



Health Psychology PSY 251

Dr. Micah Sadigh
Cedar Crest College



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Syllabus

Title: Health Psychology (PSY-251)
(3 credits)

Class Meeting Times: Wednesdays 1-3:30

Classroom: Curtis 135

Faculty: Dr. Micah R. Sadigh
(Prerequisite: PSY-100)

Office: Curtis 119

Office Hours: Mondays (2-3:30PM; & 5:30-6:15 PM); Tuesdays (3-4); Wednesdays (10-11 AM); Thursdays (4-5 PM); or by appointment (610-606-4666, Ext. 3715)

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Description: This course is an introduction to the growing field of health psychology. During the past two decades, it has been established that psychological and behavioral factors play a significant role in health, disease prevention and rehabilitation. In this course we shall explore the contribution of psychological principles in the understanding, prevention and treatment of a wide range of medical and psychophysiological disorders. Specific attention will be paid to the latest research in the field of health psychology. This course will emphasize the importance of an interdisciplinary approach to conceptualizing health and disease so as to more efficiently address issues that deal with health promotion and disease prevention. Finally, we shall specifically explore research in health psychology, specifically as it applies to women's health and well-being. Three tests, written assignments, class attendance and participation will constitute the final grade for the course.

Goals:

1. Students will gain a comprehensive knowledge of the field of health psychology with an emphasis on women's health
2. Students will gain an in depth understanding of the contributions of health psychology to the processes of health promotion and disease prevention with an emphasis on women's health
3. Students will gain an in depth knowledge of the interdisciplinary nature of health psychology
4. Students will be able to identify the differences and similarities between health psychology, behavioral health and behavioral medicine

Course Objectives:

Upon the completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. provide a comprehensive definition of health psychology
2. describe the contribution of psychological principles in the prevention of disease
3. describe the contribution of psychology to the betterment of the health care system
4. describe the role of psychological principles in the assessment and evaluation of a variety of medical diseases and disorders

Course Outline, Assigned Readings, and Tentative Dates:**Week 1**

- The relationship between health and behavior
- A brief history of health psychology (Chapter 1)

Weeks 2 & 3

- The biomedical, the psychosomatic, and the biopsychosocial models
- Theories of Health Behavior (Chapter 3& 4)

Week 4

- Research in health psychology
- Health behaviors (Chapter 2)

Week 5

- Introduction to stress and Health
- **TEST 1 (9/23)**

Week 6

- Stress, health and disease (Chapter 5)
- Recent developments in stress research and the emerging models

Week 7

- Stress and stress-related disorders (Chapter 6)
- The Transactional Model

Week 8

- Coping strategies and psychophysiological interventions (Parts 1 & 2) (Chapter 8)

Week 9

- Acute and chronic pain (Chapter 7)
- Psychological assessment of pain

Week 10

- Additional Coping Strategies (Parts 1& 2)

- **TEST 2 (10/28)**

Week 11

- Cardiovascular disorders (Chapter 9)
- Cancer (Chapter 10)

Week 12

- Health Compromising Behaviors: Eating Disorders (Chapters 15)

Week 13

- Alcohol and Tobacco (Chapter 13 & 14)

Week 14

- Health Psychology in the 21st Century
- **TEST 3 (12/2)**

Textbook:

Brannon, L. & Fiest, J. (2007). *Health Psychology: An introduction to behavior and health* (6th edition). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Additional reading assignments: Dr. Sadigh's papers and articles will be provided

Assessment: The objectives of the course will be assessed by the administration of three tests and brief papers. The tests will consist of multiple choice questions, which will be derived from the lectures notes and the assigned chapters. The instructions for papers appear below.

Written Assignments: Throughout the semester, I will be asking you to write about your responses to a variety of questions that have to do with health and behavior. I will make sure to give you ample time to complete these assignments. I will announce each assignment after we have finished discussing specific topics in our course.

