Psych 485: Health Psychology
Spring 2008

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Office: Science 1, 487B
Office Hours: M 2:00 – 3:00 and Th 11:00 -12:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course will provide an overview of the field of health psychology using lecture, class discussion, exams, and written assignments. The course will cover specific health and social psychological theories, empirical research, and application of theory and research to “real world” situations. The class is oriented primarily toward the social and personality aspects of health psychology.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required Textbook

Exams
There will be two non-cumulative exams for this course given on Mar 4th and Apr 24th. Exams will be given during the scheduled class period. Exams will consist of short answer and essay questions. Material for the exams comes from both the textbook and lecture. The final exam will be cumulative and tentatively will be on Tuesday, May 6th from 9:45-11:45 a.m.

You are expected to take the exams when scheduled. I realize, however, that family crises, serious illnesses, and other emergencies do arise. If something should happen as to make it impossible for you to take the test at the scheduled time, please contact me and I will try to work something out. It is your responsibility to contact me prior to the exam or within 24 hours of a missed exam. Written documentation of the reason you missed the exam may be required.

This is an upper-level class; therefore, the exams for this course go beyond recalling information. To earn a high grade you are expected to demonstrate understanding and application of the concepts and an ability to integrate different theories, models, and research studies presented in class.

Health Psych in the News
An important objective of this course is to improve your ability to critically examine articles about health psychology in the press. You will identify and critique four news articles on health psychology-related topics. These articles and critiques are due Jan 24th, Feb 14th, Mar 11th and April 8th. These assignments will be explained in more detail in class.

Reaction Papers
Another important objective of this course is to improve your ability to read health psychology studies in scientific journals. You will read, summarize and react to four journal articles on the graduate student
supplemental. These papers are due Feb 5th, Feb 26th, Mar 27th and Apr 17th. These assignments will be explained in more detail in class.

**Late Assignments and Missed Exams**

All assignments will be due in class on the assigned day. If you are unable to come to class, you should leave your assignment in my mailbox (Lago W112). Do not e-mail assignments to me. Late assignments will be marked down one letter grade for each day they are late.

**Grading**

The total number of points available in the class is 420. Final grades will be based on the percentage of points earned.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 Exams</td>
<td>100 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Reaction papers</td>
<td>15 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 News article papers</td>
<td>15 each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>100</td>
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</tbody>
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**Attendance**

Attendance is not required for this course. However, much of the exam material comes from lectures. Thus, you will probably not do well in this class by just studying the material in the text. In addition, any changes to the syllabus or assignments will be announced in class and you will be responsible for these announcements.

**Disability Accommodations**

I encourage all students needing special accommodations to talk to me as soon as possible. For more information regarding services available to students with disabilities, contact the Disability Resources office, located on the first floor of the Student Services building (room 1076), at 294-6624. You will need to provide them with documentation of your disability and complete a SAAR (Student Academic Accommodation Request) form.

**Academic Misconduct**

Academic misconduct in any form is in violation of Iowa State University *Student Disciplinary Regulations* and will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to: copying or sharing answers on tests or assignments, plagiarism, and having someone else do your academic work. Depending on the act, a student could: receive a failing grade on the exam or assignment, receive a failing grade for the course, or be suspended or expelled from the University. See the Conduct Code at [www.dso.iastate.edu/ja](http://www.dso.iastate.edu/ja) for more details and a full explanation of the Academic Misconduct policies.
Addendum for Graduate Students

Course Requirements

In addition to the requirements listed above, you will write a research paper (not to exceed 10 pages of text with 1” margins, 11 point font, double spaced) that will be due on May 1st. This paper will be in the form of a research proposal that reflects your knowledge of health psychology theories, and of how social psychological research methods are applied to physical health issues. It should include: 1) discussion of the social psychological theory upon which your research question is based and a brief review the literature relevant to this question; 2) a set of specific hypotheses; 3) the design of a study that will test the hypotheses. One way to think of this assignment is that it is like a preliminary proposal of a thesis or dissertation. You may propose an experimental laboratory study, a field study, or analysis of existing data. One stipulation is that it would be feasible for you to conduct the proposed study within a 12 month block of time.

I will provide feedback on your paper at several points in its development. A brief description of your proposal (maximum 1 page) will be due in class Feb 19th and an outline of your paper and preliminary references will be due in class Mar 13th.

Grading: Your grade will be based on your performance on the following:

- Exam I 25%
- Exam II 25%
- Paper 30%
- News assignments 10%
- Reaction papers 10%