

**George Mason University**  
**College of Education and Human Development**  
**HEAL**  
**HEAL 230 B01 Intro to Health Behavior**  
**3 credit hours, Summer 2024**  
**Online Learning**  
**(May 28 – July 27, 2024)**

**Faculty:**

Name: Sara T. Pappa, PhD., MCHES  
Office hours: By appointment  
Office Location: Zoom  
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**Prerequisites/Corequisites:**

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. For more information, please see the University Catalog, and the Provost's Office's Mason Core website, <http://provost.gmu.edu/general-education/>

**Course Delivery Method:**

This course will be delivered online using 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 by May 28th at 9:00 a.m.

**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 a standard up-to-date browser, either Internet Explorer or Mozilla Firefox is required (note: Opera and Safari are not compatible with Blackboard).

- 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 will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool.
- 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/](http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/)

### Expectations

- Course week: Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on Monday, and finish on Sunday.
- 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 one time per week. It is recommended that students check the course Blackboard site daily.
- 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, attending Zoom classes and participating in course discussion boards 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. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- 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.
- Instructor Support: Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- 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.
- Accommodations: Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

### Learner Outcomes or Objectives:

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

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 and 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, asthma, 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; and
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.A. & Feist, J. (2022). Health psychology: An introduction to behavior and health (10th ed.). Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN: 978-0-357-37500-6.

**NOTE:** The textbook is integrated into Blackboard and is part of the fees paid to take this course (this program is called First Day). We will cover all 16 chapters. The exams are based on the 10<sup>th</sup> edition. By using First Day, you do receive a discount on the text. Watch this video for help setting up a Cengage Account to access the textbook directly from Blackboard: <https://play.vidyard.com/mNxofeRXYsqEKxoSY6sUko>

If you wish to opt out of the First Day program you must contact the bookstore immediately. If you opt out, 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. The final day to opt out of First Day is June 7th. Please contact the bookstore for more information. If you plan to opt out, please take steps to access the textbook right away. You will need it the first week. This video will help you with the textbook: <https://youtu.be/lbblnCvGvVA>

Additional required readings and postings will be posted on Blackboard.

**Course Performance Evaluation:**

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, VIA, hard copy). Please note that all the evaluations during the course are 'performance based assessments' and no fieldwork experience is required.

- **Assignments and Examinations:**

- a. **Chapter activity** assignments (4) are to be completed individually and are due as per the syllabus. Assignment details and a rubric for the chapter activities will be provided on Blackboard. This is worth 100 points (4 at 25 points each). Citations and references are required.
- b. **Discussion board** assignments (5) are to be completed individually and are due as per the syllabus. Assignment details and a rubric for the discussion boards will be provided on Blackboard. Each student is expected to post a comment (create a thread) in 5 different discussion forums and in each forum he/she has to reply to two other student postings. Each initial posting is worth 10 points and the replies to peers are worth 10 points (5 each). This is worth 100 points (5 at 20 points each).

- c. A **2-page Research Brief** is to be completed individually and is due as per the syllabus. Assignment details and a rubric for the brief will be provided on Blackboard. This is worth 100 points. Topic must be approved by Dr. Pappa by Friday, June 7, 2024. Citations and references are required.
- d. The **midterm (chapters 1-8)** and **final exams (chapters 9-16)** will be delivered on Blackboard and are due as per the syllabus. Exams are open book/notes. They will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false and short essay questions. Exams are 100 points each.
- e. All grades and comments on work submitted will be posted on Blackboard.

- **Other Requirements:**

- a. Students are expected to complete all readings, videos, assignments, discussion boards and exams on their own.
- b. Students are expected to be respectful of others and their belief systems, and help to create a safe environment where people feel comfortable sharing information. Disrespect will not be tolerated.
- c. Make-up exams will only be given in the case of extreme circumstances. These circumstances must be documented in detail. If a student misses an exam due to a circumstance that is not extreme then it is at the instructor’s discretion whether or not the exam will be given and what automatic point deduction will occur for missing the original exam date. Late work will NOT be accepted. Extenuating circumstances will be determined by instructor.
- d. All assignments that include sources should have in-text citations and a References list as per APA formatting guidelines. Incorrect citation of sources will result in a point deduction. Plagiarized work from any outside source (i.e., books, articles, websites) is unacceptable and will result in a zero. All sources cited must be reputable sources of information. These include scholarly journal articles, government websites, and factsheets or other publications from recognized expert agencies.
- e. Blackboard will be used for posting course files, rubrics, readings, and assignments and communicating with the class. It is your responsibility to check the course site on a regular basis for updates to the syllabus, readings, etc.
- f. Email is the primary method of communication between students and faculty. All emails will be returned within 48 hours.

