allison Waters

Office: 337 Straub Hall

e-mail: awaters1@uoregon.edu

Course Assistants (for contact information and office hours, see Blackboard):

Jennifer Calvin	jcalvin@uoregon.edu
Kim Cooper	kcooper3@uoregon.edu
Anna Bell	jbelle1@uoregon.edu
Elizabeth Wallace	ewallac1@uoregon.edu
Clarissa Williams	clarissa.anne86@gmail.com
Joshua Harris	jharris1@uoregon.edu

Overview

This Course is designed to introduce students to the field of traumatic stress studies. We will examine the history of the field as well as current approaches to understanding trauma from cognitive, neuropsychological, developmental, cultural and clinical viewpoints. We will look at the effects of trauma on children and adults, as well as its effects on culture and society. Here is a partial list of topics:

- *Culture and Society*—how does our culture condition us to look at trauma and its effects? And what are the effects of trauma and violence on our culture?
- *Neurobiological*—what are the effects of trauma on the brain and nervous system?
- *Social*—what are the effects of trauma on our relationships and families?
- *Child Abuse*—what constitutes child abuse and what are its effects on children?
- *Psychiatric Diagnosis*—what are the controversies surrounding Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Dissociation, and are there other “disorders” that are related to trauma?
- *Culture*—how do other cultures see trauma and its effects and are people in other cultures affected differently than we are?
- *Treatment*—what are effective treatments for those who have been traumatized? What’s the best way to respond when someone discloses trauma to you?

Contact Hours and Class Attendance

The class will meet each Monday and Wednesday in 146 Straub and your attendance is expected. This is not a course to take if you think you will miss more than one class meeting, as class discussion, exams, and exercises are crucial to your success in the course. Also, you will be working in small groups in class and asked to complete various activities in your small group. Your participation is part

of the course requirements. Quizzes will be over the reading material, lectures, guest speakers, and videos. I recommend that you check the course website at Blackboard at least twice a week, as I may post important course information.

Required Readings

Readings are assigned on a weekly basis. Readings are to be completed BEFORE the Monday class meeting for which they are assigned. There is one required text book, available at the bookstore, along with on line readings available on the Blackboard website. This course has a serious amount of reading and you will not be able to do well on the quizzes or essays if you do not do the reading.

Required Text:

Herman, J. *Trauma and Recovery: The aftermath of violence—from domestic abuse to political terror*. Basic Books, 1997.

Weekly on-line readings posted on the Blackboard website.

Grading:

Your grade will be computed by combining your scores in the following overall categories for a total of 250:

Points	Course Work
100	4 Quizzes, 25 points each
80	Discussion Essays (8 essays; each worth 10 points)
50	Final Paper/Project
20	Participation (in-class small group and email)
250	Total
(EC)	Also up to 20 points extra credit potential (see below)

Final letter grades will be approximately determined from point totals as follows:

points	letter grade
225-250	A
200-224	B
175-199	C (or P)
150-174	D
Below 150	F

Based on the actual distribution of final grades, *this criterion might be relaxed, but not stiffened*.

Quizzes: 100 points

Four Quizzes will be given. Each exam will be worth 25 points. The exams will be structured to assess your knowledge of the readings, in-class films and lectures, and class discussions. They will be short answer exams that will primarily pertain to the readings assigned for the weeks in which the exam is

given. Sometimes a question will refer to material covered earlier in the course, or issues discussed in our class email discussion. If you have been to class, done the readings, and written the essays, you should be in good shape for the quizzes.

Discussion Essays and Questions: 80 points

This course is designed to encourage students to read the material and learn to ask important questions of the readings and themselves. I will post specific essay topics each week to guide your reading of contradictory material. The most important part of your essay will always be the *questions* that you come up with to interrogate the material. Each essay should show you have put thought into the reading material, reflected on the meaning of the material to you and your life and how it might affect society in general. Essays must be typed (or computer printed) and one essay must be turned in on the 2nd through the 9th Mondays at the *beginning of class*. **Please do not email essays!** If you absolutely cannot type or computer-print your essay, you must write it very neatly on nice paper (e.g.: no pages written from a spiral notebook!). Each essay will be worth up to 10 points. *A point will be subtracted for each day late, beginning with after class on Monday.*

Final Paper: 50 points

The final project in this class will be one of the following:

- Propose a new experiment or empirical study that would address a research question(s) you identify. This could be one in which you are testing a treatment or intervention, or researching a basic question about trauma. Your research proposal should make new predictions (or extend existing predictions).
- Propose new public policy regarding trauma prevention or treatment or education. You should explore the public policy implications of the reading and propose new public policy based on the readings or research literature in psychology of trauma.
- Write a detailed case study on trauma, its effects and actual or potential healing. You should include readings and research covered this term, as well as alternative ways of thinking about trauma, if appropriate.

*The paper should be at least 10 pages long and have 5 peer-reviewed references NOT from the course reading list, as well as readings from the course as desired. **The final project is due on December 1, 2008.***

Participation 20 points

Participation is crucial in this course. Participation includes in class discussion, extra assignments (TBA), and on-line discussion on Blackboard. You are not *required* to post anything on the on-line discussion, although you may earn participation credit by posting valuable contributions. You are required to read the Discussion boards at least twice a week. In-class participation will largely be in the form of small groups. Extra Assignments will be announced in class and posted on Blackboard. *It is important to note that coming to class and participating there is NOT enough to earn all the points here. Participation on-line and in the extra assignments is also necessary.*

On-Line discussion

We will have an electronic discussion as part of this course on the Blackboard discussion forum. You are expected to read the on-line discussions. Posting your own messages is optional, but will count for participation credit if your messages are thoughtful and original.

