

COURSE INFORMATION & SYLLABUS
PSYC 3853 – 201 Health Psychology
Spring 2024

MWF 12:00 – 12:50 Room: M/W/F PY 101

Office: OD 117

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Don Knox

Email: don.knox@msutexas.edu

Office hours: MWF 10:30 – 11:00

TEXTBOOK:

Required:

“Health Psychology” 6th Richard Straub. Worth Publishers 9781319169817

General Description:

This course will be an introductory look at principle and practices of health psychology. We will look at human behavior and the critical role our behavior plays in our own health and longevity. Coupled with this is the fact that too many people, especially young adults, take their health for granted or feel that they are somehow immune to the health hazards of risky behaviors. Some chronic illnesses, such as cancer or heart disease, may seem like only distant threats, so the risks of unhealthy eating, smoking, or sedentary living are not perceived as worrisome.

Course Outcomes:

1. Describe the biopsychosocial (mind–body) model as an organizing template for understanding the domains of health and illness.
2. Discuss biological, psychological, and social factors in the chronic illnesses that are the leading causes of death in developed countries today.
3. Discuss the role of psychology in preventing illness, promoting wellness, and shaping health care policy and reform.
4. Analyze different health behaviors, attitudes, outcomes, and illnesses from the perspectives of the major theories of health, and to recognize those theories when used by others to analyze events.
5. Explain how research contributes to the understanding of health, and evaluate and use research findings to investigate a topic of interest to you.
6. Recall important concepts in health psychology and be able to recognize and apply these concepts in various situations.
7. Formulate relevant questions about health processes and outcomes, and to use standardized techniques for gathering objective answers to these questions.

Requirements and Grading:

Grades will be based primarily upon five tests, given at about three-week intervals, with the last test being considered the “final exam.” Material to be covered will be clearly stated, and the type of test will also be made known in advance, though most likely multiple choice, short answer, objective questions will make up the bulk of test items. Some essay questions may be given, depending upon the nature of the class. If such questions are used, that will be announced in advance of the test. Each exam is worth 150 points.

A sixth grade, 250 points, will be awarded based upon completion of a personal journal and paper. This project has been developed to give you an opportunity to explore an area of special interest, while at the same time developing the skills set out in the learning objectives. I want you to undertake a “self-modification” project that you feel will have a positive change in you as a person. You need to purchase a “composition notebook” (10 ¼ x 7 7/8 – about \$1 – 4 at any store). On 1/24, each student will turn in their topic of self-modification. You need to chronical your progress in the journal with a minimum of three entries per week. You will need to include your results from the “Check your health” exercises in the textbook and your observations about your results. This journal will be turned in on 4/24. As par of that journal, each student will prepare a paper that summarizes the self-modification process, successes and failures during the project, and your overall assessment of the results of the activity. The paper will be 1750 - 2500 words using double-spaced pages. This is not a simple rewrite of your journal entries. This is an overall view of the process. Please allow yourself enough time to review and perhaps re-draft the paper before turning it in. In addition to content, the “clarity” of your communication with the instructor will be a major factor in assigning a grade. That is, you must write well to do well. Papers less than 1750 words (body of the text) will be graded as a zero. Please do not shoot for a minimum and expect a great grade. As in life, exceed the minimum and strive for excellence. The written journal portion of this assignment will be worth up to 150 points and the paper portion will be worth up to 100 points. Both are due on 4/24. The journal must be physically turned in and the paper must be submitted via D2L.

Assignment	Points	Total points
5 Exams	150	750
Project and Paper	250	250
Totals	Cell blank	1000

Test 1 Chapters 1 – 3

Test 2 Chapters 4 – 6

Test 3 Chapters 7 – 9

Test 4 Chapters 10 – 12

Test 5 Chapters 12 - end

The following scale will be used to grade tests, your paper, and your class participation (1000 points total):

90 – 100%	=	A
80 – 89%	=	B
70 – 79%	=	C
60 – 69%	=	D
0 – 59%	=	F

NO GRADES WILL BE DROPPED IN CALCULATING COURSE GRADES.

