



PSY333H1F Health Psychology

LEC0101 Winter 2025

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Taryn E. Grieder, M.Ed., Ph.D. taryn.grieder@utoronto.ca

Office hours: Before and after class, and by appointment (Zoom)

Teaching Assistant: Athanasios Bourganos, athan.bourganos@mail.utoronto.ca

Course Information

Lectures Tuesdays at 1 - 4 pm in SS2108.

Online assessments and participation will be completed on Quercus. Students will have the opportunity for both in-person and synchronous online office hours to ask questions and clarifications about course content. Students need the ability to read and edit PDFs or Powerpoint slides and use Quercus for submission of most assessments.

Course Description, Goals, and Prerequisites

This course is designed to give you a broad overview of the field of health psychology. Health psychology is an exciting, relatively new field of study that examines the bi-directional relationships between body and mind and the implication of these processes for various health outcomes. We will explore scientific research questions such as: What does stress do to your health? What psychological and social factors cause people to behave in unhealthy ways? How do various forms of stigma and discrimination impact health? What helps people cope with stress and illness? How do friends and family impact health? Does it matter how your doctor talks to you? Can a sugar pill cure back pain? And more!!

Intended Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Understand basic human physiology and the dynamic connections between mind and body.
2. Describe how a variety of psychological experiences (e.g. stigma, stress, social exclusion and support) “get under the skin” to influence health outcomes.
3. Discuss how physical health and physiological processes can influence a person’s psychological experiences.

4. Explain how individuals and health care professionals can use psychological research to promote health.

Note about prerequisites: It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met **all** prerequisites listed in the Psychology section of the A&S Calendar for this course. If you lack any prerequisites you **WILL BE REMOVED**. No waivers will be granted.

Reading Material

The recommended textbook for this course is:

Taylor SE, Stanton AL, Sirois F, Anderson J (2023) *Health Psychology (6th Canadian Ed.)*. McGraw-Hill: Toronto. ISBN: 9781265605261 \$59

Course Evaluation/Marking Scheme

Participation – 5%

Commentary Assignment - 20%

Midterm Assessment - 25%

Health Behavioural Change Self-Assessment - 10%

Communicating Research Project – 10%

Final Assessment - 30%

Lectures: PowerPoint and PDF slides will be posted before class on the date stated in the course schedule (found below). These slides should be downloaded and/or printed to facilitate with note taking. Please note that if you do not understand a particular concept as it is presented, please ask questions! It is your responsibility to let us know if you do not understand a particular concept or idea.

Any posted lecture recordings and slides are only for the exclusive use of enrolled students, for their personal learning. Lecture recordings and slides are not to be shared in any way beyond enrolled students.

Participation (5%): There will be 1-2 written reflection/participation questions given in video lectures to be completed on Quercus. Students will reflect on a topic covered in class, applying the course material to their response. Students will have at least 24 hours to respond to these discussion questions on Quercus (see the course schedule, below).

Midterm assessment (25%): The midterm assessment will have a combination of multiple choice and written response questions (with a strict word limit). The written response questions will ask you to think critically about course themes, connect topics in the course, and apply what you have learned to real-world situations. On the release day you will have a set amount of time (3 hours) to complete the assessment on Quercus quizzes, individually, using your lecture slides and notes only, and writing in *your own words*. You will not need to provide citations and should not be using any outside sources. The midterm assessment will cover lecture material only (this means that there will not be any questions from the recommended textbook that were not discussed in lectures).

Final examination (30%): The final examination will have a combination of multiple choice and written response questions. The written response questions will ask you to think critically about course themes, connect topics in the course, and apply what you have learned to real-world situations. The in-person final examination will be cumulative and will cover lecture material only (this means that there will not be any questions from the recommended textbook that were not discussed in lectures).

