

**PSYC 428**  
**Psychotic Disorders Seminar**  
**Winter 2026**

**Instructor:**

Dr. Christopher Bowie  
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Office hours: To be announced

**Required Readings**

There is no textbook for this class.

You will be given citations for required readings that you can access through the library or a link provided by the instructor.

**Course Description**

This seminar will provide students with an in-depth understanding of research in psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia. Topics will include neurocognitive dysfunction and its relationship to disability, pharmacological and psychological treatment, and assessment of symptoms across the lifespan. Emphasis is placed on readings, critical review of original research articles, and conceptualizing directions for future study.

**Course Format**

The professor will post lecture slides. The length of the presentations will vary, depending on the depth of the topic. These slides will be supplemented with directed learning opportunities, where students will be either provided with, or asked to access, additional resources to facilitate learning.

**Learning Objectives**

- Objective 1.* Students will recognize the signs and symptoms of psychotic disorders that differentiate them from other behaviours and other mental disorders
- Objective 2.* Students will be able to explain how neuropsychological models account for symptoms of psychosis
- Objective 3.* Students will debate the efficacy of various forms of treatment for psychotic disorders
- Objective 4.* Students will be able to interpret emerging scientific literature in order to critique studies examining the causes and treatments for psychotic disorders

**Assessment of Competency**

1. **Quizzes (20%)**

After the first week, very short quizzes will be posted to OnQ most weeks. The goal of these quizzes is to check your acquisition and synthesis of the knowledge in the lecture. The quizzes will have three to five questions each week. Your lowest quiz grade will be removed.

Quizzes will be posted following the Friday lecture and will be due prior to the next class. Late quizzes will be penalized 0.5 point per day late.

2. **Class Participation (25%)**

- (a) Students are expected to be able to formulate and ask questions of their peers' presentations and the instructor's lecture material. (10%)
- (b) Most classes will include a guided discussion of the required readings. Each student is expected to make verbal contributions to several of the articles throughout the term. Think of questions that build on the readings by integrating how future work can advance new research questions, health care policy, and/or personal recovery for those with psychosis. (15%) ***\*You are expected to have read all articles prior to the class during which they are presented to enhance your participation.***

**Grading Rubric, Section 2**

	Needs Improvement	Developing	Accomplished	Exemplary
Questions of peers	Very infrequently asks questions; Comments do not reflect familiarity with topics (0-3 Points)	Infrequently makes comments; Comments are responsive but do not stir further discussion (4-6 points)	Makes comments regularly; Comments reflect a good understanding of the topic and occasionally generate further discussion (7-8 points)	Makes comments regularly that reflect deeper understanding of the material; makes links among and between reading topics; Comments contribute to overall discussion (9-10 points)
Discussion of Papers	Makes very few comments; Surface level details of papers; Simply agrees with comments from others (0-3 points)	Infrequent comments; Comments focus on smaller details of a paper (4-6 points)	Makes comments regularly; Integrates findings across papers (7-8 points)	Frequently demonstrates a deep understanding of papers; Is able to integrate papers within and between classes; Comments reflect an appreciation for the history, contemporary, and future of our understanding of psychopathology (9-10 points)

### 3. Examining Original Data from Popular Media Reports (15%)

- A. Four teams of roughly an equal number of students will each identify a popular press article that cites a scientific report on schizophrenia/ psychosis.

They will retrieve the original data article that was cited.

\*\*Students should aim to find their media report and original paper by the end of week 2 and share it with the professor to make sure a) it is on topic and b) it is not already one selected by another group

Students will develop a short lecture and present it to the class. These lectures should be about 12 minutes and students can use slides or any other methods for presenting their case. Allocation of the presentation time should be equal among the group (i.e., about 4 minutes each).

Grading will be based on the critique of the article (5%) and a re-interpretation of the findings (5%) based on a more accurate interpretation of the data, each during the oral presentation.

- B. Additionally, each student will provide their own interpretation of another group's media selection in the form of a maximum 250 word "Letter to the Editor" requesting further consideration of the issues in future work. (5%)

Letters to the editor should be written in a professional tone, point out factual errors, and provide concrete reasons why the editor should be compelled to take action based on your suggestions. You should strive to make sure your letter is not simply a written version of a student's presentation. Incorporate your own thinking.

### 4. Journal Club (15%)

In groups of two to three students, teams will give a 15 minute presentation on an assigned journal article, followed by 10 minutes of questions from students and the professor.

Students should develop slides and/or other props for their presentation. The professor will provide the specific articles for assignment, based on a draw. Students can request non-preferred dates if they are not able to attend class that day or have a reasonable scheduling conflict.

