

## HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

PSY 1215

FA 2015

T TH 1:00-2:15

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**Instructor:** William G. Shadel, Ph.D.  
**Associate Director, Population Health Program**  
**Senior Behavioral Scientist**  
**RAND Corporation**  
**Adjunct Associate Professor of Psychology**  
**University of Pittsburgh**

**e-mail:** shadel@rand.org

**Office hours:** By appointment

### REQUIRED READINGS

This course is organized into 7 modules, and there is usually at least one journal article or reading assigned for each lecture within a module. The complete citation is listed and will allow you to access the articles through the Pitt electronic journal collection (via the e-library intranet). Some modules direct you to particular web documents by providing a url; these are freely available documents and you should be able to access them from anywhere. Sometimes, there will be a link to a video. You should read the documents/view the videos in the order listed for maximum benefit. There is no textbook purchase required for this course.

### PREFERRED RE-REQUISITES

PSY 0010 (Introduction to Psychology) or PSY 0012 (Foundations of Psychology)  
PSY 0035 (Research Methods)  
PSY 0105 (Introduction to Social Psychology)

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed as a broad survey of the field of health psychology. We will: 1) study modern day thinking and research in the discipline, while at the same time, having an appreciation for historical perspectives; 2) review basic science research (laboratory research that deals with biopsychosocial mechanisms that regulate behavior) and applied research (research that deals with interventions and treatments designed to change behavior); 3) take a theoretical perspective on what we do and how we do it; and 4) discuss larger scale sociopolitical policies that affect and are affected by health psychology. Above and beyond this broad survey of the field, the term paper will allow you to become an expert in one or two topics of special interest to you. By the end of the semester, you will have had exposure to the richness and complexity of health psychology as an integrative scientific discipline and gained in depth knowledge of key areas of particular interest to you.

### COURSE INFORMATION AND STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

1. **Class format.** Classes will have a lecture, presentation, and discussion format. This class requires your *active participation* in everything we do.

2. **Attendance.** It is to your distinct advantage to attend class. First, most of the material we cover in this class is cumulative and builds on itself; missing even one class could leave gaps in your knowledge that will have negative implications for your overall experience in the course. Second, most of the classroom activities are group/team oriented and your classmates will come to depend on you to do your part; if you miss class, you are letting your classmates down. Third, any scheduling changes in lecture schedules, reading assignments, and the like will be announced in class. You alone are responsible for knowing about any scheduling changes. Fourth, 50% of your final course grade depends upon your participation in classroom activities.

If you need to miss a class for any reason, please let me know ahead of time so I can plan accordingly.

If attendance drops off during the course of the semester, I will take attendance on random class days and weight class attendance heavily in calculating your final grade. I may also opt to administer pop quizzes and/or a final exam if attendance and/or class participation drops.

**3. Reading and on-line assignments.** The class works best and you'll get the most out of it if you complete the readings/watch the videos before the date that they are assigned. This will enable you to participate fully in classroom discussions and projects (see detailed class schedule for details). There will be no tests or quizzes on the reading material per se, but if it seems as though the class isn't doing the readings (e.g., by not drawing on the content of those readings to ask questions or to comment during class or circle times [see below]), I will administer "pop" quizzes on the readings and weight those in the calculation of your final grade.

**4. EVALUATION (How grades are determined).** Your final grade in this class will be determined by the weighted average of: one term paper assignment, a self-assessment, participation in a formal classroom debate, and participation in "circle time" classroom discussions. Participation in class lectures (via asking questions and comments, attendance) will also be folded into your final grade calculation.

Attendance and any pop quiz scores will also be folded into your final grade (*only if necessary* as described in points 2 and 3 above).

At this point, I do not intend to administer a comprehensive final exam for this class. However, if the class as a whole fails to take their coursework and responsibilities seriously, I reserve the right to administer a comprehensive final exam during finals week and will weight those final exam grades very heavily in calculating the final grades.

**4.a Term Paper (35% of final grade).** You have one term paper assignment for this class. We will review the specific requirements for the paper in class on January 19. In brief, the paper will require you to choose at least two topics of interest to you within health psychology (e.g., smokeless tobacco use; and psychosocial development), describe how those two topics "fit together" theoretically and empirically (basic science), and what the implications are (if any) from a treatment and intervention standpoint (theory and empirically driven applied science). The paper, which will be at least 10 pages in length (in APA style and not including references), is due as in "hard copy" form to me on **April 5** at the beginning of class; 10% will be subtracted from your grade on the paper for each day the paper is late. You are strongly encouraged to speak to me about your paper topic and ideas for the paper prior to beginning any significant work on it.

**4.b Drug Policy Debates (20% of final grade).** At key points throughout the semester (see dates on course schedule), there will be in class debates on three policy issues in health psychology; each topic will be debated by two teams – one taking each side of an issue. As such, you, along with 4-5 of your classmates will form a team and participate in one of the two debates. We will discuss the debates, topics, student assignments, and "sides" on January 19. The debates will have a formal point-counter point component, an informal discussion component, and a question and answer period (questions posed by class observers and myself). Everyone is expected to participate in one or more of these debate components.

