Psychology 3360.W01: Health Psychology  
Spring 2019

**Instructor:** Amy Houlihan, Ph.D.  
**E-mail:** amy.houlihan@tamucc.edu  
**Phone:** 825-2971  
**Class Location:** online  
**Office:** Bay Hall 311  
**Office Hours:** Monday 12:00 - 2:00  
Wednesday 10:00 - 12:00  
Thursday 10:00 - 11:00 (virtual)  
and by appointment

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

This course will provide an overview of the field of health psychology, examining how psychological theories and research are applied to enhance health and well-being and to prevent and treat illness. We will discuss the behavioral, emotional, social, and cognitive influences on physical health (and, to a lesser extent, mental health). Among other topics, we will examine stress, coping, risk behavior, pain, chronic illness, and the use of health services.

After this course you will be able to…

- understand and describe the models and theories that are used to explain health-risk and health-enhancing behaviors.
- describe the influence of personality, social, and contextual factors in predicting health cognitions and behaviors.
- explain how psychosocial factors influence coping with stress, health problems, and seeking healthcare.
- create and implement a behavioral contract to change a health-related behavior.
- analyze and explain the development of chronic disease using the biopsychosocial model.

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**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

**Blackboard:** This course is entirely online and will use the Blackboard platform. You are expected to have access to laptop or tablet as well as reliable internet access which enables you to view electronic resources, participate in discussions, and complete online assignments and exams. Blackboard will also be used for posting important class announcements and documents, such as assignment instructions. It is your responsibility to check Blackboard regularly to ensure completion of all required coursework. If you have technical difficulties with Blackboard, please contact the IT Help Desk, (361) 825-2692.

**Textbook:** Please refer to the course calendar to see which chapters/pages of the text are assigned for each week. In addition, we will use the publisher’s online resources (LaunchPad) that accompany the textbook. You can choose to either purchase LaunchPad alone (as it includes an e-text version of the book), or you can purchase a hard copy of the book as well as an access code to LaunchPad.
Assignments and Discussion: For most weekly units of the course, there will be one assignment and/or discussion activity that corresponds to the material covered in the unit. Instructions for each assignment will be posted on Blackboard with the unit content and will be due on the dates specified on the course calendar. Discussion prompts will be posted on the Blackboard discussion board. Each student is expected to submit one original post and to respond two at least two other students’ posts. Some of the discussion prompts will require you to first watch a video clip (links will be provided on Blackboard) or complete some library-based research. Please refer to the Discussion Forum Guidelines (under the Syllabus & Information tab in Blackboard) for more details. Due dates for assignments and discussion posts are on the course calendar.

LaunchPad Quizzes. Chapter summary quizzes on LaunchPad will be assigned weekly (see course calendar for due dates). The purpose of these quizzes is to help you gauge your understanding of the material as you prepare for the exams. Thus, these quizzes should be completed after you have read the chapters and reviewed the corresponding PowerPoint slides.

Exams: There will be three non-cumulative exams consisting of approximately 50 multiple choice questions and 3-4 short answer questions. Please expect that any material covered in the assigned chapters and class discussions may be included on the exams. Dates for all exams can be found on the course calendar.

All students are required to use the Respondus Lockdown Browser to access exams in this course. Students may also be required to utilize Respondus Monitor for some or all of the course exams. This program uses a webcam and video technology to prevent cheating during online exams. Use of the Monitor feature requires a small fee to utilize. Students are responsible for downloading the program, ensuring appropriate equipment to utilize this service, and paying any associated fees prior to the testing window.

More information about accessing online tests and the testing policies for the course are provided on Blackboard under the Syllabus & Information tab.

Health behavior contract: For this assignment, you will identify a personal health behavior that you want to change (for example, increasing your exercise or quitting smoking). You will create a behavioral contract that you will implement in partnership with a classmate. This assignment will be ongoing for three weeks; at the end of the three weeks, you will turn in a report of your progress toward changing your health behavior. More detailed information about this assignment will be provided on Blackboard.

Cancer paper – Biopsychosocial explanation of cancer: For this assignment, you will write a brief paper that examines the development of cancer from a biopsychosocial perspective. This will require the use of your textbook as well as primary sources (i.e., research journal articles). More detailed information about this assignment will be provided on Blackboard.

GRADING
Each component of the course will be worth the following number of points:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (3 at 100 points each)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health behavior contract</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cancer paper 85 points
LaunchPad quizzes (11 at 10 points each) 111 points
All other assignments and discussion posts (approx. 15 at 10 points each) 150 points

Final letter grades will be assigned based on the percentage of points you earned out of the 731 total possible points.

658 (or more) points = 90% = A
585 - 657 points = 80-89% = B
511 - 584 points = 70-79% = C
438 - 510 points = 60-69% = D
437 (or fewer) points = ≤ 59% = F

Please note that the point values here are tentative and may change in the event that a minor assignment is added or removed from the syllabus. If this happens, an updated version of the syllabus will be posted on Blackboard.

EXPECTATIONS
Please help me in creating a comfortable learning environment by treating everyone, regardless of perspective or experience, courteously. During discussions, feel free to express your disagreement with ideas, but refrain from criticizing or belittling anyone with whom you disagree. If you ever feel like you are not being treated with respect in this class, please let me know.