I encourage students to feel free to break away from the rigidity (and dreariness) of APA style and produce a dynamic presentation that does not need to include a single bullet point!

Grading will be based on the comprehensiveness and synthesis of the content (5%), clarity of the presentation (5%), and ability to answer questions succinctly and accurately (5%).

All students should be prepared to ask questions of their peers, which will contribute to their credit toward class participation.

**5. Reflections on Experiential Assignments (25%)**

Behavioural assignments will be assigned each week. These assignments are meant for you to engage in a situation or role-play that is intended to give you a closer look at what life with symptoms of psychosis is like.

Some of these experiential assignments will be completed as part of class time, others will be done in the broader community.

You will submit your reflection **on three of the assignments** of your choice. Each reflection should be a 300-400 word summary. All three reflections are due one week after the final class.

Rubric for Experiential Assignments

	Needs Improvement	Developing	Accomplished
Engagement with material	Vague or unclear	Key points are missing. Reflection is focused on narrow range of the work	Clear description of the activity and how it affected the student
Taking the perspective of one with psychosis	Very little reference. Content is stigmatizing. Content is inaccurate	Refers to effects on a person with psychosis or how the student reacted to what it might be like to have the label/diagnosis/symptom	Thoughtfully connects the activity to what living with psychosis symptoms <i>might</i> feel like with details and without stereotyping.
Quality of Insight and Reflection	Very little or no personal reflection or reaction	Surface level acknowledgement of how the student reacted. Missing link between the activity and the reaction or the link between the illness/symptom and the reaction.	Demonstrates self-awareness (emotions, thoughts, beliefs) and identifies at least one way the activity led to a personal shift in understanding the illness and/or its implications

**Land Acknowledgement**

Let us acknowledge that Queen’s University rests on traditional Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee territory. To acknowledge this traditional territory is to recognize its longer history, one predating the

establishment of the earliest European colonies. It is also to acknowledge this territory's significance for the Indigenous Peoples who lived, and continue to live, upon it and whose practices and spiritualities are tied to the land and continue to develop in relationship to the territory and its other inhabitants today. Indigenous communities in Kingston/Katarokwi continue to reflect the area's Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee roots. There is also a significant Métis community and First Peoples from other Nations across Turtle Island present here today. To read more about the history of the land, see the [Queen's Encyclopedia](#) and to learn more about land acknowledgements, see the [Office of Indigenous Initiatives](#).

### **Statement on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity**

This class will contain content that addresses issues of EDII frankly and with respect. One of my roles as instructor is to emulate respectful and inclusive behaviour. This does not mean that all of my words and actions will always be received by everyone the same way and I will be monitoring how my behaviour affects others as we continue to work toward inclusive teaching and learning. Every member of this class is asked to show respect for every other member and to recognize that the process of engaging with challenging topics will necessitate respectful disagreement that should not transfer to exclusion or personal attacks.

### **Grading:**

All components of this course will receive numerical percentage marks. The final grade you receive for the course will be derived by converting your numerical course average to a letter grade according to Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale:

***Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale***

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Numerical Course Average (Range)</b>
A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	63-66
C-	60-62
D+	57-59
D	53-56
D-	50-52
F	49 and below

## **Accommodations for Disabilities.**

Queen's University is committed to working with students with disabilities to remove barriers to their academic goals. Queen's Student Accessibility Services (QSAS), students with disabilities, instructors, and faculty staff work together to provide and implement academic accommodations designed to allow students with disabilities equitable access to all course material (including in-class as well as exams). If you are a student currently experiencing barriers to your academics due to disability related reasons, and you would like to understand whether academic accommodations could support the removal of those barriers, please visit the [QSAS website](#) to learn more about academic accommodations or start the registration process with QSAS by clicking *Access Ventus* button at [Ventus | Accessibility Services | Queen's \(queensu.ca\)](#)

VENTUS is an online portal that connects students, instructors, Queen's Student Accessibility Services, the Exam's Office and other support services in the process to request, assess, and implement academic accommodations.