Extra Credit Up to 20 points

Extra Credit can be earned in a variety of ways up to 20 extra points total. If you make especially valuable contributions to class discussion, or if you make especially valuable contributions to the on-line discussion, you may earn extra points. Or you can get extra credit for a particularly terrific paper. This might include a special presentation, if you are interested. In general, if you do something creative, special, contributive, and above-and-beyond the course requirements, you may earn extra credit.

A Special note about this class:

Trauma is a difficult topic. Although we will be discussing primarily intellectual issues, it can be a highly charged topic. If you find yourself upset in ways beyond what might be expected by our conversations and the readings, please come see me, or contact one of these resources:

Local Crisis Lines

University of Oregon Crisis Line	346-4488
Sexual Assault Support Services Crisis Line	343-7277
Whitebird Clinic Crisis Line	687-4000
Womenspace Crisis Line	485-6513

Local Counseling

University of Oregon Counseling Center	346-3227
Center for Community Counseling	344-0620
Options Counseling Services	687-6983
Sexual Assault Support Services (SASS)	484-9791
Center for Family Therapy	346-3296

Weekly Schedule: Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines

- Week 1 readings are to be completed before the October 1st class. Week 2-9 readings are to be completed *before* the Monday class that week.
- *On-line readings noted here are tentative. Check Blackboard for real readings!* ☺

Week 1: Introduction:		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
9/29	Get started on the readings for next Monday! ☺	Introduction: What is trauma and what are its effects?
10/1		
Week 2:		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
10/6	Herman, chapter 1 Winthrop Cohen Milburn and Conrad, chapter 1	Response to Trauma: Cultural and Societal ESSAY #1 DUE!
10/8		
Week 3:		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
10/13	Herman, chapter 2 Van der Kolk, The Body Keeps the Score Bremner, Does Stress Damage the Brain?	What does trauma do to us? Cognitive and neuropsychological approaches ESSAY #2 DUE!
10/15		Quiz #1
Week 4:		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
10/20	Herman 3 & 4 Freyd, 1994 Farmer, 1997	Other effects of trauma— interpersonal and societal, Torture and War ESSAY #3 DUE!
10/22		
Week 5:		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
10/27	Herman chapter 5 Terr: Overview	Child Abuse

	vanderKolk: Developmental impact of trauma Felliti	ESSAY #4 DUE!
10/29		QUIZ #2
Week 6:		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
11/3	Herman 6	Diagnosis: PTSD, Dissociation ESSAY #5 DUE!
11/5		PAPER PLAN DUE!
Week 7:		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
11/10	Nemeroff et al. Read	Diagnosis: Depression, Psychosis ESSAY #6 DUE!
11/12		QUIZ #3
Week 8:		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
11/17	Herman, chapter 7	Culture, Gender, and Treatment ESSAY #7 DUE!
11/19		
Week 9:		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
11/24	Herman, chapters 8-10 JTD Editorial Birrell and Freyd	Treatment ESSAY #8 DUE!
11/26		
Week 10:		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
12/1	Herman, Afterword Drozdek Tick	Putting it all together FINAL PAPER DUE!
12/3		QUIZ #4

Additional Notes

Using Blackboard

The web site for this course was constructed using "Blackboard" software. This allows the web site to be extensive and interactive. On the web site, you will find general announcements for the class, all documents for the course (including this syllabus), lecture notes, on-line discussions, links to relevant web sites, and more. We hope that this web site will be a useful tool for you in learning the material for this class, and in further exploring topics you find interesting. You can get to the course web site by going to <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>. If you need help logging in or using Blackboard, see <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu/local/usingbb/>. Also you can get help starting by going to the library [Information Technology Center](http://libweb.uoregon.edu/kitc/faq/blackboard.html#help) (ITC) and/or see <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/kitc/faq/blackboard.html#help>.

Academic Honesty

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please consult with the instructor before you complete any relevant requirements of the course. (Text adopted here as recommended from the UO web site regarding academic honesty at:

http://www.uoregon.edu/~stl/programs/student_judi_affairs/academic-dishonesty.htm

Plagiarism Policy:

Copying or paraphrasing information or ideas from any source, interview, print or electronic, without citation, is plagiarism. I take this very seriously; it merits a zero on the particular assignment in which it appears, and usually results in a grade penalty for the course. Always note the source of anyone else's ideas that you use, in this, and every, class. The Polk Library website includes clear guidelines for using several different citation formats properly, as well as very clear explanations of how to paraphrase correctly and avoid plagiarism. <http://www.uwosh.edu/departments/llr/citing.html>

In addition, you may be required to submit writing assignments to SafeAssign. SafeAssign is a software tool designed to help students avoid plagiarism and improper citation. The software encourages original writing and proper citation by cross-referencing submitted materials with an archived database of websites, essays, journal articles, and other published work. The instructor may in some cases also submit your work to SafeAssign or some other plagiarism analysis and detection program. By enrolling in this course you grant the instructor permission to do so."

Students with Directory Restricted Access

This course includes required on-line participation (electronic mail and World Wide Web). If you have restricted access to your directory information and wish to have special arrangements made for this course, please notify the instructor immediately.

Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the instructor soon. Also please request that the Counselor for

Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability. [Counselor for Students with Disabilities: Hillary Gerdes, 346-3211, TTY 346-1083, hgerdes@oregon.uoregon.edu]