George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
HEAL

HEAL 230 DL1 – Introduction to Health Behavior
3 Credits, Fall 2023
Distance Learning

Faculty

Name:	Dr. Amanda Gordon
Office Hours:	By appointment
Office Location:	Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate
Email Address:	agordon8@gmu.edu

Pre-requisites/Co-requisites
None

University Catalog Course Description
Introduces health behavior in context of health psychology. Explores various theoretical models to understand health, illness, and sick-role behaviors. Studies health and disease from a biopsychosocial perspective. Examines means of preventing and treating health problems.

Course Overview
This course meets the social/behavioral science requirement, one of the core requirements of the University General Education program: 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. Expected learning outcomes are: students will be able to explain how individuals, groups, or institutions are influenced by contextual factors; demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs; and use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles, or theories in the analysis of significant human issues, past and present.

Course Delivery Method
This course will be delivered online using an asynchronous format via the Blackboard learning management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on Aug 21 at 12:01am.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:
  https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

  To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:
  https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download:
  - Adobe Acrobat Reader: https://get.adobe.com/reader/
  - Windows Media Player: https://windows.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/downloads/windows-media-player/
  - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations
- Course Week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a "fixed" meeting day, our week will start on Monday at 12:01am and finish on Sunday at 11:59pm.
- Log-in Frequency: Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least two times per week.
- Participation: Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence: Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues: Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly.
- Workload: Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Late work: Late assignments will be marked down by 15% each day and will not be accepted after **three days.** These terms are negotiable only in the case of documented emergencies and, if possible, with **advance notice.** Work with me… the more I know, the more I can help you.
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested

dates/times. One-on-one sessions will take place via Zoom or BB Collaborate.
- • Netiquette: The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives
By the end of this course, students will be able to:
1. Identify biological, psychological, and sociological factors influencing health behavior as well as health problems, diseases, and injuries.
2. Describe the components comprising health behavior.
3. Differentiate health promoting (well), protecting (ill, injured, sick), and preserving (impaired) behaviors.
4. Recognize various health behavior research designs.
5. 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 and predict health behavior as well as change unhealthy behavior.
6. Demonstrate an understanding of psychometric instruments used to measure health behaviors and conditions/diseases related to not practicing health behaviors.
7. Describe health outcomes in terms of risk, functionality and life satisfaction.
8. Explore and explain determinants of seeking and adhering to conventional and alternative health care.
9. Examine the relationship of stress, immune response and disease.
10. Describe pain experience, pain syndromes and pain management.
11. Explore and explain determinants of adjusting to and recovering from injuries, chronic unhealthy conditions and diseases (e.g., Alzheimer's disease, asthmas, diabetes, and HIV/AIDS).
12. Describe the theoretical aspects of selected health behaviors: managing stress, having a healthy heart, reducing cancer risk, not using tobacco, responsible drinking and drugging, healthy eating, and exercising.
13. Demonstrate a basic understanding of health behavior change techniques such as motivational interviewing, behavioral modification, social inoculation, irrational belief dismissal, and others.

Professional Standards
Not Applicable

Required Text
Brannon, L., Updegraff, J., & Feist, J. (2022). Health psychology: An introduction to behavior and health (10th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN: 9780357375006 (soft-cover), 9780357375051 (loose-leaf).

Your textbook is part of Blackboard and is part of the fees paid to take this course. If you wish to opt out of the First Day program you must contact the bookstore immediately. If you opt out of First Day, you will need to secure a copy of the textbook on your own. You may rent or purchase the hard copy or electronic version of this text. We will cover all 16 chapters. The exams are based on the 10th edition.

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard throughout the semester.

Course Performance Evaluation
Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard). This course will be graded on a point system, with a total of <u>100 possible points</u>.

Assignments

Midterm (chapters 1-8) Final Exam (chapters 9-16) Each Blackboard online exam is composed of 50 multiple-choice items. The tests are based on the content of the text as organized and presented in PowerPoint lectures. Both tests will be graded 0-100 points and are each weighted .20 of overall course grade. To best prepare for the tests, students should use their textbook-based notes as well as other materials provided on Blackboard.	40 pts.
<u>Reflection Paper</u> Each student will have a chance to reflect on the materials presented and discussed throughout the semester. Prompts will be provided on Blackboard at least two weeks prior to the due date. The paper should be 2-3 pages, double-spaced. It is worth a total of 10 points that will be factored directly into the overall grade.	10 pts.
<u>Content Questions</u> There will be 10 content questions based on the textbook and PowerPoint lectures. Each content question will be graded 0-3 points with a total of 30 possible points that will be factored directly into the overall grade.	30 pts.
<u>Discussion Forums</u> Each student is expected to post a comment in 10 different discussion forums and reply to another student's comment within that forum. Each discussion forum will be based on text material and other supplemental articles, videos, etc. related to health psychology. Each posting with reply is worth 2 points for a total of 20 points that will be factored directly into the overall grade.	20 pts.
TOTAL:	**100 pts.**