The final grade for the course will be calculated based on the following percentages:

TEST # 1: 25%

TEST # 2: 25%

TEST # 3: 25% (includes a quiz shortly before the final exam)

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS: 25%

Honor Code: Students are expected to abide by the Cedar Crest College Honor Code. Acts of misconduct (e.g., cheating during an examination, copying material on your homework, or allowing someone to use your homework) will not be tolerated. Infringements will be handled according to college policy.

Special Accommodations: If you require assistance due to a documented disability, I will be more than happy to help you in any way possible to meet your needs. Please see me after class. As far as tests and other assignments are concerned, I need to know about your need for special accommodations right away.

Code of Respect: You are encouraged to share your thoughts, reflections, ideas, and informed opinions. Such sharing will help all of us grow. However, I ask you to take care not to impose your views on others and/or make remarks that may be injurious to others. You can expect unconditional respect from me and I ask you to do the same for your fellow students.

Classroom Protocol: All Cedar Crest College students are expected to be familiar with and fully supportive of the college's policy regarding the honor code and academic integrity. See the Student Guide for more information regarding the enforcement of these policies. Appropriate classroom behavior is defined and guided by complete protection for the rights of all students and faculty to a courteous, respectful classroom environment. That environment is free from distractions such as late arrivals, early departures, inappropriate conversations and any other behaviors that might disrupt instruction and/or compromise students' access to their Cedar Crest College education.

Plagiarism: If plagiarism is suspected, I am bound to follow academic regulations. Plagiarism is the act of presenting the ideas, words or other intellectual property of another as one's own. The use of other people's work must be properly acknowledged and referenced in all written material. The use of material without acknowledgement is an offense.

Cheating: Bear in mind that allowing another to copy one's work is an academic offense just as is copying from someone. Furthermore, submitting the same paper for two courses without arrangement is also an academic offense.

Grades:

A	93.0-100%	C	73.0-76.6%
A-	90.0-92.9%	C-	70.0-72.9%
B+	86.7-89.9%	D+	67.0-69.9%
B	83.4-86.6%	D	65-66.9%
B-	80.0-83.3%	F	below 65%
C+	76.7-79.9%		

Psychology Department Attendance Policy

The Psychology Department is committed to the principle that regular and punctual class attendance is essential to the students' optimum learning and successful academic achievement. Regular class attendance is a student obligation, and students are responsible for all work, tests and written assignments. Therefore, students are expected to be present for all class sessions. The Psychology Department's attendance policy recognizes that there will be times when attendance at class is not possible. You may think of the policy as being similar to the type used in the corporate world where each employee is given a certain number of "personal/sick days." Based on the number of regularly scheduled class meetings, you will be allowed a certain number of absences (see below) with no consequences, no questions asked. In other words, there is no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. You are of course responsible for anything covered during those missed classes, and for submitting assignments on time, regardless of whether or not you attend. Beyond the allowable number of absences, there are consequences that will adversely impact your grade, much as missing too many days of work can adversely impact your employment status. Above all else, you should carefully consider each decision to not attend class, as once your allotted absences have been used, they are gone. *It is important that students arrive for class on time. Late arrivals are very distracting, not only to the instructor, but also to fellow students. Repeated late arrivals are not acceptable and will be addressed on an individual basis.* It is each student's responsibility to understand this policy and to keep track of absences throughout the semester.

Application to this Class: Formal attendance will be taken during all class sessions. This class meets once per week (14 class meetings). As such, you may miss 2 classes without penalty. If you miss 3 classes, your final grade (cumulative percentage of points) will be lowered by 5%. That means that if you have earned 84% of the available points in the class, which is a B grade, you would be lowered to 79%, which is a C+. Likewise, if you have earned 77% of the points available, the penalty would take you down to 72%, which is a C-. As a reminder, a C grade (73%) is required in all Psychology courses. If you miss 4 classes, you will receive a failing grade for the course. If you miss four classes, you have missed approximately 25% of the class meetings.

UNNECESSARY CONVERSATIONS

Unnecessary conversations during the lectures will be distracting to your fellow students as well as your professor. Those who engage in such conversations will be dismissed from class.

TEXT MESSAGING

Text-Messaging is prohibited during the lectures!