Health Psychology: Psychology 4531

Attention!

This is a representative syllabus. The syllabus for the course when you enroll may be different. Use the syllabus provided by your instructor for the most up-to-date information. Please refer to your instructor for more information for the specific requirements of a given semester.

Introduction. For better or worse, good health has arguably become our culture’s most cherished value. Because we have placed such value on health, we are exposed to a tremendous amount of health-related information in the news: How to eat healthy, strategies to exercise more, methods to improve your well-being, etc. Some of this information is hype and some of it is evidence-based. How do we determine which is which? How do we understand the fine print on each new health trend? The goal of this course is to familiarize you with the basic biological systems that are most health relevant and how they are both influenced by psychological factors and also influence psychology. The intention is that this will give you a foundation from which you can make your own lifestyle choices based on sound evidence.

Readings. In addition to articles from the popular press or the primary literature posted on Carmen (listed on schedule, p. 3), required readings will come from three books:


These are not traditional textbooks, but are books written for a popular audience. Therefore, they can be found in the bookstore or online (including downloadable formats such as Kindle). My hope is that this will save you money as well as be more enjoyable to read. Furthermore, I hope reading such material will reduce barriers to your future pursuit of scientific reading. Be warned, the authors don’t always agree. Where they disagree will be a topic for discussion in class. The goal is to begin to teach you how to think critically about different perspectives on health.

Depending on the nature of the discussion, pdf’s of the lectures will be made available on Carmen sometimes before and sometimes after the class (within 24 hours). Not all material will be posted.
Exams: There will be three exams, including the final. The second mid-term exam will primarily focus on material covered since the first midterm. The final exam will focus primarily on topics covered in the last third of the course. Note, however, but, note the topics covered on these exams incorporate prior concepts and thus knowledge of the prior material will be expected to answer questions on the final exam successfully. Thus, it should be considered cumulative.

Exams will cover material from both the readings and lecture. The goal is to integrate conceptual knowledge. Each exam will be approximately 25-50 short answer, true-false, matching, multiple-choice, and/or short essay questions. If it is in the best interest of the class, exam grades will be computed by a fair and reasonable curve.

There will be a review session at 7pm (location TBD) the night before the midterm exams. The purpose of this time is to answer questions and clarify concepts. There will not be a formal summary or new material presented during these sessions.

Final Paper. There will be a final paper. The mental health of college students has undergone precipitous declines in the last several decades, as described in the following Psychology Today article. Why? As members of this generation you are well-poised to understand this and provide solutions. The goal of the paper will be to provide potential hypotheses based on material covered in the course (or other reasonable hypotheses) for why this might be occurring and propose potential solutions based on material covered in the course.

Psychology Today Article: https://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/201509/crisis-u

Class Participation: Participation in class is encouraged and rewarded. This will include:
1. Due to the size of the class, I need a little help getting to know you. Please load a Word file into Carmen’s dropbox that has the following:
   1) A picture of yourself (e.g. a Facebook headshot)
   2) Your Name
   3) Your Hometown
   4) Your Major
   5) Why you are taking this course or one thing you want to learn in this course
   6) One thing that you are concerned about this course
   Name the file with your last name then first name (e.g. Way, Baldwin.doc) 20% of your participation grade.
2. There will also be various in-class questions and exercises throughout the semester. Sometimes I will call on volunteers and sometimes will call on a name at random.

Grade: Your grade will be determined by your performance on your total points, which will be allocated:

   Midterm Exam 1: 25%
   Midterm Exam 2: 25%
   Final Exam: 35%
   Final Paper: 10%
   Participation: 5%

A standard OSU grading scale will be used: A = > 93%; A- = 90-92.9%; B+ = 87-89%; B = 83-86.9%; B-80-82.9%; C+ = 77-79%; C = 73-76.9%; D+ = 67-69.9%; D = 60-66.9%; E < 60%
### Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan 12 &amp; 14</td>
<td>Introduction, Methods and Biopsychosocial Model</td>
<td>Kolata, 2008; Vox.com</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan 19 &amp; 21</td>
<td>Physiology &amp; Psychology of the Stress Response</td>
<td>Sapolsky Ch 1,2, &amp; 13</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Jan 26 &amp; 28</td>
<td>Pain &amp; Placebo</td>
<td>Sapolsky Ch 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Feb 2 &amp; 4</td>
<td>Behavioral Immune System Psychneuroimmunology</td>
<td>Schaller &amp; Park, 2011</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Feb 9 &amp; 11</td>
<td>Socioeconomic Status</td>
<td>Sapolsky Ch 17</td>
</tr>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Feb 16 &amp; 18</td>
<td>Depression, Cardiovascular Disease and Cancer</td>
<td>Sapolsky Ch 3,14,15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feb 23 &amp; 25</td>
<td>Development &amp; Aging Drugs of Abuse</td>
<td>Sapolsky Ch 6 &amp; 12</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mar 1 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Social Support Romantic Relationships &amp; Health</td>
<td>McGonigal Ch. 5; Cohen, 2004; Robles, 2014</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Mar 8 &amp; 10</td>
<td>March 10: No Class (American Psychosomatic Medicine Meeting)</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mar 22 &amp; 24</td>
<td>Stress Regulation, Positive Psychology &amp; Health</td>
<td>McGonigal Ch 1,2,3,4</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Mar 29 &amp; 31</td>
<td>Mindfulness, Relaxation, and Health Religion, Spirituality, &amp; Health</td>
<td>Creswell &amp; Lindsay, 2014; Sapolsky pp 407-411</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Apr 5 &amp; 7</td>
<td>Eating, Dieting, Exercise, &amp; Metabolic Disorders</td>
<td>Mann Ch 1,2,4, 5, 12; Sapolsky Ch 4, Ch 5 (pp 71-84)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Apr 12 &amp; 14</td>
<td>Health Behavior Change &amp; Self Control Health Communications &amp; Decision Making</td>
<td>Mann Ch 3, 6-10; Reyna et al 2009; Peters et al., 2007</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Apr 19 &amp; 21</td>
<td>Sleep A Healthy Life and Wrap-up</td>
<td>Sapolsky Ch 11</td>
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**February 9: First Midterm Exam**

**March 8: Second Midterm Exam**

**April 21st** Final Paper Due 5pm

**May 2nd** Cumulative Final Exam: Monday May 2 10:00am-11:45am

This schedule is subject to change. I am also open to adding in a “To be determined” topic in the last third of the course if a good one is suggested.

Readings not in the assigned books (in order assigned):


**Statement on Academic Misconduct:** It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct http://studentlife.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf.”

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/