To learn more go to: <https://www.queensu.ca/ventus-support/students/visual-guide-ventus-students>

### Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances

Academic Consideration is a process for the University community to provide a compassionate response to assist students experiencing unforeseen, short-term extenuating circumstances that may impact or impede a student's ability to complete their academics. This may include but is not limited to any extenuating circumstance (illness, bereavement, traumatic event, injury, family emergency, etc.) which is short-lived, begins within the term, and will not last longer than 12 weeks - see [Academic Consideration](#) webpage for details (<https://www.queensu.ca/artsci/undergraduate/student-services/academic-consideration>)

Each Faculty has developed a protocol to provide a consistent and equitable approach in dealing with requests for academic consideration for students facing extenuating circumstances. For more information, undergraduate students in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences should consult the Faculty's webpage on [Academic Consideration in Extenuating Circumstances](#) and submit a request via the [Academic Consideration Request Portal](#). Students in other Faculties and Schools who are enrolled in this course should refer to the protocol for their home Faculty.

Students are encouraged to submit requests as soon as the need becomes apparent and to contact their instructor and/or course coordinator as soon as possible once academic consideration has been granted. Any delay in contact may limit the options available for academic consideration. While we encourage instructors to accommodate, each instructor has discretion in deciding whether or how to apply the Academic Consideration. For more information on the Academic Consideration process, what is and is not an extenuating circumstance, and to submit an Academic Consideration request, please see the Faculty of Arts and Science's [Academic Consideration website](#). ASO courses include links to information on Academic Consideration on your Course Homepage in onQ.

Please see the Teaching Team page for contact information for your instructor and TA(s), where relevant. For more information, please see the [Senate Policy on Academic Consideration for Students in Extenuating Circumstances](#).

## **Queen's Policy Statement on Academic Integrity**

Queen's University is dedicated to creating a scholarly community free to explore a range of ideas, to build and advance knowledge and to share the ideas and knowledge that emerge from a range of intellectual pursuits. Each core value of academic integrity, as defined in the [Senate Academic Integrity Policy](#), gives rise to and supports the next.

Honesty appears in presenting one's own academic work, whether in the context of an examination, written assignment, laboratory or seminar presentation. It is in researching one's own work for course assignments, acknowledging dependence on the ideas or words of another and in distinguishing one's own ideas and thoughts from other sources. It is also present in faithfully reporting laboratory results even when they do not conform to an original hypothesis. Further, honesty is present in truthfully communicating in written and/or oral exchanges with instructors, peers and other individuals (e.g. teaching assistants, proctors, university staff and/or university administrators).

Trust exists in an environment in which one's own ideas can be expressed without fear of ridicule or fear that someone else will take credit for them.

Fairness appears in the proper and full acknowledgement of the contributions of collaborators in group projects and in the full participation of partners in collaborative projects.

Respect, in a general sense, is part of an intellectual community that recognizes the participatory nature of the learning process and honours and respects a wide range of opinions and ideas. However, "respect" appears in a very particular sense when students attend class, pay attention, contribute to discussion and submit papers on time; instructors "show respect by taking students' ideas seriously, by recognizing them as individuals, helping them develop their ideas, providing full and honest feedback on their work, and valuing their perspectives and their goals" ("[The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity](#)", 3rd Edition, p. 8).

Ultimately, responsibility is both personal and collective and engages students, administrators, faculty and staff in creating and maintaining a learning environment supported by and supporting academic integrity. Courage differs from the preceding values by being more a quality or capacity of character – "the capacity to act in accordance with one's values despite fear" ("[The Fundamental Values of Academic Integrity](#)", 3rd edition, p. 10). Courage is displayed by students who make choices and integrous decisions that are followed by action, even in the face of peer pressure to cheat, copy another's material, provide their own work to others to facilitate cheating, or otherwise represent themselves dishonestly. Students also display courage by acknowledging prior wrongdoing and taking proactive measures to rectify any associated negative impact.

All of these values are not merely abstract but are expressed in and reinforced by the University's policies and practices.

### **Copyright of Course Material**

Course materials created by the course instructor, including all slides, presentations, handouts, tests, exams, and other similar course materials, are the intellectual property of the instructor. It is a departure from academic integrity to distribute, publicly post, sell or otherwise disseminate an instructor's course materials or to provide an instructor's course materials to anyone else for distribution, posting, sale or other means of dissemination, without the instructor's express consent. A student who engages in such conduct may be subject to penalty for a departure from academic integrity and may also face adverse legal consequences for infringement of intellectual property rights.

### **Late Policy**

I will accommodate anyone with a legitimate compassionate excuse and documentation.

Other than compassionate excuses, deductions of 5% will be assessed for each day that an assignment is late.

Students with letters of accommodation should, if possible, confirm the implementation of their accommodations prior to the listed due date. Please see the "Accommodations for Disabilities" section of this syllabus for more information.

Students experiencing short-term extenuating circumstances that are beyond their control and may affect their academic work should submit a request to their faculty office for academic consideration. Please see the “Academic Considerations for Students in Extenuating Circumstances” section of this syllabus for more details.

