

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

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

Office: 2307 Au Sable Hall

Ph: 331-2865

Email: [dillaram@gvsu.edu](mailto:dillaram@gvsu.edu)

Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 11am-12pm, or by appointment

**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 and its fundamental concepts, major theories, and empirical research. We will examine Health from the biopsychosocial perspective, including the roles of biological, psychological, and social factors. Following this course, you will have a comprehensive understanding of Health Psychology and how this field can be applied to change behaviors, treat illness and other health problems, and promote health and well-being.

**Required reading**

Taylor, S. E., & Stanton, A. L. (2021). *Health Psychology* (11<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: McGraw Hill LLC. *Loose-leaf can be purchased via bookstore.*

**Course evaluation procedures**

The total points for this class will be 550. You will be evaluated on 3 in-class exams (each worth 100 points), a Final exam (worth 150 points), 14 class exercises (each worth 5 points; 70 points total), and 3 collaborative exercises (each worth 10 points; 30 points total).

This course 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%		

**Exams**

*Exams:* Exams will be non-cumulative, and cover 2-3 chapters and additional readings as noted in the Course Schedule. Exams will also cover material from lecture (see section on Attendance). Questions will be a combination of multiple choice and essay.

*Final exam:* The Final exam will be cumulative, covering information from the entire semester. Questions will be a combination of multiple choice and essay. The date and time of the Final is listed in the Course Schedule.

*Make-up policy:* You are expected to take the exams in class on the specified dates. If you do not appear for an exam, and you have not been given permission by me to delay it, you will receive a zero, unless you bring documentation (such as a doctor's note) to excuse your absence. You will have one week after the date of a scheduled exam to take a make-up exam.

### **Class exercises**

There will be 14 class exercises. These exercises will be completed during class, but occasionally you may complete them as homework and they will be due the next class period. *I do not take emailed exercises/homework (in cases of excused absences, hand in to my mailbox in 2224 Au Sable).* Each exercise will be worth 5 points. The exercises may vary from reactions to something we read or watch to group discussion about class topics. The purpose of these exercises is to enhance learning and facilitate discussion.

*\*\* Credit for class exercises cannot be made up. If you miss a class and an exercise occurs, you cannot make it up for credit. However, I will excuse one missed exercise for all students.* Therefore, if you only miss one exercise, you can still obtain a perfect score. If you miss two exercises, you will lose points for one exercise, if you miss three, you will lose points for two, etc. This “freebie” accounts for all excuses for missing so please do not ask about make-ups. You also do not need to let me know when you missed an exercise as the “freebie” will simply be added at the end of the semester for any exercise that you missed.

### **Collaborative participation**

There will be 3 collaborative participation exercises. These exercises will take place during class, and you will be given advance notice as to when they will occur. For each exercise, you will collaborate with group members to solve a problem. You will apply theory and research as well as your own ideas. The purpose of these exercises is to engage you in problem-solving, collaborating, and integration of different perspectives.

### **Useful things to know**

*Reading:* Readings should be completed before coming to class. In addition to chapters, there are additional reading assignments that are in the Course Schedule (below). These readings are posted on Blackboard (in “Assignments”). Only some of this assigned reading will be covered in class, but exams will require you to demonstrate that you have read and understood all readings.

*Attendance:* I do not take attendance, but it is to your advantage to come to class regularly. In class, I often lecture on material that is not covered in your reading. We complete class exercises and, as noted, there are no make-ups for these exercises. We watch films, listen to podcasts, and have discussions that expand class topics. You can expect exams to cover your readings and anything else that we do in class. *If you miss a class, you should ask a fellow student for the notes.*

*Blackboard website:* I will post the lecture notes as well as grades and any announcements on the course information website for this class. Notes will be posted in “Course documents”. Grades will be in the “Grade center”. Your additional readings will be posted in “Assignments”. Make sure you have access to the BB website or contact the help desk. *Please check your grades on the*

website *OFTEN*. You have one week after a grade is posted to dispute it. Contact me if you think an error has been made.

