



December 2, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

I observed and conducted an evaluation for Amanda Halliburton's PSYC 3014: Abnormal Psychology course on September 30<sup>th</sup> from 11:15am-12:05pm. This class meets twice a week and a total of 40/55 students were present on the observation day.

Amanda is a fifth year in the Clinical Science Psychology program and is teaching this course for the first time. Amanda requested this teaching observation to ensure she had adequate student engagement in class discussions, the correct amount of coverage of the course material and on-task student behaviors.

Amanda began her class on time, and while I conducted a brief survey, she used the time to turn back their individual assignments. All but one student arrived on time for class so her students were prepared and punctual. She started her lecture by providing an outline of the lecture topics including the different paradigms, causal theories, biological factors and treatments for depression.

During the lecture, Amanda had an audible, clear voice and excellent pacing evident from the back of the room. Her slides contained the right number of words and she included many visuals. She made use of the classroom space by walking around the room while lecturing, gesturing to the material and maintaining eye contact with students.

Amanda excels at integration of the theory with other course material. For example, while she discussed one of the cognitive distortions, she related it back to Freud's theory explaining it as anger turned inward, linking the course material back to theory. This helps students think critically and examine conceptual frameworks that underlie course material. In addition to the linkage to theory, Amanda provided plenty of examples throughout and surveyed her students' understanding of the material by pausing and answering questions. In addition, she helped students compare and contrast the different theories in order to highlight the features of each theory. There were a total of three different student questions during the lecture portion and the lecture portion lasted forty minutes.

During this observation, there were a total of 21 students using laptops in the room. At the start of the lecture, 10 students were on-task and 2 students were off-task. Ten minutes later, 8 students were on-task and 2 students were off-task and ten minutes after that, 9

students were on task and 3 students were off task. This suggests the majority of laptop users in the room are using their devices to take notes.

Amanda concluded her lecture with a ten-minute class activity about ten common cognitive distortions. The students counted off into groups with each group generating examples for one cognitive distortion, then they promptly shared them with the rest of the class. A total of 7 new students participated with examples during the activity and 3 of the students who had previously participated added their examples while Amanda took notes on the board. Students were so engaged in the activity they didn't begin gathering their materials to leave before the end of class. After dismissal, Amanda answered two student questions about extra credit. She was friendly and approachable at the end of class.

In comparing her teaching performance in this class to the research methods class in a previous semester, Amanda has maintained her slide organization and excellent efficient use of class time. She has improved on confidence in lecturing, making eye contact with students and increased student engagement with her in class activity. From both observations, Amanda is an excellent instructor providing clarity and coverage of any information she teaches.

Student feedback revealed the overwhelming majority found course expectations and assignments were clear (97%), the content was arranged in a clear and logical manner (97%) and assignments were useful for learning (92%). The majority also said Amanda clearly communicated the course content excellently (74%) and always encouraged active engagement (71%). Students indicated Amanda stimulated interest in the course (91%). Students appreciated Amanda learning their names quickly, using real life examples and clearly organized assignments. Additional praise highlighted her skill in answering difficult questions, leading discussion and her expertise in abnormal psychology.

Given the positive student feedback and my classroom observations, Amanda is an organized, articulate and engaging instructor.

Sincerely,

Ruth-Anne E. Poli, M.S. Ed.  
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