Grading Scale

A (94 - 100)	A- (90 - 93)	B+ (88 - 89)	B (84 - 87)

B- (80 - 83)	C (74 - 77)	D (60 - 69)
C+ (78 - 79)	C- (70 - 73)	F (0 - 59)

Professional Dispositions

Students are expected to exhibit professional behaviors and dispositions at all times. See
https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/.

Class Schedule

Week		Topic	Readings/Assignment Due
1	Aug 21-27	Introducing Health Psychology	**Readings -** Chapter 1 **Discussion Forum 1 due Aug 27 end of day (initial post due Aug 26 end of day)**
2	Aug 28-Sept 3	Conducting Health Research	**Readings:** Chapter 2 **Content Question 1 due Sept 3 end of day**
3	Sept 4-10	Seeking and Receiving Health Care	**Readings:** Chapter 3 **Content Question 2 due Sept 10 end of day** **Discussion Forum 2 due Sept 10 end of day (initial post due Sept 9 end of day)**
4	Sept 11-17	Adhering to Healthy Behavior	**Readings:** Chapter 4 **Content Question 3 due Sept 17 end of day** **Discussion Forum 3 due Sept 17 end of day (initial post due Sept 16 end of day)**
5	Sept 18-24	Defining, Measuring, and Managing Stress Understanding Stress, Immunity, and Disease	**Readings:** Chapters 5 and 6 **Content Question 4 due Sept 24 end of day** **Discussion Forum 4 due Sept 24 end of day (initial post due Sept 23 end of day)**
6	Sept 25-Oct 1	Understanding and Managing Pain Considering Alternative Approaches	**Readings:** Chapters 7 and 8 **Midterm due Oct 1 end of day (covers Chs. 1-8)**

7	Oct 2-8	Behavioral Factors in Cardiovascular Disease	**Readings:** Chapter 9 **Content Question 5 due Oct 8 end of day** **Discussion Forum 5 due Oct 8 end of day (initial post due Oct 7 end of day)**
8	Oct 9-15	Behavioral Factors in Cancer	**Readings:** Chapter 10 **Content Question 6 due Oct 15 end of day** **Discussion Forum 6 due Oct 15 end of day (initial post due Oct 14 end of day)**
9	Oct 16-22	Living with Chronic Illness	**Readings:** Chapter 11 **Content Question 7 due Oct 22 end of day** **Discussion Forum 7 due Oct 22 end of day (initial post due Oct 21 end of day)**
10	Oct 23-29	Smoking Tobacco	**Readings:** Chapter 12 **Content Question 8 due Oct 29 end of day** **Discussion Forum 8 due Oct 29 end of day (initial post due Oct 28 end of day)**
11	Oct 30-Nov 5	Using Alcohol and Other Drugs	**Readings:** Chapter 13 **Content Question 9 due Nov 5 end of day** **Discussion Forum 9 due Nov 5 end of day (initial post due Nov 4 end of day)**
12	Nov 6-12	Eating and Weight	**Readings:** Chapter 14 **Content Question 10 due Nov 12 end of day**
13	Nov 13-19	Exercising	**Readings:** Chapter 15 **Discussion Forum 10 due Nov 19 end of day (initial post due Nov 18 end of day)**
14	Nov 20-26	---	**THANKSGIVING BREAK !**
15	Nov 27-Dec 3	Future Challenges	**Readings:** Chapter 16 **Reflection paper due Dec 3 end of day**
16	Dec 4-10	---	**Final exam due Dec 10 end of day (covers Chs. 9-16)**

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles: http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies
- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see https://ds.gmu.edu/).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources
- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to viahelp@gmu.edu or https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/assessments. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/blackboard-instructional-technology-support-for-students/.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus.

Notice of mandatory reporting of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a "Non-Confidential Employee," and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason's confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason's Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/ .

Mason is now partnered with TimelyMD to deliver TimelyCare – a new virtual mental health and well-being platform for students. The service provides 24/7 access to virtual care at no cost and augments the in-person and virtual mental health services that remain available to Mason students through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) and Student Health Services (SHS).

How can students access TimelyCare?

Students can go to **timelycare.com/gmu** or directly download the TimelyCare app from the app store to register with their school email address. Students can then start visits from any web-enabled device – smartphone, tablet, laptop, or desktop – anywhere in the United States.