

PSY 255: HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

Fall 2014 * MWF 8:00am-8:50am * Hopkins Center 310

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Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live. **Jim Rohn**

The first wealth is health. **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Liberty is to the collective body, what health is to every individual body. Without health no pleasure can be tasted by man; without liberty, no happiness can be enjoyed by society. **Thomas Jefferson**

Capital is reckless of the health or length of life of the laborer, unless under compulsion from society. **Karl Marx**

Good health and good sense are two of life's greatest blessings. **Publilius Syrus**

Please note that all facets of the syllabus are subject to change at my discretion.

Course Overview

Health psychology is the study of ways in which psychological factors affect physical health. It includes topics like 1) ways in which stress may affect our health, 2) social support and other means of coping with stress, 3) persuading people to adhere to treatments and behaviors that promote their health, and 4) psychological factors in chronic illness. We will also pay careful attention to ways in which socioeconomic status (SES) relates to health outcomes as people with low SES often have limited access to health care and health insurance.

Course Requirements

I will make every reasonable attempt to grade blind. In order to maintain blind grading on assignments submitted through turnitin.com, you must create a new or edit an existing turnitin.com account. For your first name, enter your four-digit personal class ID number. For your last name, enter your four-digit personal class ID number. Submit all of your assignments for this class using this account that keeps your identity masked from me.

Exams. Four equally weighted exams consisting of short answer questions. Each exam is worth 15% of your course grade. These exams will not be cumulative. These will be 50-minute exams. Exam grading will be done blind. **Review sheets will be posted on Moodle a week in advance.**

Group Health Intervention Project. You and two other students will present a health intervention to a community agency or group. Your group will also submit a written report of your intervention project, and each member will be graded individually for his/her own written component; you will be graded together for the fourth section of the report and for the implementation of the intervention. Your written report will be worth 20% of your course grade. You must submit both a hardcopy and a copy on turnitin.com. **The class ID number for turnitin.com is 8434038. The password is class.** The group implementation component will be worth 20% of your grade. **More specific instructions regarding this assignment will be posted on Moodle.** The Group Intervention Project timeline is in the instructions for the assignment on Moodle.

Required Readings

Our main text will be *Health Psychology* 8th edition (2014) by Linda Brannon, Jess Feist and John Updegraff, Wadsworth Publishing, ISBN: 9781133593072. You may purchase it at the AC Bookstore. There are also three readings on Moodle: an article by Norton and Ariely (2011) on perceptions of wealth distributions, an article by Gudrais (2008) on poverty and a chapter by Rhodes and Jason (1991) on community needs assessment.

Miscellaneous

1) **I offer extra credit for participation in studies through the Psychology Department Participant Pool.** I generally do not accept more than 120 minutes of participation, so plan accordingly. In order to receive credit you must a) participate in studies through the Austin College IRB and b)

turn in a sheet signed by the experimenter documenting your participation and with your brief explanation of the study. You may earn no more than two points of extra credit on your final course grade (one point for every 60 minutes). These research opportunities are current studies being conducted by your peers and/or the psychology faculty, and are opportunities to contribute to the knowledge of the field as well as your classmates' education. Participation is a serious commitment that requires honest and thoughtful responses. If you give false, misleading, or thoughtless (i.e., choosing "4" on every item on the scale) data, it not only compromises the work of your peers and faculty but can potentially cripple research that took months or years to set up. The researchers can see how much time it took you to complete the study (even the online surveys) and have to throw out data that is clearly carelessly entered. If you do not have enough time to complete the research appropriately (as described in the informed consent statement), do it at another time. More information may be found at the Research Opportunities link on the Psychology Department webpage: <http://artemis.austincollege.edu/acad/psych/>. Incomplete grades are only appropriate when an unforeseen circumstance (e.g., an extended illness or severe accident) affects your ability to complete the assignments for this class in a timely manner. The incomplete allows you to complete the missed work at a later time; it does not allow you to retake a test solely for the reason of improving your grade.

2) **If you miss class**, you are responsible for making up the work. Please do not ask me for lecture notes. However, you may ask your classmates. If you have questions about a classmate's notes (or in general), please ask me for clarifications. Students who have more than three unexcused absences may be reported to the Student Services Office and/or your mentor. Students who have more than four unexcused absences may be dropped from the class. If you will be out of town on an exam day for an official absence, it is necessary for you to take the exam before you leave. Such absences generally do not count as unexcused absences; however, if you have already expended your allotment of unexcused absences or you are doing poorly in the class, I will determine if official absences count as unexcused absences on a case-by-case basis.

