

## Psychology 333: Health Psychology

Winter 2023

University of Toronto, St. George

Lectures Fridays 12:10 pm – 3:00 pm EST

In-person @ Sid Smith 1084

Live-streamed and recorded on Zoom

Zoom: <https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/87640372081>, Passcode: **psychology**

|               | Instructor   | Teaching Assistant   |
|---------------|--|--|
| Name:         | Dr. William Ryan (Will)  | Lydia Jiang  |
| E-mail:       | <a href="mailto:ws.ryan@utoronto.ca">ws.ryan@utoronto.ca</a>   | <a href="mailto:lydia.jiang@mail.utoronto.ca">lydia.jiang@mail.utoronto.ca</a> |
| Office Hours: | In-person (SS 4029) or on Zoom. Sign up for a timeslot here: <a href="https://calendly.com/profwill/15-minute-appointment">https://calendly.com/profwill/15-minute-appointment</a> | Available via email, or by appointment as needed                               |

### Description, Goals, & Prerequisites

**Course Overview:** This course is designed to give you a broad overview of the field of health psychology, an exciting and 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 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 psychological experience.
4. Explain how individuals and health care professionals can use psychological research to promote health.

#### Note about prerequisites:

- **PSY201H1/ECO220Y1/EEB225H1/GGR270H1/POL222H1/SOC202H1/STA220H1/STA238H1/STA248H1/STA288H1/PSY201H5/STA215H5/STA220H5/PSYB07H3/STAB22H3/STAB23H3/STAB57H3**
- **AND** one of PSY230H1/PSY230H5/PSYB30H3
- **OR** PSY240H1/PSY240H5/PSYB32H3
- **Exclusion:** PSY333H5

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 the department may cancel your registration at any time, so please double check that you have met the prerequisites!

### **Land Acknowledgement & Statement of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity**

I wish to acknowledge and honour the history of this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land. [Learn more about the acknowledgement of traditional land in the University of Toronto.](#)

I am committed to creating a learning environment for my students, where your diverse perspectives and identities are respected and represented. I intend for this course to respect and promote diversity, equity, and human rights, so you will gain a more comprehensive understanding of psychology beyond historical biases. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated! Please let me know how I could improve the effectiveness, equity, inclusivity, and diversity of perspectives included in this course as well as the sense of belonging you and other students experience in the classroom. If you'd like to provide feedback anonymously, the weekly surveys are a great way to do that! You should, of course, also feel welcome to discuss any issues or concerns you have with me directly in person, in office hours, over email, or by appointment. I am always open to and actively looking for ways to improve my courses and myself, especially in relation to principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

### **Course Structure**

This is an "in person" course and is listed on the course timetables as such. However, all lectures will ALSO be delivered online over Zoom (synchronously and recorded). What this means is that, if needed or desired, you can access and complete any or all components of this course remotely. This is to allow you maximum flexibility and opportunities for success in the course. Please take advantage of this flexibility to prioritize not just your success in this course, but your health, well-being, and other obligations, values, and needs. That said, I encourage those who can, to join in person as there will be opportunities for discussion with both me (the professor) and your peers. If you are attending class in person, please follow the University's health and safety guidelines (whatever those are at the time) and consider wearing a mask even if not required. If you are feeling sick, please do NOT attend in person. Take care of yourself and your classmates by staying home! You can always join us live on Zoom if you are worried about missing out or you can take a nap and watch the recording later.

This syllabus describes the different ways that you can participate in the course. Please read this carefully and select the options that work best for you. To summarize, here is what a typical week in the course will look like:

**Each week:**

(Details on each component in the sections that follow)

*Required:*

- Attending/Watching Lecture
- Required readings and/or podcasts
- Studying lecture and reading content
- Work on Assignments:
  - Health Behaviour Assignment OR Health Communication Project
  - Final paper

*Optional:*

- Participating in discussions (some weeks)
- Weekly Survey to ask any questions, identify points of confusion, and provide feedback.
- Additional videos, readings, and surveys will also be posted for students interested in learning more about various topics.
- Attending office hours

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| <b>Options for Accessing Lectures</b> |
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Options for attending lecture include the following, each of which are detailed below.

