Course Title: The Internet and Psychological Health
Course Code: PSY 95
Instructor: Elias Aboujaoude, MD, MA

Grade Options and Requirements:
• No Grade Requested (NGR)
  o This is the default option. No work will be required; no credit shall be received; no proof of attendance can be provided.
• Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
  o Students must attend at least four class sessions.
• Letter Grade (A, B, C, D, No Pass)
  o Students must attend at least five class sessions and write an eight-page paper.

*Please Note: If you require proof that you completed a Continuing Studies course for any reason (for example, employer reimbursement), you must choose either the Letter Grade or Credit/No Credit option. Courses taken for NGR will not appear on official transcripts or grade reports.

Tentative Weekly Outline:

Week 1: Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and Impulse Control Disorders (ICDs)
• Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) definitions
• Psychotherapy and psychopharmacology treatments
• Why Internet-related disorders resemble OCD
  o compulsive online pornography, compulsive video game use, compulsive texting
• Why Internet-related disorders resemble ICDs
  o Snapchat, online disinhibition
• Bibliography:
Week 2: Manufacturing a New Diagnosis: Problematic Internet Use

- Controversies in defining and measuring problematic Internet use
  - How much is too much?
  - Addiction to the Internet or addiction on the Internet?
- Focus on time spent vs. specific problematic behaviors (pornography, shopping, gambling, relationships)
- “Click Here if You Are Addicted to the Internet” (and other therapies)
- Bibliography:

Week 3: The Rise of the “e-Personality”

- Online vs. offline personality
  - Online impulsivity
    - Anthony Weiner; Marc Jacobs
  - Online aggression
    - The Internet and the id; cyberbullying; video games and subsequent violence
  - Online narcissism
    - Façade-book; selfie culture; “I” obsession
  - Online inattention
    - Rising rates of attention deficit disorder
- Bibliography:
Week 4: The Illusion of Knowledge
- The Internet made books more accessible (but made us impatient with books)
- Writing also transformed: the triumph of bitmojis
- The Internet as the perfect democracy (but also encourages demagoguery
- Memory lane: Why memorize anything when all information is at our fingertips?

Bibliography:

Week 5: The End of Privacy
- The myth of Snapchat
- Privacy and psychological health (Freud, Rand, Jung)
- How the availability of our personal information is disempowering
- The “right to be forgotten”

Bibliography:
Week 6: Oculus meets VRET: Pro-Mental Health Online Tools

- Social phobia: The Internet makes dating and relationships possible
- The Internet as a tool to delivery mental health treatment
  - Computerized CBT (cCBT)
  - Webcam therapy
  - Mobile therapy
  - Virtual Reality Exposure Therapy (VRET)

- Bibliography: