



# Chaminade University OF HONOLULU

[Chaminade University Honolulu](https://www.chaminade.edu)

3140 Waiālae Avenue - Honolulu, HI 96816

**Course Number:** PSY 456

**Course Title:** Psychology of Movies

**College/School/Division Name:** School of Education and Behavioral Sciences

**Term:** Spring 2026

**Course Credits:** 3

**Class Location:** Online

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**Office Location:** Behavioral Sciences #111A

**Office Hours:** Mondays 8-10am and by virtual appointment (email for google meet link)

**Text** - Wedding, D., Boyd, M. A., & Niemiec, R. M. (2024). *Movies and mental illness*. Göttingen: Hogrefe.  
ISBN-13: 978-0889375536

**Movies**- Temple Grandin (2010), A Beautiful Mind (2001), The Beaver (2011), The Aviator (2004), Fearless (1993), Psycho (1960), Insomnia (2002), Boys Don't Cry (1999), We Need to Talk about Kevin (2012), Flight (2012), Raging Bull (1980), No Country for Old Men (2007), Kill Bill Vol 1 (2003), & One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975).

One movie of student choice: A Clockwork Orange (1971), Prince of Tides (1991), or Thelma and Louise (1991).

### **Catalog Course Description**

Examination of how motion pictures depict mental illness, relationships, and other psychologically relevant issues, as well as how films depict the field of psychology itself. Topics of discussion include universal themes, the psychological value of filmmaking and viewing, application of theories and concepts, accuracy in the depiction of psychological variables, and psychological impact. Character analyses involve examination of personality, mental illness, developmental issues, conflicts, and motivation.

### **Psychology Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)**

1. Students will identify key concepts, principles, and overarching themes in psychology.
2. Students will exhibit the value of adaptation and change through the critical thinking process of interpretation, design, and evaluation of psychological research.
3. Students will exhibit effective writing and oral communication skills within the context of the field of psychology.
4. Students will exhibit the value of educating the whole person through the description and explanation of the dynamic nature between one's mind, body, and social influences.

### **Course Learning Outcomes**

Students who successfully complete this course will:

1. Assess the basic psychological principles related to human behavior across the theories of psychology (PLO 1).
2. Evaluate the accuracy of portrayal of psychological topics, psychological diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes (PLO1).

3. Identification of film techniques used to illustrate psychological concepts (PLO 4).  
(PLO 1)
4. Analyze the ethical issues and considerations related to movie psychology impact of popular film in society  
(PLO 2).

**Course Requirements**

Grades for the course will be assigned based on the quality of student work as demonstrated by successful completion of the following requirements:

1. Online Discussions: 6 @ 6 points each = 36 points
  2. Movie Reflection Questions: 14 @ 20 = 280 points
  3. Final Movie Review: 1 @ 40 points
- Total Points = 356 points

**1. Online Discussions (CLO 1-4)**

Each week students will engage in online discussions about how motion pictures depict mental illness, relationships, and other psychologically relevant issues.

**2. Movie Reflection Questions (CLO 1-4)**

Each week students will read the correlating chapter, watch assigned movie, and complete reflection questions.

**3. Final- Movie Review (CLO 1, 2, 3)**

Students will choose a final movie to review and complete application of psychological theory to the depiction of psychological variables, review of the psychological impact, and character analyses of personality.

**Grading**

Grades will be based on the quality of work and will be assigned based on a straight percentage using the following chart:

90%	-	100%	A
80%	-	89%	B
70%	-	79%	C
60%	-	69%	D
59% or below			F

All assignments will be due in Canvas by 11:59 pm on the due date as specified in this syllabus.

Discussion responses will be allowed to be submitted up to one week late with a 50% point deduction. Discussion Participation will not be accepted after the due date specified in Canvas. The reason is because Responses and Participation assignments are designed to engage the class with your thoughts and feelings about the topics being covered for that week. Once the class has moved on to the next topic, late submissions will not be read by your peers. The Responses and Participation adds value and depth to the class discussion during its respective week and that is why no exceptions, regardless of the reason provided, will be accepted.

Movie Reflection papers and Final Movie Review will be accepted late up until the last day of class. If submitted late, regardless of reason and/or how late it is submitted, will be given a 50% point deduction.

**Marianist Values**

This class represents one component of your education at Chaminade University of Honolulu. An education in the Marianist Tradition is marked by five principles and you should take every opportunity possible to reflect upon the role of these characteristics in your education and development:

1. Education for formation in faith
2. Provide an integral, quality education
3. Educate in family spirit
4. Educate for service, justice and peace
5. Educate for adaptation and change

**Articulation of Characteristics and Values**

PSY 456 Psychology of Movies is guided by the Marianist Educational Value of Educate for Adaptation and Change. Father Chaminade said, “new times call for new methods.” This could not be truer for the field of Psychology. Psychology seeks to identify and understand why we do what we do and think what we think. This value guides this course through its focus on the development of:

1. Flexible thinking;

2. Being respectful of differences;
3. Critical thinking; and
4. Open-mindedness.

#### **Technical Assistance for Canvas Users:**

- Search for help on specific topics or get tips in [Canvas Students](#)
- [Live chat with Canvas Support for students](#)
- Canvas Support Hotline for students: +1-833-209-6111
- Watch this [video to get you started](#)
- [Online tutorials](#): click on “Students” role to access tutorials
- Contact the Chaminade IT Helpdesk for technical issues: [helpdesk@chaminade.edu](mailto:helpdesk@chaminade.edu) or call (808) 735-4855

#### **Tutoring and Writing Services**

Chaminade is proud to offer free, one-on-one tutoring and writing assistance to all students. Tutoring and writing help is available on campus at Kōkua ‘Ike: Center for Student Learning in a variety of subjects (including, but are not limited to: biology, chemistry, math, nursing, English, etc.) from trained Peer and Professional Tutors. Please check Kōkua ‘Ike’s website (<https://chaminade.edu/advising/kokua-ike/>) for the latest times, list of drop-in hours, and information on scheduling an appointment. Free online tutoring is also available via TutorMe. Tutor Me can be accessed 24/7 from your Canvas account. Simply click Account – Notifications – TutorMe. For more information, please contact Kōkua ‘Ike at [tutoring@chaminade.edu](mailto:tutoring@chaminade.edu) or 808-739-8305.

#### **Disability Access**

If you need individual accommodations to meet course outcomes because of a documented disability, please speak with me to discuss your needs as soon as possible so that we can ensure your full participation in class and fair assessment of your work. Students with special needs who meet criteria for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provisions must provide written documentation of the need for accommodations from Kōkua ‘Ike: Center for Student Learning by the end of week three of the class, in order for instructors to plan accordingly. If a student would like to determine if they meet the criteria for accommodations, they should contact the Kōkua ‘Ike Coordinator at (808) 739-8305 for further information ([ada@chaminade.edu](mailto:ada@chaminade.edu)).

#### **Title IX Compliance**

Chaminade University of Honolulu recognizes the inherent dignity of all individuals and promotes respect for all people. Sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse will NOT be tolerated at CUH. If you have been the victim of sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, we encourage you to report this matter promptly. As a faculty member, I am interested in promoting a safe and healthy environment, and should I learn of any sexual misconduct, physical and/or psychological abuse, I must report the matter to the Title IX Coordinator. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources by visiting Campus Ministry, the Dean of Students Office, the Counseling Center, or the Office for Compliance and Personnel Services.

#### **Attendance Policy**

The following attendance policy is from the 2019-2020 Academic Catalog (p. 54-55). Faculty members should also check with their divisions for division-specific guidelines.

Students are expected to attend regularly all courses for which they are registered. Student should notify their instructors when illness or other extenuating circumstances prevents them from attending class and make arrangements to complete missed assignments. Notification may be done by emailing the instructor’s Chaminade email address, calling the instructor’s campus extension, or by leaving a message with the instructor’s division office. It is the instructor’s prerogative to modify deadlines of course requirements accordingly. Any student who stops attending a course without officially withdrawing may receive a failing grade.

Unexcused absences equivalent to more than a week of classes may lead to a grade reduction for the course. Any unexcused absence of two consecutive weeks or more may result in being withdrawn from the course by the instructor, although the instructor is not required to withdraw students in that scenario. Repeated absences put students at risk of failing grades.

Students with disabilities who have obtained accommodations from the Chaminade University of Honolulu Tutor Coordinator may be considered for an exception when the accommodation does not materially alter the attainment of the learning outcomes.

Federal regulations require continued attendance for continuing payment of financial aid. When illness or personal reasons necessitate continued absence, the student should communicate first with the instructor to review the options. Anyone who stops attending a course without official withdrawal may receive a failing grade or be withdrawn by the instructor at the instructor's discretion.

### **Academic Conduct Policy**

From the 2019-2020 Undergraduate Academic Catalog (p. 39):

Any community must have a set of rules and standards of conduct by which it operates. At Chaminade, these standards are outlined so as to reflect both the Catholic, Marianist values of the institution and to honor and respect students as responsible adults. All alleged violations of the community standards are handled through an established student conduct process, outlined in the Student Handbook, and operated within the guidelines set to honor both students' rights and campus values.

Students should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the ideals of the University. This includes knowing and respecting the intent of rules, regulations, and/or policies presented in the Student Handbook, and realizing that students are subject to the University's jurisdiction from the time of their admission until their enrollment has been formally terminated. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more details. A copy of the Student Handbook is available on the Chaminade website.

For further information, please refer to the Student Handbook: <https://chaminade.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/NEW-STUDENT-HANDBOOK-19-20-Final-8.20.19.pdf>

### **Credit Hour Policy**

The unit of semester credit is defined as university-level credit that is awarded for the completion of coursework. One credit hour reflects the amount of work represented in the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement for those learning outcomes. Each credit hour earned at Chaminade University should result in 45 hours of engagement. This equates to one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester, 10 week term, or equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. Direct instructor engagement and out-of-class work result in total student engagement time of 45 hours for one credit.