3) **Make-up exams without a late penalty** after the scheduled exam date and time will generally only be offered in the case of a documented illness, emergency, or death in the family. When you are ill, I need an official note from a medical professional (e.g., an email from the campus nurse). In the case of ongoing issues, you or your family should notify Karen Spore in Student Affairs at 903.813.2228. Make-up exams will consist of short answer questions. Notification of your absence on the exam day must be given preferably prior to but no later than the day of the exam, and prior to the start time of the exam.

4) **Regarding reviewing your exams**, I do not give exams back to students. If you would like to review an exam you have taken (and I strongly encourage you to do so), please come to my office hours. I will keep your course materials through the end of the following semester. After that point, I will throw them out.

5) **If you have a documented disability** for which you would like accommodations, please inform me by the second week of class. It is your responsibility to remind me of your accommodations at least a week before I distribute each assignment or exam. To arrange for accommodations, you will need to register as soon as possible at the Academic Skills Center with Laura Márquez-Ramsey, the Director of the Academic Skills Center, (903) 813-2454, Suite 211 of the Wright Campus Center. For information, go to <http://www.austincollege.edu/campus-life/academic-skills-center/>.

6) **Turn your cell phones on silent or off during class**. Please clear it with me if you feel that you have an emergency situation requiring your cell phone to be on vibrate mode while you are in class. If you need to use your phone, please step out of class to do so. You can enter your class schedule into a cell phone app (e.g., Studious [for Android phones]), and it will silence your phone when you are in class.

7) **Please be courteous in class to fellow students and to me**. This includes not holding ongoing conversations during class, not reading for other classes or for pleasure during class, not doing games or puzzles in class, not surfing the net in class, not sending or receiving text messages in class, not flirting in class, etc. Please make an effort not to fall asleep in class. Students who routinely text, surf the net or are otherwise distracted during class will be dropped from the class.

8) **The GRADING SCALE** is as follows: A+ = 97-100; A = 94-96; A- = 90-93; B+ = 87-89; B = 84-86; B- = 80-83; C+ = 77-79; C = 74-76; C- = 70-73; D+ = 67-69; D = 64-66; D- = 60-63; E = 59 or below. I

will make every reasonable attempt to grade blind, so only put your class ID number on your assignments (unless instructed otherwise). I will downgrade all late work a third of a letter grade for each day late (including weekend days). If you want to contest a grade, note I will keep course materials only until the last day of the subsequent semester.

9) **You are responsible for keeping track of your grades in the course.** Do not assume that you are passing the course or that the course grade will be curved so that no one fails. If you are concerned about your progress in the class, please come and see me – the earlier, the better.

10) **Academic Honesty:** The academic process is one in which all members of the class, instructors and students alike, disseminate information and acquire knowledge with goals of both personal fulfillment and collective improvement through intellectual enrichment. Academic dishonesty completely undermines this honorable and valuable process. If I have evidence of your suspected academic dishonesty, I will report it to the Academic Integrity Council and you will have the incident noted in your file. Punishment could be as severe as failing the course. Austin College's detailed statement on academic honesty is in the Environment at <http://www.austincollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/Environment-2012-2013.pdf>.

a) **Working Together on Assignments:** Imagine a math problem involving a right triangle in which one leg of the triangle is 6 inches long while the other is 8 inches long. You and a friend are working on this homework problem. Your friend says, "Help me find the value of the hypotenuse." On the one hand you could say, "It's 10." However, on the other hand you could say, "It involves the Pythagorean theorem: $A^2 + B^2 = C^2$ where A is one leg of the triangle, B is the other and C is the hypotenuse." In my class the first response would be cheating and the second case would not. I define working together as sharing information regarding the *means* to a solution for an assignment. Sharing the solution is a form of cheating because one person's grade is dependent upon another person's work and unless instructed otherwise, you must produce the solutions to your assignments independently. You may share strategies and pointers (e.g., "Look at the lecture notes from last week" or "Read p. 52 in the text"). But each person must do the work to solve the problem alone unless instructed otherwise in the syllabus or a handout for the assignment.

