

**Health Psychology**  
*PSY 367, Winter 2021*  
Grand Valley State University

Professor: **Amanda Dillard, Ph.D.**

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Office hours: Monday and Wednesdays 2-3 pm, or by appointment; via Blackboard Collaborate

**Course description**

Welcome to Health Psychology! Health Psychology is the application of psychological principles and research to the enhancement of health, and the prevention and treatment of illness. This course will introduce you to Health Psychology through examining current theories and empirical research in the field. We will examine health from a Biopsychosocial perspective, studying the interaction of biological, psychological, and social factors to understand contemporary health problems. After completing this course, you will have a comprehensive understanding of Health Psychology and how this field can be applied to prevent risky behaviors, treat health problems and illness, and promote health and well-being.

**Required book**

Taylor, Shelley. (2018). *Health Psychology* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw Hill. (Connect is not required.)

**Blackboard**

**This is an online class.** You need to be on Blackboard (BB) for this class. Make sure you have access to the BB website or contact the help desk. All materials (lectures, additional readings, class exercises, collaborative activities, Tests) will be posted/submitted/administered on BB. In addition, all grades and any announcements will be posted on BB. *You should go on BB every day that we have class – M, W, and F.* Please check your grades on the website often and contact me ASAP if you think an error has been made.

Because this is an online class, you will need:

- High-speed internet access
- Computer with sound card and speakers (in order to watch videos); operating system that meets current Blackboard browser requirements.
- Microsoft Word & a program that reads pdf files
- Video camera & microphone (built into computer or external); an iPad, iPhone, or Android device may suffice

**Evaluation procedure**

The total points for this class will be 355. You will be evaluated on 3 Tests (each worth 75 points; 225 points), 20 class exercises (each worth 5 points; 100 points), and 3 collaborative exercises (each worth 10 points; 30 points total).

Tests and your Final grade will use the following grading scale.

A	93-100%	C	73-76%
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%
B	83-86%	D	62-66%
B-	80-82%	F	61% or lower
C+	77-79%		

### **Tests**

There will be 3 Tests during the semester and all will be open-note, open-book. These Tests will be administered on BB and will be timed. Check the Course Schedule to make sure you will be available on the Test days as Tests have to be completed on these scheduled days. Tests will be non-cumulative, covering material from lecture, class exercises, 2-3 book chapters, and additional readings as noted in the Course Schedule. Test questions will be primarily multiple choice with 1-2 short-answer essays.

### **Lectures**

Lectures will be posted on Mondays, Wednesdays, and some Fridays (I will give you notice on the weeks when we will have a Friday lecture). The lectures will be posted by 9am on each of these days. Lectures will cover concepts and issues in the readings but will also expand on the readings and provide more in-depth information. It is very important that you watch the lectures and take careful notes. This is essential to your success in the course as Tests will take largely take from lectures. Also, do your best to watch the lectures the day they are posted, as class exercises (more information on these below) will be due the following day.

### **Class exercises**

There will be 20 class exercises during the semester. You will submit the exercises via BB. The content of these exercises vary, from reflections to something you read or watch to questions posed about class topics that day. The purpose of these exercises is to check understanding of concepts, promote further learning, and give you a chance to “do” not just read, think, or watch.

The due dates for class exercises are not listed in the syllabus, but they are established. Unless otherwise noted, class exercises will always be due by 9pm the following day they are assigned. For example, if a class exercise is assigned during Monday’s lecture, you must submit the exercise for full credit by 9pm Tuesday. Any exercises submitted after this due date will be marked late and can only receive partial credit. If the class exercise is more than 5 days late, you will not be able to get credit for it.

### **Collaborative activities**

Health Psychology is an Issues course in the General Education curriculum (Health). As part of this curriculum, the course aims to meet three goals: Problem-solving, Collaboration, and Integration. There will be 3 assignments to meet these goals and their purpose is to engage you in thinking about issues in Health psychology, to have you collaborate with your classmates, and to expose you to different perspectives on topics.