### **Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools**

Use of GenAI tools is not allowed in any part of student work for this course. Submitting AI-generated content constitutes a departure from academic integrity as defined by university Academic Integrity procedures.

## Class Schedule:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings &amp; Assignments</b>
Week 1	Psychosis: Introduction to the Concept and History	----
Week 2	Delusions, Negative Symptoms, & Thought Disorder	<i>Reading:</i>  1. Tandon, R., Nasrallah, H. A., & Keshavan, M. S. (2009). Schizophrenia, "just the facts" 4. Clinical features and conceptualization. <i>Schizophrenia research, 110</i> (1-3), 1-23.  2. Corlett, P. R., Krystal, J. H., Taylor, J. R., & Fletcher, P. C. (2009). Why do delusions persist?. <i>Frontiers in human neuroscience, 3</i> , 12.
Week 3	Hallucinations  &  Social Factors in the Development of Psychosis	<i>Reading:</i>  1. Larøi, F., & Woodward, T. S. (2007). Hallucinations from a cognitive perspective. <i>Harvard review of psychiatry, 15</i> (3), 109-117.  2. Ford, J. M., Morris, S. E., Hoffman, R. E., Sommer, I., Waters, F., McCarthy-Jones, S., ... & Cuthbert, B. N. (2014). Studying hallucinations within the NIMH RDoC framework. <i>Schizophrenia bulletin, 40</i> (Suppl_4), S295-S304.  3. Bentall, R. P., de Sousa, P., Varese, F., Wickham, S., Sitko, K., Haarmans, M., & Read, J. (2014). From adversity to psychosis: pathways and mechanisms from specific adversities to specific symptoms. <i>Social psychiatry and</i>

Week 4	Cognition as the Core Feature of Schizophrenia	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green, M. F., Horan, W. P., &amp; Lee, J. (2019). Nonsocial and social cognition in schizophrenia: current evidence and future directions. <i>World Psychiatry, 18</i>(2), 146-161.</li> <li>Bowie, C. R., Reichenberg, A., Patterson, T. L., Heaton, R. K., &amp; Harvey, P. D. (2006). Determinants of real-world functional performance in schizophrenia subjects: correlations with cognition, functional capacity, and symptoms. <i>American Journal of Psychiatry, 163</i>(3), 418-425.</li> </ol>
Week 5	Cognitive Enhancement	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bowie, C. R., Bell, M. D., Fiszdon, J. M., Johannesen, J. K., Lindenmayer, J. P., McGurk, S. R., ... &amp; Ueland, T. (2020). Cognitive remediation for schizophrenia: An expert working group white paper on core techniques. <i>Schizophrenia research, 215</i>, 49-53.</li> <li>Best, M. W., Milanovic, M., Iftene, F., &amp; Bowie, C. R. (2019). A randomized controlled trial of executive functioning training compared with perceptual training for schizophrenia Spectrum disorders: effects on neurophysiology, neurocognition, and functioning. <i>American Journal of Psychiatry, 176</i>(4), 297-306.</li> </ol>
Week 6	Social and Cultural Considerations	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilling, M., Howison, M., Frederick, T., Ross, L., Bellamy, C. D., Davidson, L., ... &amp; Kidd, S. A. (2017). Fragmented inclusion: Community participation and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer people with diagnoses of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. <i>American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 87</i>(5), 606. <b>*Journal Club 1</b></li> <li>Weisman de Mamani, A., &amp; Suro, G. (2016). The effect of a culturally informed therapy on self-conscious emotions and burden in caregivers of patients with schizophrenia: A randomized clinical trial. <i>Psychotherapy, 53</i>(1), 57. <b>*Journal Club 2</b></li> <li>Maura, J., &amp; de Mamani, A. W. (2017). Mental health disparities, treatment engagement, and attrition among racial/ethnic minorities with severe mental illness: A review. <i>Journal of Clinical Psychology in Medical Settings, 24</i>(3-4), 187-210.</li> </ol>

