

TEXAS A & M UNIVERSITY - COMMERCE
HEALTH & HUMAN PERFORMANCE
COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE TITLE: Health Psychology
COURSE NUMBER: HHPH 547
CREDIT HOURS: 3
INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Tara Tietjen-Smith
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OFFICE HOURS: TBA
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TEXTBOOK: Brannon, L. & Feist, J. (2010). *Health psychology: An introduction to behavior and health*. 7th edition. Wadsworth: United States.
- Can use ebook version for over \$100 less: Can order at:
<http://www.cengagebrain.com/shop/isbn/9780495601326>

RECOMMENDED TEXT: American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Course Description:

This course is provided for the student to examine the contributions of psychological research to the understanding, prevention, and treatment of a variety of health concerns. The biopsychosocial model of health and illness will be emphasized. Students will study how social, emotional, behavioral, biological, and spiritual factors influence health.

Goals:

Upon completion of this course, the student will:

- (1) Demonstrate a broad background of knowledge in health psychology;
- (2) Describe the models and theories that are used to explain health risk and health-enhancing behaviors.
- (3) Explain the biopsychosocial model and its relevance to the prevention, etiology, and treatment of disease & apply that model to specific health issues;
- (4) Synthesize research on factors involved in causing, maintaining, contributing to, preventing, and treating a specific health issue

(5) Evaluate his/her own health history and habits; and describe and enact a positive, proactive attitude toward healthy living.

Course Requirements:

(NOTE: NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED!!!)

A. Discussions:

Students will participate in 10 discussions of research studies related to health psychology. Students will be graded on the following: (1) quality of discussion; (2) responses to other students' posts; and (3) use of outside references to support or refute the studies discussed. **(10%)**

B. Behavior Change Project:

Students will identify a behavioral change that would contribute to his/her health. Examples are as follows: exercising regularly, eating more fruit/vegetables, managing stress better, quitting smoking, sleeping more, etc. Students will keep a time log throughout the semester to be turned in at the end of the semester. Then, the student will write a paper describing the success (or lack thereof) he/she has in changing the behavior **(15%)**.

C. Research Paper:

Students will submit **one research paper** covering a topic approved by the instructor. The purpose of the research paper is for the student to synthesize research about and apply the biopsychosocial model to a specific health issue. The research paper involves the following steps: **choose a specific health issue; research how that situation/disease develops and the factors that contribute to it; and research current treatment, education, or prevention approaches.**

Possible topics are as follows (This list is not all-inclusive. If you have other topics in which you are interested, please share them with the instructor. Please do some preliminary research on your topic to make sure that you can find enough information for this paper.):

- Self-care (e.g., breast, testicular or skin self-exams; getting regular check-ups)
- Exercise (e.g., improving adherence to training programs)
- Eating disorders or obesity
- Prevention of accidents & injury (e.g., safety gear, helmets, seat belts)
- Smoking
- Pain management
- Immunizations or vaccinations
- Infant mortality or treatment of terminally- or chronically-ill children
- Compliance with medical advice
- Health impact of caregiving (e.g., family members of Alzheimer's or AIDS patients)
- Brain or spinal injuries

- Cancer
- Arthritis
- Survivorship & grief
- Asthma
- Hospice vs. hospital care for the dying
- Strokes

The student MUST get approval of the topic before writing!

Guidelines for this paper are as follows:

5-8 pages (actual writing not including the cover page, references, etc.)

APA format

At least 6 references (at least 4 of them current (2005 – 2011), professional, refereed journal articles)

NOTE: Each student should have a separate topic. (If you have a topic in mind, please let me know ASAP.)

The research paper is worth 200 points (20%).

D. Exams (2):

A **mid-term and final exam** will be administered throughout the semester, covering all information covered in home assignments, web discussions, and the book (**200 points each, 40%**)

E. Participation and Homework: (15%)

The student will be responsible for obtaining all materials presented online, assigned readings from the textbook, and outside assignments given by the instructor. Students are also **REQUIRED** to participate in class discussions online. Since this class is online, a major portion of time management is up to the student. You are responsible for making sure your assignments are in on time. Lack of professional participation will be reflected on the final grade. You may work ahead, but **NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**

Grading:

Discussions (10)	100 points (10%)
Behavior Change Project	150 points (15%)
Exams (2 @ 200 points each)	400 points (40%)
Research Paper	200 points (20%)
<u>Participation and Homework</u>	<u>150 points (15%)</u>
TOTAL	1000 POINTS (100%)

Grade Scale:

90 - 100 = A
80 - 89 = B
70 - 79 = C

60 - 69 = D
0 - 59 = F

All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Students' Guide Book.)

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library, Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Character Expectations:

Integrity has been identified as the single most important characteristic of a scholar. One goal of your education is the development of professional and scholarly characteristics. Integrity includes ethical behavior such as academic honesty. Academic honesty is essential to the goals of education and it enhances the spirit of learning and teaching. Students, together with faculty, exemplify their integrity by freely assuming responsibility for encouraging honesty and integrity. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, **acts of fraud or deception on an examination, laboratory work, or class assignment**; acts of forgery or unauthorized alteration of any official academic record or document; and **attempts to gain credit for work that the student has either not actually completed or has plagiarized from another person's work**. Plagiarism is defined as the act of using writings from another person and presenting them as one's own work. Quotation marks, page numbers, and author references are required for adequate acknowledgment of word-for-word copying of another person's work. An author reference is sufficient acknowledgment for rephrasing in your own words the work of another person. Furthermore, **submitting any paper for academic credit in more than one course without the instructor's permission is considered an act of academic dishonesty**. Work you submit should represent your effort, and unless specified by the assignment, you should work independently (e.g., do not use work completed by others as your own). When you have collaborated (worked with others), clearly state this. It is in your best interest to gain prior permission of the instructor before working with another student.