1. Attending in person
2. Attending via zoom live
3. Watching the lecture recording

**Option 1. In-Person Lectures.** Lectures will take place in Sid Smith 1084 on **Fridays from 12:10 – 3 pm EST**. Please note that while I would love to see you in class, you do NOT have to attend in person if you are not able or comfortable doing so for whatever reason. If this is the case, see the alternative options below.

**Option 2. Synchronous Remote Lectures.** All lectures can be attended remotely and synchronously over zoom. Students who cannot or do not wish to attend class in person, but would still like to listen to and participate in lectures synchronously may do so. I will monitor the chat and answer questions. Students attending in person are also welcome to log onto zoom and ask questions using the chat if you prefer that to asking out loud in-class.

The link for all lectures is: <https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/87640372081>

Passcode: **psychology**.

**Option 3. Lecture Recordings.** Students may also wish to listen to some lectures asynchronously due to different time zones, illness, scheduling concerns, or perhaps you missed something live and would like to listen again. All lectures will be recorded using Zoom and will be posted in the weekly Quercus page for that lecture shortly after the live lecture ends. Students are welcome to utilize this option, however, please note that it will not be possible to participate in the optional discussions when listening asynchronously.

**Note:** You are welcome to use any of the above options to listen to and participate in lectures. You may switch between options as they need or wish!

## Course Requirements & Marking Scheme

Your grade in this course will be based on your performance on two exams (a midterm and a final Assessment), one paper, and *either*: 1) a three-part Health Behaviour Change Assignment or 2) A Health Communication Project. Details regarding each assignment are provided in the sections below.

| Assessment                        | Weight     | Due Date(s)   |
|-----------------------------------|------------|---|
| Discussions (optional)            | 0% to 6%*  | Weeks 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, & 11 (each worth 1%)                          |
| Midterm Assessment                | 27% to 30% | Feb 17 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Research Review Paper             | 28%        | March 17 <sup>th</sup>  |
| Your Choice of <i>either</i> :    | 12%        |   |
| Health Behaviour Assignment (HBA) |            | Feb 3 <sup>rd</sup> , Feb 10 <sup>th</sup> , March 31 <sup>st</sup> |
| Health Communication Project      |            | March 31 <sup>st</sup>  |
| Final Assessment                  | 27% to 30% | During Final Assessment Period - TBA                                |

\*You have the choice of whether to complete (or not) the optional discussions. Each discussion is worth 1% and reduces the weight of the midterm and final exams equally (half percent each). Since there are 6 discussions total you could reduce the weight of each exam by up to 3% each (27% instead of 30% each).

## Course Materials

**Required Readings:** Required readings include a range of empirical and popular press articles. These will be available on the course page on Quercus/Canvas. Additional supplementary readings (not required) will also be posted on the Canvas website. These are mostly popular press articles that relate to the material and add interesting perspectives.

**Required Text:** Sapolsky, R. M. (2004). *Why zebras don't get ulcers: The acclaimed guide to stress, stress-related diseases, and coping-now revised and updated*. Holt paperbacks. Can be purchased via Amazon online or at other commercial bookstores. Ebooks also available. If purchasing this text is prohibitive to you, please email Will/Dr. Ryan for some alternative options.

**Supplementary (Optional) Textbook:** Taylor, S. E., Sirois, F. M., & Molnar, D. (2020). *Health Psychology* (5th Canadian Edition- any edition will do!). McGraw-Hill. If you really like textbooks and want one to accompany this course, this is the one to use. Again, this is NOT required.

**Course Website:** We will be using Quercus (q.utoronto.ca) as the method of course delivery. This includes: (1) delivering lectures and other course content, (2) distributing course readings,

(3) communicating announcements, (4) providing feedback, and (5) posting/tracking grades. A current version of the syllabus and other relevant course resources will also be posted. Please make sure you check Quercus regularly for the most recent lectures as well as important announcements and course information.

**Lecture Slides:** Slides presented in lecture will be uploaded in PDF format to Quercus *just prior* to each lecture so that you can make notes on them during lecture if you wish. Course.

### Asking Questions & Getting Help

There are several options for getting your questions answered. You should feel free to use any of these options.