**4.c Module "Circle Time" (20%).** This class is organized into thematically-related modules. As we move through the lecture material in each module, we'll periodically break from a lecture format and engage in "circle time". Your responsibility, as a class during circle time, is to lead an informal discussion of the topics related to this module or portions of that module. You'll individually prepare three talking points (e.g., questions, comments, and/or criticisms) about the module we just reviewed (which you'll be able to formulate because you'll have done all of the required reading for that module and attended the lectures) and use those to stimulate the class discussion. I will facilitate, guide, and moderate the discussion but will refrain from being too active a participant. You'll e-mail your talking points into me before each circle time. We'll discuss this course requirement in more detail on January 19.

**4.d Mid-course self-assessment (15%).** Mid-way through the semester (before spring break) you will prepare a two page reaction paper that provides a summary of how the material we've covered so far relates to your own life. A key feature of health psychology, as a discipline, is that much of what we discuss will at some point affect you or someone you know. This mid-course assessment is designed to encourage you to think about the course in this way. The two page summary is due by 3pm on March 3. We will discuss this requirement in more detail on January 19.

**4.e Class participation (10%).** A percentage of your grade will be devoted to your participation in classroom discussions and active participation in class. As such, it is to your advantage to attend class regularly and to make yourself known to me.

**5. Disabilities and Special Needs Statement.** If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both me and Disability Resources and Services, 216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890 or 412-383-7355 (TTY) as early as possible in the term.

**6. Academic Integrity.** All students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the University of Pittsburgh policies on academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, or in fact, **any** violation of the principles outlined in the policy manual (see especially Student Obligations) **will not be tolerated**. Any student suspected of a violation will be subject to any and all disciplinary processes and sanctions per University of Pittsburgh established policies and procedures.

**7. Office hours and meetings.** I do not have regular office hours. However, I want you to know that I am available for any questions regarding the course, your performance and responsibilities in the course, as well as "bigger picture" questions regarding graduate study and/or careers in psychology. If you would like to discuss any of these topics (or others) with me, please e-mail me (the most reliable and efficient way to get in touch with me) and we'll arrange a convenient time to meet.

**8. Laptop, PDA, cell phone, and/or digital music use during class.** Use is *absolutely prohibited* during class unless you make a compelling reason to me as to why you need to use any of these devices during class time.

**9. Grades.** The following ranges will be used to determine all grades. No "curves" will be used in calculating your grades and no extra credit will be given.

<b>A-Range:</b> <i>SUPERIOR</i>	A+: 97.5% - 100%	A: 92.5% - 97.4%	A-: 90%-92.4%
<b>B-Range</b> <i>MERITORIOUS</i>	B+: 87.5% - 89.9%	B: 82.5% - 87.4%	B-: 80% - 82.4%
<b>C-Range</b> <i>ADEQUATE</i>	C+: 77.5% - 79.9%	C: 72.5% - 77.4%	C-: 70% - 72.4%
<b>D-Range</b> <i>MINIMAL</i>	D+: 67.5% - 69.9%	D: 62.5% - 67.4%	D-: 60% - 62.4%
<b>F-Range</b> <i>FAILURE</i>	F: less than 59.9%		

**DETAILED CLASS SCHEDULE****MODULE #1: INTRODUCTION TO THE DISCIPLINE OF HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY**

**January 7:**               **Review of syllabus**

**January 12:**           **What is Health Psychology? (part I)**

1. Miller, N. (1983). Behavioral medicine: symbiosis between laboratory and clinic. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 34, 1-31. (note: this is a historically relevant paper; some of the research results are a bit dated; some are still surprisingly germane in 2016)

2. Suls, J., & Rothman, A. (2004). Evolution of the biopsychosocial model: Prospects and challenges for health psychology. *Health Psychology*, 23, 119-125.

3. <http://www.health-psych.org/AboutWhatWeDo.cfm>

4. Peruse the table of contents of the journal *Health Psychology* for the years 2012-2016.

**January 14:**           **What is Health Psychology? (part II)**

1. Gatchel, R.J. et al. (2007). The biopsychosocial approach to chronic pain: Scientific advances and future directions. *Psychological Bulletin*, 133, 581-624.

**January 19:**           **Review of assignments**

**MODULE #2: MAJOR DISEASE OUTCOMES**

**January 21:**           **Cardiovascular Disease and Cancer**

**MODULE #3: SUBSTANCE USE AS A RISK FACTOR**

**January 26:**           **Substance abuse: Etiology**

1. Johnston, L. D., O'Malley, P. M., Miech, R. A., Bachman, J. G., & Schulenberg, J. E. (2015). *Monitoring the Future national survey results on drug use: 1975-2014: Overview, key findings on adolescent drug use*. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan, 90pp.

Available at: <http://monitoringthefuture.org/pubs/monographs/mtf-overview2014.pdf>

Note: The Johnston et al. reading above is not as much as it seems (90 pp) – lots of graphs and half pages

2. Shaffer, H. et al. (2004). Toward a syndrome model of addiction: Multiple expressions, common etiology. *Harvard Review of Psychiatry*, 12, 367-374.

