

Psychology 432-010 – Spring 2013

Health Psychology
T, TH, 8:00-9:15 am
Gore Hall 115

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Office hours: Wed. 10-11 am (by appointment)

Course Objectives: The main objective of this course is to provide an introduction to the study and field of health psychology. The course will focus on research and theory that concerns the role of biological, psychological and social factors in relation to mental and physical health. The biopsychosocial model of health and disease serves as a foundation for the concepts presented in the course. This model provides a framework for understanding how our biology, social environment, thoughts, attitudes, personality and behaviors affect our physical health and vice versa. We will discuss how these principles of health psychology relate to our everyday living as well as to acute and chronic disease. Students will also learn theory and research in social, developmental, and cultural psychology relating to physical and mental health outcomes. Additionally, students will understand the complex interplay of biological, social, and psychological factors and how these factors contribute to our health. Further, students will understand the research methodology utilized to produce many basic health psychology related claims, and will evaluate through written critical analyses of research articles the adequacy of such empirical claims. Finally, students will communicate effectively their knowledge of basic health psychology principles through presentations of research-based principles within small in-class group activities, as well as through writing empirically-based, integrative essay answers on exams.

Required Text: Taylor, S.E. (2012). Health Psychology, 8th Edition.

This text provides a comprehensive introduction to health psychology including important topics in the field as well as the origin, current issues and future directions for the field. The biopsychosocial model is introduced and employed throughout the text. I have taught from the 7th edition of this text as well. It is very similar to the new 8th edition, although it does not include some of the latest research. Therefore, if you are willing to forgo having the latest information, you can likely get by fine with the 7th edition, and you will pay much less for it! You also may be able to purchase or rent an e-book of the 8th edition, which is fine with me as well. If you are interested in this option, please see the CourseSmart website here: http://www.coursesmart.com/IR/3712938/0077378318?__hdv=6.8

Class Sakai website: We will utilize a website set up for our class through the University's Sakai system at www.udel.edu/sakai. You can access the site by logging on with your student network id and password through the University of Delaware's website. On the Sakai website you will find important information relevant to the course including the course syllabus, lecture slides, readings class announcements, contact information, and your grades for exams and assignments. Additionally, you will submit many assignments through the course website.

Examinations: There will be three in-class exams. Each exam will be worth **100 points** toward your final grade. The exams will consist of multiple-choice and essay questions. The exams will be non-cumulative (except for the optional final exam) and will cover material from the text, as well as

material from in-class lectures, group discussions, research article presentations and videos. It is expected that students will take the exams on the scheduled dates. If you miss one of these exams on the scheduled dates for any reason, you will not be permitted to take the exam at a later time.

However, if you are not able to complete an exam on the scheduled examination date, for any reason, you will be allowed to take a comprehensive essay exam during finals week that will cover concepts from across the semester to replace the exam that you missed. If you miss more than one exam date, you will only be able to replace one of the missed exams with the comprehensive final exam, and you will receive a 0 score on the 2nd missed exam.

Additionally, if you are not pleased with one of your regular exam scores, you will be allowed to take the optional final exam during finals week as a replacement for your lowest regular exam score. Whichever exam score (i.e., the regular exam or the final exam) is higher, will count toward your final grade.

It will be the student's responsibility to inform the professor that he/she is planning to take the optional final exam to replace either a missed exam or a low score exam.

Research Article Group Presentations:

One significant goal of this course is to introduce you to primary source journal articles that relate to the major content areas we cover in class (e.g., cancer, cardiovascular disease, pain, etc.). Therefore, as advanced undergraduates, you will be required, within small peer groups (approximately 2-3 students), to find and review a research article of interest to you within the field of health psychology. Your group will be required to present the article to the professor for approval before moving forward with this assignment. **You must submit your article to the professor for approval early, as the article needs to be approved and posted for the class 1 week before your presentation, giving the class time to read and analyze the article.** Then, your group will be required to lead a discussion with the class (PowerPoint presentation) about the article you have found.

A standardized template for your presentation is provided on Sakai to help your group create the presentation and lead the discussion on your assigned date. You should also utilize the Jordan & Zanna (1999) article titled "How to Read a Journal Article in Social Psychology" to help you prepare your presentation. You are also required to read Dr. Beth Morling's chapter (2011) on different types of research claims and validity of research findings, found online at this address: <http://bit.ly/W6QsO5>. This chapter will prepare you to present sophisticated critiques of the research articles, which is required to obtain high grades on these presentations. The presentations will be about 10-15 minutes long, after which you will lead the class in a discussion of the research findings for approximately 15 additional minutes.

Topics and groups for these presentations will be assigned on a first come first served basis. Specifically, the professor will provide the major content areas for presentations, and students will then have the opportunity in class to sign up for a topic until each topic is covered. The presentation score will be worth **50 points** toward your total grade. You may also be required to hand in an evaluation to the professor of each member in your group. This will help ensure that each group member participates equally in the group presentation work and will be considered when assigning group presentation grades to each person.

