

Topics in Health Psychology

PSYC*3110, Course Outline: Fall 2015

Lecture times: Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30-9.50am
Lecture venue: MCKN, Room 117

Instructor: Dr Kieran O'Doherty
Office: 3014 MacKinnon Extension (3rd floor)
Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 10-11am
Phone: 519-824-4120 x58919
Email: kieran.odoherty@uoguelph.ca

Teaching Assistants: Amanda Jenkins (ajenki02@uoguelph.ca)
Karla Stroud (kstroud@uoguelph.ca)
Sadie Goddard-Durant (goddards@uoguelph.ca)

Required Textbook: David F. Marks, Michael Murray, Brian Evans & Emeé Vida Estacio (2015) *Health Psychology. Theory, Research and Practice* (4th Ed.) Sage Publications.
(available on library reserve)

Course Overview and Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to provide you with an overview of the field of health psychology. The content matter of the course is intentionally broad and will cover such topics as social and behavioural dimensions of illness; social inequalities in health; psychosocial dimensions of smoking, alcohol, and obesity; methodology in health psychology; experience of health and illness; and several others. At the end of the course you should be able to distinguish between the different major approaches to health psychology, have knowledge of some of the main debates and areas of practice in the field, and be able to formulate an argument in at least one of the topic areas covered.

Assessment:

The weighted breakdown of assessment for the course will be:

- 1) *Discussion notes on journal articles* – 10%

Each week there will be assigned readings, and most lectures will require preparatory reading of at least one journal article. You are required to submit short discussion notes on the required journal readings (NOT the text book chapters).

The format of discussion notes should be one paragraph in length (maximum half a page), in which you write down your thoughts on the article. You can focus on such things as the implications of the article for practice or policy; you could come up with a few discussion questions that are raised by the article and elaborate on why you think they are relevant; or you could come up with your own ideas here. **IMPORTANT:** do **not** simply present a summary of the article.

For each journal article for which you submit discussion notes you earn 1%, up to a cumulative maximum of 10% (for discussion notes on 10 articles). There will be at least 12 required journal articles, so you can afford to miss two discussion notes and still get the full 10% for this grade component. Discussion notes need to be submitted electronically via CourseLink before the lecture in which the article is discussed.

2) Class participation activities – 10%

There will be in-class activities throughout the course, such as group discussions, partner work, or working out problems presented in class. You will be required to submit work on these activities at the end of each class in which the activity took place. For each activity in which you participate successfully, you receive 2%, up to a maximum of 10%. There will be at least 7 in-class activities throughout the course, so that you can afford to miss two class activities and still get the full 10% for this grade component.

3) Mid-term Exam – 20%

There will be a mid-term exam on **Thursday 22 October, 2015**. The exam will take place instead of the scheduled lecture – same time and place as the usual lecture would have taken place. The exam will cover materials from the **textbook and all lectures and readings** up to that point.

4) Final Exam – 25%

The final exam will take place on 18 December, 11:30am-1:30pm. The final exam will cover all materials (textbook, lectures, additional readings) **since the mid-term exam**.

5) Essay – 30%

The largest component for assessment in this course will come from an essay. To help you write the best possible essay, there will be a peer-evaluation component. To participate in the essay peer-evaluation, you need to submit your essay by **3 November 2015 (4:30pm)**. Your essay will then be assigned to two of your peers for evaluation, and you will be assigned to evaluate two of your peers' papers. There will be opportunity for in-class discussion among each group of 3 peer evaluators, and you will have the opportunity to revise your essay based on your peers' comments. The final due date for the essay is **Thursday 19 November 2015 (4:30pm)**. Please submit a **hard-copy and an electronic version** of the essay. Both are required. The final grade for the essay will be assigned by a TA or by Dr. O'Doherty. Peer evaluations are not taken into account in the final grade – they are intended only to help you in developing the essay.

6) Peer evaluation activity (5%)

By participating in the peer-evaluation of the essay (see above) you will earn 5%. Please note: it is important that you provide substantive feedback to you peers. If there are complaints by students that the feedback they received was sloppy or based on inadequate reading of the essay, 0% may be assigned for this component. To be eligible to participate in the peer evaluation activity you have to submit your own essay by **3 November 2015 (4:30pm)**. If you do not submit by this deadline, you cannot be assigned papers by your peers to evaluate, and you will be assigned 0% for this grade component. You need to submit your evaluation of 2 papers you are assigned to review by **November 10 (4:30pm)**. You only need to submit an electronic copy of the essay for the peer-evaluation.

Essay Guidelines

The essay component of this course is the single highest weighted item you will be assessed on. This means that you should spend a significant amount of time and effort on the essay – I would recommend at least several weeks or even a couple of months. My suggestion would be for you to work on the bulk of the paper during **October**, complete a draft by the **end of October**, and use the remaining time before the deadline to do any last refinements on the paper before submitting. Please note that the essay topics go beyond the materials covered in the course. You will need to research the existing literature on the subject and read extensively.

