



Psychology 437

Health Psychology

Instructor:	Dr. Shawn Currie	Lecture Location:	SA 119
Phone:	403-943-2284	Lecture Days/Time:	MW 6:00-8:50pm
Email:	scurrie@ucalgary.ca		
Office:	Admin 34		
Office Hours:	After Class (or by Appt)		

Course Description and Goals

This class will provide an overview of the theory and methods within the rapidly expanding field of health psychology. Students will learn about biological, psychological and social determinants of disease onset, maintenance, and treatment. The course will follow the textbook closely, but not exclusively. The first half of the course will provide a general review of the impact of stress on illness and coping, and the modification of health-related behaviours such as smoking and exercise in health promotion. The second half of the course will highlight practical examples of health psychologists at work in the fields of cardiovascular health, pain, sleep, and addictions.

Prerequisites

Psyc 312 – Experimental Design and Quantitative Methods for Psychology
Psyc 385 – Abnormal Psychology, although not required, would be an asset.

Required Text

Taylor, S.E. and Sirois, F.M. (2011). Health psychology: 2nd Canadian edition. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson. The textbook should be available at the bookstore. Other readings can be acquired directly from the library's online resources.

Evaluation

1. 30% of your mark will come from a mid-term exam scheduled during class time. The exam will consist mostly of short answer questions and multiple-choice questions.
2. 30% of your mark will be based on an individual paper to be handed in no later than the beginning of class on June 20, 2012. The paper should be a minimum of 10 pages in length (double-spaced) not including references. Paper topics must be approved by instructor by May 23.
3. 40% of your mark is based on a final 2-hour exam scheduled by the Registrar during the final examination period. The exam will consist of short answer and essay questions from the textbook and lectures covering material from the mid-term exam to last day of classes. Grades for the mid-term, paper, and final examination will be computed as a percentage and then combined as a weighted overall average for the course.

Grading Scale

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

As stated in the University Calendar, it is at the instructor's discretion to round off either upward or downward to determine a final grade when the average of term work and final examinations is between two letter grades. In this course, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

Tentative Lecture Schedule

Date	Topic and Important Date	Readings
W May 9	Course overview; origins of health psychology. The body's physical systems	Chapter 1 & 2
M May 14	Biopsychosocial aspects of stress. Stress, illness, & coping	Chapter 6
W May 16	Coping behaviours and social support.	Chapter 7
M May 21	Victoria day. No class.	
W May 23	Health promotion & health behaviours. Sleep & insomnia Paper topics due.	Chapter 3 & 4
M May 28	Behavioural risk factors: substance abuse, obesity & smoking	Chapter 5
W May 30	Pain and pain management	Chapter 10
M Jun 4	Mid-term exam	
W Jun 6	Managing chronic illnesses	Chapter 11 & 12
M Jun 11	Cardiovascular health, diabetes	Chapter 13
W Jun 13	Cancer & AIDS Neurological disorders	Chapter 14
M Jun 18	Patient-provider relationship Health psychology interventions.	Chapter 9 Martins, R. K., & McNeil, D. W. (2009). Review of Motivational Interviewing in promoting health behaviors. <i>Clinical Psychology Review</i> , 29, 283-293.

W Jun 20	Health psychology interventions (cont'd). Papers due.	Resnicow, K., Dilorio, C., Soet, J. E., Borrelli, B., Hecht, J., Ernst, D. et al. (2002). Motivational interviewing in health promotion: It sounds like something is changing. <i>Health Psychology, 21</i> , 444-51.
F June 22	Spring Term Lectures End. Last day to withdraw.	
June 25-27	Final Exam – Scheduled by the Registrar	

Note: Chapters 8 & 15 will not be covered.

Term Paper – 30% of final grade. Each student will submit a paper approximately 10 pages double-spaced. Topics must be approved by instructor. A list of suggested topics is provided. Students can also pick their own topic provided it addresses an issue relevant to the field of health psychology. Topics can concern: interactions between psychological processes, environment, or personality and physical health; interventions used by health psychologists; a controversy in the field of health psychology or behavioural medicine; behavioural aspects of health and illness; psychological reactions to acute or chronic illness. Topics that address purely mental health issues (e.g., depression) or purely medical issues (a review of Huntington’s disease) are not appropriate.

Consult with me in advance if you are unsure of the topic or want direction on an appropriate outline. The completed paper is due no later than the beginning of class on June 20. Late submissions of the paper will be penalized. Failure to submit the paper in class on the due date will result in the loss of 10% of the paper grade per day for each day (including weekends) beyond the deadline date and time. Do not slide the paper under my office door: the office is assigned to many lecturers and since I do not work on campus I rarely go there. Late papers can be handed to the main office of the Department of Psychology where they will be date stamped. Late papers that are not date stamped will be considered accepted on the day that I receive them. E-mail submissions will not be accepted.

