

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
School of Recreation, Health and Tourism
HEAL 230—Introduction to Health Behavior
Spring 2010

DAY/TIME:	7:20p R	LOCATION:	Lecture Hall 2
PROFESSOR:	Dr. Rich Miller	EMAIL ADDRESS:	emiller@gmu.edu
OFFICE LOCATION:	Occoquan 220D	PHONE NUMBER:	703-993-2066
OFFICE HOURS:	MW 8:30-10:30a	FAX NUMBER:	703-993-2025

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to health behavior within the context of health psychology. Students will study the determinants of health behavior from a bio-psycho-social perspective. Various theoretical models will be applied to the understanding of health promotion and protective (illness, sick role and impaired role) behaviors. We will also examine means of preventing and treating health problems.

This course meets the social/behavioral science requirement, one of the *core requirements* of the University General Education program. The goal of the core requirement is to help ensure that students are introduced to the broad range of intellectual domains that contribute to a liberal education. By gaining exposure to the subject matter and ways of knowing in a variety of fields, students will be better able to synthesize new knowledge, respond to fresh challenges, and meet the demands of a complex world.

The overall goal of this course is to provide students with an understanding of the social and behavioral sciences. Students will be engaged in reasoning using the scientific method, the use of quantitative and qualitative information, and the analysis of empirical observations in relation to theory, among other methods. The development of major ideas in social science is also addressed.

For more information on General Education, please see the University Catalog, and the Provost's Office General Education website, <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/provost/gened/index.html>

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Identify biological, psychological, and sociological factors influencing health and disease;
2. Describe the components that comprise health behavior;
3. Differentiate between health promoting and protective (illness, sick role, and impaired role) behaviors;
4. Examine and discuss health behavior theories (e.g., reasoned action/planned behavior, behavior modification, self-efficacy, social cognitive learning and others) and models (e.g., health belief, precaution adoption, transtheoretical) and how they can be used to understand, predict and change health behavior;
5. Analyze the fundamentals of conducting health behavior research;
6. Demonstrate an understanding of psychometric instruments used to measure health behavior;
7. Describe health risk and what it means for someone to be at-risk;
8. Explore and explain the determinants of seeking and adhering to health care;
9. Describe the theoretical aspects of health behaviors: managing stress, managing pain, having a healthy heart, reducing cancer risk, using tobacco, drinking and drugging, eating, and exercising;
10. Identify how persons perceive, adjust to and recover from impaired health conditions;
11. Display critical thinking skills while exploring the theoretical aspects of a selected health behavior.

REQUIRED READINGS

Brannon, L., & Feist, J. (2010). Health psychology: An introduction to behavior and health (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning. ISBN: 0-495-60132-2. Additional course material located at <http://courses.gmu.edu>

EVALUATION

15% - First Test	30% - Health Behavior Paper
15% - Second Test	25% - Participation
15% - Third Test	

Grading: A+ 98-100, A 93-97, A- 90-92, B+ 87-89, B 83-86, B- 80-82, C+ 77-79, C 73-76, C- 70-72, D 60-69, F 0-59

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Each test is composed of 50 multiple-choice questions. The tests are based on the content of the text as organized and presented in classroom lecture. Each test will be graded 0-100 points and weighted .15 of overall course grade. To best prepare for the tests, students should use their lecture notes to help focus attention on important content in the textbook. Multiple-choice items will measure students' abilities to identify/recall, differentiate, apply and analyze subject material.

The health behavior paper involves completing four online assignments according to guidelines posted at Blackboard by their due dates. The assignments represent the introduction, review of the professional literature, theoretical aspects, and conclusion sections of the paper. Each assignment will be graded separately using scoring rubrics with the total possible score of 100 points being weighted .30 of overall course grade. These assignments will represent cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning experiences.

Participation credit involves being in full attendance during each class day and actively involved in class activities. Absence [ABSE] results in no credit. Arriving late [LATE], taking an extended break [BRK] or leaving early [LEFT] from class results in partial credit. Student non-course computer use or cell use [NCCS] is not active involvement in class activities and, therefore, results in partial credit. Although medical excuses are not accepted, each student is entitled to one excused [EXCU] absence during the semester. The percent of attended days will be weighted .25 of overall course grade. Class activities are based on cognitive, affective, and psychomotor learning experiences and they will reinforce the important subject material in the course.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE (see Blackboard for dates)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
Session 1	Introduction	Ch 1
Session 2	Conducting health behavior research	Ch 2
Session 3	Seeking health care	Ch 3
Session 4	Adhering to medical advice	Ch 4
Session 5	Defining, measuring and managing stress	Ch 5
	Understanding stress and disease	Ch 6
	<i>First Test</i>	<i>Covers material from Chs 1-6</i>
Session 6	Understanding and managing pain	Ch 7
Session 7	Considering alternative approaches	Ch 8
Session 8	Behavioral factors in cardiovascular disease	Ch 9
Session 9	Behavioral factors in cancer	Ch 10
Session 10	Living with chronic disease	Ch 11
	<i>Second Test</i>	<i>Covers material from Chs 7-11</i>
Session 11	Smoking tobacco	Ch 12
Session 12	Using alcohol and other drugs	Ch 13
Session 13	Eating and weight	Ch 14
Session 14	Exercising	Ch 15
	Future challenges	Ch 16
	<i>Third Test</i>	<i>Covers material from Ch. 12-16</i>



Our School follows all academic and general policies contained within the University's Catalog among which are:

- All students are held to the standards of the George Mason University Honor Code.
- Students having documentation on file at the Disability Resource Center should bring this to the attention of the instructor.
- Students are expected to attend the class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation.
- University policy states that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the professor.