



**Jindal School of  
Liberal Arts & Humanities**  
India's First Transnational Humanities School



**O.P. Jindal Global University**  
A Private University Promoting Public Service  
www.jgu.edu.in

## **Representations of Mental Illness in Art History (Fall 2026)**

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**Course code: LH-M-PY16**

**Course credits: 4**

**Hours per week:**

**Class Timings:**

**Instructor: Angela Ann Joseph (Ph.D.)**

**Email: aajoseph@jgu.edu.in**

**Office hours:**

**Class Room No:**

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### **Course Description:**

This JSLH elective course is an exploration of mental illness and other facets of human psychological experience depicted in selected works of art in western art history. The primary goal of this course is to create greater awareness, understanding and knowledge of psychopathology through an artistic lens. It aims to elaborate on the lived experience of artists affected with mental health conditions, thereby putting the person with mental illness at the centre of understanding how psychological functioning impacts the human condition. This goal has been envisioned in alignment with graduate attributes of JSLH which place emphasis on knowledge, critical thinking, social responsibility, respect for diversity and ethics.

This interdisciplinary course will be useful for students interested in global mental health, clinical psychology, counselling, visual arts and art therapy. Students can expect to learn about the artist, the historical era and the psychological expression of the human mind as represented in visual images. The specific areas of concentration will include but are not limited to art representing asylums, bereavement, depression and bipolar disorders, suicide, anxiety, schizophrenia and psychosis, substance abuse, traumatic life events, sexual issues and rape, eugenics and involuntary euthanasia (degenerate art), depth psychology (Freud and Jung), marriage and family life, aging, finding meaning and forensic psychiatry

### **Learning outcomes:**

1. Students will be able to **identify** the characteristic features of common mental health disorders and the human psychological condition
2. Students will be able to **analyse** the historical context, the artist and inner workings of the mind as expressed through visual images
3. Students will be able engage in **self-awareness** and gain an **understanding** of how art as medium of communicating psychological states

## Evaluation and Grading

### Grade Breakdown

Assessment	Percentage towards final grade (%)	Deadline
Assignment 1: Analysing paintings by a selected artist on a particular psychological condition.	35	March
Assignment 2: Identifying an Art therapy technique, applying it on yourself and writing up your self reflection	35	April
End Semester Exam	30	To be Announced

### Assessment Details

Both internal assessments will be individual assignments. Details of each assignment will be shared at the beginning of the semester. The end semester exam will be a closed book exam.

### Grade Definition

O (80% & Above) [8.0]	Outstanding	Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability
A+ (75%-79%) [7.5]	Excellent	Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability
A (70%-74%) [7.0]	Very Good	Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyze existing materials and originality in thinking and presentation
A- (65%-69%) [6.0]	Good	Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills
B+ (60%-64%) [5.0]	Fair	Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills.

B (55%-59%) [4.0]	Acceptable	Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of study and reasonable critical and analytical skills
B- (50%-54%) [3.0]	Marginal	Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials and, poor critical and analytical skills
F (Below 50%)	Fail	Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant materials. Will require repeating the course

## Academic Integrity

In line with JGU policy, JSLH operates a zero-tolerance approach to Plagiarism. The unacknowledged use of material by others within your work is a violation of academic integrity and all reported cases will be investigated before potential disciplinary action. Instructors will address methods of citation and presentation within your oral presentations

## Disability Support and Accommodation Requirements

JGU endeavors to make all its courses accessible to students. All students with a known disability needing academic accommodations are required to register with the Disability Support Committee.

The Committee provides a range of accommodations to the conditions identified by the *Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016* and the *Mental Health Care Act 2017* and beyond. We provide support to students with a wide-range of health and learning-related conditions. These conditions include physical and mobility-related difficulties; visual impairment; hearing impairment; medical conditions; specific learning difficulties, e.g. dyslexia; dyscalculia, mental health conditions such as anxiety and panic attacks. The Disability Support Committee maintains strict confidentiality in its discussions. We respect the privacy of the students.

However, the students with long-standing conditions should register with the Committee at the beginning of the academic year. The DSC will take at least 14 business days to make arrangements with the respective departments. Please do reach out to us if you have any queries at Disability Support Committee: [dsc@jgu.edu.in](mailto:dsc@jgu.edu.in).