1. **Questions during lecture.** If you are attending the lecture in person or synchronously over zoom, you will be able to ask questions throughout lecture.
2. **Office Hours.** You can schedule an appointment to meet with Will/Dr. Ryan either in person or over Zoom here: <https://calendly.com/profwill/15-minute-appointment>
  - a. You can sign up for up to 2 appointments per week.
  - b. You will be able to select what type of appointment you would like.
    - i. In person appointments will be held in SS4029
    - ii. Zoom appointments will be held on our regular class link: <https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/87640372081> Passcode: **psychology**
3. **Weekly Survey.** For each lecture you will have the opportunity to complete a short anonymous survey about that weeks' lecture and course content. Here you can indicate any questions or areas of confusion and Will/Dr. Ryan will address those in the next live lecture. This option may be particularly useful if you are completing the course asynchronously or may be hesitant to ask questions in class. Links to weekly surveys can be found on Quercus on the weekly pages.
4. **General Discussion Board.** You may also post questions on the general discussion board on Quercus. Will/Dr. Ryan will answer questions there and other students can provide answers if they have them as well. This is a great place to ask questions that you think other students may have as well.
5. **Emails.** Students are welcome also to email to Will/Dr. Ryan and/or the TA with questions. I will do my best to reply to all emails within 48 hours (if not sooner!). Before emailing, please check to make sure the information you are seeking is not already available on Quercus. Email is best for quick questions, while longer, more complex questions are best addressed in office hours.

### Assignments Details

#### Optional Discussion Group Participation (up to 6%)

To give you a chance to discuss big questions and empirical articles in health psychology with your classmates, we will hold multiple small-group discussions over the course of the semester. Discussions will take place during class (20-30 mins each) and students can participate either in-person or over Zoom (in breakout rooms). Groups will be formed based on who is attending in-person vs. online each class (e.g. groups may be different each time depending on who shows up

and that's ok!). Will/Dr. Ryan will provide a shared google doc for each group with open-ended questions to guide the group discussions. Groups will use this document to submit their answers and names.

We will hold a total of **6 discussions** throughout the term. The dates and topics for these are noted in the course schedule. Participation in each discussion is worth 1% (up to 6% total).

### **Research Review Paper (28%)**

To help you think scientifically about health psychology, gain practice in dissecting empirical journal articles in our field, dive deeper into one topic of interest, you will complete an 8-10 page research review paper.

An 8-10 page paper (not including title page and references) in which you review existing research to analyze the impact of a health-related, practice, policy, or program of your choice. This can be any behaviour, procedure, intervention, or policy that is related to health (whether positively, negatively, or inconclusively), such as smoking e-cigarettes, the keto diet, acupuncture, corporate wellness programs, medical marijuana, or the impact of technology on sleep quality. You are welcome to choose any of these topics, something we discussed in lecture, or any topic of interest to you so long as it fulfills the requirements of the assignment. You will need to find at least 5 peer-reviewed sources that address your topic (additional sources, including non-peer reviewed sources are welcome), and write a paper that details the issue, applies course theories and relevant research to explain why the topic you chose is important and how and why it impacts health, as well as future directions for research or development. Your final draft of your paper is due on **March 17<sup>th</sup>** (by 11:59 pm).

*Optional: Research Proposal* If you would like some feedback on your idea for your final paper you may turn in an optional research proposal. In order to ensure that you receive this feedback with ample time to work on your paper, these optional proposals must be turned in by **Feb 10<sup>th</sup>** (11:59 pm EST). In this proposal please include a brief description of your paper topic, a list of 5 references you intend to include. More instructions will be provided in class and on Quercus. This proposal is optional and will not directly impact your overall course grade. However, getting this project started early and receiving feedback are likely to improve your final paper and communication project grades.

More details on this assignment will be posted on the course website and reviewed during class.

### **Choice of ONE of the following assignments for 12%:**

#### ***Option 1. Health Behaviour Change Assignment (HBA) (12% Total)***

We all have health-related behaviours that we would like to change (e.g. exercising or sleeping more, smoking or drinking less). 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. There are three parts to the assignment, which will be posted on and submitted through the course Quercus page. To gain full credit for the

assignments, you must complete them and follow all guidelines. Your grade on this assignment does NOT depend on whether you achieve your behaviour change goal, but on whether you complete and are engaged with the assignment. Assignments are due by end of day (11:59 pm EST) on the day listed below (and on the course schedule on Quercus). The three parts of the assignment build on one another culminating in a short essay on your experience. Each part is weighted as follows:

