

CAPILANO UNIVERSITY COURSE OUTLINE		
TERM: Fall 2015	COURSE NO:	PSYC 343
INSTRUCTOR:	COURSE NAME:	PSYCHOLOGY OF ANOMALOUS EXPERIENCES
OFFICE / LOCAL / E-MAIL:	SECTION NO(S):	CREDITS: 3

COURSE FORMAT:

Three hours of class time, with an additional hour delivered through on-line or other activities, for 15 weeks, which includes two weeks for final exams.

COURSE PREREQUISITES:

45 credits of 100-level or higher course work including PSYC 100.

NOTE: Completion of PSYC 101 is recommended.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course examines a range of commonly reported anomalous experiences from the critical perspective of Psychology. Unlike an Abnormal Psychology course, the focus is mainly on non-pathological experiences. The ‘critical thinking’ approach is reviewed; a brief historical overview of claims and critiques is presented; and several types of anomalous experience are considered with respect to the bio-psycho-social processes that affect perception, memory and belief.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Use critical and analytical thinking skills to examine reports of anomalous experiences, and to weigh the evidential value of claims associated with them
- Understand contemporary anomalous experiences within a historical context
- Exercise communication skills and social interaction skills in creating a plan for the scientific investigation of an anomalous experience report
- Utilize research methodologies in self-directed learning to produce original work

REQUIRED TEXTS:

A reading package will be available in the Capilano University Bookstore, and on-line via Moodle.

RECOMMENDED READINGS:

In addition to the required readings, a list of recommended readings will also be provided.

COURSE CONTENT:

Week 1: A Critical Thinking Approach to What We Know – and Don’t Know – About Anomalous Experiences

Week 2: Oracles and Miracles: Anomalous Experiences in History

Week 3: Mystical and Meditative Experiences

Week 4: Mediumship, Channelling and Possession

Course content – continued

Week 5: Divination and Psychics

Week 6: Apparitions, Hauntings and Poltergeists

Week 7: Extrasensory Perception and Psychokinesis

Week 8: Parasomnias and Lucid Dreaming

Week 9: Out of Body and Near Death Experiences

Week 10: Anomalous Healing and ‘Energy Experiences’ in Alternative Medicine

Week 11: UFO Sightings, Contacts and Abduction Experiences

Week 12: Déjà Vu and Past Life Memories

Week 13: Cryptozoological Encounters (Sasquatch, Ogopogo etc.)

Week 14 – 15: Final Exam Period

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:Research Paper:

A research paper of 3000-3500 words, drawing upon course themes, readings, and independently researched material.

First In-Class Test:

Surveying course content (readings and classroom-presented material) from the first part of the semester.

Second In-Class Test:

Surveying course content (readings and classroom-presented material) from the second part of the semester.

Final Exam: A cumulative exam based on the course content (readings and classroom-presented material).

Fourth Hour Activities:

Participation in on-line (Moodle) forums. Each forum is based on a famous anomalous experience report (eg. a haunting, a UFO encounter, a miraculous healing). Students discuss the application of various research methods to each case. Students submit a brief written summary of one forum for grading toward the end of the semester.

EVALUATION PROFILE:

Research Paper:.....	25 %
First In-Class Test:	15 %
Second In-Class Test:	20 %
Forum Participation:	9 %
Forum Summary:	6 %
Final Exam:.....	25 %
	100 %

GRADING PROFILE:

A+ = 90 - 100%	B+ = 77 - 79%	C+ = 67 - 69%	D = 50 - 59%
A = 85 - 89	B = 73 - 76	C = 63 - 66	F = 0 - 49
A- = 80 - 84	B- = 70 - 72	C- = 60 - 62	

OPERATIONAL DETAILS:

Capilano University has policies on Academic Appeals (including appeal of final grades), Student Conduct, Cheating and Plagiarism, Academic Probation and other educational issues. These and other policies are available on the University website.

Attendance : Students are responsible for all announcements made in class or on the course web site and for all material on the course outline. Although instructors may discuss only portions of a chapter in class, students are responsible for studying all of each chapter listed on the course outline.

Appropriate university level behaviour is expected (see the Capilano University Calendar), including professional and respectful classroom conduct. Turn off cell phones and use laptops only to take notes on class material.

Missed Exams:

Make-up exams are given only in exceptional circumstances and with prior notice to the instructor. A penalty of up to 20% will be levied on those make-up exams when granted. However, submissions for waiver of late penalties for exceptional circumstances may be presented, in writing, with the appropriate documentation, to the Chair of the Psychology Department.

Late Assignments:

Due dates for papers and assignments will be announced and guidelines will be distributed in class.

All papers must be submitted directly to the instructor at the beginning of the class period or e-mailed by midnight that day. Late papers will be penalized according to the number of days delayed, up to 20% for one week. No papers will be accepted later than one week except under exceptional circumstances.

Cheating and Plagiarism:

The Psychology Department adheres to the definition of cheating and plagiarism found in the Study Policy Handbook which students are responsible for obtaining. Cheating and plagiarism will result in a grade of zero for the assignment and will be reported to the appropriate authority.

Incomplete Grades:

Incomplete grades will be given only in exceptional circumstances and requires the approval of the course instructor.

Confidentiality:

The Psychology Department adheres to professional standards of ethics and confidentiality. Personal information that is given to an instructor would not normally be shared with anyone outside the department without student authorization. However, there are a few exceptional circumstances in which an instructor may be required by law to disclose information, e.g. if there is an indication that a minor (under the age of 19) is being abused sexually or physically, or neglected; and disclosure of information is made necessary for legal proceedings.

Operational details - continued

English Usage:

Academic writing skills are required in all assignments. American Psychology Association (APA) writing guidelines, including the use of non-sexist language, must be followed.

All assignments must be original and must be used for this course only. Keep a copy of all work and hand in the original which must be typed.

Electronic Devices:

No personal electronic devices (cell phones, calculators, electronic dictionaries, etc.) may be used during an examination. During an exam, turn off all cell phones and put them away.

Emergency Procedures:

Please read the emergency procedures posted on the wall of the classroom.