HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY
Psychology 260
Fall 2013
Tues and Thurs: 8:15-10:00 am
Olin 101
6 credits

Instructor:
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Office: 133 Olin
Office Hours: 12:45-1:45 Tuesdays and Wednesdays, or by appointment
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Course Description:
What are the physical consequences of stress? How do psychosocial factors influence the experience of pain? How can psychological interventions help reduce the risk of heart attacks? Can praying and being prayed for impact medical conditions? Do school-based prevention programs effectively diminish the prevalence of smoking?

In this course, we will examine how psychological principles can be employed to promote and maintain health, prevent and treat illness, and encourage adherence to disease treatment regimens. Within a biopsychosocial framework, we will analyze behavioral patterns and public policies that influence risk for cancer, chronic pain, substance abuse, and sexually transmitted diseases, among other conditions.

We will additionally examine how policies affect public health. Toward this end, students in small groups will critically examine the effects of local public (town) or private (campus) policies on health outcomes. For this project students will go “into the field” to investigate an issue, propose policy changes supported by theory and research, and solicit and respond to feedback on their proposals. Groups will present their findings at a poster session at the end of the term.

Course Readings:

All assigned articles can be found through Carleton eReserves.
Grading Criteria and Policy

Final grades will be based on the following assignments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In class</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Reaction paper on <em>Yesterday</em></td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group Projects</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Service Announcement Poster</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy and Health</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>33</td>
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**Class Participation**

Classes will include a combination of instructor-facilitated discussion, student-facilitated discussion, small group discussion of Policy and Health Projects, and critical thinking activities. Your informed participation is an important requirement for this class. To do well on the participation component of the grade, you will need to regularly demonstrate through your comments and questions that you have read and thought critically about the assigned readings.

**Online Pre-Class Discussion Forum**

**Goals**

The goals of the discussion forum are as follows:

- To provide out-of-class opportunities for discussion and critical thinking
- To enable quieter students to share their views and boost their participation score
- To provide me with insight into topics that students find provocative, challenging, or confusing

**Initial Posts - due Sundays at 8 pm**

Discuss something from the readings for Monday that you found to be especially interesting, controversial, and/or confusing. Aim to tap into the higher-order thinking levels of application, analysis, synthesis, or evaluation. You are welcome to post your own opinion on the topic, and you might (though needn’t) conclude by posing a thought-provoking question.

Ideally, posts should:

- demonstrate critical thinking about the assigned material
- be 3-5 sentences in length and posted on time
- utilize an informal (though not colloquial) tone and contain solid mechanics
Peer Responses – due Mondays at 8 pm
Respond to one of the initial posts. (It is okay if the selected post is one to which others have responded.) You might, for example, thoughtfully rebut another student’s comment or provide an alternate perspective to the one currently dominating the discussion.

Ideally, responses should:
• demonstrate critical thinking about the assigned material and initial post
• be 3-5 sentences in length, be posted on time, and contain solid mechanics
• not be simple "me too" statements that neither expand the conversation nor demonstrate significant reflection

Readers – by Tuesdays at 8 am
To promote fruitful discussions, those not making initial posts or responding are asked to read through the various threads in advance of class.

Forum Schedule
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Initial Posters</th>
<th>Responders</th>
<th>Readers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 2, 6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C, D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weeks 3, 7</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>A, B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 4, 8</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C, D</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weeks 5, 9</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A, B</td>
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Netiquette
• Please be professional and courteous.
• Online communication lacks the non-verbal cues that provide much of the meaning in face-to-face conversations. Choose words carefully, phrase sentences clearly, and keep sentences brief.
• State the main topic of your posting in the Subject line.
• Proofread what you post for both spelling and grammar.
• Please do not use all capital letters.

Reaction Paper
We will have one movie night during the semester. On September 29 at 7 pm, we will gather to watch Yesterday. This film revolves around a Zulu woman in South Africa who simultaneously takes care of her daughter, her dying husband, and her own serious illness. Later that week you will be asked to write a reaction paper and engage in a discussion on the film.
Policy and Health Project
For this project you will work in small groups to propose and justify (using principles of health psychology) policy changes that could have beneficial health effects on a target population. For example, your group may choose to examine how a local high school could cost-effectively promote healthier food consumption among the students. As another example, your group could investigate town policies that influence alcohol use and smoking.

The first step for your group is to select a specific behavior, population, and venue of interest. Possible behaviors to target include (but are not limited to) exercise, auto/bike accident prevention, cancer screening, STD prevention, food consumption, sleep habits, alcohol use, and smoking. Examples of target populations are adolescents, college students, adult males, adult females, and the elderly. Possible venues for intervention include a school campus, a private work site, and a town hall.

The second step is to investigate the issue on site by conducting interviews, reading relevant policy manuals, etc. Once you have a solid grasp of the issue, propose and justify (based on theory and past research) policy changes. Be sure to include in your 6-8 page (not including cover page and references; page limits strictly enforced) written proposal a concrete means for assessing progress (behavior change). Additionally, anticipate obstacles to the acceptance of your proposal (financial, political, practical, etc) and address them preemptively.