Research Article Critical Analyses:

Additionally, before coming to class on a group presentation day, students will be required to **read each journal article** that the groups present. Furthermore, students will turn in written critical analyses of 3 research articles throughout the semester, requiring students to briefly analyze the main

sections of the article as outlined by Jordan & Zanna (1999) in their paper “How to Read a Journal Article in Social Psychology,” which will be provided on Sakai. You are also required to read Dr. Beth Morling’s chapter (2011) on different types of research claims and validity of research findings, found online at this address: <http://bit.ly/W6QsO5>. This chapter will prepare you to write sophisticated critiques of the research articles, which is required to obtain high grades on these papers. All students will be required to **complete a critical analysis of 3 research articles throughout the semester**, one of which cannot be the article their group presentation is on. The analyses will be due at 10:00 pm the night before the respective article’s in-class group presentation is held, and will be submitted via the “Assignments” tab on Sakai. A copy of the research article that each group presents will be provided by the presenting group, for the class, at least one week in advance.

Students should also bring a copy of their critical analyses assignments to class so that they are able to use their notes during the in-class discussion. Reading the articles and preparing the brief analyses will make our discussions during the group presentations interesting and fun, and will help you understand the concepts presented in the articles more fully. The critical analyses papers will be graded critically for quality of writing, content, and critical thought and will each be worth **50 points** toward students’ total grade. **Critical Analyses will not be accepted late.** They are designed to help facilitate a discussion in-class; therefore, handing the papers in late will not result in any credit. While there will be about 8 research articles presented by groups in class, students are only required to complete 3 critical analyses papers, and will not be allowed to submit more than 4 papers for credit. Therefore, students will have the opportunity to write their analyses on papers that they are particularly interested in, or surrounding due dates that are easier for their respective schedules.

Grading:

Grades will be based on three in-class exam scores (100 points per exam), your critical analyses papers (50 points per paper), and your group research article presentation (50 points).

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale (percentage rounded up at .5):

100-93=A	92-90=A-	89-88=B+
87-83= B	82-80=B-	79-78=C+
77-73=C	72-70=C-	69-68=D+
67-63=D	62-60=D-	59-below=E

In accordance with the **American with Disabilities Act**, if you require a reasonable accommodation due to a disability, please discuss your need with the instructor during the first week of class. Students seeking academic accommodations should also register with the University’s ADA office, which coordinates accommodations and offers support for students with disabilities. The ADA office can be contacted at 302.831.8670.

Academic Dishonesty: You are expected to be familiar with the University’s policy on Academic Dishonesty. Please refer to the Student Guide to University Policies for a description of what constitutes academic dishonesty and the consequences of engaging in this behavior.

Tentative course schedule:

<u>Week#</u>	<u>Date:</u>	<u>Topic(s)</u>	<u>Readings:</u>
1	2/05/13	Course Overview and Syllabus	
	2/07/13	Introduction to Health Psychology	Chapter 1
2	2/12/13	Health Beliefs and Behaviors	Chapter 3
	2/14/13	Health Beliefs and Behaviors	
3	2/19/13	Promoting Health Behaviors	Chapter 4
	2/21/13	Promoting Health Behaviors Group Presentation/ Critical Analysis #1 (Due 2/20)	
4	2/26/13	Stress, Coping and Disease	Chapter 6
	2/28/13	Stress, Coping and Disease Group Presentation/Critical Analysis #2 (Due 2/27)	
5	3/5/13	No Class!	
	3/7/13	Moderators of Stress	Chapter 7
6	3/12/13	Moderators of Stress Group Presentation/Critical Analysis #3 (Due 3/11)	
	3/14/13	Exam #1	
7	3/19/13	Utilizing Health Care	Chapters 8, 9
	3/21/13	Eating Disorders	Chapter 4
8	3/23-3/31	No classes, Spring Break!	
9	4/2/13	Cancer	Chapter 14
	4/4/13	Cancer Group Presentation/Critical Analysis #4 (Due 4/3)	
10	4/9/13	No Class!	
	4/11/13	Immunity and HIV/AIDS	Chapter 14
11	4/16/13	Immunity and HIV/AIDS Group Presentation/Critical Analysis #5 (Due 4/15)	

	4/18/13	Exam #2	
12	4/23/13	Cardiovascular Disease	Chapters 2, 13
	4/25/13	Cardiovascular Disease Group Presentation/Critical Analysis #6 (Due 4/24)	
13	4/30/13	Pain and Pain Management	Chapter 10
	5/2/13	Diabetes Group Presentation/Critical Analysis #7 (Pain or Diabetes) (Due 5/1)	Chapter 14
14	5/7/13	Death and End of Life Care	Chapter 12
	5/9/13	Death and End of Life Care Group Presentation/ Critical Analysis #8 (Due 5/8)	
15	5/14/13	Exam #3	

Optional Final Exam Date TBD