

Rutgers University

Psychology 377:01: Health Psychology

Spring 2022

Instructor: Keiko Brynildsen, Ph.D.
Class time: Mondays and Thursdays 12:10-1:30 pm (I intend to use Zoom during the live class so that any students who are quarantining or otherwise unable to be present in class can attend virtually.)
Class location: AB 2160
Office hours: Wednesdays 12-1 pm, Fridays 12:30-1:30 pm, and by appointment (in-person or Zoom)
Zoom personal room: <https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/3291005050?pwd=eTZUeEpwckE3YTc1ckR1aGYzVWFFQT09> (passcode: 982405)
Email: keikob@psych.rutgers.edu (I will aim to respond within 24 hours)
Course web page: Canvas (canvas.rutgers.edu)

Grad TA: Kyle Brenner
Email: kb979@scarletmail.rutgers.edu
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Course Objectives:

The objectives of this course are to understand the psychosocial processes that influence health and health care delivery. Topics to be examined are the psychophysiological and social bases of health and illness, pain, adaptation to chronic illness, stress and coping, personality and illness, substance use, eating behaviors, health-promoting behaviors, patient adherence, physician-patient communication, and using health care.

Learning goals:

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

- interpret and evaluate research findings in Health Psychology.
- identify and explain the main conceptualizations of stress, the effect of stress on the body, and evidence-supported mechanisms for coping with stress.
- explain the factors involved in and the process of health behavior change (generally and for specific health-related behaviors such as smoking) using the major models of health behavior.
- identify sources of problems in health care delivery (e.g., physician-patient communication) and ways to address them.
- recognize and explain psychological factors involved in pain and serious illness.

Respect for diversity:

It is of utmost importance that all students in this class enjoy a safe learning environment with equal opportunities to succeed and grow, without being subjected to judgment or disrespect from others, whether based on one's ethnicity, religion, gender identity, or any other reason. We must ensure that we use only civil, appropriate, and respectful communication with each other to promote a comfortable class environment.

Required materials:

Readings: Assigned articles will be posted in the Modules section of Canvas.

Other requirements: regular and reliable access to a computer with high-speed Internet. Please visit the [Rutgers Student Tech Guide](#) for resources available to all students. If you do not have the appropriate technology for financial reasons,

please email Dean of Students (deanofstudents@echo.rutgers.edu) or complete the contact form for assistance. If you are facing other financial hardships, please visit the Office of Financial Aid at <https://financialaid.rutgers.edu/>

General course requirements:

1. **Canvas.** It is expected that all students will regularly access Canvas for course announcements and materials. Please also check your rutgers.edu email regularly use only your Rutgers (not personal) email when contacting me.
2. **Attendance:** Attending class is essential to the learning process. Regular class attendance is expected. I will post the lecture slides on Canvas before each class; you may find it helpful to take notes on these while attending the lecture.
3. **Exams:** Three midterm exams and one final exam will be given. Each exam will be based on material presented both in lecture and in the assigned readings. The final exam will be cumulative, with an emphasis on a general understanding of the material from the first 3/4 of the course and specific understanding of the material from the last 1/4 of the course. All exams will be multiple-choice. You must provide your 9-digit RUID number on all exams. In the event that we cannot be on campus, exams will be given using the “Quizzes” function on Canvas, in which case backtracking (going back to previous questions) will not be possible.
4. **Quizzes:** Quizzes will be assigned weekly using Canvas Quizzes and will be due on Sundays at 11:59 pm. These brief quizzes will address the assigned articles and/or the material discussed in class with the aim of solidifying your comprehension and retention of the material. You may take each quiz an unlimited number of times; your highest score will be recorded. If you submit a quiz late, you will receive partial credit with a 10% per day late deduction (starting after 11:59 pm on Sundays).

Quiz points will be posted in the Canvas gradebook; it is your responsibility to check to ensure that your points have been recorded. **If you see a discrepancy, please let me know within 1 week of the quiz due date.**

5. **Written Assignment: Using Psychological Methods to Improve Health Behaviors:** Using a theory or intervention strategy you learned about in class, conduct a health behavioral intervention on yourself for **1 week** and submit a 1-page write-up about your intervention. The assignment description on Canvas includes important details about this assignment.

