

Psychology 427
January 6, 2022

Advanced Topics in Health Psychology

Instructor: Dr. Anita DeLongis
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zoom office hrs: Thursdays 4-5 and by appointment
<https://ubc.zoom.us/j/6115430445?pwd=ZHgrOW1FL0p1MjV5cVVuckhyaldjUT09>

Teaching Assistant: Patrick Klaiber
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zoom office hrs: after class time or by appointment

Class meetings: Tues 3-5:30 pm

Course content: This seminar provides an overview of current theory and research in the field of health psychology. The course emphasizes the biopsychosocial model of health and illness. The aims of this course are threefold. The first goal is for students to become acquainted with current knowledge in substantive areas, such as psychosocial risk factors in the development of illness; stress, coping, and social support; and the impact of illness on the person and larger social units in which they are embedded. The second goal is for students to develop an understanding of the models, theories, and methods used to examine psychosocial factors in health and disease. The third goal is to consider all issues discussed with an awareness of diversity and the importance of understanding the sociocultural context. Health psychology is a broad, interdisciplinary field, so the course will necessarily be selective in coverage. We will cover key issues and concepts in the field, with a focus on stress, coping, and social support. Given the current COVID pandemic, we will give particular attention to the ongoing health crisis.

Course format: The course is a discussion seminar. Given this, students are asked to read and think critically about the assigned material each week. Each week 2 scholarly journal articles and/or book chapters will be distributed for the following week based on key topics in health psychology. Following the initial class meeting, which will be an orientation and course overview meeting with the entire class, the class will be broken into two groups, with class time divided between meeting with the TA to get help on term projects and meeting with the professor to discuss the course material and readings. Group A will meet with the professor while Group B meets with the TA. Then Group B will meet with the professor while Group A meets with the TA. Group membership will be assigned following the orientation meeting. The course format may need to alter during the term, depending on UBC policy re COVID. However, I will do everything possible to

maintain an inclusive policy that does not exclude students who are unable to attend in person class meetings given health and/or travel restrictions.

Discussion Question: Each week, please submit a key discussion question before class and please come to class prepared to lead a discussion addressing that question. Please submit your discussion question via Canvas by 8 pm Monday (PST) each week. This will allow time for other students to read your question and consider it prior to our class meeting on Tues.

Asynchronous option: If you are unable to participate in class meetings, please let Dr. DeLongis know as soon as possible. In this case, each week nonattending students are asked to submit a thought paper based on the readings for that week. These should be critical commentary (3-5 double-spaced pages) on the readings. These are not meant to be summaries of the material. Rather, they are intended to give you an opportunity to develop and express your thoughts about the readings in lieu of class discussion. These are due by 8 pm on Monday (PST) prior to the class you are unable to attend.

Term Projects: There are two options for term projects in this course: a) an empirical paper examining a psychological, social, or behavioral factor as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic (using de-identified data collected by the professor, TA, and Dr. Sin along with other members of their research teams throughout COVID), or b) a literature review on a health psychology topic. (A third alternative is to work on data collected in your own lab if you are currently working in a health psychology lab – but this must be approved by the TA and professor in conjunction with your research supervisor in your home lab). Access to data will not be provided without a certificate indicating completion of the human subjects ethics tutorial (the TA will provide details on how to complete this, <https://tcps2core.ca/welcome>) and subsequent UBC ethics approval for you to access the data.

A 2-page project proposal plus bibliography, with a clearly stated research question/hypothesis, rationale, and methods (including search strategy or key analytical variables), is due by 5 pm on February 8th.

Term papers should be prepared in APA style <https://apastyle.apa.org> and should be no more than 25 double-spaced pages in length including title page, abstract, references, figures and tables. Detailed instructions for both project proposals and term papers will be provided during class, and the hour class time each week with the TA will be devoted to helping you prepare your term paper. Please feel free to discuss your ideas for your term project with the professor and TA while you are in the planning stages. *Term papers are due by 5 pm April 12.*

- Presentations:** The last three weeks of the term will be devoted to student presentations. Each student is asked to give a presentation on their term project. Presentations should be 8-10 minutes in length with accompanying power point slides that can be shared with the class. Please feel free to discuss your presentation with the professor and TA while you are in the planning stages. If you are unable to attend class for your presentation, please discuss the asynchronous option of recording your presentation in advance of the class meeting.
- Evaluation:** Evaluations are based on discussion questions, class participation and discussion (30%), project proposals (5%), term papers (40%), and presentations (25%). There will be no exams in the course. Please feel free to discuss your course marks, progress and evaluation with Dr. DeLongis *at any time during the course*.
- Readings:** In addition to a chapter assigned from the Revenson & Gurung Handbook, each week a corresponding journal article or book chapter will be distributed for reading and discussion for the following week. Readings and topics will be finalized based on class interest and feedback and will include both classic papers in health psychology and emerging literature on psychosocial factors in health.
- Primary Reading:** Revenson, T. A., & Gurung, R. A. R. (2019). *Handbook of Health Psychology*. NY: Taylor & Francis. (digitally available in the UBC library).