Health Behavioural Change Self-Assessment (10%): We all have health-related behaviours that we would like to change (e.g. exercising or sleeping more, smoking or drinking less, better stress coping strategies, etc.). This assignment will allow you to take what you learn in this class and apply it in your life. Over the course of the semester, you will choose a health-related behaviour that you would like to change, track/monitor that behaviour, and develop and implement a plan to change that behaviour. Your grade on this assignment does NOT depend on whether you achieve your behavioural change goal, but on whether you complete and are engaged with the assignment. The assignment has 2 parts:

Part I: Setting goal and initial tracking = 1% Note: We will discuss material related to goals in Session 3, so you don't need to start prior to that.

Part II: Data submission and personal report = 9%

Commentary Assignment (20%): The journal club commentary assignment is a written report on a recent primary research article (aka empirical research study, which will have methods and results sections) of your choice that examines an issue related to the course (ie. produced new research on health psychology). Please see the commentary assignment outline for further details, which is available for download on Quercus.

Communicating Research Project (10%): Taking what you have learned from your commentary assignment, you will complete a project designed to communicate this health psychology research to others to whom this topic would be important, interesting, or pertinent, but are not researchers themselves. Reaching your audience could take any of several forms including: a press release, an informational video, a brochure, blog post or a letter to the legislature. Your goal is to convey the importance of the research and how it is likely to impact your audience. Further information will be provided on Quercus.

Course Webpage/Quercus

<https://q.utoronto.ca/courses/382388>

This course uses the University's learning management system, Quercus, to post information about the course. This includes posting readings and other materials required to complete class activities and course assignments, as well as sharing important announcements and updates. The site is dynamic and new information and resources will be posted regularly as we move through the term, so please make it a habit to log in to the site on a regular basis.

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT GRADES POSTED ONLINE: Please also note that any grades posted are for your information only, so you can view and track your progress through the course. No grades are considered official, including any posted in Quercus at any point in the term, until they have been formally approved and posted on ACORN at the end of the course. Please contact the instructor and TAs as soon as possible if you think there is an error in any grade posted on Quercus.

Course Policies

Departmental Guidance for Undergraduate Students in Psychology

The Department of Psychology recognizes that, as a student, you may experience disruptions to your learning that are out of your control, and that there may be circumstances when you need extra support. Accordingly, the department has provided a [helpful guide](#) to clarify your and your instructor's responsibilities when navigating these situations. This guide consolidates Arts & Science Policies for undergraduate students in one place for your convenience. As an instructor in the department, I will frequently consult with these recommendations when providing you with support, and I recommend that you also consult it to learn more about your rights and responsibilities before reaching out to me.

Accommodations and Accessibility Needs:

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an acute or ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS) at the beginning of the academic year by visiting <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as/new-registration>. Without registration, you will not be able to verify your situation with your instructors, and instructors will not be advised about your accommodation needs. AS will assess your situation, develop an accommodation plan with you, and support you in requesting accommodation for your course work. Remember that the process of accommodation is private: AS will not share details of your needs or condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

As a student at the University of Toronto, you are part of a diverse community that welcomes and includes students and faculty from a wide range of cultural and religious traditions. For my part, I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (such as a test or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

Specific Medical Circumstances

If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, consult me right away. Normally, I will ask you for documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. This documentation can be an Absence Declaration (via ACORN) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. You can submit a different form (like a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI. For more information on the VOI, please see <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>. For information on Absence Declaration Tool for A&S students, please see <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence>. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility

Services as soon as possible. There may be times when you are unable to complete course work on time due to non-medical reasons. If you have concerns, speak to me or to an advisor in your College Registrar's office; they can help you to decide if you want to request an extension or accommodation. They may be able to provide you with a College Registrar's letter of support to give to your instructors, and importantly, connect you with other resources on campus for help with your situation.

Missed Midterm

Students who miss the midterm must contact the instructor within one week of the missed test and provide the documentation mentioned above. Students will then have the opportunity to write a make-up test.