See the Course Schedule for when the collaborative activities will occur and their due dates. For each activity, you will reflect on how you might solve a problem in the field, you will read over

others' ideas, and generate a response to their ideas. All of this will be done on BB. You will be placed into groups on BB for the first collaborative activity and you will remain in these groups for all of the activities. Special instructions on how to access your group and the details of each activity will be given on the Monday of the week they are due.

### **Note about Readings**

The Course Schedule lists the readings each week. In addition to the book chapters, there are additional readings you will complete. I have carefully selected these additional readings to provide more depth to information covered in the book chapters. These readings can be found in BB in the respective weekly folders. While only some of the readings will be covered in lecture, Tests may require you to demonstrate that you have read all assigned readings.

### **Note about important dates**

Please check the Course Schedule to make sure that you are available on the Test dates. Please complete the collaborative activities by the due date listed in the Course Schedule. Submit class exercises on time (due the following day after they are assigned in lecture).

For any makeup work, it is required that you have an excused absence. Information on excused absences can be found at <https://www.gvsu.edu/catalog/navigation/academic-policies-and-regulations.htm> under Class Attendance.

### **Students with special needs or concerns**

If there is any student in this class who has special needs because of a learning, physical, or other disability, please contact me and Disability Support Resources (DSR) at (616) 331-2490. It is the student's responsibility to request assistance from DSR.

### **GVSU Course Policies**

This course is subject to the GVSU academic policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/courjanolicies/>

Academic policy changes due to COVID-19 can be found at <https://www.gvsu.edu/provost/student-affairs-activities-updates-228.htm>

## ***WINTER 2021 Course Schedule\****

<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
<b>Week 1:</b> Jan 18 - 22	Introduction to Health Psychology; Historical roots and conceptualization; <i>Jan 20 (1<sup>st</sup> lecture posted)</i>	Taylor, 1; Taylor, 15

<b>Week 2:</b> Jan 25 - 29	Research methods in Health Psychology	Straub, 2007
<b>Week 3:</b> Feb 1 - 5	Health behaviors: Habits and outcomes; Characteristics of health behaviors	Taylor, 4; Taylor, 5
<b>Week 4:</b> Feb 8 - 12	Theories of behavior change	Prochaska et al., 1992; Stroebe, 2011; Taylor, 3
<b>Week 5:</b> Feb 15 -19	Wrap up; <b>Friday Feb 19, TEST 1</b>	<u>Collaborative exercise 1 due Thursday</u>
<b>Week 6:</b> Feb 22 -26	The stress response; Measuring stress and appraisal	Taylor, 2 (pps. 15-20); Taylor, 6
<b>Week 7:</b> Mar 1 - 5	Chronic stress and illness: Early and contemporary models	Cohen et al., 1998; Dougall & Baum, 2012
<b>Week 8:</b> Mar 8 - 12	Sources of chronic stress; <i>March 10 (Break Date; no lecture)</i>	Kiecolt-Glaser et al., 1995
<b>Week 9:</b> Mar 15 -19	Chronic illness; Coping with stress and illness	Taylor, 7; Taylor, 11
<b>Week 10:</b> Mar 22 -26	Wrap up; <b>Friday March 26, TEST 2</b>	<u>Collaborative exercise 2 due Thursday</u>
<b>Week 11:</b> Mar 29 -Apr 2	The five-factor model of personality; Associations with health and well-being; <i>April 1 (Break Date; no lecture)</i>	Smith et al., 2012; (pps. 375-387)
<b>Week 12:</b> Apr 5 - 9	Individual personality traits (e.g., conscientiousness, optimism) and health	Dillard & Ellis (2018)
<b>Week 13:</b> Apr 12 -16	The role of positive emotions in health and longevity	Fredrickson, 2011; Lawrence et al., 2015

**Week 14:** Apr 19 -23 Social support: Types and sources

Reblin & Uchino, 2008

Collaborative exercise 3 due  
Thursday

**Finals Week:**  
Apr 26 -30 **Monday April 26, TEST 3**

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*\* I may adapt this schedule as needed.*