Tentative Course Schedule:

Discussion sessions

(topics and readings subject to change based on student interest)

- Week 1 (Jan 11): Orientation and class introductions
- Week 2 (Jan 18): Stress and health: Chapter 15
- Week 3 (Jan 25): Coping: Chapter 16
- Week 4 (Feb 1): Social support: Chapter 20
- Week 5 (Feb 8): Personality and health: Chapter 14
- Week 6 (Feb 15): Health behavior: **TBA**
- READING BREAK**
- Week 7 (Mar 1): Health disparities: Chapter 21
- Week 8 (Mar 8): Gender and health: Chapter 22
- Week 9 (Mar 15): Aging and health: Chapter 19
- Week 10 (Mar 22): Student presentations
- Week 11 (Mar 29): Student presentations
- Week 12 (Apr 5): Student presentations

Project Development Sessions

(topics subject to change based on student feedback)

- Week 1 (Jan 11): Orientation, course format overview, and class introductions.
- Week 2 (Jan 18): Bases of writing an empirical research paper or literature review
- Week 3 (Jan 25): How to come up with a good research question/hypothesis
- Week 4 (Feb 1): Literature review and citation management
- Week 5 (Feb 8): Data analyses (SPSS or R for beginners)
- Week 6 (Feb 15): Statistics and results presentation
- READING BREAK
- Week 7 (Mar 1): Results presentation for literature review
- Week 8 (Mar 8): How to write a good discussion section
- Week 9 (Mar 15): Time for questions
- Week 10 (Mar 22): Student presentations
- Week 11 (Mar 29): Student presentations
- Week 12 (Apr 5): Student presentations

Psychology Department Grading Policy

In order to reduce grade inflation and maintain equity across multiple course sections, all psychology courses are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions. The average grade in 100- and 200-level Psychology classes will be 72 for an exceptionally strong class, 70 for an average class, and 68 for a weak class, with a standard deviation of 14. The corresponding figures for 300- and 400-level classes will be 75, 73, and 71, with a standard deviation of 13. Scaling may be used in order to comply with these norms; grades may be scaled up or down as necessary by the professor or department. Grades are not official until they appear on a student's academic record. You will receive both a percent and a letter grade for this course. At UBC, they convert according to the key below:

A+	90-100%	B+	76-79%	C+	64-67%	D	50-54%
A	85-89%	B	72-75%	C	60-63%	F	0-49%
A-	80-84%	B-	68-71%	C-	55-59%		

What will happen if you or the Teaching Team experience illness or a personal emergency? Particularly given omicron, it is possible that any of us, including the professor or the TA, will experience illness or a personal emergency during this course. If you are unwell, please do not attend any in person meetings. We are committed to helping you to complete your coursework and to get back on track. [If you miss marked coursework \(assignment, presentation, participation in class\) and the course is still in-progress, speak with me immediately to find a solution for your missed coursework.](#)

[If classes are over, fill out Arts Academic Advising's online academic concession form](#) immediately, so that an advisor can evaluate your concession case.

If you are a student in a different Faculty, please consult [your Faculty's webpage on academic concession](#), and then contact me if appropriate.

If the professor or TA are ill or have a personal emergency, we will communicate with you immediately and as often as we can, using the Announcements feature in Canvas. We will invite you to continue as much as possible with the scheduled learning activities, and we will communicate with you any modifications (e.g., to availability, timeliness of feedback) that are impacted. We ask for your patience, flexibility, and compassion, as well as continued dedication to your and classmates' learning during that time.

Academic Integrity:

The academic enterprise is founded on honesty, civility, and integrity. As members of this enterprise, all students are expected to know, understand, and follow the codes of conduct regarding academic integrity. At the most basic level, this means submitting only original work done by you and acknowledging all sources of information or ideas and attributing them to others as required. This also means you should not cheat, copy, or mislead others about what is your work. Violations of academic integrity (i.e., misconduct) lead to the breakdown of the academic enterprise, and therefore serious consequences arise and harsh sanctions are imposed. For example, incidences of plagiarism or cheating may result in a mark of zero on the assignment or exam and more serious consequences may apply when the matter is referred to the Office of the Dean. Careful records are kept in order to monitor and prevent recurrences. A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the [UBC Calendar: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Academic accommodations help students with a disability or ongoing medical condition overcome challenges that may affect their academic success. Students requiring academic accommodations register with the [Centre for Accessibility](#). The Centre will determine that student's eligibility for accommodations in accordance with [Policy LR7: Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#).

Land Acknowledgement statement

UBC's Point Grey Campus is located on the traditional, ancestral, occupied, and unceded territory of the xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam) people. I acknowledge the land rights of the Musqueam people, who for millennia have passed their culture, history, and traditions from one generation to the next on this site.