

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
UG Course Syllabus

SOSC3990 Health Psychology (Fall 2024)

3 Credits

Prerequisites: SOSC1960 Introduction to Psychology, SOSC1969 Discovering Mind and Behavior, OR SOSC1980 Psychology of Personal Growth

Instructor

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Course Description

Health psychology is the scientific study of how biological, psychological, and social factors affect health promotion as well as the prevention and treatment of illness. We look at how people stay healthy, why they become ill, and how they cope and recover when they are ill. This course is intended to introduce students to theoretical models, research methodology, empirical findings, and current issues in health psychology. Students should complete the course with fundamental knowledge in this young and exciting field of study.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. understand the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in health psychology.
2. familiarizes with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in health psychology.
3. critically evaluate the theories and key concepts in health psychology.
4. apply the key concepts reasonably to the real-life setting.

Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve. Detailed rubrics for each assignment are provided below, outlining the criteria used for evaluation.

Group Project (30%):

- **Presentation (20%):** In a group of 5 people for 15 minutes (plus a 5-minute Q&A), students will design a health promotion or prevention program for one health-related behavior to the public. More details can be found in the separate guidelines.

- All group members should attend and discuss with the teaching team your presentation in the consultation session.
- Attendance of the presentation sessions is required. 1% (out of 30%) will be deducted for absence from each session.
- PPT slides (10%)

Individual Paper (20%):

- Write a reflection on ONE news article about any health issues. Explain how it is related to health psychology and why you find the news interesting (e.g., the news report findings that are contradictory to our common belief or have implications for the empirical findings in health psychology).
- Critically evaluate what you have learned in this course to analyze the news articles. This is NOT a summary of the news article, be reflective and insightful with your thoughts about the health issues. More details can be found in the separate guidelines.

Quizzes (50%):

- Two quizzes will be administered to test your understanding of course materials. They will include multiple-choice questions only and will be non-cumulative (The relevant chapters of the textbook will appear on the last page of the lecture handouts and this course outline).
- Supplementary readings are also listed in the lecture slides, but they will NOT be included in the quizzes. These readings are useful for a deeper understanding of the course contents.

Summary

Assessment Task	Contribution to Overall Course grade (%)	Due date
Group Project Presentation	20%	13, 15, 20, 22/11/2024* 4/10/2024 (consultation session)
Group Project PPT Slides	10%	11/11/2024
Individual Paper	20%	4/12/2024*
Quiz 1	25%	9/10/2024
Quiz 2	25%	29/11/2024

*Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be released within two weeks of the due date.

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
Group Project and PPT Slides	ILO1, ILO2, ILO4	This task assesses students' ability to understand the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in health psychology (ILO1), familiarize the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in health psychology (ILO2), and apply the key concepts reasonably to the real-life setting (ILO4).
Individual Paper	ILO1, ILO3	This paper assesses students' ability to understand the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in health psychology (ILO1) and critically analyze the theories and key concepts in health psychology (ILO3).

Quizzes	ILO1, ILO2	Quizzes are designed to assess students' understanding and familiarity of the fundamental knowledge, key concepts (ILO1) and implications of the research findings in health psychology (ILO2).
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Final Grade Descriptors

Grades	Short Description	Elaboration on subject grading description
A	Excellent Performance	Demonstrates a deep understanding of the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in health psychology. Familiarizes very well with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in health psychology. Exhibits exceptional critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in health psychology. Reasonably applied the concepts to real-life setting with both practicality and innovation.
B	Good Performance	Shows good understanding of the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in health psychology. Familiarizes well with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in health psychology. Exhibits good critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in health psychology. Applied the concepts to real-life setting with only practicality.
C	Satisfactory Performance	Possesses adequate understanding of the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in health psychology. Demonstrates satisfactory familiarity with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in health psychology, but with some misunderstandings. Shows satisfactory critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in health psychology. Applied the concepts to real-life setting, but with limited practicality.
D	Marginal Pass	Has very basic understanding of the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in health psychology. Shows minimal familiarity with the implications of the classical and contemporary findings in health psychology. Shows limited critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in health psychology. Applied the concepts to real-life setting with minimal practicality.
F	Fail	Demonstrates insufficient understanding of the fundamental knowledge and key concepts in health psychology. Lacks critical thinking skills in evaluating the theories and concepts in health psychology. Unable to apply the concepts to real-life setting and with no practicality.