<p>Week 7</p>	<p>Medication Treatments</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Manschreck, T. C., &amp; Boshes, R. A. (2007). The CATIE schizophrenia trial: results, impact, controversy. <i>Harvard review of psychiatry</i>, 15(5), 245-258.</li> <li>2. Wunderink, L., Nieboer, R. M., Wiersma, D., Sytema, S., &amp; Nienhuis, F. J. (2013). Recovery in remitted first-episode psychosis at 7 years of follow-up of an early dose reduction/discontinuation or maintenance treatment strategy: long-term follow-up of a 2-year randomized clinical trial. <i>JAMA psychiatry</i>, 70(9), 913-920.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Media Presentations 1-2</b></p>
<p>Week 8</p>	<p>Challenging Issues and “Antipsychiatry”</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <p><b>Please read in the following order:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Szasz, T. (1993). Crazy talk: Thought disorder or psychiatric arrogance?. <i>British Journal of Medical Psychology</i>, 66(1), 61-67.</li> <li>2. Bentall, R. P., &amp; Pilgrim, D. (1993). Thomas Szasz, crazy talk and the myth of mental illness. <i>British journal of medical psychology</i>, 66(1), 69-76.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Media Presentations 3-4</b></p>
<p>Week 9</p>	<p>The Hearing Voices Movement</p>	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Corstens, D., Longden, E., McCarthy-Jones, S., Waddingham, R., &amp; Thomas, N. (2014). Emerging perspectives from the hearing voices movement: implications for research and practice. <i>Schizophrenia bulletin</i>, 40(Suppl_4), S285-S294.</li> <li>2. Jones, N., Marino, C.K. and Hansen, M.C., 2016. The Hearing Voices Movement in the United States: Findings from a national survey of group facilitators. <i>Psychosis</i>, 8(2), pp.106-117. <b>*Journal Club 3</b></li> <li>3. Rosen, C., McCarthy-Jones, S., Jones, N., Chase, K.A. and Sharma, R.P., 2018. Negative voice-content as a full</li> </ol>

		mediator of a relation between childhood adversity and distress ensuing from hearing voices. <i>Schizophrenia research, 199</i> , pp.361-366. <b>*Journal Club 4</b>
Week 10	Social Cognition	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Grant, N., Lawrence, M., Preti, A., Wykes, T., &amp; Cella, M. (2017). Social cognition interventions for people with schizophrenia: a systematic review focussing on methodological quality and intervention modality. <i>Clinical Psychology Review, 56</i>, 55-64.</li> <li>2. Vohs, J.L., Lysaker, P.H., Francis, M.M., Hamm, J., Buck, K.D., Olesek, K., Outcalt, J., Dimaggio, G., Leonhardt, B., Liffick, E. and Mehdiyoun, N., 2014. Metacognition, social cognition, and symptoms in patients with first episode and prolonged psychoses. <i>Schizophrenia Research, 153</i>(1-3), pp.54-59. <b>*Journal Club 5</b></li> <li>3. Grossman, M.J. and Bowie, C.R., 2021. Money talks: The influence of extrinsic motivators on social cognition in early episode psychosis. <i>Schizophrenia Research, 233</i>, pp.52-59. <b>*Journal Club 6</b></li> </ol>
Week 11	Innovative Treatments	<p><i>Reading:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Menon, M., Balzan, R. P., Harper, K., Kumar, D., Andersen, D., Moritz, S., &amp; Woodward, T. S. (2017). Psychosocial approaches in the treatment of psychosis: Cognitive Behavior Therapy for psychosis (CBTp) and Metacognitive Training (MCT). <i>Clinical schizophrenia &amp; related psychoses, 11</i>(3), 156-163</li> <li>2. Craig, T. K., Rus-Calafell, M., Ward, T., Leff, J. P., Huckvale, M., Howarth, E., ... &amp; Garety, P. A. (2018). AVATAR therapy for auditory verbal hallucinations in people with psychosis: a single-blind, randomised controlled trial. <i>The Lancet Psychiatry, 5</i>(1), 31-40. <b>*Journal Club 7</b></li> <li>3. Kopelovich, S.L., Stiles, B., Monroe-DeVita, M., Hardy, K., Hallgren, K. and Turkington, D., 2021. Psychosis REACH: Effects of a Brief CBT-Informed Training for Family and Caregivers of Individuals With Psychosis. <i>Psychiatric Services</i>, pp.appi-ps.</li> </ol>

		<p>4. Nahum, M., Lee, H., Fisher, M., Green, M.F., Hooker, C.I., Ventura, J., Jordan, J.T., Rose, A., Kim, S.J., Haut, K.M. and Merzenich, M.M., 2021. Online social cognition training in schizophrenia: a double-blind, randomized, controlled multi-site clinical trial. <i>Schizophrenia bulletin</i>, 47(1), pp.108-117.</p>
Week 12	Phenomenology of Psychosis, Stigma, and Recovery	<p>1. Link, B. G., &amp; Phelan, J. C. (2001). Conceptualizing stigma. <i>Annual review of Sociology</i>, 27(1), 363-385.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Letter to the Editor Due</b></p>