3. Steinberg, L. (2007). Risk taking in adolescence: New perspectives from brain and behavioral science. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 16, 55-59.

**January 28:**           **Substance abuse: Prevention and treatment**

1. Jackson, C. et al. (2012). Interventions to prevent substance use and risky sexual behaviour in young people: a systematic review. *Addiction*, 107, 733-747.

2. Brandon, T. et al. (2007). Relapse and relapse prevention. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 3, 257-284.

3. Shadel, W.G., et al. (2000). Current models of nicotine dependence: What is known and what is needed to advance understanding of tobacco etiology among youth. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence*, 59, 9-22.

4. Video: "Hooked: Why bad habits are hard to break"

<http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/hooked-why-bad-habits-are-hard-to-break/>

**February 2:** Policy debate: Should recreational marijuana use be legal?

**February 4:** **Substance abuse circle time**

#### **MODULE #4: WEIGHT, DIET, AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AS RISK FACTORS**

**February 9:** **Weight Control, obesity, physical activity, and diet (part I)**

1. Brownell, K. et al. (2010). Personal responsibility and obesity: A constructive approach to a controversial topic. *Health Affairs*, 29, 379-387.

2. Video: "Why can't America 'weight' any longer?" (start at minute 4:30)

(<http://www.tedmed.com/talks/show?id=7337>)

**February 11:** **Weight Control, obesity, physical activity, and diet (part II)**

1. Marcus, B.H. et al. (2006). Physical activity intervention studies: What we know and what we need to know. *Circulation*, 114, 2739-2752.

2. Melanson, K.J. (2007). Nutrition review: Dietary considerations for obesity treatment. *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*, 1, 433-436.

3. <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/whats-the-optimal-speed-for-exercise/>

4. MacLean, P. et al. (2015). NIH Working Group Report: Innovative research to improve maintenance of weight loss. *Obesity*, 23, 7-15.

**February 16:** **in class movie: *Supersize Me* (part I)**

**February 18:** **in class movie: *Supersize Me* (part II)**

**February 23:** Policy debate: Should junk foods be subject to higher taxes?

**February 25:** **Weight, diet, & physical activity circle time**

**March 1, 3:** **NO CLASS: Mid-course self-assessment due this week by 3pm March 3**

**March 8, 10:** **SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS**

## MODULE #5: HIV, AIDS, AND SEX

**March 15:** in class movie: *And the Band Played on (part I)*

**March 17:** in class movie: *And the Band Played on (part II)*

**March 22:** HIV and AIDS

1. Hariri, S., & McKenna, M. (2007). Epidemiology of HIV in the United States, *Clinical Microbiology Reviews*, 20, 478–488.

2. Mustanski, B.S. et al. (2011). HIV in young men who have sex with men: A review of epidemiology, risk and protective factors, and interventions. *Journal of Sex Research*, 48, 218-253.

3. Laga, M., & Piot, P. (2012). Prevention of sexual transmission of HIV: real results, science progressing, societies remaining behind. *AIDS*, 26, 1223-1229.

4. Video: “Sex, drugs, and HIV: Let’s get rational”

[http://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth\\_pisani\\_sex\\_drugs\\_and\\_hiv\\_let\\_s\\_get\\_rational\\_1/transcript](http://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_pisani_sex_drugs_and_hiv_let_s_get_rational_1/transcript)

**March 24:** Sexual and reproductive behavior

1. Waxman, H. (2006). Politics and science: Reproductive health. *Health Matrix*, 16, 5-25.

2. Chin, H.B. et al. (2012). The effectiveness of group-based comprehensive risk-reduction and abstinence education interventions to prevent or reduce the risk of adolescent pregnancy, Human Immunodeficiency Virus, and sexually transmitted infections: Two systematic reviews for the Guide to Community Preventive Services. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 42, 272–294.

**March 29:** Policy debate: Should needle exchange programs be a key part of HIV prevention?

**March 31:** HIV, AIDS, and sex circle time

## MODULE #6: SELECTED CROSS-CUTTING TOPICS

**April 5:** Stress and coping – PAPERS DUE TODAY IN CLASS

Schneiderman, N. et al. (2005). Stress and health: Psychological, behavioral, and biological determinants. *Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 1, 607-628.

**April 7:** Health disparities

Adler, N., & Rehkopf, D. (2008). U.S. Disparities in health: Descriptions, causes, and mechanisms. *Annual Review of Public Health*, 29, 235–52.

**April 12:** Comorbidity

Jane-Llopis, E., & Matytsina, I. (2006). Mental health and alcohol, drugs and tobacco: a review of the comorbidity between mental disorders and the use of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs. *Drug and Alcohol Review*, 25, 515 – 536.

**April 14:** Conducting research in health psychology

**MODULE #7: CONCLUDING TOPICS**

**April 19: Course (cumulative review of all topics) circle time**

**April 21: Careers in health psychology and course summary**