- **Part I:** Setting goal and initial tracking = 2% Due **Feb 3<sup>rd</sup>**
  - Note: We will discuss material related to Part I in lecture on Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, so you don't need to start prior to that (It's a relatively short assignment).
- **Part II:** Implementing strategies = 2% Due **Feb 10<sup>th</sup>**
- **Part III:** Reflection = 8% Due **March 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Option 2. Communicating Science Project (12%).** Taking what you have learned from your research paper you will complete a project designed to communicate these findings 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: an op-ed, a press release, an informational video, a brochure, blog post or a letter to the legislature. Your goal is to convey the importance of your topic, the current state of research, and how it is likely to impact your audience. The communication project is due on **March 31<sup>st</sup>** (by 11:59 pm).

## Midterm & Final Assessments

Both assessments will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and long answer questions. These 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. Both assessments are online and “open book”, but not “open Google”, meaning that you can use course notes and articles when writing your responses, but should not be relying on other sources or Googling answers to questions. All writing **MUST** be in the student's own words. See *Course Policies* section below for more on academic integrity. All assessments must be completed independently. You will be responsible for ALL material covered in both the lectures and the required readings, regardless of whether they overlap in content.

### **Weight:**

There will be two exams in this course, a midterm and a final exam each worth 30% (or less if you are doing the optional exercises/discussions).

### **Timing:**

Both exams will be online (administered over Quercus) and available for a 24-hour period. You can take the exam any time during this period. The exams are written to take only 3 hours each. Once you start the exam you will have 4 hours to complete it (unless you start too close to the end of the window!). This extra time is provided to help reduce the stress of time pressure and account for any technical difficulties you might have.

Students with accommodations for extended time on tests, please contact me (Will/Dr. Ryan) with your documentation and I will adjust the time limit on Quercus for you accordingly. Assessments **MUST** be turned in by the date and time noted below unless there is a verifiable

emergency or other documented reason (see *Course Policies* section below). **Late exams are NOT accepted and will be treated as missed exams.** See *Course Policies* below.

- Midterm: Friday Feb 17<sup>th</sup> 9 am – Saturday February 18<sup>th</sup> 9 am.
  - Note: There will be NO CLASS on the day of the midterm assessment to allow time for you to work on it.
- Final:
  - During Final Assessment Period (April 11<sup>th</sup>- 28<sup>th</sup>), 24-hour exam window TBA

## Course Policies

**Penalties for Late Assignments:** Assignments handed in late will incur a 5% deduction in points for EACH day that they are late. Midterm and final assessments will NOT be accepted late.

**The 48 Hour Late Ticket:** Each student gets one 48-hour late ticket good for (almost) any assignment\*. To use this late ticket, all you have to do is comment "Late ticket" in the comments box on your late submission. You do NOT need to seek permission to use your late ticket or let the TA or I know. We will keep track of who uses their late tickets on each assignment. Although Quercus may automatically flag your assignment as late (it doesn't know you are using your ticket), no points will be deducted and it will be treated as on time.

\*Note: This ticket may NOT be used for the midterms or final assessment or to skip acting as your group leader on the date you've signed up for.

**Missed Assessments:** As a rule, makeup assessments will not be issued except in cases of extenuating circumstances with appropriate documentation. If you miss the midterm assessment, you must submit documentation that demonstrates your inability to complete that assessment (i.e., the ACORN illness self-declaration tool) and let Will/Dr. Ryan know within 7 calendar days of the due date of the missed assessment. In these cases, the weight of the midterm assessment will be added to the final assessment. If you miss the final assessment, you must get in touch with Dr. Ryan (and potentially your College Registrar) as soon as possible to work out a plan.

**Grade Dispute Policy: The 24/14 Policy.** You must wait for at least 24 hours following the return of an assignment/assessment before bringing a grade concern to me; use this time to reflect upon your performance and grade. Additionally, grade concerns must be brought to my attention within 14 business days of the return of the assignment/assessment. Please write a short paragraph detailing your grade concern, including a copy, photo, or scan of the original assignment, if relevant, and email it to me. Grade disputes are not to be directed to your TA. Only reasonable and well-justified concerns will be considered, and all decisions are final. Note that in agreeing to resubmit your work for remarking, you are agreeing to a re-evaluation of the entirety of your work; your grade may go up, go down, or stay the same.

