UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Personality Disorders

2026/2027

Code: 102541
Credits: 6

Degree programme	Type	Course
Psychology	OP	4

Contact lecturer

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Group languages

You can consult this information at the end of the document.

Prerequisites

There is no specifically established prerequisite for this subject, but it is highly recommended to take the Adult Psychopathology course (and ideally Childhood Psychopathology also). In this way students have a complete vision of psychopathology (both states of mental disorder as well as personality organizations), a much deeper one than that offered in the course Psychopathology of the Vital Cycle (second year).

Objectives

This subject is one of the optional courses included in the training that leads to the Mention of Adult Clinical Psychology, located academically in the fourth year of the Degree of Psychology.

Personality disorders, in all its degrees and wide variety, constitute a huge part of the daily work of the clinical psychologist. Personality is the matrix of vulnerability (and/or protection) towards psychopathology; that is, how we become sick depends on how we are. Therefore, one can not understand a mental disorder and design a psychological treatment separately from the personal "make up" of the individual. As studied in the first course, individual differences in subjective feelings and behavior reflect the interaction between genetic-biological temperament and the idiosyncratic environmental experience. In this subject, which specializes in the clinical manifestations of personality, the student becomes familiar with and learns (1) to identify the exaggerations and pathologies of personality, (2) how they distort the way individuals interact with the environment, (3) how certain forms of pathology are generated from this vulnerability matrix and the main theories that explain it, (4) how to explore and evaluate these impairments, (5) how all this affects the psychological treatment, and (6) the basic principles to treat these problems.

One of the important features of this subject is that it intends to outline a broad view of the complexity of factors that contribute to cause personality abnormalities (evolutionary, genetic, biological, relational, learning processes, socio-cultural...), which allows the student to articulate much of the knowledge previously acquired throughout the degree in multiple subjects. This objective also allows the student to live the need to know several frameworks of reference if we want to understand the complexity of the phenomenon of the disordered personality, thus combining contributions made by different models in Psychology (for example, cognitive, behavioral, psychodynamic, systemic).

Therefore, the general goal of this subject is that the student knows in an integrated way the clinical presentation of personality disorders, their assessment and . More precisely, the specific goal of this subject are:

1. To integrate knowledge previously acquired to understand the relationship between normal and abnormal personality as well as between personality and mental disorder.

2. To know the clinical presentation, diagnostic formulation and main etiological hypotheses of personality disorders from an integrative perspective.

3. To familiarize students with the basic principles of psychological treatment in personality disorders.

Learning outcomes

1. Analyse the risk factors affecting practical clinical cases.
2. Recognise the main etiological influences of clinical problems and disorders in adults.
3. Recognise the stages of clinical assessment.
4. Distinguish different approaches to assessment and diagnosis and classify them according to the application context.
5. Differentiate the various methods and tools and their usefulness.
6. Apply assessment techniques.
7. Apply communication skills.
8. Apply assessment techniques for each type of problem and level of complexity.
9. Analyse the quality of the information collected.
10. Plan the evaluation to be carried out during the intervention.
11. Plan post-treatment evaluation.
12. Relate theoretical contents (individual differences, psychological problems, symptoms) with the results of clinical assessment instruments.
13. Criticize the validity of the results obtained in relation to measures of control and reliability of the test application conditions.
14. Analyse the content of clinical interviews related case studies in the field of clinical psychology with adults.
15. Recognise the key elements of narrative discourse or the results of a standardized assessment.
16. Maintain a favourable attitude towards the permanent updating through critical evaluation of scientific documentation, taking into account its origin, situating it in an epistemological framework and identifying and contrasting its contributions in relation to the available disciplinary knowledge.
17. Apply knowledge, skills and acquired values critically, reflexively and creatively.
18. Identify the social, economic and/or environmental implications of academic and professional activities in the area of your knowledge.
19. Explain the explicit or implicit deontological code in your area of knowledge.
20. Critically analyse the principles, values and procedures that govern the exercise of the profession.
21. Assess the impact of the difficulties, prejudices and discriminations that actions or projects may involve, in the short or long term, in relation to certain persons or groups.
22. Propose projects and actions that are in accordance with the principles of ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and obligations, diversity and democratic values.
23. Identify the principal forms of sex- or gender-based inequality and discrimination present in society.
24. Analyse the sex- or gender-based inequalities and the gender biases present in one's own area of knowledge.
25. Assess how stereotypes and gender roles impact professional practice.
26. Propose projects and actions that incorporate the gender perspective.