In general, late work in this class will not be accepted. If an emergency arises that prevents you from completing an assignment, discussion post, or exam, you must notify me (either by email or phone) within 24 hours of the missed assignment/exam. At my discretion, I will arrange with you an alternate time for you to take an exam or extend an assignment deadline for you. You may be asked to provide documentation, such as a doctor’s note, to verify the reason for your missed assignment/exam.

In addition to checking Blackboard for announcements and information, you are expected to check your Islander email account on a regular basis. This is the fastest and most efficient way for me to disseminate information to the class.

CONTACTING ME
I am committed to making myself available to answer questions, discuss concerns, and to provide/accept feedback concerning the course. I check my email frequently (less often during nights and weekends) and will do my best to respond to your messages quickly. I also encourage you to visit during my office hours or to set up alternative meeting times with me. Remember that should you begin to struggle in this course, it is always better to talk to me about it sooner rather than later; if you wait until the very end of the semester there is usually little I can do to help you.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY
All forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. This includes, but is not limited to: handing in another’s work as your own, using unauthorized materials on an exam, collaborating with others on an exam, copying another’s answers for an exam, turning in the same papers for two different classes, purchasing or otherwise obtaining papers written by
another and turning that work in as your own. You are expected to avoid plagiarism (whether intentional or unintentional) by carefully citing your sources in your research paper. Any information used in your assignments that is not your own idea should be appropriately referenced using APA style (seek help if you do not know how to properly cite your sources). If academic dishonesty occurs, you will receive a zero on the assignment, and the incident will be reported as described in the TAMUCC student code of conduct.

If for any reason, I suspect your work is not your own or that you have not adhered to the academic integrity guidelines in completing assignments or exams, I reserve the right as your instructor to challenge an exam or assignment grade. In the case of suspected problems, I will ask the student to meet with me to complete a random selection of oral exam questions as an indicator of his/her knowledge of the material. If the student is unable or unwilling to complete the requested questions, a grade of “0” for the exam/assignment in question will be given and report of academic dishonesty will be submitted.

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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room 116. If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

ACADEMIC ADVISING
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online degree audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

DROPPING THE CLASS
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

GRADE APPEAL PROCESS
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the
process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_app eals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website: http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

ACADEMIC CONTINUITY
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane, in which classes cannot be held on the TAMUCC campus, this course will continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., email, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

COURSE CALENDAR
This calendar is tentative. I will notify you in advance of any changes. If necessary, revised versions will be re-posted on Blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 (Jan 14)</td>
<td>Introduction to health psychology and the biopsychosocial model</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assignment/Discussion: Thur 1/17&lt;br&gt;Ch 1 LaunchPad quiz: Sat 1/19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2 (Jan 21)</td>
<td>Research methods in health psychology</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Assignment/Discussion: Thur 1/24&lt;br&gt;Ch 2 LaunchPad quiz: Sat 1/26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 (Jan 28)</td>
<td>Health behavior models (HBM, TRA)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Discussion: Thur 1/24&lt;br&gt;Assignment: Fri 1/25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 (Feb 4)</td>
<td>Health risk behavior and the prototype/willingness model</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Discussion: Thur 2/7&lt;br&gt;Assignment: Fri 2/8&lt;br&gt;Ch 9 LaunchPad Quiz: Sat 2/16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5 (Feb 11)</td>
<td>Health risk behavior, cont’d.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Exam 1 [Ch 1, 2, 6 (p. 145-158), 9 (p. 243-262)] Tue 2/12&lt;br&gt;Assignment/Discussion: Thur 2/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 (Feb 18)</td>
<td>Health behavior change and interventions</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Discussion/Assignment: Thur 2/21&lt;br&gt;Ch 6 LaunchPad Quiz: Sat 2/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7 (Feb 25)</td>
<td>Stress and illness</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Discussion/Assignment: Thur 2/28&lt;br&gt;Ch 4 LaunchPad Quiz: Sat 3/2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 (Mar 4)</td>
<td>Coping with stress, optimism, and perceived control</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Discussion: Thur 3/7&lt;br&gt;Assignment: Fri 3/8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar 11</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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| Week 9  | Social support | 5 | **Health behavior contract: Thur 3/21**  
Ch 5 LaunchPad Quiz: Sat 3/23 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Week 10  | Obesity and eating disorders | 8 | **Exam 2 [Ch 6 (p. 158-162), 4, 5]: Tue 3/26**  
Discussion/Assignment: Thur 3/28  
Ch 8 LaunchPad Quiz: Sat 3/30 |
| Week 11  | Cardiovascular disease and type A behavior | 10 | Discussion/Assignment: Thur 4/4  
Ch 10 LaunchPad Quiz: Sat 4/6 |
| Week 12  | Pain and pain management | 14 | Discussion/Assignment: Thur 4/11  
Ch 14 LaunchPad Quiz: Sat 4/13 |
| Week 13  | HIV and AIDS | 12 | Discussion/Assignment: Thur 4/18  
Ch 12 LaunchPad Quiz: Sat 4/20 |
| Week 14  | Using health services | 13 | **Cancer Paper: Thur 4/25**  
Ch 13 LaunchPad Quiz: Sat 4/27 |
| Week 15  | Health disparities and other current/future challenges | | Discussion/Assignment: Wed May 1 |
| Thur May 9 | | | **Exam 3: Ch 8, 10, 14, 12, 13** |