Course AI Policy

Use of GenAI in project and individual paper is permitted. Students have to sign a declaration and include the prompts requested.

Communication and Feedback

Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be communicated via Canvas within two weeks of submission. Feedback on assignments will include comments on strengths and areas for improvement. Students who have further questions about the feedback including marks should consult the instructor within five working days after the feedback is received.

Late Submission Policy

A 5-hour grace period after the deadline is applied to all submissions. Submissions received less than 5 hours after the deadline will NOT be penalized. NO submissions will be accepted after the grace period of the due date.

Score deduction applies to any assignments over the word limit. Details can be found in the assignment guidelines.

Required Texts and Materials

Taylor, S. E. (2021). *Health psychology* (11th edition). New York: McGraw Hill.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to [Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry](#) for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.

Teaching Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Required Readings Chapters
1	Sep 4	Introduction	
	Sep 6	What is Health Psychology?	1
2	Sep 11	Health Behavior Change	3
	Sep 13		
3	Sep 18	<i>Mid-Autumn Festival</i>	
	Sep 20	Stress and Coping	6, 7
4	Sep 25		
	Sep 27		
5	Oct 2	<i>[Tutorial 1] Writing Workshop</i>	
	Oct 4	<i>[Tutorial 2] Group Project Consultation</i>	
6	Oct 9	Quiz 1 (Week 1 to 4)	
	<i>Oct 11</i>	<i>Chung Yeung Festival</i>	
7	Oct 16	Management of Pain	10
	Oct 18		
8	Oct 23	Using Health Services	8
	Oct 25		
9	Oct 30	Patient-Provider Relations	9
	Nov 1		
10	Nov 6	Management of Chronic Illnesses	13, 14
	Nov 8		
11	Nov 13	<i>Group Project Presentation</i>	
	Nov 15		
12	Nov 20		
	Nov 22		
13	Nov 27	<i>[Tutorial 3] Individual Paper Consultation</i>	
	Nov 29	Quiz 2 (Week 7 onwards)	

Other Notes

Interaction in Class

I believe interactions (both verbal and non-verbal) between the teaching team and the students (and among students) are one of the key ingredients to an optimal learning experience. Your active participations in class discussions or activities will not only enhance your learning, but also motivate the teaching team to do better! Stay behind the class and share with me your thoughts about the course contents.

Lecture Slides

Lecture slides will be posted to Canvas before each class, but the contents will be slightly different from the displayed slides. I hope to encourage you to take your notes. Note-taking facilitates your reflection and assimilation of the lecture contents.

Communication

Expect that your emails will be responded to during weekdays 10 am to 6 pm HKT. Do NOT inbox your message on Canvas.