27. Communicate in an inclusive manner avoiding the use of sexist or discriminatory language.
28. Identify situations in which a change or improvement is needed.
29. Analyse a situation and identify its points for improvement.
30. Propose new experience-based methods or alternative solutions.
31. Weigh up the risks and opportunities of both one's own and other people's proposals for improvement.
32. Propose new ways of measuring the viability, success or failure of the implementation of innovative proposals or ideas.
33. Formulate a clinical case including the results of the evaluation and the gender perspective.
34. Summarise the essential information to facilitate the process of formulating a clinical case and a differential diagnosis incorporating the gender perspective.

Contents

BLOCK A - Key concepts and classifications in the field of Personality Disorders.

Topic 1. Abnormal personality: historical, conceptual and epistemological aspects.

Topic 2. Forms of description and understanding of personality disorders.

BLOCK B - Description of Personality Disorders according to categorical classifications.

For each personality disorder (Themes 3 to 5) the following topics will be covered:

a) Psychology and clinical manifestations.

b) Diagnosis, course, epidemiology, differential diagnosis and comorbidity.

c) Clinical assessment.

d) Etiological hypotheses.

Topic 3. Personalities of the psychotic spectrum (paranoidism, schizoid, schizotypic).

Topic 4. Dramatic-emotional personalities (histrionism, narcissism, antisocial, psychopathy, borderline).

Topic 5. Anxious personalities (dependent, obsessive, avoidant).

BLOCK C - Therapeutic principles in Personality Disorders.

Topic 6. Treatment of personality disorders from an integrative perspective.

Learning activities and methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
Reading texts	35	1.4	
Clinical seminars	12	0.48	
Master classes with ICT support	24	0.96	
Search for documentation in journals, books or the internet	4	0.16	
Autonomous study	58.5	2.34	
Creation of a clinical case	13.5	0.54	

The teaching methodology of the subject is designed so that the student can identify the psychological problems that we call as personality disorders, as well as the causative factors, the way of evaluating them and the fundamental principles of their treatment. For this purpose in this subject, the conceptual integration of previous learning will be greatly impelled. A very active and participatory attitude will be promoted in the classroom, mimicking the processes of discussion of cases in the clinical world.

The teaching methodology of this subject can be divided into three blocks:

Block 1. Targeted teaching. It is structured in two obligatory assistance activities:

1. The first consists of a series of ***master classes*** with support of multimedia technologies carried out in large groups. It is intended that the student be able to achieve the main theoretical concepts and offer an analysis of the diverse (and often competitive) visions about personality disorders. It will also be addressed how the gender bias affects this matter. The duration of this activity will be two hours for all students in a module.
2. The second activity consists of ***clinical seminars*** that will be carried out in small groups under the principle of learning based on problems. In these practices, clinical cases will be analyzed where the problem identification process will be worked, b) the diagnostic discussion and c) the case formulation, similar to what would be done in clinical sessions of the professional world. In this way, the student can proactively use the theoretical concepts that have been dealt with in the master classes. How the gender bias afects the assessment and diagnose of personality disorder will also be addressed. The duration of this activity will be of two hours distributed with the quarter of students of a module.

Bloc 2. Supervised activity. This optionalactivity aims to consolidate the theoretical and practical contents of the course and can be creatively designed between teachers and students so that individual concerns can be stimulated. Generically, it proposes approaching reality to the subject by encouraging experiential learning. It is about 'digging' into one's biography in search of an example illustrating any of the problems addressed in the subject, either experienced in one's own skin or in close others (familiar, friend, acquaintance). Ideally the case should be very well-known to being able to give details, always preserving anonymity and disguising real identity. Alternatively, the student can work on other types of psychobiographic materials in order to elaborate this case (e.g., a clinical case of the subject of External Practice, an interview made to a distant acquaintance, a literary or cinematographic character...). The task is to create a case with which other colleagues can practice the identification of symptoms, differential diagnosis, the elaboration of etiological hypotheses, case formulation, the design of the psychological assessment procedure and the therapeutic design. Models will be offered for how to elaborate these cases and their solution. The task consists of creating a case with which the rest of the classmates can practice symptom identification, diagnostic analysis, development of etiological hypotheses, case formulation, assessment approach and therapeutic design. This task crystallizes in the material used in the activity that constitutes evidence 2.