**Specific Medical Circumstances:** If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, consult me right away. Normally, would ask you for medical documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. Given the pandemic circumstances, the ACORN



self-declaration of illness tool (<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/news/message-dean-absence-declaration-tool>) and an email to let me know is sufficient.

**Religious Accommodation:** 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 backgrounds, cultural traditions, and spiritual beliefs. I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling, assessments, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you cannot complete a component of the course or meet a course deadline due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

**Accommodation for Personal Reasons:** There may be times (especially in 2021) when you are unable to complete course work on time due to non-medical reasons. If you have concerns about your ability to complete an assignment, please reach out to me (Will/Dr. Ryan). You do not need to tell me any details about your situation that you do not want to divulge, but I do need to know that there is an issue in order to support you. Indeed, I am here to support you can will make accommodations where reasonable, possible, and in fairness to other students. It may also be a good idea to speak with an advisor in your College Registrar's office; they can support you in requesting extensions or accommodations, and importantly, connect you with other resources on campus for help with many situations and concerns.

**Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:** Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters ([www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm)) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity>).

**Plagiarism Detection:** 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>).

Please note that I (Will/Dr. Ryan) understand that this is an imperfect tool and will always do additional investigation before interpreting a specific "plagiarism detection score". Sometimes the scores on this are inflated for reasons other than plagiarism and I will always take this into consideration and will never rely solely on this automatic analysis in registering an academic

integrity concern. I am also aware that there are many ways to prevent these programs from detecting plagiarism, artificially reducing the score. Again, this is but one tool I use in assessing the originality of student writing.

**Lecture Slides & Recordings:** Students are free to use all lecture video, slides, and other materials for their own use. Students are, however, NOT permitted to share lecture slides or recordings with others not enrolled in this course. Uploading course materials to the web or shared server is expressly prohibited. Lectures are the intellectual property of the instructor, and the slides and recordings should be respected thus. Specifically, I do not want to discover that a student has put any of my materials into the public domain, has sold my materials, or has given my materials to a person or company that is using them to earn money (this is a real thing that has happened). The University will support me in asserting and pursuing my rights, and my copyrights, in such matters.

**Participation & Conduct in Class:** In our structured and unstructured discussions and dialogues, we will have many opportunities to explore challenging issues and increase our understandings of different perspectives. A positive learning environment relies upon creating an atmosphere where diverse perspectives can be expressed. Each student is encouraged to take an active part in class discussions and activities. Honest and respectful dialogue is expected. Disagreement and challenging of ideas in a supportive and sensitive manner is encouraged. Hostility and disrespectful behaviour is not acceptable. In the time we share together over this term, please honour the uniqueness of your fellow classmates and appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from each other. Please respect each others' opinions and refrain from personal attacks or demeaning comments of any kind. Just as we expect others to listen attentively to our own views, we must reciprocate and listen to others when they speak, most especially when we disagree with them. In this class, our emphasis will be on engaging in the mutual exploration of issues as presented in the course readings as scholars, rather than in defending points of view we have formed outside the classroom.

**Harassment/Discrimination:** The University of Toronto is a richly diverse community and as such is committed to providing an environment free of any form of harassment, misconduct, or discrimination. In this course, I seek to foster a civil, respectful, and open-minded climate in which we can all work together to develop a better understanding of key questions and debates through meaningful dialogue. As such, I expect all involved with this course to refrain from actions or behaviours that intimidate, humiliate, or demean persons or groups or that undermine their security or self-esteem based on traits related to race, religion, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, disability, receipt of public assistance or record of offences.

**For Students Taking This Course From Outside Canada.** If you are a citizen of another country, and/or accessing your courses at the University of Toronto from a jurisdiction outside of Canada, please note that you may be subject to the laws of the country in which you are residing, or any country of which you have citizenship. The University of Toronto has a long-established commitment to freedom of expression, with this right enabled by an environment valuing respect, diversity, and inclusion. In your classes, you may be assigned readings, or discuss topics

that are against the law in other jurisdictions. I encourage you to become familiar with any local laws that may apply to you and any potential impact on you if course content and information could be considered illegal, controversial, or politically sensitive. If you have any concerns about these issues, please contact your instructor directly to discuss with them.