*Fall, 2021 Course Schedule\**

		Topic	Readings
M	30-Aug	Course welcome and introduction	
W	1-Sep	Health psychology: Historical roots and conceptualization	Taylor & Stanton (T&S), 1
F	3-Sep	Health psychology <i>continued</i>	T&S, 15
M	6-Sep	<i>Labor Day – No class</i>	
W	8-Sep	Research methods in Health Psychology	Straub, 2007
F	10-Sep	Research methods <i>continued</i>	
M	13-Sep	Health promoting and health compromising behaviors	T&S, 4; T&S, 5
W	15-Sep	Health promoting behaviors <i>continued</i>	T&S, 3
F	17-Sep	Independence and instability of health behaviors	Stroebe, 2011
M	20-Sep	Attitude theories of behavior change	NCI Concepts and constructs (Web reading)
W	22-Sep	Attitude theories <i>continued</i>	
F	24-Sep	Cognitive theories of behavior change	Prochaska, DiClemente & Norcross, 1992
M	27-Sep	Wrap up	
W	29-Sep	EXAM 1	
F	1-Oct	Stress and health	T&S, 2 (pps 15-20); T&S, 6
M	4-Oct	Measures of stress and appraisal	Cohen et al., 1998

W	6-Oct	The transactional model and other models of stress	Dougall & Baum, 2012
F	8-Oct	Chronic stress and illness; The Allostatic load model	T&S, 14
M	11-Oct	Allostatic load model <i>continued</i> ; <i>Stress: Portrait of a killer</i>	
W	13-Oct	Sources of chronic stress	Kiecolt-Glaser et al., 1995
F	15-Oct	Sources <i>continued</i>	
M	18-Oct	Chronic illness: Prevalence and impact	T&S, 13
W	20-Oct	Depression and anxiety in chronic illness	T&S, 11; T&S, 12 (pps. 257-261)
F	22-Oct	Wrap up	
M	25-Oct	<i>Fall break – No class</i>	
<hr/>			
W	27-Oct	EXAM 2	
<hr/>			
F	29-Oct	Coping; Styles and types	T&S, 7
M	1-Nov	Coping with chronic illness: <i>The Truth about cancer</i>	
W	3-Nov	TOC <i>continued</i>	
F	5-Nov	Personality and health	Smith et al., 2012 (pps. 375-387)
M	8-Nov	Personality <i>continued</i>	
W	10-Nov	Trait optimism and health	Dillard & Ellis, 2018
F	12-Nov	Unrealistic optimism	
M	15-Nov	The role of positive emotions in health and longevity	Fredrickson, 2003

W	17-Nov	Positive emotions <i>continued</i>	Lawrence, Rogers, & Wadsworth, 2015
F	19-Nov	Social support: Types and sources	Reblin & Uchino, 2008
M	22-Nov	Social support and health outcomes	Moak & Agrawal, 2010
W,F	24-26 Nov	<i>Thanksgiving recess – No class</i>	
M	29-Nov	Wrap up	

---

W 1-Dec EXAM 3

---

F	3-Dec	The health-wealth gradient	Ruiz, Prather, & Steffen, 2012
M	6-Dec	Psychosocial factors in use of health services	T&S, 8; T&S, 9 (pps. 182-189)
W	8-Dec	Use of health services <i>continued</i>	
F	10-Dec	Course review and close	

For Sec 367-02 (1pm), **Final exam is Monday, Dec 13, 12pm-1:50pm**

For Sec 367-01 (2pm), **Final exam is Wednesday, Dec 15, 2pm-3:50pm**

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

*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 Disability Support Resources (DSR) at (616) 331-2490 or [dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu](mailto:dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu). It is the student's responsibility to request assistance from DSR. If you have a disability and think you will need assistance, please make me aware so that the university and I can develop a plan to assist you.