Bloc 3. Autonomous activity. Study activities of the student include, in addition to the study and bibliographical search, the reading of materials of specialized contents or complementary of special interest for the acquisition of the own competences of the subject.

Note: 15 minutes of a class are reserved, within the calendar established by the center/degree, for the completion by the students of the surveys of evaluationof the performance of the teaching staff and of the evaluation of the subject/module.

Annotation: within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continuous assessment activities

Title	Weight	Hours	ECTS	Learning outcomes
EV2. Development of a clinical case and presentation in the practical seminar	10%	0	0	6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34
EV3. Test 3.	50%	2	0.08	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 12, 16, 17, 18, 23, 24, 25, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34
EV1. Test 1 (topics 1,2,3,4)	40%	1	0.04	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 12, 17, 23, 24

Feedback from evidences for continued learning:EV1: Type of feedback: In the classroom / S9EV2: Type of feedback: Oral feedback will be given in the classroom at the same time as the groups present the clinical casesEV3: Type of feedback: Tutoring, in the space dedicated to exam review for those who want to receive feedback, S22

The evaluation guidelines for the 2025-26 course of the Faculty of Psychology can be found in the following link: PautesAvaluacioPsicologia_2026

General Philosophy

The evaluation of the subject consists of three evidences of learning that consist of: two face-to-face written tests, individual multiple choice tests (evidence 1 and 3, with a weight of 40% and 50% respectively) and a group-based preparation of a clinical practical case that will be presented to the rest of the group to work certain aspects and led by the team preparing the case (evidence 2, with a weight of 10% on the final grade).

This subject does not consider single assessment.

Description of the Evidences of Learning

The evidences are oriented to show the student's ability to apply the concepts and theories worked in the directed teaching and the autonomous study of compulsory readings, as well as the competences worked in the clinical seminars:

- Evidence 1 (EV1): Individual, face-to-face multiple-choice written test. It will evaluate the subject matter included in Topics 1 to 4 (including the readings corresponding to these topics in the bibliography, not only the content strictly exposed in class). Totalgrade value: 40%. Score from 0 to 10. It will take place on the first assessment period.

- Evidence 2(EV2): Students will be allocated by the teaching team to different groups. The groups must design 1) a clinical case and 2) an exercise to be led by the team with the rest of the group to practice diagnostic skills or clinical formulation or therapeutic design in the practical classroom. In order to present the

work, the written and/or audiovisual material that will be used in the classroommust be submitted in advance. The score is not only based on the preparation of the material, but also on: the presentation of the case, the supervision of the work conducted by peers on diagnostic procedures and/or clinical case formulation and/or therapeutic design that each work team will facilitate among their colleagues in the classroom, showing mastery of the material (content and procedures) worked on through the presentation, guidance, supervision and leadership of a practical exercise that allows the rest of the students in the practical classroom to learn about and/or practice that aspect of the syllabus that is intended to be worked on. The practical exercise can consist of working on a real clinical case or one designed by the team, and which is worked on in class with the rest through role-playing (a diagnostic interview or a therapy session..). The point is that the prepared material a) allows the students in the classroom to practice diagnosis, clinical case formulation or treatment design, and b) is the basis of a dynamic guided by the work team that is being evaluated and that allows the teaching staff to appreciate the mastery that the team has over that specific aspect or disorder of the syllabus.

- Evidence 3 (EV3): Individual, face-to-face, individual, multiple-choice written test. It will evaluate predominantly the subject matter of Topics 5 to 6 (including the readings corresponding to these topics in the bibliography, not only the content strictly exposed in class). Since it is a continuous assessment, and therefore the learning is cumulative, it can also integrate questions related to the internal topics (1 to 4, for example, to be able to make a differential diagnosis of the problems covered in topics 5 to 6 itwill be necessary to have assimilatedthe psychological problems already dealt in topics 1 to 4). Total grade value: 50%. Score from 0 to 10. It will take place on the second assessment period.

Evaluation System

The calculation of the grade will result from the following formula:

EV1 EV2 EV3 Total

Grade 40% 10% 50% 100%

Definition of evaluable student:

According to the evaluation guidelines of the Faculty of Psychology, the student who provides evidences of learning 1, 2 and/or 3 with a weight equal to or greater than 40% is considered evaluable.