Grading Rubrics

Group Project Student Rubrics (30%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Marginal	Fail	Mapping to Course ILOs
Content (15%)	The target audience is well-defined with clarity. The program is well-designed and matches with the needs of the target audience. Demonstrated an exceptionally good understanding on psychological concepts. Concepts applied with outstanding justifications and supported with empirical evidence. The program is innovative with the consideration of practicality.	The target audience is defined with clarity. The program is designed appropriately and matches with the needs of the target audience. Demonstrated a good understanding on psychological concepts. Concepts applied with good justifications, but supported with limited empirical evidence. The program is practical, but with limited innovation.	The target audience is defined. The program is designed appropriately but does not match with the needs of the target audience. Demonstrated understanding on psychological concepts. Concepts applied with good justifications, but do not support with empirical evidence. The program is practical, but without innovation.	The target audience has not been defined. The program's design does not match with the needs of the target audience. Demonstrated mere understanding on psychological concepts. Concepts applied without justifications and do not support with empirical evidence. The program is with limited practicality.	The target audience has not been defined. The program's design does not match with the needs of the target audience. Demonstrated some misunderstandings on psychological concepts. Concepts applied without justifications and do not support with empirical evidence. The program does not show practicality.	ILO1, ILO2, ILO4
Organization and Presentation (5%)	The presentation is logical and well organized. Speech is coherent with the contents of slides. Demonstrated very good time management (no overrunning). Demonstrated an outstanding cooperation among members. Addressed	The presentation is logical and organized. Speech is coherent with the contents of slides. Demonstrated good time management (no overrunning). Demonstrated good cooperation among members. Addressed questions in Q&A clearly.	The presentation is organized. Speech matches slightly with the contents of slides. Demonstrated a fair time management (1-3 minute overrunning). Demonstrated fair cooperation among members. Addressed questions in Q&A fairly.	The presentation is not so organized. Speech does not match clearly with the contents of slides. Demonstrated poor time management (4-10 minute overrunning). Demonstrated fair cooperation among members. Showed confusions in addressing questions in Q&A.	The presentation is not organized. Speech does not match with the contents of slides. Demonstrated very poor time management (more than 10 minutes overrunning). Demonstrated no cooperation among members. Did not address any questions in Q&A.	ILO1, ILO2, ILO4

	questions in Q&A very clearly.					
PPT Slides (10%)	Covered all contents stated on the guidelines clearly and concisely.	Missed 1-2 aspects of contents stated on the guidelines, or with some confusing points.	Missed 3-4 aspects of contents stated on the guidelines, and with some confusing points.	Missed nearly all contents stated on the guidelines, and with a lot of confusing points.	Did not follow all contents stated on the guidelines, and with a lot of confusing points.	ILO1, ILO2, ILO4

Individual Paper Student Rubrics (20%)

Criteria	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Marginal	Fail	Mapping to Course ILOs
Content (15%)	Included a very clear and concise summary of the news article. Demonstrated an outstanding understanding why the news article is important or relevant to health psychology. Elaborated very clearly how findings or theories of health psychology are linked. Provided a very insightful and unique discussions on other issues and supported with evidence.	Included a clear and concise summary of the news article. Demonstrated good understanding why the news article is important or relevant to health psychology. Elaborated clearly how findings or theories of health psychology are linked. Provided insightful discussions on other issues and supported with evidence.	Included a clear summary of the news article. Demonstrated satisfactory understanding why the news article is important or relevant to health psychology. Elaborated how findings or theories of health psychology are linked, but with some confusing points. Provided appropriate discussions on other issues, but did not support with evidence.	Included a summary of the news article, but with some misunderstandings. Demonstrated mere understanding why the news article is important or relevant to health psychology. Elaborated fairly how findings or theories of health psychology are linked, or with a lot of confusing points. Provided fair discussions on other issues without evidence.	Did not include a summary of the news article. Demonstrated poor understanding why the news article is important or relevant to health psychology. Did not elaborate how findings or theories of health psychology are linked and with a lot of confusing points. Did not provide discussions on other issues.	ILO1, ILO3
Organization and Writing (5%)	Very smooth, coherent and well-organized logic of presentation. The writing style follows APA citation and referencing very appropriately.	A coherent and organized logic of presentation. The writing style in general follows APA citation and referencing.	A logic of presentation, but with flaws in coherency of arguments. The writing style in general follows APA citation and referencing.	An unorganized logic of presentation, and with a lot of flaws in coherency of arguments. The writing style did not follow APA citation and referencing.	A poor logic of presentation with incoherency of arguments. The writing style did not follow APA citation and referencing at all.	ILO1, ILO3