

PSY 137D: Health Psychology  
Spring 2005 T Th 12:30-1:45  
MS Room 4000A

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Tues 11:00-12:00  
Franz Hall 4615

**Text:** Shelley E. Taylor (2003). Health Psychology (5<sup>th</sup> edition). New York: McGraw Hill.

**Reader:** A required course reader can be purchased from Course Reader Material at 1141 Westwood Blvd (between Kinross and Lindbrook). The phone number there is 443-3303.

**Course Overview:** This course is designed to give you a broad overview of the field of health psychology. Health psychology is a young and exciting field of study that examines the bi-directional relationship between psychology and health. We will try to answer such questions as: Are certain personality types more likely to get sick, or to get certain illnesses? What does stress do to your health? What psychological and social factors cause people to behave in unhealthy ways? What helps people adjust to illness? Does having a lot of friends affect your health? What can psychologists do to help cure illness? Who is healthier, men or women? Are there ethnic variations in health? How can we help people who are in pain without getting them addicted to pain-killers? Does it matter how your doctor talks to you? Does being bereaved make you ill? Does dieting work? Can a sugar pill cure back pain?

**Grading:** Grades will be based on two exams and a homework assignment. Exam 1 will cover all the assigned text and readings from the first half of the course. Exam 1 is worth 45% of your final grade. Exam 2 will cover all the assigned text and readings from the second half of the course. Exam 2 is worth 45% of your final grade. A written homework assignment will be worth 10% of your final grade. The written assignment will be due at the beginning of class on **Tuesday May 31<sup>st</sup>** (It will be described in class on Tuesday May 12 – and it is already posted on the course web page and in your reader).

**Policies:** You will find that your instructor is very nice and runs a democratic classroom. You may peg her as a pushover. Do this at your peril. It is your responsibility to make sure you are in class for the exams, to receive the homework assignment, and to turn in the assignment. Not being in class the day the homework is assigned does not grant you extra time to complete it, nor does missing class the day it is due. No late homework assignments will be accepted. An assignment turned in after the due date (and time) will receive a zero. Complaints about the grading of particular items on the exams must be submitted *in writing* on paper (not email), within 7 days of the date the exam answers were discussed in class. If you do not show up for the exams you will receive zeros on them. There are no exceptions. Final grades will be computed by a fair and reasonable curve. The instructor does not have to explain, defend, or even show you the curve.

Date	Topic	Taylor Readings	Reader Readings
Tues Apr 5	Course overview/What is health psychology?	Chapter 1	
Thur Apr 7	Biopsychosocial model/Methods		1-3
Tues Apr 12	Psychosocial factors in disease etiology	417-427, 434-439, 482-487	
Thur Apr 14	Stress—conceptual issues	178-203	
Tues Apr 19	Stress and health outcomes		4
Thur Apr 21	Psychoneuroimmunology	458-474	5
Tues Apr 26	Coping and social support	Chapter 7	6-7
Thur Apr 28	Video on coping with illness		
Tues May 3	Beliefs that aid adjustment		8
Thur May 5	<b>EXAM 1</b>		
Tues May 10	Health behavior change—persuasion	Chapter 5	9
Thur May 12	Health behavior change-models	52-87	
Tues May 17	Gender, ethnicity, SES, and health		10-12
Thur May 19	Bereavement	385-403	(13-15)
Tues May 24	Eating		16-17
Thur May 26	Pain (Doc-P)	Chapter 10	18
Tues May 31	Placebos (Pain) <b>HOMEWORK DUE 12:30</b>	310-315	19
Thur Jun 2	Doctor-patient communication (Placebos)	284-310	20
Tues Jun 7	Wellness, faith, and happiness		21
Thur Jun 9	<b>EXAM 2</b>		(22-23)

(Items in parentheses are **optional** readings and will not appear on the exams.)

## Reader Contents

1. Allen, A. (2000). The cancer study bombshell that wasn't. Salon.com, July 14. Hoover, R.
2. Cancer – nature, nurture, or both. New England Journal of Medicine, 2000, 343, 135-136.
3. Kolata, G. (2004). Cancer prevention is hot, but experts are split. New York Times, January 11.
4. Sapolsky, R. (1994). Glands, gooseflesh, and hormones. Chapter 2 in Why Zebra's Don't Get Ulcers, NY: Freeman.
5. Sapolsky, R. (1994). Immunity, stress, and disease. Chapter 8 in Why Zebra's Don't Get Ulcers, NY: Freeman.
6. Kessler, L. (1999). For the bad times. Salon.com, Oct. 19
7. O'Connor, A. (2004). Cracking under the pressure? It's just the opposite, for some. New York Times, September 10.
8. Spiegel, D. (2001). Mind matters – Group therapy and survival in breast cancer. New England Journal of Medicine, 345(24), 1767-1768.
9. Abbott, A.. (2005). What ever happened to safe sex? Salon.com, February 25.
10. Satel, S. (2002). I am a racially profiling doctor. New York Times Magazine, May 5.
11. Pear, R. (2000). Research neglects women, studies find. New York Times, April 30.
12. Adler, N.E., & Snibbe, A.C. (2003). The role of psychosocial processes in explaining the gradient between socioeconomic status and health. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 12, 119-123.
13. Torres, A.R. (2002). Loving a ghost. Salon.com, Feb 14.
14. Torres, A.R. (2002). What if. Salon.com, May 17.
15. Torres, A.R. (2002). Found and lost. Salon.com, July 10.
16. Gladwell, M. (1998). The pima paradox. The New Yorker, February 2.
17. Shute, N. (1998). The joy of fat. U.S. News and World Report, January 12.
18. Gawande, A. (1999). The pain perplex. The New Yorker.
19. McCarthy, S. (1999). Spin doctoring. Salon.com, July 15.
20. Trillin, A. (1981). Of dragons and garden peas. New England Journal of Medicine, 304(12), 699-701.
21. Bowen, J. (1999). Faith healing. Salon.com, November 3.
22. Benson, H. (1993). The relaxation response. In Goleman, D., & Gurin, J. (Eds.). Mind Body Medicine: How to use your mind for better health. NY: Consumer Reports Books.
23. Antoni, M. (1993). Stress management – strategies that work. In Goleman, D., & Gurin, J. (Eds.). Mind Body Medicine: How to use your mind for better health. NY: Consumer Reports Books.