

Selected Topics in Psychology: Autism in the Community

A Community-Engaged Learning Course

MWF

Instructor: Colby Taylor, Ph.D.

Email: ctaylo41@cbu.edu

Office Phone: **901-321-3822**

Office: Rosa Deal 222D

Course Description: The purpose of this class is to gain a comprehensive understanding of autism spectrum disorder, including its history, its diagnostic criteria, its purported causes, its associated strengths and deficits, its treatment, its heterogeneity of presentation, and its future. The course will require a service component and many of the course objectives will occur outside of the classroom.

Required Texts:

Hall, L. J. (2017). *Autism Spectrum Disorders: From theory to practice* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Pearson. 978-0134531519

Course Objectives:

1. Understand the diagnostic components of autism spectrum disorder
2. Understand the diverse ways in which autism spectrum disorder can present
3. Gain knowledge of the most effective, empirically supported treatments for autism spectrum disorder
4. Gain exposure to contemporary issues and possible future directions related to autism spectrum disorder
5. Engage in service related to autism spectrum disorder in order to gain first-hand experience with the disorder.
6. Gain familiarity with career options related to service provision for individuals on the autism spectrum.

Assignments and Grading

Assignment	Number and Value
Class Participation	25 points
Something Borrowed	25 points
Something New	25 points
Something to Read	5 @ 25 points total
Something to Do	25 points
Something Blue	25 points
Something to View	25 points
Exam	75 points
Total Points	350

Grading	A: 350-315	B: 314-280	C: 279-245	D: 244-210	F: below 210
---------	------------	------------	------------	------------	--------------

Something Borrowed

You will interview someone whose life has been affected by autism spectrum disorder. Following the interview, you will narrate their experiences with the disorder through a short paper (minimum of 2 pages). The narration might include things such as when/how the individual was diagnosed, treatments pursued, the individual's educational and social journey, etc.

Something New

You will write a summary and reflection (a minimum of 1.5 pages) on an empirical article related to autism spectrum disorder. This article should be contemporary (i.e., published in 2015 or after—hence the “new”).

Something to Read

You will be required to submit five reading logs throughout the semester. Each reading log should be at least five sentences in length and should include a short summary and reflection related to the reading. Assigned readings will occur throughout the semester.

Something to Do

You will complete 25 hours of service/community-engagement throughout the semester. Accompanying this will be a service log, with at least one sentence reflecting upon each service hour (25 total).

Something Blue

April is National Autism Awareness Month. Blue is the color of Autism Speaks. You will be required to participate in one philanthropic activity related to autism during this month and to write a reflection (minimum of 1 page) on this experience.

Something to View

Autism spectrum disorder is prominently featured in many contemporary television series and movies. You will view either a television series or movie featuring a character with autism

spectrum disorder and then write a reflection on how this individual meets diagnostic criteria for the disorder, and whether the presentation of the disorder is “typical”, sensationalized, stigmatizing, etc.

Class Participation

Earned through attendance and active participation in class. You are expected to prepare for each class by completing the assigned readings and participate in a meaningful academic discussion. Simply attending class is not enough to earn full participation credit.

Exam

This will be a 50-question exam (format will be multiple-choice and true/false) related to the material that we covered this semester. A study guide will be offered prior to the exam.

Class Policies

Attendance: Attendance is tied to your participation grade. You cannot earn participation points if you are not present, thus it is to your benefit to come to class.

Cheating Policy: In short, cheating in this class will not be tolerated. Any form of cheating on any exam, a paper or an extra-credit activity will result in zero points earned and possibly an “F” for the course.

“Cheating” includes, but is not limited to, the following activities:

- Taking credit for someone else’s work
- Putting others’ work in your paper without referencing them
- Looking at others’ exam papers
- Having ANY paper visible (including under your seat) during exams
- Having ANY electronic device visible, including electronic devices in or on your ear, during an exam
- Talking with another student during an exam

Cell Phones: All cell phones, smart phones, iPods, MP3 devices, etc., must be turned off at the beginning of each class. No tweeting, using Facebook (or other social networking sites), texting or emailing during class. You may use laptops but only if these rules are followed. Please be considerate of me and your other classmates.

Electronic Communication: Course announcements as well as consultation with me will occur via email messages and Moodle. You must maintain your university email account and you are responsible for checking your email and Moodle for course messages on a regular basis. If you need assistance setting up or accessing your university email address, please go to the ITS Help Desk located in St. Joseph Hall 115.

University Policy on Disabilities: Students with disabilities or conditions requiring accommodation must meet with the Director of the Office of Student Disabilities (Thomas Center) in order to document the disability and make appropriate accommodation plans. Professors cannot provide any accommodations without this documentation. You can access more information on the Office of Student Disabilities at www.cbu/studentlife/disability

School of Arts Plagiarism Statement: Plagiarism is taking the work of others and offering it as one's own. Plagiarism is a major breach of the responsibility of students and scholars and is unacceptable in any community of learning. As such, plagiarism is cause for automatic failure for the course in which the assignment, paper, project, text, experiment, or oral presentation has been plagiarized.

Agenda

Date	Topic	Due
1/6	Introductions Review of Syllabus	
1/8	Defining ASD	
1/10	Defining ASD	
1/13	History of ASD	
1/15	History of ASD	
1/17	Watch <i>Refrigerator Mothers</i> in class	
1/20	NO CLASS	DR. MLK JR. HOLIDAY
1/22	Diagnosing ASD	
1/24	Diagnosing ASD	
1/27	Causes of ASD	
1/29	Causes of ASD	
1/31	Causes of ASD	
2/3	High-Functioning ASD	
2/5	High-Functioning ASD	
2/7	Watch <i>Asperger's Are Us</i> in class	Something Borrowed
2/10	ASD in Females	
2/12	Cultural Considerations	
2/14	Intellectual Disability	
2/17	Intellectual Disability	
2/19	ASD in Early Childhood	
2/21	Watch <i>A Mother's Courage: Talking Back to Autism</i>	
2/24	ASD in Middle Childhood	
2/26	ASD in Adolescence	
2/28	Watch <i>Autism in Love</i>	Something New
3/2	NO CLASS SPRING BREAK	
3/4	NO CLASS SPRING BREAK	
3/6	NO CLASS SPRING BREAK	
3/9	ASD in Adulthood	
3/11	Educational Considerations	

3/13	Educational Considerations	
3/16	Educational Considerations	
3/18	Treatment	
3/20	Treatment	
3/23	Watch <i>The Horse Boy</i>	
3/25	Treatment	
3/27	Treatment	
3/30	Dietary Concerns	
4/1	Speech Concerns	
4/3	Occupational and Physical Therapy Concerns	
4/6	Comorbid Conditions	
4/8	Controversial Issues Related to ASD	
4/10	NO CLASS GOOD FRIDAY	
4/13	NO CLASS EASTER MONDAY	
4/15	Controversial Issues Related to ASD	Something to View Due
4/17	Media Portrayals	
4/20	Review Day	
4/22		EXAM
4/24	Future Directions	
4/27	Future Directions	Something Blue due by 5 pm
Final Exam Slot	Final Debrief/Celebration	Something to Do Due