- **GRADING** : There will be a total of **500 points** that may be earned in this class:

- Chapter Activities (4 at 25 points each)                    100 pts.
- Discussion Boards (5 at 20 points each)                    100 pts.
- Research Brief    100 pts.
- Midterm Exam    100 pts.
- Final Exam    100 pts.

A	= 94 – 100	B+	= 88 – 89	C+	= 78 – 79	D	= 60 – 69
A-	= 90 – 93	B	= 84 – 87	C	= 74 – 77	F	= 0 – 59
		B-	= 80 – 83	C-	= 70 – 73		

**Professional Dispositions** See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/polices-procedures/>

**Class Schedule:**

Class and assignment details can be found in Course Content on Blackboard.

<b>WEEK OF:</b>	<b>TOPICS/READINGS/VIDEOS</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS DUE</b>
<b>May 28th</b>	Chapter 1: Introduction to Health Psychology  Chapter 2 : Conducting Health Research  <i>Additional readings/videos as posted on Blackboard.</i>	Discussion Board 1 post due Thursday, 5/30; replies (2) due by Sunday, 6/2.
<b>June 3rd</b>	Chapter 3 : Seeking and Receiving Health Care  Chapter 4 : Adhering to Healthy Behavior  <i>Additional readings/videos as posted on Blackboard.</i>	Research Brief topic due by Friday, 6/7.
<b>June 10th</b>	Chapter 5 : Defining, Measuring and Managing Stress  Chapter 6: Understanding Stress, Immunity and Disease  <i>Additional readings/videos as posted on Blackboard.</i>	Discussion Board 2 post due Thursday, 6/13 ; replies (2) due by Sunday, 6/16.  Chapter Activity 1 (covers chapters 1-5) due by Friday, 6/14.
<b>June 17th</b>	Chapter 7 : Understanding and Managing Pain  Chapter 8 : Considering Alternative Approaches  <i>Additional readings/videos as posted on Blackboard.</i>	Discussion Board 3 post due Thursday, 6/20; replies (2) due by Sunday, 6/23.  Chapter Activity 2 (covers chapters 6-8) due by Friday, 6/21.
<b>June 24th</b>	Chapter 9 : Behavioral Factors in Cardiovascular Disease  Chapter 10 : Behavioral Factors in Cancer  <i>Additional readings/videos as posted on Blackboard.</i>	Take Midterm exam (chapters 1-8) on Monday, 6/24, 9-11 a.m.
<b>July 1st</b>	Chapter 11 : Living with Chronic Illness  <i>Additional readings/videos as posted on Blackboard.</i>	Discussion Board 4 post due Thursday, 7/4; replies (2) due by Sunday, 7/7.

WEEK OF:	TOPICS/READINGS/VIDEOS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
July 8th	Chapter 12 : Smoking Tobacco  Chapter 13 : Using Alcohol and Other Drugs  <i>Additional readings/videos as posted on Blackboard.</i>	Chapter Activity 3 (covers chapters 9-12) due by Friday, 7/12.  Research Brief DRAFT due on Blackboard by Friday, 7/12.
July 15th	Chapter 14 : Eating and Weight Management  Chapter 15 : Exercising  <i>Additional readings/videos as posted on Blackboard.</i>	Discussion Board 5 post due Thursday, 7/18 ; replies (2) due by Sunday, 7/21.
July 22nd	Chapter 16 : Future Challenges  <i>Additional readings/videos as posted on Blackboard.</i>	Chapter Activity 4 (covers chapters 13-16) due by Wednesday, 7/24.  Research Brief due on Blackboard by Wednesday, 7/24.  Take Final exam (chapters 9-16) on Blackboard on Friday, 7/26, 9-11 a.m.

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

- 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/>).

## Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to VIA should be directed to [viahelp@gmu.edu](mailto: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, Dr. Pappa is 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](mailto: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](https://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 – anywhere in the United States.