Penalties for Lateness

A penalty of 10% per calendar day, up to and including the last day of classes, will be applied for late assignments. After the last day of classes, the penalty of 10% per calendar day will be applied by the Undergraduate Counselor on behalf of the Department. Any term work that will be handed in after the final day of classes is subject to a petition for extension of term work. This petition should be filed with the student's College Registrar's Office.

Turnitin

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation website (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Contact

All communication should be sent via University of Toronto email addresses only. Please include "PSY333" in the subject line, and do not send messages through Quercus/Canvas (as they often get filtered as spam/junk). The University requires that all students have a U of T email address and check it regularly; it is the only address to which official university communications will be sent. If you are unable to attend class or would like to discuss matters concerning the course directly, please email to schedule an appointment.

Requesting a Regrade

If you think an assessment has been incorrectly marked, you can request a regrade. In this case, you must first review your assessment with the TA. Following review with the TA, if you wish to have your assessment reviewed by the instructor, please submit a request by email within 2 weeks of the grade return date.

Video recording and sharing (download and re-use prohibited)

Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other sources depending on the specific facts of each situation and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor.

For questions about the recording and use of videos in which you appear, please contact your instructor.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All

members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

Academic Resources

Writing:

As a student here at the University of Toronto, you are expected to produce well-written assignments. The university provides its students with multiple resources to help them achieve this. For more information on campus writing centres and writing courses, please visit <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/>.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:

All students, faculty and staff are expected to follow the University's guidelines and policies on academic integrity. For students, this means following the standards of academic honesty when writing assignments, collaborating with fellow students, and writing tests and exams. Ensure that the work you submit for grading represents your own honest efforts. Plagiarism—representing someone else's work as your own or submitting work that you have previously submitted for marks in another class or program—is a serious offence that can result in sanctions. Speak to me or your TA for advice on anything that you find unclear. To learn more about how to cite and use source material appropriately and for other writing support, see the U of T writing support website at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca>. Consult the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for a complete outline of the University's policy and expectations. For more information, please see <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity> and <http://academicintegrity.utoronto.ca>

Mental Health and Well-being

Your mental health is important. Throughout university life, there are many experiences that can impact your mental health and well-being. As a University of Toronto student, you can access free mental health and wellbeing services at Health & Wellness (<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/health-wellness/>) such as same day counselling, brief counselling, medical care, skill-building workshops, and drop-in peer support. You can also meet with a Wellness Navigation Advisor who can connect you with other campus and community services and support. Call the mental health clinic at 416-978-8030 ext. 5 to book an appointment or visit <https://uoft.me/mentalhealthcare> to learn about the services available to you.

You can also visit your College Registrar to learn about the resources and supports available: <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/college-registrars-offices>

If you're in distress, you can access immediate support: <https://uoft.me/feelingdistressed>

Course Outline/Schedule

Every effort will be made to manage the course as stated. However, adjustments may be necessary at times. If so, students will be advised, and alterations announced on Quercus.

| Date | Topic | Related Reading |
|--------------------|---|------------------------|
| January 7 | Introduction/Overview What is Health Psychology? | Chapters 1 & 2 |
| January 14 | Theories of Behaviour Change | |
| January 21 | Motivation & Goals | Chapter 4 |
| January 28 | Stress & Health *HBCSA part 1 due by 11:59 pm | Chapter 6 |
| February 4 | Coping with Stress | Chapter 7 |
| February 11 | Psychoneuroimmunology (not on midterm) *Commentary Assignment Due | Chapter 14 |
| February 18 | Study break – no class | |
| February 25 | Midterm Assessment | |
| March 4 | Health-Promoting Behaviours | Chapter 3 |
| March 11 | Addictions | Chapter 5 |
| March 18 | Pain, Chronic Illness & End of Life *Communicating Research Project Due | Chapters 10 & 11 |
| March 25 | Health Care & Policy | Chapters 8 & 9 |
| April 1 | Final Review *HBCSA final project (part 2) due | |
| April 9-30 | Final Examination (date TBA) | |