



Course Syllabus

Health Psychology

PSY 251

Fall 2007

SB G30

M, W, F 11:00 to 11:50 a.m.

Faculty Instructor: David M. Young, Ph.D.

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Catalogue Description: Health Psychology is concerned with the interaction between behavior and health and illness. It includes the psychological study of the relationship between health and lifestyle, stress and coping, and health-injurious behaviors.

Some Notes on This Course: Health Psychology encompasses a vast array of problems and prospects for people looking for a long and satisfying life. The key feature that this area of psychology emphasizes is that health problems are best understood from a multi-disciplinary perspective. Bio-medical models of illness provide one important way of understanding health and illness, but other approaches which acknowledge the role of psychosocial factors allow for a more complete picture of the meaning of health, and illness. One such model, called the biopsychosocial model, provides the foundation for this course. What this model emphasizes is that most health problems have aspects or components, which are social, psychological, and biological. An appreciation of the contributions of these multiple components can assist us not only in understanding problems of health and illness, but also in the treatment and prevention of those problems. The course begins with a general introduction to these topics, and then proceeds to review the contributions of this biopsychosocial model to understanding a number of health problems. *(Note: Slides will be available to be viewed and/or printed from my website.)

The role of stress in health and illness is considerable. Together, the various forms of stress rival all other factors affecting health and well-being. For this reason, this course places additional emphasis on the stress as a key variable in understanding the processes of health and disease.

In addition to the readings for this class, each student will have two additional assignments. One assignment will be to observe some aspect of addiction, research the literature in that area, and write a brief paper (3 pages) summarizing your work and conclusions. In the other assignment, each student is to complete a personal

behavior change project. You will track a behavior for a week and develop and implement a change program. Feedback from past students indicate a two week change period is more helpful than one week coverage. We will discuss this in class.

By engaging in this study, my hope is that some of the ideas discussed in class will come to life, at least in small measure. As you monitor changes in your everyday life and examine whether those changes influence your attention to health concerns, you will be, in some ways, your own "health psychologist."

Required Text:

Taylor, S. E. (2006) *Health Psychology*. Sixth Edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Course Requirements:

Class requirements include the following:

1. Four exams (non-cumulative) given at approximately four-week intervals (about 85% of grade).
2. A personal health (behavior change) project, described in detail later (about 10 % of grade).
3. A very short (three page) paper on some aspect of addiction including an observation section followed by your conclusions (about 5% of grade).

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ON SOME CLASSROOM POLICIES

Although I will not call the roll often during the semester, your attendance in this course is expected. I expect you to be on time for this course just as you expect me to be on time. Please consider the impact of your behavior on others.

As the four exams will make up 85% of your grade, it is important that you take each exam as scheduled. I will announce specific dates for the exams in class. If you miss an exam, you will be able to make-up a version of the test **at the time of the final exam**. I will administer the final, and after you have completed the final I will administer a version of the make up exam. **In order to use this option you must contact me immediately before or after the scheduled examination.** Please be careful about missing an exam as having to study for an additional exam during finals week should be avoided. Remember, you may make up only one exam this semester.

LECTURE, READING, AND EXAM SCHEDULE

<u>WEEK OF</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>TEXT CHAPTER</u>
8/20	Introduction to Health Psychology	1
8/27	Health Behaviors	3
9/3	Health Enhancing Behaviors (Note: No Class 9/3- Labor Day)	4
9/10	Health Risking Behaviors (EXAM 1 - about here - covers chapters 1, 3, 4, 5)	5
9/17	The Nature of Stress	6
9/24	Stress Moderation	7
10/1	Health Service Utilization (EXAM 2 - about here - covers chapters 6, 7, 8) 10/5 - No Class - Behavior Change Research Day	8
10/8	Patient Provider Relations (Note: No Class 10/8 or 10/9 - Semester Break)	9
10/15	Pain and Pain Management (Behavior Change Project due 10/19/07)	10
10/22	Chronic Illness (EXAM 3 - about here - covers chapters 9, 10, 11)	11
10/29	Psychological Issues in Terminal Illness	12
11/5	Heart Disease, Hypertension, and Stroke	13
11/12	Heart Disease - continued (Addiction Paper due 11/16/07)	13
11/19	Psychoneuroimmunology. AIDS, Cancer, and Arthritis (Note: No Class 11/21 to 11/23 - Thanksgiving Break)	14
11/26	AIDS, Cancer, and Arthritis - continued	14
12/3	Wrap-up, catch up	

FINAL EXAM:

Wednesday, December 12, 10:30 am - 12:30pm
Non-cumulative (chapters 12, 13, 14)