## Academic & Other Resources

**Accessibility Services (AS):** Students with diverse learning and needs are welcome in this course. If you have an ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS) (<http://accessibility.utoronto.ca>) at the beginning of the academic year. 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 then assess your medical 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 condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

**Academic Success Centre:** “Academic Success professional staff are dedicated to helping you reach your highest learning potential. Every student is capable of achieving academic excellence, but not all learning takes place in the classroom, and not everyone learns in the same way. Your life is more complex than your academic responsibilities, so [they] look at the whole picture and take an individualized approach to supporting you. [They] know there is no ‘right’ way to get through university, and [they] welcome the opportunity to explore strategies that might help you find greater balance between life and learning.” Check out their study spaces, attend a workshop or meet with a learning strategist here: <https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/asc/about-us>

**Mental health, well-being:** As a student, you may experience challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation, financial concerns, family worries, or general anxiety about the state of the world. These factors may affect your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate fully in daily activities. All of us benefit from support and guidance during times of struggle; there is no shame in needing help or in asking for help. There are many helpful resources available through Student Life ([www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/feeling-distressed](http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/feeling-distressed)) and Counselling and Psychological Services (<http://www.caps.utoronto.ca/main.htm>). An important part of the University experience is learning how and when to ask for help. Please take the time to inform yourself of available resources and do not hesitate to seek assistance from your Teaching Assistant or from me to help learn what supports are available. We are here to support you!

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

**English Language Resources:** For anyone who would like to advance their understanding and command of English, there are many supports available at UofT:  
<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/english-language-learning>

### Tips for Success

Everyone has different learning preferences and strategies that work best for them. However, there are a few things that everyone can do to ensure they receive the best possible grade in this course:

1. “Attend” lecture weekly (aka come in person, watch the live stream or recordings). When watching, avoid other distractions. Put your phone away, close other windows on your computer, and take notes.
2. After watching lectures review the lecture slides. Compare these to your notes. Reorganizing and combining this information can help you to consolidate and remember it.
3. Do all the readings. Required readings will be covered on the assessments. Read and take notes. Most students find it helpful to read more than once.
4. Study hard. Review your notes, make flashcards, form a study group.
5. Come to office hours! The instructor and the TA are here to help you. If you have any concerns or questions regarding the course or material, please email us with questions or to set up an appointment!

### COVID-19 Contingency Planning

Given the global pandemic and the inherent uncertainties, I want to briefly address our back up plan for the course should the situation worsen and we are no longer able to meet in person. If this occurs, I will still deliver our lectures at the regular class time over zoom and provide options for students to attend synchronously or asynchronously. In-person discussion groups and would move to zoom. The plan for assignments, assessments, and online office hours, would remain the same as this can all be completed remotely.

### Required Readings

#### Lecture 1: What is Health Psychology? Definitions, History, & Methods

- Syllabus

#### Lecture 2: Theories of Behaviour Change

- The Ostrich Effect (NPR Podcast). <https://www.npr.org/2018/08/06/636133086/you-2-0-the-ostrich-effect>
- Ihekweazu, C. (2021): Is Coffee the Cause or the Cure? Conflicting Nutrition Messages in Two Decades of Online *New York Times*’ Nutrition News Coverage, Health Communication, DOI: 10.1080/10410236.2021.1950291

#### Lecture 3: Motivation & Goals

- Silva, M. N., Marques, M. M., & Teixeira, P. J. (2014). Testing theory in practice: The example of self-determination theory-based interventions. *European Health Psychologist*, 16(5), 171-180.

- Silva, M. N., Vieira, P. N., Coutinho, S. R., Minderico, C. S., Matos, M. G., Sardinha, L. B., & Teixeira, P. J. (2010). Using self-determination theory to promote physical activity and weight control: a randomized controlled trial in women. *Journal of behavioral medicine*, 33(2), 110-122.

#### **Lecture 4: Stress & Health**

- Sapolsky Chapters 1-2, 13

#### **Lecture 5: Coping with Stress**

- Crum, A. J., Jamieson, J. P., & Akinola, M. (2020). Optimizing stress: An integrated intervention for regulating stress responses. *Emotion*, 20, 120-125.
- Lee, S. W., Millet, K., Grinstead, A., Pauwels, K. H., Johnston, P. R., Volkov, A. E., & van der Wal, A. J. (2022). Actual Cleaning and Simulated Cleaning Attenuate Psychological and Physiological Effects of Stressful Events. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 19485506221099428.