Definition of passing the subject:

Having obtained a weighted total of at least 5 points in the continuous assessment and a score of 4.0 points or higher in each of the in-person assessment tests that contribute 20% or more to the continuous assessment grade-specifically, evidence items Ev1 and Ev3. Failure to meet these requirements will result in a maximum grade of 4.5 points being recorded in the academic transcript.

Reevaluation system:

Students may sit for the final retake exam if they have not met the criteria to pass the course, have completed assessment tasks accounting for at least two-thirds of the total grade (i.e., having completed at least EV2 and EV3, or EV1 and EV3), and have obtained an average score of between 3.5 and less than 5 across the three assessment tasks (EVs).

It will be held on the re-examination period. It is individual and face-to-face. The re-evaluation test consists of a single written test that integrates all the material worked on a continuous basis. The grade derived from the re-evaluation test will have a maximum of 6.5; In other words, for any mark of the re-evaluation exam that is equal to or greater than 6.5, a 6.5 will be recorded as the final mark for the course, since this is the maximum mark that can be obtained in the subject through the recovery system.

No unique final synthesis test for students who enrole for the second time or more is anticipated.

Single assessment: This subject does not include a single assessment.

Use of AI technologies: Their use is not allowed for the creation of the EV2 (Clinical Case) since its objective is the combination of personal introspection, analysis of cases that each person can know in their environment and active creation based on one's own intellect. Thus, any work that includes fragments generated with AI will be considered a lack of academic honesty and may lead to a partial or total penalty in the grade of the activity, or greater sanctions in serious cases.

Exam translation: The translation of the assessment tests will be delivered if the requirements established in article 263 are met and the request is made electronically in week 4 (e-form) (more information on the Faculty website).

Content of Evidences of Learning

Please see below the bibliography that must be studied to prepare EV 1 and 2 (see full references in the Bibliography section):

Test: Evidence 1		Material evaluated in the tests additional to the content presented in the classes		
BLOCK A				
Topic 1. Concepts	Chapter 1 - Current concepts (Caballo handbook)	Chapter 2 - Models (Roca handbook)		
Topic 2.Descriptions	Chapter 7- Categorization and diagnosis (Roca handbook)			
BLOCK B	*Note:* All otherchapters belong to the handbook of V. Caballo			
Topic 3.Psychotic PDs	Chapter 2 - Paranoid	Chapter 3 - Eschizoide	Chapter 4 - Schizotypic	
Topic 4. Emotional PDs	Chapter 5 - Antisocial	Chapter 6 - Borderline	Chapter 7 - Histrionic	Chapter 8 - Narcissist
Test: Evidence 2				
Topic 5. Anxious PDs	Chapter 9 - Avoidant	Chapter 10 - Dependent	Chapter 11 - Obsessive-compulsive	
Matters of block B thatare not covered in the master classes and require autonomous study	Chapter 12 - TP Not specified			
Chapter 13 - TP Relegated and forgotten				
Chapter15 -	Chapter 16 - Clinical			

Evaluation of PDs	Formulation of PDs				
BLOCK C					
Topic 6. Treatments					
Chapter 17 - Cognitive-behavioural treatment	Chapter 19 - Schema therapy	Chapter 20 - Dialectic-behavioural therapy	In addition, the content of these 2 papers will be part of the assessment:	Article 1: \"Tratamiento psicoanalítico de los trastornos de personalidad\"	Referència: Fernández Belinchón, C., & Rodríguez Moya,L. (2013). Tratamiento psicoanalítico de los trastornos de personalidad. *Acción Psicológica*, 10(1), 57-64.

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Interesting web links:

Revistes especialitzades:

http://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/per/

http://www.guilford.com/cgi-bin/cartscript.cgi?page=pr/jnpd.htm

www.apa.org - American PsychologicalAssociation

Software

Not necessary.

Course groups and languages

The information provided is provisional until November 30. After this date, you will be able to consult the language of each group through this link. To access the information, you will need to enter the course CODE

Type of teaching	Group	Language	Semester	Shift
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	5	Catalan	second semester	afternoon
(SEM) Seminars	111	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	112	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	113	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	114	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	115	Catalan	second semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	511	Catalan	second semester	afternoon