

**Moravian College**

**Course title: Health Psychology (PSYC 275)**

**Semester: Fall 2006**

**Dates: 8/28/2006 to 12/11/2005**

**Time: TR (8:50 to 10:00 a.m.)**

**Classroom:**

**Instructor: Debra J. Romberger, Ph.D., LPC, NCP**

**Contact Information: [drombergermft@aol.com](mailto:drombergermft@aol.com)**

**Phone: office 610 554-0144**

**Office hours: before or after class or by appointment**

**Description of Course:**

This course surveys biopsychosocial, behavioral, and biomedical theory, covering a broad landscape from primary sources through the most contemporary research. The role of research and research design in health Psychology are discussed. Such topics as allopathic patient-physician relationship, predictive theories of health behaviors, gender/individual difference, and adherence to treatment are presented. Psychological concepts relating to the prevention, diagnosis, treatment of disease and illness, and models of wellness including a review of coping strategies are discussed. The impact of psychological stress on health and immunity is presented. Explorations of applied health psychology including biopsychosocial interventions are explored.

**Learning Objectives:**

1. Describe the models of mind-body interactions in the current models employed within the field of Health Psychology today.
2. Identify current theoretical models relating psychological processes to physical illness and well-being.
3. Describe the types of research and research design appropriate to health psychology.
4. Discuss and define strategies of coping with illness, and disease.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of adherence and wellness.
6. Define current areas of research focus and possible future directions within the discipline of health psychology.
7. Discuss the models of psychological stress and its impact on wellness and illness.
8. Demonstrate an understanding of the concepts of adherence and wellness.
9. Describe how behavior is impacted by chronic illness.
10. Evaluate the importance of health and quality of life in the context of increased life expectancy.

**Required Text:**

**Ogden, J. (2004) Health psychology a textbook (third edition). McGraw-Hill Education, New York.**

**Research Paper:**

Each student will produce a final paper will be due the day of their presentation during the last two weeks of class. A lottery will be used to determine order of presentations. The topic submission including: paper topic, thesis statement, outline and preliminary references. Preliminary submissions may be made prior to that date for topic approval. This paper is an opportunity to work as a health psychologist and explore a topic of interest to you. Begin by choosing a health concern (e.g., stress, overeating, or coronary disease) then using one of the models and/or theories discuss how a health psychologist might use these models/theories to predict, understand, change or even prevent illness and promote health. You will need to identify the population you will serve, provide measurement of success, and accommodations for noncompliance.

For example, you may choose to write a paper discussing the relationship between chronic back pain and depression and use the cognitive behavioral theories to aid the reader in understanding how cognitions impact both onset and prognosis of debilitating chronic back pain.

Proposed title: A DISCUSSION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHRONIC BACK PAIN AND DEPRESSION AND TREATMENT OUTCOMES USING COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL

Discuss: Prevalence of back pain, impact of daily living (i.e., why this is important) theoretical construct and how it applies to onset, degree of debilitation, prognosis. Use current research to support your assumption that cognitive behavioral therapy has a positive impact on the reduction of pain compared to say the biomedical model alone. In addition you will target a specific population, and provide planning for noncompliance to treatment.

A superior paper will demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge, and critical thinking appropriate for a 200 level course. The paper must follow APA Publication Manual guidelines and be free of typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors. Only **primary sources** may be used (minimum of 10). Use of secondary sources will result in reduction of one letter grade. Length 15-20 pages. Please include: title page, abstract, and references in APA format.

References: Every statement made in a scholarly research paper must be supported by a reference. Be very cautious when stating your opinion, or using terms suggesting absolute facts, or values, as these **MUST** be supported by references. Note that textbooks including our course text is composed of information cited in other sources.

**Research articles:**

You are required to submit 10 research articles pertaining to the topic being discussed that day in class. You will be provided with a template to evaluate articles and submit for credit at the end of the semester. These articles will be discussed in class on Thursdays in small groups then shared with the class. They are an attempt to connect the current literature to the topics we are discussing in class and allow for the opportunity of class participation. These articles/lit reviews will be handed in the last day of class for credit.

**Exams:**

There will be 2 exams. Each exam will be worth 100 points. (Please see course schedule for dates and chapters.) Exams are a combination of multiple choice and true and false questions and essay.

The final exam will be take home essay due the day of the exam. You will be provided a case history and asked to develop a treatment plan using theories and models discussed throughout the term to best facilitate the desired outcomes.

**Missed exams/Late Papers ☹**

To be fair to students who prepare for exams and assignments in a timely fashion, make-up exams will not be given except in extreme situations and with the permission of the instructor. Late Papers will be reduced by one letter grade per day late.

**Attendance/Participation**

I encourage you to prepare for class by reading material assigned for class. Your participation will make the class much more interesting and informative for both yourself and your classmates, and you have an opportunity to earn up to 50 points.

**Cheating and Plagiarism**

Please refer to your Moravian college handbook for the college's policy on this subject.

**Total points:**

2 in class exams	200
Final exam - take home essay	100
Research paper	100
Presentation of paper	50
Research articles (10)	100
Participation	50
Total	600

*Grading system*

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D	69-60%
F	below 60%

**Topic schedule**

August 29 & 31	Introducing Health Psychology
Sept. 5 & 7	Health Beliefs
Sept. 12 & 14	Illness Cognitions
Sept 19 & 21	Doctor-patient communication and the role of health professional's health beliefs
Sept 26 & 28	Smoking and alcohol use
<b>Oct. 3</b>	<b>TEST 1</b>
Oct. 5 & 12	Eating behaviors
Oct 17 & 19	Exercise
Oct. 24 & 26	Sex
Oct. 31 & Nov. 2	Stress
<b>Nov. 2</b>	<b>thesis statement/outline/preliminary reference list in APA format due</b>
Nov. 7 & 9	Stress and illness
Nov. 14 & 16	Pain
<b>Nov. 21</b>	<b>TEST 2</b>
Nov. 28, 30	presentations
Dec. 5 & 7	presentations

TBA - date of final essay due

This is an outline of the proposed schedule. Changes may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Any students in need of accommodations do to physical or leaning differences are encouraged to see me after class or by appointment early in the semester.