

Psychology 134, Fall 2020
Health Psychology
Asynchronous/Remote Instruction

Instructor: Aaron J. Fisher, PhD

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Live Sessions: Wednesday, 10:00 – 11:00 AM
Thursday, 5:00 – 6:00 PM

Text: J.M Suls, K.W. Davidson, & R.M Kaplan (2011). *Handbook of Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine*. New York: Guilford Press.

*Occasionally, issues might arise throughout the semester that may require me to reconsider elements of the syllabus. As such, the content of this syllabus is tentative.

Course Description & Goals:

The primary goal of the course is to provide students with an introduction to the field of Health Psychology. This is a broad term and encapsulates a number of research domains. During the course of the semester students will learn about the measurement of psychological, behavioral, and biological constructs; basic incidence and prevalence information related to psychological and medical disorders; *basic* introductions to endocrinology, immunology, and peripheral physiology – and how these systems are thought to relate psychology to health; as well as introductions to how science is working to understand psychology and health in the laboratory and across the population. Examples of the latter will primarily relate to cardiovascular health and related health behaviors.

In order for students to gain a better understanding of the topics, it is important that you feel comfortable asking questions of yourself, of others, and, of course, of me. ***Given the asynchronous, remote nature of the course***, I encourage students to attend the **live sessions** (see below) in order to engage with me and the GSIs. I further encourage you to bring questions to live sessions so that we can all think about and contribute to the answer. However, some of the topics that we will discuss in class may be sensitive for some students. Frequently, students know someone who suffers from mental health or medical problems, or may be in distress themselves. It is important to remain respectful during live sessions.

Format:

The course will be asynchronous, meaning that lectures and discussion section materials will be prerecorded and posted to bCourses for you to watch at any time. **Please Note:** we have spread GSI availability throughout the week (see calendar on bCourses). You ***DO NOT*** have to attend your registered time or GSI and are free to attend whichever live session works best for your schedule on a given week. I will have two live sessions on Wednesday mornings and Thursday evenings (listed above).

Course Requirements:

Readings: About a third of your assigned readings come from the textbook listed above. The remainder of course readings will come from primary articles. All readings will be made available on bCourses as PDFs—including the textbook, which I have provided in PDF format. All readings are listed on your course schedule below. Please note the lecture that each reading is associated with.

Attendance: There will be *NO* attendance requirement and classes will be asynchronous.

Asynchronous Classes: Each week, I will post the entire week's lectures as videos on bCourses. I will do my best to make the videos available as early in the week as possible. Please understand that this will be a new process for me—I will be recording and posting videos for the first time in my career. Please feel free to give me feedback about the videos. I'm happy to hear about ways that might improve the learning experience. You can watch the videos on your own time.

Discussion Section: We will not have traditional discussion sections. Instead, we will have a combination of (a) prerecorded asynchronous materials, (b) thought papers, and (c) live sessions with GSIs. The prerecorded materials will present additional readings during the early to mid-semester portions of the class. They will then shift to presenting information on how to conduct literature searches and write APA-style science papers, in preparation for your final paper.

- **Thought Papers:** Each week you will be required to submit a one-page response to the discussion section materials. On the weeks that GSIs present instructional materials for paper writing, please respond to one of the readings for lecture. *Thought papers are due every Friday—except when there is an exam.* Thus, there are 10 total thought papers due throughout the semester.
- **Live Sessions:** You do not have to attend live sessions with your assigned GSI. You may attend any live sessions that work for your schedule.
- **Turning in Materials:** *However,* you do need to submit all materials to your assigned GSI. This includes all thought papers and paper-related assignments (introduction and final paper).

Exams: There will be four exams in the course. **All 4 exams will be:**

- **Asynchronous**
- **Available from Friday morning until Monday night at 11:59 PM**
- **Open note**

See course schedule, below, for the dates of each exam. The exams will be multiple choice and open book. Although we cannot (and will not) police your behavior, *we ask that you work alone and do not work collaboratively on exams.* Please respect this request, given the flexibility we have provided.

“Review” Paper: In order to help you integrate your personal interests in health psychology with the scientific literature, you will be asked to generate a review of the current literature on a topic in the field of health psychology (or related fields of biological psychology or behavioral medicine). These papers should represent a brief version of review papers found in the scientific literature; however, it is of the utmost importance that you do not summarize an existing review paper. The goal is to read a collection of empirical and epidemiological papers on a given topic (e.g. depression and heart disease) and provide a thorough review of the existing literature, empirical findings, remaining problems, and future directions. These papers should be written in quasi-APA format, including a title page, abstract, main body (the review), and references. The assignment is *broken into two sections*. First, an initial draft of your introduction will be due to your GSIs on **November 9th**. This will allow them to give you feedback on your writing and hopefully set you up for a great grade on your final paper.

Then, the final paper will be **due on November 30th**. The main body of the paper (not including references) must be 6–8 pages in length

Grading:

3 Exams (100 points each)	300 total possible points
1 “Review” Paper	100 possible points
<i>Dropped Lowest Score</i>	(- 100 possible points)
1 Final Exam	100 possible points
Thought Papers & Paper Intro	100 possible points
Total Possible Points	500

Your grade will simply be your total earned points, divided by 500 points.

Course Schedule:

The following contains a brief, tentative course schedule for the semester. Please note the schedule is subject to change, and I will notify you via bCourses of any changes. **Please disregard any information from the University about final exams. The Final Exam timing & format is described below.**

Date	Topic	Assignment
Week 1 8/26 – 8/28	The Biopsychosocial Model	Chapter 2
Week 2 8/31 – 9/4	The Role of Behavior	Chapter 1
	Cognitive & Affective Influences on Health Decisions	Chapter 4
Week 3 9/8 – 9/11	Health Behavior	Chapter 5
	Emotions & Stress	Chapter 3 (pages 31-34) Lazarus (1982)
Week 4 9/14 – 9/18	Behavioral Epidemiology	Chapter 13
Available: Friday, 9/18 – Monday, 9/21	Exam 1	Asynchronous, Untimed, Open Note

Week 5 9/21 – 9/19	Hormones Stress	Romero & Butler (2007) Kagan (2016)
	Psychoneuroimmunology	Chapter 12 Fagundes (2017)
Week 6 9/28 – 10/2	Immunology & Self-regulation	Shields (2017)
	Emotion & Anger	Nelson et al. (2020) Chapter 8
Week 7 10/5 – 10/9	Personality and Health I	Chapter 7
	Personality Stability	Damian (2018)
Week 8 10/12 – 10/15	Personality and Health II	Gale (2017) Powers (2012)
Available: Friday, 10/16 – Monday, 10/19	EXAM #2	Asynchronous, Untimed, Open Note
Week 9 10/19 – 10/23	Depression & Illness	Chapter 14 Shimbo et al. (2005)
	Heart Disease 1	Martens et al. (2010) Seldenrijk et al. (2015)
Week 10 10/26 – 10/30	Heart Disease 2	Dalen (2014)
	Genetics in Health Psychology	Chapter 16

Week 11 11/2 – 11/5	Animal Models	Chapter 11
Available: Friday 11/6 – Monday, 11/9	EXAM #3	Asynchronous, Untimed, Open Note
Week 12 11/9 – 11/13	Exercise I	Lear (2017)
	Exercise II	Zschucke (2014) Chekroud (2018)
Week 13 11/16 – 11/20	Relationships	Haase (2016) Slatcher & Selcuk (2017) Kiecolt-Glaser (2018)
Thanksgiving		
Week 14 11/30 – 12/3	Final Thoughts	Micha (2017) Rubin (2019) Ganna & Ingleson (2015)
Available: Friday, 12/4 – Monday, 12/14	Final Exam	Asynchronous, Untimed, Open Note