

HPS308: Psychopathology

Learning Objectives

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TOPIC 1:

Classification, diagnosis and an integrative approach to Psychopathology

Learning Objectives:

1. Define the key elements in the current conceptualisation of abnormality or psychological disorder.

- A psychological dysfunction within an individual that is associated with distress or impairment in functioning and a response that is not typical or culturally expected
 - Psychological dysfunction: a breakdown in cognitive, emotional, or behavioural functioning
 - Personal distress or impairment
 - Atypical or not culturally expected
 - Violating social norms
 - Important cultural differences
- Current accepted definition used in DSM-5:
 - *Behavioural, psychological, or biological dysfunctions that are unexpected in their cultural context and associated with present distress and impairment in functioning, or increased risk of suffering, death, pain, or impairment*

2. Describe the scientist-practitioner approach to psychopathology.

- **Scientist-practitioner:** mental health professionals that take a scientific approach to their clinical work
 - Keep up with the latest scientific developments in their field- use most current diagnostic and treatment procedures
 - Evaluate their own assessments or treatment procedures to see whether they work
 - Might conduct research (often in clinics or hospitals) that produces new information about disorders or treatment
- Aims to:
 - Describe psychological disorders
 - Determine causes of psychological disorders
 - Treat psychological disorders

3. Describe the three major categories of focus underlying the study and discussion of psychological disorders.

- **Clinical description**
 - Presentation: unique combination of behaviours, thoughts, and feeling that make up a specific disorder
 - Specifies what make the disorder different from normal behaviour or from other disorders
 - Course of disorder: chronic course, episodic course, time-limited course
 - Anticipated course: prognosis