



**JOHN CABOT UNIVERSITY**

COURSE CODE: "PS 351"  
COURSE NAME: "Health Psychology"  
SEMESTER & YEAR: Fall 2024

**SYLLABUS**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Nicola Petrocchi  
**EMAIL:** npetrocchi@johncabot.edu  
**HOURS:** MW 10:00 AM 11:15 AM  
**TOTAL NO. OF CONTACT HOURS:** 45  
**CREDITS:** 3  
**PREREQUISITES:** Prerequisite: PS 101  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Before or after class or by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will examine five broad areas: the foundations of health psychology including health research; stress, pain and coping; behavioral factors in cardiovascular disease and chronic disease; tobacco, alcohol, drugs, eating, and exercise; and challenges in health psychology.

*Satisfies "Applied Psychology" core course requirement for Psychological Science majors.*

**SUMMARY OF COURSE CONTENT:**

The purpose of this course is to help students develop an understanding of how *cognitive, emotional, behavioral, social* and *biological* factors contribute to physical health and illness. Current research and examples across a number of health concerns will be examined and students will have opportunities to evaluate, synthesize and apply this information to case studies and to consider this information for management of their own health. One of the aims of the course is to prepare the student to read psychological literature with a critical eye, considering the difficulties involved in studying human psychological processes in an objective way.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

At the end of this course in Health Psychology, students should have an understanding and appreciation of common health concerns and current evidence relating the role of physiology, emotions, cognition, and behavior choices to the prevention and treatment of illness and to the promotion and maintenance of health.

**TEXTBOOK:**

Book Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN number	Library Call Number	Comments	Format	Local Bookstore	Online Purchase
Health Psychology, 7 edition	Jane Ogden	McGraw-Hill Education	ISBN-10 : 0335251862 ; ISBN-13: :978-0335251865					

**REQUIRED RESERVED READING:**

NONE

**RECOMMENDED RESERVED READING:**

NONE

**GRADING POLICY**

**-ASSESSMENT METHODS:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Guidelines</b>	<b>Weight</b>
2 Midterm tests	The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions and short essay questions.	20 % each
Final examination	The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions and short essay questions - it is not cumulative: this means that it will cover only the topics introduced after the 2° midterm	20%
Individual assignment	Students will be required to do a 10-minute presentation on a topic of their choice related to health psychology - instructions are on Moodle	20%
Participation in class activities and discussions	Students will be expected to make regular contributions to weekly discussion forums on Moodle.	20%

**-ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:**

**A** Work of this quality directly addresses the question or problem raised and provides a coherent argument displaying an extensive knowledge of relevant information or content. This type of work demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate concepts and theory and has an element of novelty and originality. There is clear evidence of a significant amount of reading beyond that required for the

**B** This is highly competent level of performance and directly addresses the question or problem raised. There is a demonstration of some ability to critically evaluate theory and concepts and relate them to practice. Discussions reflect the student's own arguments and are not simply a repetition of standard lecture and reference material. The work does not suffer from any major errors or omissions and provides evidence of reading beyond the required assignments.

**C** This is an acceptable level of performance and provides answers that are clear but limited, reflecting the information offered in the lectures and reference readings.

**D** This level of performances demonstrates that the student lacks a coherent grasp of the material. Important information is omitted and irrelevant points included. In effect, the student has barely done enough to persuade the instructor that s/he should not fail.

**F** This work fails to show any knowledge or understanding of the issues raised in the question. Most of the material in the answer is irrelevant.

**-ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:**

**ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS AND EXAMINATION POLICY**

Attendance and participation, although not mandatory, are essential to earn a good grade for this course. Students are strongly invited to attend every class meeting, and to come to class prepared and ready to participate in discussions.

You cannot make-up a major exam (midterm or final) without the permission of the Dean's Office. The Dean's Office will grant such permission only when the absence was caused by a serious impediment, such as a documented illness, hospitalization or death in the immediate family (in which you must attend the funeral) or other situations of similar gravity. **Absences due to other meaningful conflicts, such as job interviews, family celebrations, travel difficulties, student misunderstandings or personal convenience, will not be excused.** Students who will be absent from a major exam must notify the Dean's Office prior to that exam.

**ACADEMIC**

**HONESTY**

As stated in the university catalog, any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade on the work in which the dishonesty occurred. In addition, acts of academic dishonesty, irrespective of the weight of the assignment, may result in the student receiving a failing grade in the course. Instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs. A student who is reported twice for academic dishonesty is subject to summary dismissal from the University. In such a case, the Academic Council will then make a recommendation to the President, who will make the final decision.

**STUDENTS WITH LEARNING OR OTHER DISABILITIES**  
John Cabot University does not discriminate on the basis of disability or handicap. Students with approved accommodations must inform their professors at the beginning of the term. Please see the website for the complete policy.

SCHEDULE

<b>Session</b>	<b>Session Focus</b>	<b>Reading Assignment</b>	<b>Other Assignment</b>	<b>Meeting Place/Exam Dates</b>
WEEK 1	1) INTRODUCING HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY: BACKGROUND AND AIMS; 2) HEALTH INEQUALITIES: VARIABILITY IN HEALTH AND ILLNESS	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 1 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 2	1) HEALTH BELIEVES AND RISK PERCEPTION; 2) MOTIVATION AND SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY: THE SOCIAL COGNITION MODEL	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 2 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 3	1) ADDICTING BEHAVIORS: SMOKING AND ALCOHOL USE; 2) STAGES OF SUBSTANCE USE AND CESSATION APPROACHES	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 3 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 4	1) DIET AND HEALTH: MODELS OF EATING BEHAVIOR 2) BODY DISSATISFACTION AND DIETING	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 4 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 5	1) EXERCISE: MOTIVATION AND BEHAVIOR, 2) ***MIDTERM***	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 5 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 6	1) HISTORY OF RESEARCH ON SEX BEHAVIOUR 2) POSITIVE SEX EDUCATION	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 6 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 7	1) CHANGING HEALTH BEHAVIOUR 2) CREATING A SCIENCE OF BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE INTERVENTIONS	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 7 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 8	1) BECOMING ILL: ILLNESS COGNITIONS 2) PREDICTING AND CHANGING HEALTH OUTCOMES	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 8 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		

WEEK 9	1) ACCESSING HEALTH CARE & ADHERENCE AND THE MEDICAL CONSULTATION; 2) STRESS (1° PART)	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 9 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 10	1) STRESS (2° PART): HOW DOES STRESS CAUSE ILLNESS? THE ROLE OF COPING BEHAVIORS 2) *****MIDTERM 2*****	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 10 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 11	1) BEING ILL: PAIN AND THE PLACEBO EFFECT;	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 11 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 12	1) CHRONIC ILLNESS AND PSYCHOLOGY: CANCER; 2) OBESITY: PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 12 (FROM PAGE 324 TO THE END), CHAPTER 13 (TILL PAGE 357) & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 13	1) PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BEHAVIORAL FACTORS IN CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE; 2) WHAT IS QUALITY OF LIFE; 3) END OF LIFE CARE	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 13 (TILL THE END); CHAPTER 14 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		
WEEK 14	1) GENDER AND HEALTH; 2) TRANSGENDER HEALTH	TEXTBOOK: CHAPTER 15 & MATERIAL ON MOODLE		