Your ~4-paragraph write-up should include:

- a. the behavior you changed, including an explanation of why you chose this behavior.
- b. the theory/intervention strategy that you applied (and why?).
- c. the success of your intervention.
- d. your reflections about why your intervention strategy did or did not work.

Please consult with me before starting your intervention if you have any concerns about your selected behavior.

Due date: **Thursday, Apr. 7 (11:59 pm)**

Submission: Canvas (Assignments tab – “Health Behavior Intervention”)

Alternative assignment: Students who prefer not to participate in a health behavioral self-intervention may opt to complete an alternative assignment. The alternative assignment is as follows:

Using Research to Design a Health Behavioral Intervention: Using 2 different theories or intervention strategies you learned about in class, design a health behavioral intervention that targets 2 of your or another person’s health behaviors and submit a ~4-paragraph write-up about your intervention. This alternative assignment is further described on Canvas.

Your ~4-paragraph write-up should include:

- a. The 2 behaviors you are targeting, including an explanation of why you chose these behaviors

- b. An explanation of the 2 theory/intervention strategies that are used in your design (including an explanation of why you think each strategy will be effective for each behavior)
- c. Your reflections of any potential factors that may contribute to or be an obstacle to the success of your designed intervention

Due date: **Thursday, Apr. 7 (11:59 pm)**

Submission: Canvas (Assignments tab – “Alternative Assignment”)

*Note: all submissions will be screened for plagiarism using Turnitin.com.

Grading:

Course grades will be based on the following:

Exam 1:	16%
Exam 2:	17%
Exam 3:	17%
Final exam:	25%
Written Assignment:	15%
Quizzes:	10%
TOTAL	100%

Final grades will be determined by the following (standard Rutgers grading scale):

90.00% and above	A
85.00-89.99%	B+
80.00-84.99%	B
75.00-79.99%	C+
70.00-74.99%	C
60.00-69.99%	D
below 60.00%	F

Academic integrity:

Rutgers University does not tolerate academic dishonesty, which includes, but is not limited to, cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material, and facilitating violations of academic integrity. Any suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct (see <http://nbacademicintegrity.rutgers.edu/> for more information on Rutgers University’s policies regarding academic dishonesty).

Final exam:

Our final exam will be held at the time scheduled by the University (<http://finalexams.rutgers.edu/>). University regulations set the time and date of all final examinations and specific guidelines that define conflicts (<http://sasundergrad.rutgers.edu/forms/final-exam-conflict>). If you have a legitimate reason for missing the exam, you will receive a TF in the course until the make-up exam has been completed.

Disability services:

The Office of Disability Services works with students with a documented disability to determine the eligibility of reasonable accommodations, facilitates and coordinates those accommodations when applicable, and lastly engages with the Rutgers community at large to provide and connect students to appropriate resources (e-mail: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>, phone: (848) 445-6800). Students with disabilities requesting accommodations must follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/getting-registered>. Please give your letter of accommodation to me as soon as possible, and we will coordinate the accommodations privately.

*Note: This syllabus is subject to change if adjustments become necessary during the semester.

Student-wellness services:

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS): (848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.rhscaps.rutgers.edu/

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA): (848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 / www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Scarlet Listeners: (732) 247-5555 / <http://www.scarletlisteners.com/>

Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.

Mask policy:

In order to protect the health and well-being of all members of the University community, masks must be worn by all persons on campus when in the presence of others (within six feet) and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common workspaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Masks must be worn during class meetings; any student not wearing a mask will be asked to leave.

Masks should conform to CDC guidelines and should completely cover the nose and mouth:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/about-face-coverings.html>

Each day before you arrive on campus or leave your residence hall, you must complete the brief survey on the [My Campus Pass symptom checker](#) self-screening app.

General policies:

Please be mindful of your fellow students by avoiding behavior that interferes with classroom (remote or in-person) activities or with other students' ability to focus such as chatting, texting, using social media, playing computer games, entering the class late, or leaving the class prematurely (if it is necessary that you arrive late or leave early, please sit in the back to minimize disruption). A student responsible for continual disruptive behavior may be required to leave class pending discussion and resolution of the problem.