The third step involves actively promoting your proposal. This may entail meeting with existing policy makers (e.g., school administrators, company managers, government officials) and presenting them with your consulting report. It may also entail working with an existing organization that promotes positive health change and/or writing letters to local newspapers.

The final step is for your group to prepare and present a poster on your project so we can learn about your experience, including any resistance you faced. To promote individual accountability (and fairness), group members will be asked to complete a confidential peer-assessment form, the results of which will be used to calculate a small component of each student’s project grade (20%).

Public Service Announcement (PSA) Posters
After reading about and discussing effective persuasion strategies, you will be asked in small groups to design a PSA poster.

Final Exam
The exam will entail short-answer and essay questions and emphasize concepts covered in class and the readings.
Grades
Grades will be determined on a scale not more stringent than the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-91.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88-89.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82-87.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-81.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-79.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>72-77.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-71.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68-69.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-67.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59.9%</td>
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Additional Course Information

Students with Special Needs
Carleton is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students requesting accommodations must place documentation on file with the Coordinator of Disability Services, who will then inform faculty about student accommodations.

Writing Assistance
The Writing Center, located on the 2nd floor of Scoville and in the Libe (room 329), has peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process (brainstorming to final proofreading). Hours are listed here: https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/writingcenter/

Late Assignments
Late assignments will be accepted but at the penalty of one-third of a grade per weekday. For example, a “B+” paper due on Tuesday but submitted on Thursday would receive a grade of “B-” (i.e., two-thirds of a grade lower). Exceptions to the penalty can occur with highly legitimate excuses. Such legitimate excuses include family emergencies, major illness, or events of similar seriousness. Being excessively burdened with work can certainly be stressful but unfortunately does not qualify as a legitimate excuse! The instructor shall determine the legitimacy of any excuse.

Make-up Exams
If you miss an exam for any reason, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor within 48 hours of the missed exam. If you fail to do so, you will forfeit the opportunity to make up that exam. Students may contact the instructor by email or phone. Make-up exams will be administered only to students with a legitimate excuse.
**SCHEDULE**

**Week 1: 9/17**

**The Biopsychosocial Model**
What led to the development of health psychology?
How do biological, psychological, and social factors interact to influence health?

Straub, Ch. 1 (pp. 15-25)


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**Theories of Health Behavior**
What are stage models of health behavior?
What motivates some people to sunbathe despite the health risks?

Straub, Ch. 6 (pp. 165-172)


**P&H Projects: Proposing a Topic**

**Week 2: 9/24**

**Sunday Night Movie on 9/29: Yesterday**

**Theories of Health Behavior**

**P&H Projects: Conducting Background Research, Preparing Persuasive Messages**

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**Stress and Illness**
What are the physical and psychological consequences of stress?

Straub, Ch. 3 (pp. 58-60, 64-66), Ch. 4 (pp. 92-102)


Week 3: 10/1
Stress and Illness (cont.)
Straub, Ch. 4 (pp. 102-120)


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Psychoimmunology, HIV, and AIDS
How do psychological factors affect the body’s immune response?
How do psychological factors affect the acquisition and progression of HIV?

Straub, Ch. 11 (pp. 351-357, 360-362, 366-375)


P&H Projects: Investigating Current Policy
Week 4: 10/08
Reaction paper on Yesterday due 10/7 by 8 pm

Psychoimmunology, HIV, and AIDS (cont.)
Straub, Ch. 3 (pp. 72-78), Ch. 11 (pp. 363-365, 376-378)


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Public Service Announcement Posters

Straub, Ch. 6 (pp. 186-8)

Week 5: 10/15
Public Service Announcement Posters due on 10/16 @ 5 pm

Managing Pain
How do psychosocial factors influence the experience of pain?
What are effective psychological methods of controlling pain?

Straub, Ch. 13 (pp. 423-436)

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Straub, Ch. 13 (pp. 436-445)


P&H Projects: Preparing a Proposal

Week 6: 10/22
Coping with Stress
What are effective strategies for coping with stress?
Can praying and being prayed for impact stress-related medical conditions?

Straub, Ch. 5 (pp. 124-132), Ch. 9 (299-307)


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Straub, Ch. 5 (149-158), Ch. 13 (138-158), Ch. 14 (pp. 468-470)


P&H Projects: Preparing a Proposal
Week 7: 10/29

Policy & Health Proposals Due on 11/1 by 5 pm

Tobacco Abuse
What are effective strategies for preventing and quitting smoking?

Straub, Ch. 8 (pp. 267-281)


The Patient-Provider Relationship

Straub, Ch. 12 (399-406)


Week 8: 11/5

Nutrition and Obesity
How do psychological factors influence eating and overeating?

Straub, Ch. 7 (pp. 203-210, 213-227)

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Week 9: 11/12
Revised Policy & Health Proposals Due on 11/14 by 5 pm

Cancer
How do psychosocial factors influence the development of cancer?
What factors predict effective coping with cancer?

Straub, Ch. 10 (324-335)


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Straub, Ch. 10 (335-347)


P&H Projects: Preparing Your Poster

Week 10: 11/19
P&H Projects: Poster Session

Finals Week
Exam 2