## Readings:

There is no required textbook for this course. A comprehensive reading list will be shared with you which consists of selected papers corresponding to each topic in the course. The links to each of these reading is pasted in the session outline below

## Lecture Schedule

Week/	Topics	Learning Outcomes	Readings/ Learning resources
Week 1	Asylums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the transition from inhumane to humane treatment of those hospitalized for mental illnesses with the introduction of Pinel's moral treatment. The series ranges from Pinel freeing the insane from their chains to life in the asylum: Bedlam, Saragossa, and St Remy.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/asylums.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/asylums.html</a>
Week 2	Bereavement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand how resilience and vulnerability manifest in the face of illness, loss, and adversity, and the uses of art in coping with loss.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/bereavement-coping-with-loss.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/bereavement-coping-with-loss.html</a>
Week 3 02/16	Bipolar and Depressive Symptoms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and understand depictions of depressive symptoms in artists, their response to depression in others, and how art assists in coping with depressive symptoms.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/depression-and-bipolar-disorder.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/depression-and-bipolar-disorder.html</a>
Week 4 02/23	Suicide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To inform students about artists who committed suicide and their underlying beliefs about suicide. They illustrate attitudes toward suicide (as heroic, as a crime, as apotheosis), document suicide in classic literature (Divine Comedy, Hamlet, Story of Lucretia) and realistically in everyday life. They depict its impact on survivors and on the community where the victim lived.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/suicide.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/suicide.html</a>

Week 5 03/02	Anxiety Disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appreciate the visual depiction of acute anxiety attacks, understand how anxiety linked to relationships, and psychosomatic disorders.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/anxiety-disorders.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/anxiety-disorders.html</a>
Week 6 03/09	Psychosis and Schizophrenia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe and appreciate depictions of an asylum, parricide, psychotic prodrome, and recovery from a psychotic episode.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/schizophrenia-and-psychosis.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/schizophrenia-and-psychosis.html</a>
Week 7 03/16	Substance Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand depictions of alcohol use and abuse, medical addiction and overdose, and family response to alcohol abuse.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/substance-abuse.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/substance-abuse.html</a>
Week 8 03/23	Traumatic Life Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describes the effects of traumatic life events—accidents, war, plague, Spanish Flu, tidal waves, involuntary institutional placement, abandonment at sea, and presidential assassination.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/traumatic-life-events.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/traumatic-life-events.html</a>
Week 9 03/30	Sexual Issues and Rape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss and understand unwanted sexual attention, prostitution, and rape.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/sexual-issues-and-rape.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/sexual-issues-and-rape.html</a>
Week 10 04/06	Eugenics and Involuntary Euthanasia (Degenerate Art)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand how Hitler and Goebbels appropriated the arts in Nazi Germany to advance the ideology of a master race leading to eugenic sterilization and condemnation of modern art as degenerate. Involuntary euthanasia was the result.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/eugenics-and-involuntary-euthanasia.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/eugenics-and-involuntary-euthanasia.html</a>

Week 11 04/13	Depth Psychology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand how Freud, Jung, Adolf Meyer and others were pivotal in introducing depth psychology beyond Europe and be able to trace the developments as the century progressed.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/depth-psychology.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/depth-psychology.html</a>
Week 12 04/20	Marriage and Family Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examine relationships between artists and their families and illustrates common interpersonal themes in psychiatry.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/marriage-and-family-life.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/marriage-and-family-life.html</a>
Week 13 04/27	Ageing	Examine aging in literature and art and trace self-portraiture in well-known artists.	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/aging.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/aging.html</a>
Week 14 05/04	Finding Meaning: Beliefs, Spirituality and Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examines the belief systems of artists and expressions of spirituality in their work. It begins in the Paleolithic era and progresses to myths, specific religious beliefs, and psychological interpretations of them.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/finding-meaning.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/finding-meaning.html</a>
Week 15 05/11	Forensic Psychiatry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To understand the beginnings of forensic psychiatry with the McNaughton rule, parricide, presidential assassination, Esquirol's monomanias, art theft, and legal aspects of art legacy in one's will.</li> </ul>	<a href="https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/forensic-psychiatry.html">https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/forensic-psychiatry.html</a>

### Mapping of Learning Outcomes with Assessments

Learning Outcomes	Assessments
<b>LO1:</b> Students will be able to <i>identify</i> the characteristic features of common mental health disorders and the human psychological condition	Internal Assignment 1 and End Semester Exam

<b>LO2:</b> Students will be able to <i>analyse</i> the historical context, the artist and inner workings of the mind as expressed through visual images	
<b>LO3:</b> Students will be able engage in <b>self-awareness</b> and gain an <b>understanding</b> of how art as medium of communicating psychological states	Internal Assignment 1 and End Semester Exam

**Psychology, Art, Creativity and Mental Illness Links:**

<https://sites.jamanetwork.com/art-and-images-in-psychiatry/index.html>

<https://hekint.org/psychiatry-psychology/>

<https://hekint.org/art-flashes/>