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

*Excused absence policy can be found:*

<http://catalog.gvsu.edu/content.php?catoid=48&navoid=2406&hl=%22attendance%22&returnto=search>



**PSY 367 Health Psychology  
Issues - Health**

This course is part of GVSU's General Education Program. The goal of the program is to prepare you for intelligent participation in public dialogues that consider the issues of humane living and responsible action in local, national, and global communities.

PSY 367 is designed to help you learn:

1. How the course relates to health.
2. How complementary and competing perspectives covered in the course contribute to the ongoing discussion about health.
3. Collaboration, which is the process of working together and sharing the workload equitably to progress toward shared objectives, learned through structured activities that occur over a significant period of time. People with a general education work collaboratively with others on both small and large projects. Effective collaborators are interdependent, interactive, accountable, and reflective. That is, they work interdependently within a group, interact productively with group members, demonstrate accountability for their own contributions to the work of the group, and reflect on the success of the group, including their own contributions and the contributions of others.
4. Integration, which is the process of synthesizing and applying existing knowledge, past experiences, and other perspectives to new, complex situations. People with a general education correlate and synthesize facts, basic concepts, and disparate knowledge for application within and beyond the campus, to make sense of a variety of data and experiences, to address issues in a more effective way than can be accomplished from only one field of study or perspective, and reflect on their own learning.
5. Problem solving, which is the process of designing and evaluating strategies to answer open-ended questions or achieve desired goals. People with a general education define and solve problems by seeking and identifying relevant contextual information, formulating strategies, and proposing and evaluating potential solutions.

This course satisfies one or more of the General Education course requirements. The overall goal of the General Education program is designed to increase your knowledge and skills in the following areas:

Knowledge Goals:

1. The major areas of human investigation and accomplishment — the arts, the humanities, the mathematical sciences, the natural sciences, and the social sciences.
2. An understanding of one's own culture and the culture of others.
3. An understanding of how academic study connects to issues in the world.

Skills Goals:

1. Collaboration is the process of working together and sharing the workload equitably to progress toward shared objectives, learned through structured activities that occur over a significant period of time.
2. Critical and creative thinking uses systematic reasoning to examine and evaluate ideas, leading to new ways of thinking or doing.
3. Ethical reasoning is a decision-making process based on defining systems of value.
4. Information literacy is the process of locating, evaluating, and using multiple forms of information.
5. Integration is the process of synthesizing and applying existing knowledge, past experiences, and other perspectives to new, complex situations.
6. Oral communication is the practice of effectively communicating verbally with a public audience across a variety of contexts.
7. Problem solving is the process of designing and evaluating strategies to answer open-ended questions or achieve desired goals.
8. Quantitative literacy is a competency and comfort in working with numbers.

9. Written communication is the practice of creating and refining messages that educated readers will value.

Ensuring that undergraduate students receive a broad general education has been a primary goal of colleges and universities since their inception. In this era of increasing specialization and growing demand for professional expertise, it is vital that we continue to emphasize the value of general learning.

GVSU maintains that a complete education involves more than preparation for a particular career. A career occurs in the context of a life, and a sound general education helps one “make a life” as well as “make a living.” The university is committed to assuring that all undergraduate students, regardless of academic major, receive a broad education rooted in the arts and sciences.

Teaching in the liberal tradition is at the heart of Grand Valley's identity, and this focus is critical in our General Education Program. Liberal education transcends the acquisition of information; it goes beyond the factual to ask important evaluative and philosophical questions. Liberal learning holds the fundamental principles and suppositions of a body of knowledge up to inquiry, question, and discussion. It helps a person recognize the assumptions under which he or she operates and encourages the examination and questioning of those assumptions. Liberal learning begins in the General Education Program and continues through the more specialized studies comprising each student's major and minor areas of study.

*Grand Valley State University educates students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies.*