#### **Lecture 6: Psychoneuroimmunology**

- Sapolsky Chapter 8
- Madison, A. A., Andridge, R., Shrout, M. R., Renna, M. E., Bennett, J. M., Jaremka, L. M., ... & Kiecolt-Glaser, J. K. (2022). Frequent interpersonal stress and inflammatory reactivity predict depressive-symptom increases: two tests of the social-signal-transduction theory of depression. *Psychological Science*, 33, 152-164.

#### **Lecture 7: The Social Determinants of Health & Sleep**

- Sapolsky Chapters 11
- TBA

#### **Lecture 8: Myths & Facts about Eating, Exercise, & Weight**

*Required:*

- Mann, T. (2015). *Secrets from the Eating Lab*. New York: HarperCollins. Chapter 2: Why Diets don't work: Biology, stress, and forbidden fruit.
- Hobbes, M. (2018). Everything you know about obesity is wrong. *Highline, Huffington Post*. <https://highline.huffingtonpost.com/articles/en/everything-you-know-about-obesity-is-wrong/>

#### **Lecture 9: Treating & Coping with Pain & Chronic Illness**

- Durso, G. R., Luttrell, A., & Way, B. M. (2015). Over-the-counter relief from pains and pleasures alike: Acetaminophen blunts evaluation sensitivity to both negative and positive stimuli. *Psychological science*, 26(6), 750-758.
- De Ridder, D., Geenen, R., Kuijjer, R., & van Middendorp, H. (2008). Psychological adjustment to chronic disease. *The Lancet*, 372(9634), 246-255.

#### **Lecture 10: Improving the Health Care System**

- TBA

## Course Calendar

| Week | Lect # | Date       | Lecture Topic  | Required Readings                                      | Assignments  |
|------|--------|------------|--|--|--|
| 1    | 1      | Jan 13th   | What is Health Psych?:<br>Definitions, History & Methods | Syllabus   |  |
| 2    | 2      | Jan 20th   | Theories of Behavior Change                              | The Ostrich Effect (NPR Podcast)<br>Ihekweazu (2021)   | Discussion 1- Ihekweazu (2021)   |
| 3    | 3      | Jan 27th   | Motivation & Goals                                       | Silva, et al. (2010); Silva et al (2014)               | Discussion 2- Teixeira Article   |
| 4    | 4      | Feb 3rd    | Stress & Health  | Sapolsky Chapters 1-2 & 13                             | Discussion 3- Stress (Video)<br><b>HBA Part 1</b>                      |
| 5    | 5      | Feb 10th   | Coping with Stress                                       | Lee et al. (2022); Crum et al. (2020)                  | <b>HBA Part 2</b><br>Optional Research Proposal                        |
| 6    |        | Feb 17th   | <b>MIDTERM</b>   |  |  |
| 7    |        | Feb 24th   | <b>READING WEEK</b>                                      |  |  |
| 8    | 6      | March 3rd  | Psychoneuroimmunology                                    | Sapolsky Chapter 8; Madison et al (2022)               | Discussion 4- Madison et al (2022)                                     |
| 9    | 7      | March 10th | The Social Determinants of Health & Sleep                | Sapolsky Chapter 11; TBA                               |  |
| 10   | 8      | March 17th | Myths and Facts about Eating, Exercise, & Weight         | Mann (2015) Secrets from the Eating Lab; Hobbes (2018) | Discussion 5- Mann (2015) & Hobbes (2018)<br><b>Research Paper Due</b> |
| 11   | 9      | March 24th | Treating & Coping with Pain & Chronic Illness            | Durso, et al (2015); De Ridder, et al (2008)           | Discussion 6- Durso et al. (2015)                                      |
| 12   | 10     | March 31st | Improving the Health Care System                         | TBA  | <b>Communication Project OR HBA Part 3</b>                             |
| 13   |        | April 7th  | <b>NO CLASS</b><br>(University Holiday)                  |  |  |
|      |        |            | <b>FINAL ASSESSMENT</b><br>(TBA)                         |  |  |