b) **Studying Together for Exams:** I encourage you to study together for exams. Collaborative learning is beneficial in many ways. It helps you gain varied perspectives on a certain issue. There may be certain things that you have studied that remain confusing to you that other students may understand. There may be certain things that you help other students understand and in the process of explaining things to them, it helps you cement your knowledge. In preparing for exams, I strongly encourage you to study in groups.

c) **Plagiarism:** You will write a paper for this class and you will need citations beyond the required readings. Throughout the body of the paper, if you are summarizing findings or ideas that are not yours, you need to cite where you found that information - even if from the textbook, course readings or lecture. Not giving credit to the original authors is plagiarism. In addition, if you use more than three words in a row from a source, you need to not only cite it but you also need to use quotation marks. Typing in a sentence from a source and then changing every third word but presenting it in your paper as your own ideas and writing is dishonest (i.e., it is cheating). In addition, using work you wrote or created for another course or a from a previous semester of Health Psychology without first clearing it with me and any other professors involved will be considered plagiarism in this course.

d) **Research Papers and Citing Sources:** The writing assignment will require you to conduct research. This involves citing the sources for your ideas. If you use someone else's idea, you **MUST** cite it. This is not only when you quote it; this is **ALWAYS**. In addition, you include the citation immediately after the sentence with the idea. **IT IS PLAGIARISM TO USE SOMEONE'S IDEAS THROUGHOUT A PARAGRAPH AND THEN CITE THEM AT THE END OF THE PARAGRAPH.** Maybe this is how some of you were taught in high school. **NOT ONLY IS THAT WRONG ACCORDING TO MLA STYLE AND APA STYLE, BUT IT IS ALSO PLAGIARISM.** If you think this is a trivial offense, keep in mind that students were reported to the Academic Integrity Council for this exact type of offense. As your professor, I believe it is incumbent upon me to give you clear warnings and instructions regarding this issue. However, it is incumbent upon you to take this seriously and to work diligently not to plagiarize. Students often start papers at the last minute. Doing so may not allow you enough time to cite sources properly. Make sure you give yourself enough time to cite things properly so that you do not end up with a violation of Austin College's Academic Integrity Policy.

There are additional notes on avoiding plagiarism and cheating on Moodle. There are also notes on how to do well in my class on Moodle. Moodle is a website that Austin College uses so that professors may exchange information via the Internet with their students. I use it to post documents you need for the course as well as to send messages to the class. If you are unsure how to sign into your Moodle account, ask another student or ask someone at the IT Helpdesk.

Schedule of Lectures & Readings
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Week	Topic	Reading
1: Aug 28-Sept. 1	What is health psychology?	chs. 1 & 2 Norton & Ariely article Gudrais article
2: Sept. 3-8	Seeking health care	ch. 3
Friday, Sept. 5	GIS Health Mapping by Michael Schmitz	
3: Sept. 10-15	Adhering to medical advice	ch. 4 Rhodes & Jason chapter
Monday, Sept. 15	FIRST EXAM	
4: Sept. 17-22	Stress and disease	chs. 5 & 6
5: Sept. 24-29	Pain and coping with pain	ch. 7
6: Oct. 1-6	Complementary & alternative treatments	ch. 8
Monday, Oct. 6	SECOND EXAM	
7: Oct. 8-13	Cardiovascular disease	ch. 9
Friday, Oct. 10	FALL BREAK	
8: Oct. 15-20	Cancer	ch. 10
9: Oct. 22-27	Chronic illnesses	ch. 11
Monday, Oct. 27	First draft of intervention report due	
10: Oct. 29-Nov. 3	Smoking tobacco	ch. 12
Monday, Nov. 3	THIRD EXAM	
11: Nov. 5-10	Alcohol and other drugs	ch. 13
12: Nov. 12-17	Eating and weight	ch. 14
13: Nov. 19-Dec 1	Exercising	ch. 15
Nov. 24-26	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
14: Dec. 3-5	Future Challenges	ch. 16
Friday, Dec. 5	INTERVENTION PROJECT FORUM Final draft of intervention report due	
15: Dec. 8-12	FOURTH EXAM (Thursday, 3-3:50)	

DATES YOU MAY WANT TO KEEP IN MIND

Sept 8: last day to add a course
 Sept 23-25: Off-campus Jan Term registration
 Oct 20: last day to drop or change grading system
 Oct 20-22: On-campus Jan Term registration

Nov 10-13: Spring registration
 Dec 5: last day to drop with WP, WF or WU grade
 Dec 8-12: Exam period