The minimum 45 hours of engagement per credit hour can be satisfied in fully online, internship, or other specialized courses through several means, including (a) regular online instruction or interaction with the faculty member and fellow students and (b) academic engagement through extensive reading, research, online discussion, online quizzes or exams; instruction, collaborative group work, internships, laboratory work, practica, studio work, and preparation of papers, presentations, or other forms of assessment. This policy is in accordance with federal regulations and regional accrediting agencies.

***SCIENTIFIC METHOD DEFINITIONS*** the **METHODS OF SCIENCE** are only tools, tools that we use to obtain knowledge about phenomena.

The **SCIENTIFIC METHOD** is a set of assumptions and rules about collecting and evaluating data. The explicitly stated assumptions and rules enable a standard, systematic method of investigation that is designed to reduce bias as much as possible. Central to the scientific method is the collection of data, which allows investigators to put their ideas to an empirical test, outside of or apart from their personal biases. In essence, stripped of all its glamour, scientific inquiry is nothing more **THAN A WAY OF LIMITING FALSE CONCLUSIONS ABOUT NATURAL EVENTS.**

Knowledge of which the credibility of a profession is based must be objective and verifiable (testable) rather than subjective and untestable.

**SCIENCE** is a mode of controlled inquiry to develop an objective, effective, and credible way of knowing.

The assumptions one makes regarding the basic qualities of human nature (that is, cognitive, affective, behavioral, and physiological processes) affect how one conceptualizes human behavior.

The two basic functions of scientific approach are 1) advance knowledge, to make discoveries, and to learn facts in order to improve some aspect of the world, and 2) to establish relations among events, develop theories, and this helps professionals to make predictions of future events.

Research Design in Counseling; Heppner, Kivlighan, and Wampold

A **THEORY** is a large body of interconnected propositions about how some portion of the world operates; a **HYPOTHESIS** is a smaller body of propositions. **HYPOTHESES** are smaller versions of theories. Some are derived or born from theories. Others begin as researchers' hunches and develop into theories.

The **PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE** decrees we can only falsify, not verify (prove), theories because we can never be sure that any given theory provides the best explanation for a set of observations.

Research Method in Social Relations, Kidder

**THEORIES** are not themselves directly proved or disproved by research. Even **HYPOTHESES** cannot be proved or disproved directly. Rather, research may either support or fail to support a particular hypothesis derived from a theory.

Scientific research has four general goals: (1) to describe behavior, (2) to predict behavior, (3) to determine the causes of behavior, and (4) to understand or explain behavior.

Methods In Behavioral Research; Cozby

In order to verify the reliability and validity of scientific research it is important to replicate the results. It is the preponderance of evidence that establishes/supports the theory.

**Course Calendar**

<b>Course Units</b>	<b>Weekly Assignments</b>	<b>Due Date to Canvas</b>
Unit 1	Read Chapter 1- Then Participate in the Online Discussion Films & Psychopathology  Read Chapter 2- Then Watch Temple Grandin (2010) & Complete Movie Questions  Read Chapter 3- Then Watch- A Beautiful Mind (2001) & Complete Movie Questions	

Unit 2	<p>Participate in the Online Discussion – Film and Emotion</p> <p>Read Chapter 4- Then Watch- The Beaver (2011) &amp; Complete Movie Questions</p> <p>Read Chapter 5- Then Watch- The Aviator (2004) &amp; Complete Movie Questions</p> <p>Read Chapter 6- Then Watch- Fearless (1993) &amp; Complete Movie Questions</p>	
Unit 3	<p>Participate in the Online Discussion- Films and DID/ Somatic Links</p> <p>Read Chapter 7- Watch Psycho (1960) &amp; Complete Movie Questions</p> <p>Read Chapter 8- Watch Insomnia (2002) &amp; Complete Movie Questions</p> <p>Read Chapter 9- Watch Boys Don't Cry (1999) &amp; Complete Movie Questions</p>	
Unit 4	<p>Participate in the Online Discussion- Film &amp; Stereotypes</p> <p>Read Chapter 10- Then Watch We Need to Talk about Kevin (2012) &amp; Movie Que</p> <p>Read Chapter 11- Then Watch Flight (2012) &amp; Complete Movie Questions</p> <p>Read Chapter 12- Then Watch Raging Bull (1980) &amp; Complete Movie Questions</p>	
Unit 5	<p>Participate in the Online Discussion- Film- Personality and Violence</p> <p>Read Chapter 13- Then Watch No Country for Old Men (2007) &amp; Complete Movie Questions</p> <p>Read Chapter 15- Then Watch Kill Bill Vol 1 (2003) &amp; Complete Movie Questions</p>	
Unit 6	<p>Participate in the Online Discussion- Film &amp; Psychotherapy</p> <p>Read Chapter 16- Then Watch One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest (1975) &amp; complete movie questions</p> <p>Final Movie Project Review</p>	