Essay Topics:

Choose one of the following topics on which to write your essay:

1. Is it the responsibility of individuals to do everything possible to maintain their own health? Or is it the duty of the government to enact policies that encourage good health? Discuss and use the subject of either (i) alcohol, (ii), smoking or (iii) obesity to illustrate your argument.
2. The experience of an illness is not only determined by biology. Use the subject of either (i) cancer or (ii) HIV/AIDS to discuss this statement.
3. If you would like to choose a different topic for the focus of your paper, please contact me to get your topic approved no later than **15 October**.

Essay Requirements:

- The purpose of the essay is for you to develop skills in formulating and expressing an argument using academic knowledge. Therefore:
 - Begin with what experts in the field have said (i.e., look at the relevant peer-reviewed literature).
 - Make sure that you know what has been said in the **academic literature** about this or similar issues (i.e., begin with a review of the relevant peer-reviewed literature); you need to demonstrate and articulate an understanding of research in the area.
 - Consider different points of view.
 - Logically work towards developing your own position on the issue.
- Choose a suitable title for your essay that reflects your argument and is within the scope of the topic

- The paper must include a meaningful engagement with relevant literature on the subject (don't rely on Wikipedia – you need to read and use peer reviewed publications); ensure that you provide a solid overview of relevant studies and/or theory on your chosen topic
- The essay should be between 2500 and 3000 words in length
- Please use 1.5 or double spacing and 12-point font
- Use page numbers, reasonable margins, and don't forget to include your name and student number
- Citations and references should follow the APA guidelines (note: different disciplines use different reference styles; make sure you use the right one)
- The essay must be original – it must be your own work (and yours alone), and not have been submitted or used for any purpose other than this course
- AVOID PLAGIARISM – this means that all ideas you use in your essay that come from your readings need to be cited; where quotes are used, make sure you give page numbers; distinguish clearly between your own thinking and arguments, and what you have read somewhere else and are using for your essay; READ the university guidelines regarding academic integrity here: <http://www.academicintegrity.uoguelph.ca/>
- Penalties:
 - Marks will be subtracted for essays significantly outside of the word length margins (see above)
 - Marks will be subtracted for late essays at a rate of 10% per day to a maximum of 30%. Any essay that is more than 3 days late automatically receives 0%.
- Extensions will generally not be granted. Because you are expected to be working on the essay over several weeks, excuses based on unforeseen events occurring close to the deadline are not accepted.

RE-GRADING POLICY:

The following policy is in place for ALL requests for re-grading (NO exceptions):

The essay will be returned in class together with the marking scheme. Graded exams will not be returned, but are available for viewing in my office. Consult the marking scheme and *carefully/thoughtfully* review your answers and marks received. If you believe an error was made, write a short and specific statement indicating why you think there is an error (i.e. you must clearly justify the re-grading).

Submit this to Dr. Kieran O'Doherty by delivering it to the office mailbox in the Psychology Department, Mackinnon Extension, within one week (i.e. by 4:30pm on 7th calendar day) after the assignment/exam is returned in-class. For essays, attach the statement to the original essay and marking scheme.

Note: all re-grading will be done by Dr. Kieran O'Doherty; materials will be re-graded in entirety and all appropriate adjustments made. Grades may go up or down following a re-grade request.

Readings

Please note that in general, there will be readings for every week of lectures (up to two chapters from the textbook and up to two journal articles). It is expected that you have read this material prior to the relevant lecture and are prepared to discuss it in class. Required readings will be posted on Courselink.

Class Attendance

To do well in this course you need to attend lectures regularly and take good notes. Although lecture slides may be posted online, they are not sufficient by themselves for you to gain a good understanding of the material. Although I aim to post all lecture slides ahead of time, this may not also be possible. Guest lecturers may or may not make their slides available. Please also check CourseLink regularly for updates and announcements.

Email Correspondence

I encourage you to ask questions about the course, about the exam, and the assignment. However, please ask these questions either **during class, before or after class**. If you would like to have a one-on-one conversation, please see me **during my office hours**. Because of extremely high email volume during term, I will not respond to emails relating to course content, exam format, or assignment that are covered in the course outline or were discussed in class.

University Policies

Academic Consideration

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for

Academic Consideration:

[Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions](#)

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring.

University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is

not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

[Academic Misconduct Policy](#)

Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible.

For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or see the website: [Student Accessibility Services Website](#)

Course Evaluation Information

Please refer to the [Course and Instructor Evaluation Website](#) .

Drop date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is 6 November. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Academic Calendar:

[Current Undergraduate Calendar](#)