

Psychology 427

Advanced Topics in Health Psychology

Instructor: Dr. Anita DeLongis
adelongis@psych.ubc.ca
office hr: Thursdays 3-4 and by appointment

Class meetings: Wednesday 3-5:30 pm

Classroom: Kenny 4001
Group Meeting rooms: Kenny 4002, 4003, 4004

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 of health psychology, 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 equity and 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. We will give particular attention to current issues in health.

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. You are welcome to form small groups of 2-5 to work on your course projects.

Discussion Question: Each week, please submit one 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 Tuesday (PST). This will allow time for other students to read your question and consider it prior to our class meeting on Wednesday.

Course Projects: There are three options for projects in this course: a) a literature review on a health psychology topic; b) an empirical paper examining a psychological, social, or behavioral factor as it relates to the COVID-19

pandemic (using de-identified data collected by our research team; or c) an empirical paper using data collected in a lab with another professor if you are currently working in a health psychology lab – but this must be approved by the professor in conjunction with your research supervisor in your home lab. Access to our data cannot be provided without a certificate indicating completion of the human subject ethics tutorial.

<https://tcps2core.ca/welcome>

and subsequent UBC ethics approval for you to access the data.

Regardless of which option you choose for your course project, you are welcome to work in small groups of 2-5. Detail instructions will be provided in class.

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 2*.

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. Please feel free to discuss your ideas for your term project with the professor while you are in the planning stages. *Term papers are due by 5 pm April 12*.

- Presentations:** The final classes 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 while you are in the planning stages. Please submit your slides to the professor via e-mail prior to your presentation.
- 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 10):	Orientation and class introductions
Week 2 (Jan 17):	Stress and health: Chapter 15
Week 3 (Jan 24):	Coping: Chapter 16
Week 4 (Jan 31):	Health behavior: Conner, M., & Norman, P. (2017). Health behaviour: Current issues and challenges, <i>Psychology & Health</i> , 32:8, 895-906, DOI: 10.1080/08870446.2017.1336240
Week 5 (Feb 7):	Personality and health: Chapter 14
Week 6 (Feb 14):	Social support: Chapter 20
READING BREAK	
Week 7 (Feb 28):	Health disparities: Chapter 21
Week 8 (Mar 6):	Gender and health: Chapter 22
Week 9 (Mar 13):	Aging and health: Chapter 19
Week 10 (Mar 20):	Student presentations
Week 11 (Mar 27):	Student presentations
Week 12 (Apr 3):	Student presentations
Week 13 (Apr 10):	Final Class Wrap up

Department of Psychology 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? It is possible that any of us, including the professor, will experience illness or a personal emergency during this course. If you are unwell, please do not attend 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 Dr. DeLongis 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 Dr. DeLongis is ill or has a personal emergency, she will communicate with you immediately and as often as she can, using the Announcements feature in Canvas. She will invite you to continue as much as possible with the scheduled learning activities, and will communicate with you any modifications (e.g., to availability, timeliness of feedback) that are impacted. She asks 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 xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam) people. We 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.