In our remote classes (hopefully just the first two weeks of the semester), all students will be muted upon entry to the Zoom classroom to minimize disruption from background noise. Please be mindful of your fellow students by avoiding behavior that interferes with their ability to focus such as using the chatroom for communication that is not relevant to the class. Please be sure to use only respectful communication and maintain a congenial online environment.

Exam scores will be posted on Canvas; it is your responsibility to contact me immediately (within 2 days) if you believe you have not received credit for a submitted exam.

Final grades will not be changed except in the case of a true error. Although students may sometimes desire a different grade than what they earned, changing any student's grade would be unfair to the other students. Therefore, I will not entertain any requests for grade changes or opportunities for additional assignments.

You may not post any class materials such as class recordings, lecture slides, exams, quizzes, or practice questions to any web site.

Course Schedule (Quizzes, Exams, and Assignment)

This calendar presents dates of exams, quizzes, and assignments (please see the next schedule for course topics).

January 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 First class	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30 Quiz due 11:59 pm (Canvas)	31					

February 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Quiz due 11:59 pm (Canvas)	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 Exam 1 (will cover material addressed through 2/10)	15	16	17	18	19
20 Quiz due 11:59 pm (Canvas)	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Quiz due 11:59 pm (Canvas)	28					

March 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6 Quiz due 11:59 pm (Canvas)	7	8	9	10 Exam 2 (will cover material addressed through 3/7)	11	12

*Note: This syllabus is subject to change if adjustments become necessary during the semester.

13	14 <i>No Class – Spring Break</i>	15	16	17 <i>No Class – Spring Break</i>	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Quiz due 11:59 pm (Canvas)	28	29	30	31		

April 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3 Quiz due 11:59 pm (Canvas)	4	5	6	7 Intervention assignment (or alternative) due by 11:59 pm (Canvas)	8	9
10	11 Exam 3 (will cover material addressed through 4/7)	12	13	14	15	16
17 Quiz due 11:59 pm (Canvas)	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 Quiz due 11:59 pm (Canvas)	25	26	27	28	29	30

May 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Quiz due 11:59 pm (Canvas)	2 Last day of class	3 Reading Day	4 Reading Day	5 Final Exam (8-11 am)	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14

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Course Schedule (Topics)

This schedule presents the topics we will cover and the order in which we will cover them. Specific dates are not given here for topic coverage and reading assignments because these dates will be determined by our pace in covering the material.

TOPIC	READING
Part I: Introduction to Health Psychology	
Introduction and overview; What is Health Psychology?	
Research methods	
Psychophysiology	
Part II: Stress and Coping	
Stress: measurement and models	Creswell, Welch, Taylor, Sherman, Gruenewald, & Mann (2005). Affirmation of personal values buffers neuroendocrine and psychological stress responses. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 16, 846-851.
Stress moderators (social support)	
Stress moderators (personality)	
Coping with and reducing stress	Jamieson, Nock, & Mendes (2020). Mind over matter: Reappraising arousal improves cardiovascular and cognitive responses to stress. <i>Journal of Experimental Psychology</i> , 141, 417-422.
Part III: Health Behaviors	
Theories of health behavior	
Prevention and intervention	Mann, Sherman, & Updegraff (2004). Dispositional motivations and message framing: A test of the congruency hypothesis in college students. <i>Health Psychology</i> , 23, 330-334.
Smoking	
Alcohol use	
Eating and obesity	
Part IV: Getting Medical Treatment	
Using health services	
Decisions in health care	
Patient-provider relations	Pereira, Figueiredo-Braga, & Carvalho, 2016. Preoperative anxiety in ambulatory surgery: The impact of an empathic patient-centered approach on psychological and clinical outcomes. <i>Patient Education and Counseling</i> , 99, 733-738.
Iatrogenic illness	
Part V: Pain and Discomfort	
Pain	
The placebo effect	Howe, Goyer, & Crum (2017). Harnessing the placebo effect: Exploring the influence of physician characteristics on placebo response. <i>Health Psychology</i> , 36, 1074-1082.
Part VI: Chronic and Life-Threatening Health Problems	
Coping with serious illness	

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