

Health Psychology Course Outline
Psychology 314, Section 901
Winter 07, Term 1

Instructor: Melady Preece, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 2pm

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Office Hours: By appointment

Class Times: Tuesday 6:00pm to 8:30pm

Location: West Mall Swing Space 221

Required Reading: Brannon, L., & Feist, J. (2007). Health Psychology: An introduction to behavior and health, 6e. Toronto: Thompson Wadsworth.

Course Description: The focus of this course is on the application of psychological principles to all areas of health and well-being. Topics include research methods in health psychology, psychoneuroimmunology, stress and coping, eating disorders, smoking, substance abuse, pain, chronic illness, alternative medicine, and health promotion.

Format: Lectures, videos, discussion.

Contacting Me: If you wish to email questions related to the course that are relevant to everyone, please send the questions to the group email. I will make sure that the question is answered appropriately. You will receive an email inviting you to Psyc 314 on Google groups. I will not answer questions about the course material if they are sent to my personal email. My personal account is for you to use if you have issues of a more individual or personal nature. However, to ensure a prompt response, please be sure to put "Psych 314" in the heading of any personal email.

Student Presentations: Many of you likely have personal knowledge regarding some of the topics we will be studying. I would like to offer you the opportunity to share your experiences/knowledge with the class. A bonus mark of 1-2% will be awarded for good quality presentations. This will be added to your final grade. If you would like to present, please contact me at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled presentation dates, so that I can help you with the length/breadth/scope of the presentation.

Evaluation:

1. Midterm exam (35%)
2. Health Psychology in the Media – written assignment (15%)
3. Health Behavior Diary (5%)
4. Final exam (45%)

Examinations:

- Midterm: Multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer. 1.5 hours allowed.
- Final exam: Multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer. 2 hours allowed.
- Exams will be based on lecture and assigned reading as outlined in the course schedule. **Final will be based only on material presented in the second half.**
- If you miss the midterm due to illness, you will be given the opportunity to take the midterm exam at the final exam sitting, after you have completed the final exam. The Psychology Department requires a written medical explanation. If you miss the final exam due to illness, you must contact Arts Advising to arrange completion of the course at another time, usually the end of the next term.

· Exams will be based on lecture, assigned readings, and any videos shown. Please note that lecture topics are subject to revision, although assigned textbook readings will not change.

· Examinations will cover both text and lecture material, so attendance at lectures is important for any student who wishes to do well. I will use the lecture time to focus on topics that I feel are particularly important or interesting. Sometimes I will summarize, review, or expand on material that is in the text, and other times I will present additional material. However, not all text material will be covered in lecture, and not all lecture material will be included in the assigned text material. Nonetheless, you are responsible for all assigned text material and all lecture material.

Written assignment, "Health Psychology in the News"

An important objective of this course is to improve your ability to critically examine health research, particularly as it relates to health behaviors. As an assignment, you will identify a news article on a topic related to health behaviors. Then find at least three research articles from peer-reviewed journals on this topic (I recommend using www.scholar.google.com). Avoid purely medical research, and look for research that has a psychological component. Cite your sources using APA style (same as your text book). Attach the media article to your paper. Your paper should be between 3 and 5 pages double-spaced. Newspaper or magazine articles are preferred. However, a "news" article from an online news report, such as MSN, is also acceptable.

Health behavior diary

The purpose of this assignment is to increase your understanding of health behaviors by using yourself as a subject. You will select a health behavior that you would like to improve, e.g., exercise, diet, smoking, drinking, etc., and record that health behavior in a diary format for one week. You will submit your record along with a one to two page double-spaced discussion of what you learned from this exercise.

Final exams:

The exam period is from Wednesday, December 5 through December 19, inclusive. Saturdays are included in the exam schedule. Please do not make travel plans during this time, as you will not be accommodated.

How your final grade is determined:

- Grading systems are always scaled in a way that indicates a student's performance *relative* to others in the class. The absolute value of a score is often subjective and may offer little assessment of a student's performance in the absence of comparisons with other students' scores.
- In order to make your grade reflect your standing relative to others in the class (and to other classes in Psychology), your raw scores are transformed to derived scores with a standard average and a standard distribution. You may be reassured to know that these same transformations are used by many national testing services, such as the GRE, SAT, MCAT, LSAT etc. The Psychology Department's recommended guidelines for 300 level courses are shown below.

Psyc 300 and 400 level courses

Class Performance	Mean	SD	% A	% A+B	% Fail
Good	70	13	22	56	6
Average	68	13	18	50	8
Weak	66	13	14	44	11

Lecture Schedule and Readings

Date	Lecture, Video	Required Reading, Assignments Due
Sept. 4	The Field of Health Psychology	· Syllabus Chapter 1, Introducing Health Psychology
Sept. 11	-Research Methods in Health Psychology, Epidemiology, special topics in health research	· Chapter 2, Conducting Health Research
Sept. 18	Stress, Coping with Stress	Chapter 5, Defining and Measuring Stress
Sept. 25	Psychoneuroimmunology <i>Video, Mind-Body connection</i>	Chapter 6, Stress & Disease
Oct. 2	Pain	Chapter 7, Understanding Pain Chapter 8, Managing Stress & Pain
Oct. 9	Health Behaviors	Chapter 3 – Seeking Health Care, Hypochondriasis
Oct. 16	Medical Systems <i>Bitter Medicine – Video</i>	Chapter 4 – Adhering to Medical Advice
Oct. 23	MIDTERM EXAM Smoking	6:00 – 7:20 PM, CHAPTERS 1 THROUGH 8 Chapter 13, Smoking Tobacco
Oct. 30	Drinking Harm Reduction, Insite <i>Video: Fix</i>	Chapter 14, Alcohol and Other Drugs Health Psychology in the News DUE

Nov. 6	Eating and Obesity	Chapter 15, Eating and Weight Chapter 16, Exercising
Nov. 13	Cardiovascular Disease Cancer	Chapter 9, Behavioral Factors in Cardiovascular Disease Chapter 10, Behavioral Factors in Cancer
Nov. 20	Coping with Chronic Illness <i>Video: In My Own Time</i>	Chapter 11, Living with Chronic Illness Health Diary DUE
Nov. 27	Alternative Medicine Death and Dying	Chapter 8, pgs 190-197 www.deathclock.com
Dec. 4	Review, Student Presentations <i>Video: Tibetan Book of the Dead</i>	
TBA	FINAL EXAM	

