

**Faculty of Health  
Department of Psychology  
PSYC 4190 Section M  
SEMINAR IN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY  
Winter 2017**

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**Course Prerequisite(s):** Course prerequisites are strictly enforced.

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology), with a minimum grade of C.
- HH/PSYC 2021 3.00 (Statistical Methods I) or HH/PSYC 2020 6.00 (Statistical Methods I and II)
- HH/PSYC 2030 3.00 (Introduction to Research Methods) or substitutes
- HH/PSYC 3170 3.00 (Health Psychology)
- Students must be in an Honours program in Psychology and have completed at least 84 credits (excluding (EDUC) education courses)

**TIME:** Wednesdays: 7:00pm-10:00pm  
**ROOM:** FC 110  
**COURSE DIRECTOR:** Gerry Goldberg, Ph.D., C. Psych.  
**OFFICE HOURS:** before and after class as needed  
**OFFICE:** 277 BSB  
**EMAIL:** gegold@yorku.ca  
**SECRETARY:** Zehra Bandhu office is 284 BSB, Email: [zehra@yorku.ca](mailto:zehra@yorku.ca)  
Phone: 416 736 2100 Ext 66232.

**Course Website: MOODLE:** *Check Moodle for updates, lecture outlines, grades, and more!*

The course will examine biological, psychological and social risk factors for **unipolar depression** and the interplay among these factors. This will be done from three perspectives. The first will be a broad or general perspective, followed by a focus on occupational/ workplace risk factors for depression. The third perspective will view potential risk factors specific to health care providers (e.g. physicians, nurses, psychologists, paramedics, pharmacists). For each perspective, students will find and examine biological, psychological and social factors that may moderate a specific risk factor they have selected.

A goal of this course is to help you develop skills needed to help secure a job and succeed in the workplace. This includes making sure you are responding to the requests made of you. In other words, did you read and respond to what was requested of you? Did you avoid providing information that was extraneous to the request?

**Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:**

1. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge in health psychology.
2. Critically evaluate, synthesize and resolve conflicting results in health psychology.
3. Articulate trends in health psychology.
4. Locate research articles and show critical thinking about research findings in health psychology.
5. Express knowledge of health psychology in written form.
6. Engage in evidence-based dialogue with course director and peers.
7. Demonstrate an ability to work with others.

**Required reading:**

There are no required readings but students will be expected to find current (within the last 5 years) peer reviewed scientific studies and materials pertaining to potential causes of depression for each of the three perspectives. Resources will be available to assist students in their search via the course Moodle site.

**Evaluation:** See last page of outline re: **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

Evaluation will be based upon three presentations, three written papers and class participation. There will be no tests or examinations.

20% Class participation including attendance and participation in class discussions

15% Project 1 (5% presentation 10% written paper)—general perspective

30% Project 2 (10% presentation 20% written paper)—focus on occupations/workplace

30% Project 3 (10% presentation 20% written paper)—focus on health care providers.

**The remaining 5% will be applied to your highest graded paper.**

**Tentative Schedule:**

1.	<b>Jan 11</b>	Lecture: Course overview. Introduction to depression
2.	<b>Jan 18</b>	Lecture: Depression in the workplace—sources of workplace stress <b>Deadline for submission of risk factor for Project 1</b>
3.	<b>Jan 25</b>	Project 1: Student presentations
4.	<b>Feb 1</b>	Project 1: Student presentations Project 1: <b>Papers due</b> <b>Deadline for submission of risk factor for Project 2</b>
5.	<b>Feb 8</b>	Lecture: Health care providers stress and depression.
	<b>Feb 15</b>	Reading Week—No classes
6.	<b>Feb 22</b>	Project 2: Student presentations
7.	<b>Mar 1</b>	Project 2: Student Presentations
8.	<b>Mar 8</b>	Project 2: Student presentations Project 2: <b>Papers due</b> <b>Deadline for submission of risk factor for Project 3</b>
9.	<b>Mar 15</b>	Lecture: Health care providers stress and depression continued
10.	<b>Mar 22</b>	Project 3: Student presentations
11.	<b>Mar 29</b>	Project 3: Student presentations
12.	<b>Apr 5</b>	Project 3: Student presentations <b>Project 3: Paper due for <i>this</i> and previous class presentations</b>

**PROJECTS**

There are three projects each requiring students to provide a presentation and a written paper. The projects become increasingly specific and more challenging. Begin your research and development of all three projects early. Do not wait until completion of the first project to begin the second or third.

**Topics/Potential Risk Factors**

Materials will be provided at the beginning of the course to help students determine the topic/s they may wish to explore. Newspapers, textbooks, etc may be used to get the initial ideas but presentations/papers must be based on current peer review journal articles. It is acceptable, but not required, to select a single risk factor and focus on it for all three projects.

**Note:** Topics such as **stress or occupational stress or workload** are too broad a risk factor however one may select a specific stressor (e.g. poor nutrition, sleep deprivation, shiftwork, bullying at work, exposure to traumatic events, specific personality traits such as Type A behaviors, perfectionism or specific behavioral patterns such as anger) as a risk factor.

**Note:** For purposes of this course, **burnout and compassion fatigue** will be considered forms of depression and so cannot be considered a potential risk factor. Risk factors for burnout or compassion fatigue are acceptable.

**Topic Selection Procedure and Order of Presentation for Projects**

**Order of presentation will be determined at the second class**

### **Project 1**

Students will select and submit a topic to me by the date indicated on the chart. Failure to do so will detract from your class participation mark. Students should be prepared to present as per chart. Order of presentations will be determined at the second class and posted on line. Risk factors should be specific and clear and be either a potential biological, psychological and/or social factor.

### **Project 2**

Students will select and submit a topic to me by the date indicated on the chart. Failure to do so will detract from your class participation mark. Email the topic in a single written sentence. The order of presentations will be posted but some students may be absent for their presentation. **You may be required to present earlier than expected.**

### **Project 3**

This will be handled similarly to Project 2. Students will select a topic by the date indicated on the chart. The order of presentations will be posted but some students may be absent for their presentation. **You may be required to present earlier than expected.**

### **PROJECT PRESENTATIONS:**

**The order of presentations will be determined at the second class via “from the draw from a hat” and will be posted on Moodle BUT you must be ready to present when called upon. Don’t count on all students remaining in the course or being present when they are supposed to present. While some students may volunteer to present early for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> project presentation, they tend not to volunteer for the 3<sup>rd</sup> presentation.**

### **Project 1**

Students will select one specific biological, psychological or social factor suspected of causing unipolar depression and find current literature examining this potential cause from the biopsychosocial perspective. **Examine if the risk factor you have selected has a biological, psychological, and/or social aspect to it and how other biological, psychological and social factors interact or modify the impact of the potential risk factor you have selected.** (Note: Make sure the discussion of each modifying factor is focused on how it **directly impacts the relationship between the risk factor selected and depression.** You may not present other stressors as causing depression unless there is a clear focus on how such stressors influence the relationship between the risk factor you selected and depression.

You may begin your paper and presentation with material from current textbooks but it is expected you will demonstrate an ability to find very current experimental findings from peer reviewed journals to update this information. **It is expected that you will find sufficient research to describe a biopsychosocial perspective. You will not just provide an annotated bibliography (i.e. provide a review of one article after another) but integrate the information from the literature in providing the biopsychosocial perspective.**

The goal of this project is for students to demonstrate the ability to:

- (1) find and integrate appropriate current **peer reviewed research** pertaining to a potential risk factor for depression. (*You need sufficient research to present a biopsychosocial perspective. In other words does the risk factor have biological, psychological and/or social aspects?, is its relationship to depression moderated by other biological, psychological, and social factors?, and is the relationship between your risk factor bidirectional?*);
- (2) provide an oral presentation that demonstrates critical thinking in a manner that stimulates interest and discussion; and,
- (3) prepare a written paper in **APA style.**

### **Oral Presentation (5%) – approximately 5 minutes\***

- Select a specific risk factor for unipolar depression that is biological, psychological or social.
- Review the nature of the relationship between the risk factor and depression.
- Engage the class with an oral presentation that is memorable; not merely a written presentation which is read. A component of your grade will be based on your ability to stimulate curiosity and class discussion. You may have as many written notes as you wish but do not overwhelm others with information. **Do not read your presentation from your notes or PowerPoint presentation. When you do this you will likely provide too much information too quickly without eye contact or engaging the audience.**

The actual time allotted to your presentation will be determined by class size. Be prepared to provide a presentation that is approximately 5 minutes and lead a brief class discussion on the topic. (If the class is large, the discussion will be brief). Be prepared to **pose discussion questions to the class to stimulate discussion following your presentation.** *Make sure your discussion question is related to your risk factor and the biopsychosocial focus of this course.* Good questions, which link to course objectives, will earn you a better grade.

**Written Paper:** Students will submit in APA style a three page (typed double spaced) paper followed by a reference section. This will be a formal presentation of the information offered in the oral. See the chart for due dates. A hard copy must be submitted in class. The paper must be submitted to Turnitin.

### **Project 2**

Start the project as soon as possible and ***before*** you have completed Project 1. The oral presentation is similar to Project 1 **except it will be approximately 15 minutes including class discussion (actual time determined by class size)**

Students will focus on **occupational/workplace** risk factors (e.g. work/family life balance, job insecurity, responsibility for others, irregular work hours, sexual harassment, bullying). Evaluation will be based on both the depth of the discussion and the ability to present in a manner that stimulates discussion and debate.

This written paper should be in APA style and up to 5 pages double spaced, followed by a reference section. This paper will build upon the original presentation and input from fellow students. **A hard copy of the paper must be submitted in class is due the class following your presentation.** The paper must be submitted to Turnitin.

### **Project 3**

**Start the project as soon as possible and before you have completed Project 1 or 2.** This will be similar to Project 2. **Again, the oral presentation will be approximately 15 minutes including class discussion (actual time determined by class size).**

Students will select a **specific health care profession** (e.g. physician, nurse, paramedic, dentist, or pharmacist) and focus on an occupational/workplace risk factor associated with being or becoming that specific health care provider (e.g. work/family life balance, job insecurity, responsibility for others, irregular work hours).

Again, students will be evaluated on the depth of their discussion and ability to present in a manner that stimulates discussion and debate.

The written paper should be in APA style, up to 5 pages double spaced and followed by a reference section. **A hard copy of your paper is due the class following your presentation except for the presenters on the last day of classes who will submit their papers on the day of their**

**presentation.** This paper will build upon the original presentation and input from fellow students. The paper must be submitted to Turnitin.

**If AV equipment is needed, it is your responsibility to arrange for it one week in advance. Generally the classrooms have all the AV you will need.**

### **LATE PAPERS AND MISSED PRESENTATIONS:**

Students are to complete each component of the course on time. Late papers will be assessed a late penalty of .5 marks per day. If you miss your scheduled presentation you must have a legitimate excuse (e.g. death in the family, severe illness, etc.). **Documentation** (i.e. an attending physician's statement, not a MD's note) is required to be permitted to write an additional written paper on an assigned topic to make up for the missing grade.

### **CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION FOR ALL COMPONENTS OF THE COURSE**

#### **Class Participation**

- Participation in discussion and attendance
- Being ready to present when called upon
- Submitting topics for projects on time

#### **Oral Presentations:**

- Current information from peer reviewed journals
- Risk factor is clearly defined
- Presentation is focused, organized, in depth, clear and engaging
- Reading from a paper or PowerPoint was minimal
- An effort was made to stimulate class discussion (e.g. presented topical points, posed good questions?)
- Presentation and discussion completed within the allotted time

#### **Written Papers:**

The written documents will be more formalized and detailed version of the oral presentation.

- Focus on the assignment as described in this outline
- Focus on a single risk factor especially when looking at how other possible risk factors may interact with it. (IMPORTANT: When other factors such as stressors or other risk factors are brought into discussion, this discussion must be related to the original risk factor selected.)
- Literature search provides a biopsychosocial perspective
- A current understanding of the issues was presented
- Present a summary and integration of findings of various studies
- Paper is well organized, concise and clear, free from repetition
- Writing is free of unnecessary flowery prose
- APA style
- Paper is of the prescribed length (i.e. within a page)

#### **Tips for doing well on the assignments**

- **Focus on the relationship between the risk factor and depression from a biopsychosocial perspective.**
- The opening sentence should be a tightly worded description of your risk factor. The next sentence should focus in on its relationship to depression. The rest of the opening paragraph should provide a brief outline of what is to come in the paper.
- This is a short paper; very little space should be dedicated to prevalence of the risk factor (usually one sentence).

- The causes of the risk factor are not the focus of the paper and should be kept to a minimum unless depression or a byproduct of depression is involved.
- Don't dwell on the basics of stress unless there is a specific or unique reason to discuss this in relation to your selected risk factor. The basics of the stress response (e.g. the pathways, the impact of cortisol) were part of the prerequisite course.
- Don't list stressors that might be concurrent with a job unless you demonstrate their relationship to the selected risk factor. The less the relationship, the briefer the discussion of these other stressors.
- Methods of dealing with the problem of your selected risk factor are not part of the project, however, you may briefly mention these.
- Project Two focuses on an occupation/workplace.
- Project Three focuses on a specific health care professional.

### **Oral Presentations**

- Focus discussion question(s) on your selected risk factor. Relate questions to the biopsychosocial approach. *Good biopsychosocial questions generated out of the studies you reviewed can earn you extra credit.*
- Speak clearly
- Find creative ways to keep the attention of classmates
- Do not read your presentation.

### **Class Discussion**

- Speak up in class
- You are welcome to use your computer when the professor is lecturing e.g. to follow the PowerPoint online. Use of these devices **WHEN A STUDENT IS PRESENTING** will detract from class participation grades.

### **What is meant by a biopsychosocial question?**

*Look for a question that attends to a moderating factor between your risk factor and depression. For example, you might find that a demographic like age or sex changes the relationship between your risk factor and depression and you wonder why. Perhaps you are looking light deprivation and depression and find that this has a greater impact on one gender than the other or that therapies to deal with this are more effective on one gender than the other. Getting a discussion going about this is the goal.*

### **GENERIC REVIEWS OF THE STRESS REACTION.**

All of you will likely find that stress is an important in the development of depression but do not dwell on the biology of the stress reaction unless your description is distinctive or unique to your risk factor. It is assumed that all of you are familiar with the basic stress reaction from prerequisite courses. A “generic” review of the stress reaction will detract from your grade so make sure your paper and presentation goes beyond the core concepts regarding stress presented in previous courses.

### **Grading as per Senate Policy**

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests\* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.) (For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - <http://calendars.students.yorku.ca/2016-2017/academic-and-financial-information/academic-services/grades-and-grading-schemes>)

## Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Important Dates](#)

### Important dates

Last date to add a course **without** permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)  
Last date to add a course **with permission** of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)  
Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)  
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a “W” on the transcript – see note below)

Fall (F)	Year (Y)	Winter (W)
Sept. 21	Sept. 21	Jan. 18
Oct. 5	Oct. 19	Feb. 1
Nov. 11	Feb. 10	March 10
Nov. 12 - Dec. 5	Feb. 11 - Apr. 5	March 11 - Apr. 5

## Academic Integrity for Students

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please visit [an overview of Academic Integrity at York University](#) from the Office of the Vice-President Academic.

The following links will assist you in gaining a better understanding of academic integrity and point you to resources at York that can help you improve your writing and research skills:

- [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#)
- [Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity](#)
- [Information for Students on Text-Matching Software: Turnitin.com](#)
- [Beware! Says who? A pamphlet on how to avoid plagiarism](#)

[Resources for students to help improve their writing and research skill](#)

### Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The [York University Accessibility Hub](#) is your online stop for accessibility on campus. The [Accessibility Hub](#) provides tools, assistance and resources. Policy Statement

**Policy:** York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs.

The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses.

Provided that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder.

For Further Information please refer to: [York university academic accommodation for students with disabilities policy](#)