Make-up tests: Students who miss one or more tests due to absences will be allowed to schedule make-up exams with permission of the Instructor. There will be no grade penalty for exams missed due to an excused absence. A 25 -point penalty will be assessed for exams missed due to unexcused absences. **Excused absences come from the Dean of Students.** Written work will not be accepted late

– no exceptions (really means no exception). Please turn written work in early. I will not accept emailed work.

Class Attendance Requirements and Additional Classroom policies:

Class attendance is expected! Schedule problems can usually be worked out, but must be discussed IN ADVANCE. Bona fide emergencies do sometimes occur, but must be discussed with the instructor as soon as possible after the emergency absence. I do not require (nor will I read) notes from physicians. Please send any medical excuse information to the Dean of Students' Office.

Leaving class early counts as an absence. Coming to class late counts as an absence.

IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN Six (6) UNEXCUSED ABSENCES, YOU WILL BE DROPPED FROM THIS CLASS WITH A GRADE OF "F".

An absence may be excused **ONLY** if the student complies with, or provides one of the following:

- a. Negotiates approval for the absence with the instructor **IN ADVANCE**, or in the case of a legitimate emergency, as soon as is reasonable.
- b. Presents a written excuse from a physician or the MSU Infirmary via the Dean of Students
- c. Presents written evidence of participation in a mandatory University function (Band, Choir, Sports, etc.)
- d. Presents written evidence of attendance at a recognized professional meeting or professional educational program.
- e. Presents a written excuse from a physician for a dependent child's illness via the Dean of Students.

Student Code of Conduct:

MSU's official policy in the University's Code of Student Conduct on page 52, states:

Instructor Drop An instructor may drop a student any time during the semester for excessive absences, for consistently failing to meet class assignments, for an indifferent attitude, or for disruptive conduct. The instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning prior to dropping the student from the class. An instructor's drop of a student takes precedence over the student-initiated course drop of a later date. The instructor will assign a grade of either WF or F through the first 9 weeks of a long semester, the first 6 weeks of a 10-week summer term, or the 12th class day of a 4- or 5-week summer term consisting of 20 days. After these periods the grade will be an F. The date the instructor drop form is received in the Office of the Registrar as the official drop date. A student dropped from a class by a faculty member for disruptive behavior has the right of appeal to the Student Conduct Committee through the Student Conduct office.

I will closely follow this policy in terms of your conduct in class. Anything that is disruptive to the class will result in you being Instructor Dropped from the class with a grade of F. I will enforce this policy in that my obligation is to provide the best and most informative course that I can. I cannot do that when there is behavior that disrupts the class. This also includes attempting to dominate or "teach" the class, interrupting the course frequently with stories that are not facilitative or relevant to the flow of the class, using electronics during class that are not directly related to the class material, and talking

frequently to one's peers while course is being held. Any other behaviors that are deemed disruptive will also be enforced as deemed by our Code of Conduct policy. Remember that there are stories and questions that are facilitative to our class discussions, and some that are obstructive.

Other Comments:

Taping, laptop microphones, Googleglasses, cell phones – NOT ALLOWED! All students deserve the same respect and confidentiality in the classroom.

I will NOT accept emailed work.

Given the nature, scope, and intensity of this course, it is essential that each student keep up. It is the responsibility of each student to seek assistance when needed.

Academic Dishonesty: Please do not cheat or plagiarize. The MSU policy on cheating and plagiarism is in the MSU Student Handbook and Activities Calendar (Code of Student Conduct, Item 11) and I encourage you to review it. Additional information regarding the Academic Dishonesty policy is available from the Dean of Students office, in Clark Student Center. Cheating or engaging in plagiarism will result in a grade of zero (0) and/or a letter grade of “F” for the course!!!!!! If you find yourself even *thinking about* cheating on an exam or copying someone else’s work, please *talk to me* instead of doing it!!!

Late work – I will not accept late work. I will not accept work sent via email. I will not accept work turned in to the department office or under my office door. I will only accept work submitted via D2L. ALL WORK MUST BE SAVED IN Microsoft convention (*.doc or *.docx). I cannot and will not open gdocs or pages. Work turned in any format other than the two I state will be graded as a zero. I will not accept work saved as a pdf. There will be no exceptions for late work and this includes absences for any MSU events – get things done in advance. Dates are posted and D2L is available.