The paper must be in the latest APA style, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins, and written in Times New Roman 12 point font. The paper must reflect a critical analysis of the research on the topic that you have selected. You must use articles from peer-reviewed journals, although books are acceptable and I will allow a maximum of 2 book references. You must have at least 8 references from primary sources. Quoting a secondary source within an article does not count as an extra reference.

Suggested Paper Topics

1. Should cannabis be prescribed for persons with non-terminal medical illnesses (e.g., chronic pain, MS)? What are the benefits and risks? Critique the evidence for and against.
2. Describe what is currently being done on this campus to prevent harm from excessive alcohol use. Which of these interventions are evidence-based (i.e., has research to show they are effective)? How could the University do more to prevent harmful alcohol use?
3. How does the strength of one’s religious beliefs or spirituality influence physical and mental health? Review the suspected mechanisms of action linking spirituality to improved health.
4. How effective is exercise as a treatment for depression and other mental disorders? Critique the evidence including comparisons with traditional treatments (e.g., medications, therapy).

5. How effective are needle-exchange programs, safe-injection sites, and prescription heroin trials in terms of (a) reducing the spread of infectious diseases, (b) reducing drug use in general and engaging users into treatment, and (c) reducing drug-related crime and associated problems?
6. Eating disorders are uncommon in men but stereotyped images of males are also prevalent in the media (e.g., muscular, athletic). How do media portrayals of the male body image impact men's mental health and engaging in potentially harmful behaviours such as steroid use.
7. Critically review the evidence for the effectiveness of psychological debriefing techniques following traumatic or life-threatening events for preventing PTSD and other stress disorders.

To stick to the page limits, the paper should address the question as directly as possible by reviewing the supporting research, expert opinion, and pertinent facts. Please avoid providing a lot of irrelevant material.

You are likely to find lots of literature on all of these topics so the challenge is finding 'quality' literature that incorporates a psychological perspective in the issue. The following journals are considered high quality:

Health Psychology	Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology
Psychophysiology	American Psychologist
Journal of Health Psychology	Annals of Behavioral Medicine
New England Journal of Medicine	Psychological Bulletin
JAMA	Psychology and Health
Psychosomatic Medicine	Addiction
Journal of Behavioral Medicine	Psychology of Addictive Behaviors

Reappraisal of Grades

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with

Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

Academic Accommodation

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

Absence From A Test/Exam

Makeup tests/exams are NOT an option without an official University medical excuse (see the University Calendar). A completed Physician/Counselor Statement will be required to confirm absence from a test/exam for health reasons; the student will be required to pay any cost associated with this Statement. Students who miss a test/exam have 48 hours to contact the instructor and to schedule a makeup test/exam. Students who do not schedule a makeup test/exam with the instructor within this 48-hour period forfeit the right to a makeup test/exam. At the instructor's discretion, a makeup test/exam may differ significantly (in form and/or content) from a regularly scheduled test/exam. Except in extenuating circumstances (documented by an official University medical excuse), a makeup test/exam must be written within 2 weeks of the missed test/exam.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act

The FOIP legislation disallows the practice of having student's retrieve tests and assignments from a public place. Therefore, tests and assignments may be returned to students during class/lab, or during office hours, or via the Department Office (Admin 275), or will be made available only for viewing during exam review sessions scheduled by the Department. Tests and assignments will be shredded after one year. Instructors should take care to not link students' names with their grades, UCIDs, or other FOIP-sensitive information.

Course Credits for Research Participation (Max 2% of final grade)

Students in most psychology courses are eligible to participate in departmentally approved research and earn credits toward their final grades. **A maximum of two (2) credits (2%) per course, including this course, may be applied to the student's final grade. Students earn 0.5% (0.5 credits) for each full 30 minutes of participation.** The demand for timeslots may exceed the supply in a given term. Thus, students are not guaranteed that there will be enough studies available to them to meet their credit requirements. Students should seek studies early in the term and should frequently check for open timeslots. Students can create an account and participate in Departmentally approved research studies at <http://ucalgary.sona-systems.com>

The last day to participate in studies and to assign or reassign earned credits to courses is **June 25th, 2012.**

Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>

Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

Student Union VP Academic: Phone: 403-220-3911 suvpaca@ucalgary.ca

Student Union Faculty Rep.: Phone: 403-220-3913 socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca

Important Dates

The last day to drop this course and **still receive a tuition fee refund** and the last day for registration/change of registration is **May 14, 2012**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **June 22, 2012**.