

**Health Psychology**  
 PSY 367, Fall, 2023  
 Grand Valley State University

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 Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2-3pm, 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 behavior, 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. *Online text can be accessed via Blackboard course website via GVSU SAVE.*

**Course evaluation procedures**

The total points for this class will be 520. You will be evaluated on 3 in-class exams (each worth 100 points), a Final exam (worth 100 points), 16 class exercises (each worth 5 points; 80 points total), and 2 collaborative exercises (each worth 20 points; 40 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 short answer essay.

*Final exam:* The Final exam will be cumulative, covering information from the entire semester. The date and time of the Final exam is listed below 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 16 class exercises. These exercises will be completed in class or submitted online (after being assigned during class). Each exercise will be worth 5 points. The exercises vary from comprehension questions about podcasts we listen to or films we watch to self-reflection or small group discussion about class topics. The purpose of these exercises is to enhance learning and facilitate application of concepts. These exercises are not listed in the Course schedule as their dates vary depending on factors such as timing and student comprehension of topics.

*\*\* Please note that if you miss a class and an exercise occurs, you will not be able to make it up (unless you have an excused absence; please meet with me if you have extended absences). However, I will allow one missed exercise/freebie for all students. Therefore, if you 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. The freebie accounts for all reasons 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 2 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 assigned group members to solve a problem. There will be an individual portion to the exercises in preparation for the group collaboration. 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 integrating different perspectives.

### **Useful things to know**

*Reading:* For most weeks, you will read chapters from the text, but for some weeks, you will read additional articles that I have selected. All readings are presented in the Course schedule below. It is your responsibility to check the schedule for the readings each week. If there is an article (i.e., non-chapter reading) for the week, it will be posted in Blackboard in the weekly folders. Note that only some readings 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 readings. We complete class exercises and, as noted, there are no make-ups for these exercises. We listen to podcasts, watch films, and have discussions that expand class topics. You can expect exams to cover anything that we do in class. *If you miss a class, you should ask a fellow student for the notes.*

*Blackboard website:* You have to be able to access the Blackboard website for this class. Please contact the IT help desk if you have issues. *The primary text for the class is accessed via the Blackboard website.* Lecture notes and additional readings will be posted in the weekly folders. I will also post announcements, assignments, and grades on Blackboard. *Please check your grades on the website OFTEN.* Contact me if you think an error has been made. *You have one week after a grade is posted to dispute it.*

### **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 any assistance, please make me aware.

### Symptomatic illness

Please do not come to class if you are ill. Instead, notify me as soon as possible via email. If you have a known COVID exposure and are asymptomatic, please wear a mask.

### Other information

*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>

## Weekly Course Schedule \*

Week	Topic	Readings
<b>Week 1:</b> Aug 28 - Sep 1	Introduction to Health Psychology; Historical roots and conceptualization	Taylor and Stanton (T&S), 1; T&S, 15
<b>Week 2:</b> Sep 4 -8	<b>Labor day recess - No class Monday;</b> Research methods in Health Psychology	Straub, 2007
<b>Week 3:</b> Sep 11 - 15	Health behaviors: Habits and outcomes; Independence and instability	T&S, 4; T&S, 5
<b>Week 4:</b> Sep 18 - 22	Theories of behavior change	T&S, 3; Stroebe, 2011
<b>Week 5:</b> Sep 25 - 29	Wrap up; <b>Friday Sep 29, TEST 1</b>	Prochaska et al., 1992
<b>Week 6:</b> Oct 2 -6	History of stress and health	T&S, 2 (pps. 15-20); T&S, 6
<b>Week 7:</b> Oct 9 - 13	Chronic stress and illness: Contemporary models and evidence	T&S, 14; Dougall & Baum, 2012
<b>Week 8:</b> Oct 16 - 20	Sources of chronic stress	Cohen et al., 1998; Kiecolt-Glaser et al., 1995

<b>Week 9:</b> Oct 23 - 27	<b>Fall break - No class Monday;</b> Chronic illness: Prevalence and impact	T&S, 11, T&S, 12 (pps. 257-261)
<b>Week 10:</b> Oct 30 -Nov 3	Wrap up; <b>Wed Nov 1, TEST 2</b>	T&S, 13
<b>Week 11:</b> Nov 6 - 10	Coping styles and types; Personality and health	T&S, 7; Smith et al., 2012; (pps. 375-387)
<b>Week 12:</b> Nov 13 -17	Personality and health <i>continued</i> ; Trait and unrealistic optimism	Dillard & Ellis (2018)
<b>Week 13:</b> Nov 20 -24	Positive emotions in health and longevity; <b>Thanksgiving recess - No class Wed-Fri</b>	Fredrickson, 2011; Lawrence et al., 2015
<b>Week 14:</b> Nov 27 -Dec 1	Social support: Types, sources and outcomes; <b>Friday Dec 1, TEST 3</b>	Reblin & Uchino, 2008; Moak & Agrawal, 2010
<b>Week 15:</b> Dec 4 - 8	Psychosocial factors in use of health services	Ruiz et al., 2012, T&S, 8

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\* I may adapt this scheduled as needed.

**Final exam schedule:**

For 367\_01: Monday, December 11, 10:00 am - 11:50 am

For 367\_02: Wednesday, December 13, 10:00 am - 11:50 am



**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.*