

Faculty of Health
Department of Psychology
PSYC 4190 Section M
SEMINAR IN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY
Tues/Thurs/11:30-2:30/DB 0004
S2/2017

Instructor and T.A. Information

Instructor: Dr. Frances Wilkinson
Office: Lassonde 0009D
Office Phone: 33184
Office Hours: 2:30-3:30 Tues/Thurs or by email
Email: franw@yorku.ca

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)

Course website: [Moodle](#)

Course Description

This seminar course will apply the core principles and concepts of Health Psychology to the study of human epidemics. We will focus on the central roles of fear, denial, and stigma, and consider three aspects of large-scale epidemics or pandemics: 1) identification and containment, 2) prevention strategies and 3) survivorship. We will look at three very different diseases (HIV/AIDS, Ebola, Zika) each of which has in the past caused, or currently threatens to cause widespread illness and long lasting psychological, social and economic consequences. In each case, we will consider the complex interaction between the individual (patients/care-givers) experience and the political/cultural/social context within which the epidemic occurred.

Learning Outcomes

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.

Specific Learning Objectives

1. Recognize and apply concepts previously learned in Introduction to Health Psychology to the fast-moving and chaotic health environment that arises during epidemics of infectious disease.
2. Describe similarities and differences between the time course and human reactions to epidemics of sexually transmitted (HIV/AIDS) diseases, diseases spread through close primarily non-sexual contact (Ebola), and through insect vectors (Zika).
3. Develop awareness of the longterm physical consequences of each of these diseases to survivors.
4. Discover the way each of these diseases has been portrayed in the media in the early stages of the epidemic and discuss the media's role in driving fear and panic in the affected population and elsewhere, or in covering up the severity of the evolving health crisis.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the concept of stigma and its consequences on those suffering from these illnesses, those who survive and the caregivers (family and health care workers) who care for them.
6. Apply your understanding of the role of fear, denial and stigma in these epidemic situations to considering why prevention programs are likely to succeed or fail.

Required Text

- There is no required textbook for this course
- Everyone will be required to acquire one of the books on the book club list (see book club description below), but **do not do this until after the first class as membership in a particular book club will depend on the number of interested students.**
- The other required readings for the course will be scholarly papers and media reports for which links will provided on the reading list on Moodle.

Course Requirements and Assessment - Tentative - to be confirmed in first class

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Date of Evaluation (if known)</i>	<i>Weighting</i>
Book Club	Weekly (weeks 2-6)	35%
In-class assignments (see below)	Weekly (weeks 2-6)	30%
Final Exam	S2 Exam period (Aug 1-11)	35%
<hr/>		
Total		100%

Description of Assignments

1. Book Club (35%): Based on your book choice (see book section below) you will be assigned to a "book club" which will meet every Thursday in the second half of the class period. Students will be required to complete the weekly reading assignment and prepare written answers to a set of questions on the readings (which will be handed in at the beginning of

class, so make 2 copies). The book club will consider the questions and come up with their agreed-upon best answer to the questions which will be written up by the group and submitted to the course director at the end of each meeting. In the final week, each book club will make a presentation to the entire class summarizing and evaluating their book. Grading will be a combination of individual and group grades.

2. Class-related assignments (30% of grade): The first component of this (20%) will be short weekly reports/reflections on the assigned reading material for week's topic (weeks 2-5 inclusive; (4x5% = 20% total). The remaining 10% of the grade will come from a variety of very short assignments (e.g. searching for media reports); you will be able to choose the time and nature of your assignments from a long list of possibilities. Further details will be provided in the first class.
3. Final exam (35%). Due to the limitations of the brief summer term, a final examination offers a better means for you to integrate the material we have covered than other forms of evaluation. The exam will be in essay format, will be based on all the in-class lectures/discussions and required readings and may also be informed by your book club readings. Further exam details will be provided in the first class. Because the final exam covers all the course material, its value may be increased to compensate for other missed components of the course due to documented illnesses and emergencies as outlined under **Missed Exams** below. *Note that the exam will be held in the final exam period (Aug 1-11) so be sure you do not book trips away during this period.*

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 - [Grading Scheme for 2016-17](#))

Late Work/Missed Tests or Exams

Students with a documented reason for missing a class with graded activities, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (Attending Physician Statement (APS) which can be found at: <https://registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf>) may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

Final Exam: Standard rules and procedures about missed final exams will apply. You will require a Attending Physician's Statement and will have to apply for Deferred Standing <http://myacademicrecord.students.yorku.ca/deferred-standing>.

IMPORTANT NEW INFORMATION REGARDING MISSED TESTS:

For any missed tests or late assignments, students **MUST** complete the following online form which will be received and reviewed in the Psychology undergraduate office.

[HH PSYC: Missed Tests/Exams Form](#) . Failure to complete the form within 7 calendar days of the original deadline will result in a grade of zero for the test/assignment.

Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Summer 2017 - Important Dates](#)

	SU	S1	S2
Last date to add a course without permission of instructor	15-May	5-May	23-Jun
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor	29-May	12-May	30-Jun
Last date to drop course without receiving a grade	7-Jul	2-Jun	21-Jul
*Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript - Add and Drop Deadlines)	July 8-31	June 3-12	July 22-31

**Note: You may withdraw from a course using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as "W". The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.*

Information on Plagiarism Detection

Plagiarism is taken very seriously in the is course; you may not copy unattributed sources of any kind, including one another. Rules concerning what may be used in the final exam, which will be partially open-book, will be provided before the end of term.

Electronic Device Policy

This course is a seminar, and as such its success depends on the engagement of the participants. For this reason, no electronic devices may be used in the classroom, with the following exception:

Book Club: each group will appoint a "scribe" who will use their laptop to type up the agreed upon answers to the weekly questions as the book club meeting proceeds. This person will submit an electronic version of the answers to the Course Director and to all members of the book club at the end of the book club session. This record will form the basis of the group grading. If no one has a device capable of word processing, a written long-hand copy of the responses will be accepted.

Cell phones and tablets should be silenced and out of sight through all class sessions. Anyone who feels that they need to text, tweet etc more than they need to participate will be asked to leave the classroom until they are able to focus on the course. If your phone rings, please deal with this as rapidly and as considerately as possible (i.e. if you must answer due to an emergency situation,

please leave the room to do so). There will be a break in the middle of each session when you will have time to answer calls/texts etc.

Laptops may be used to take notes only; however, this privilege will be revoked if they are seen to be used for other activities (email/internet etc) during class discussion time.

Class Etiquette

The topics discussed in this course may be distressing to some, as we will be considering issues related to extreme illness and death and, in the case of HIV/AIDS, various forms of sexual behaviour. This is a co-educational seminar course, and you will be expected to participate in the discussion of these topics with other class members. If you are not certain you will be comfortable in this situation and able to participate fully in the course, you should talk to the Course Director before beginning the course, as this course may not be a good fit for you. Membership in the book clubs will be according to the book chosen, so it will be important to read the descriptions of the books carefully and refer to the reviews at on-line bookseller websites for more detailed descriptions.

There will be many areas in this course where cultural sensitivities and deeply held beliefs of class members may clash. I hope everyone will come with an open mind and a willingness to listen to other views non-judgmentally. Our goal is to gain a scientific understand of the medical and social consequences of human behaviours in the difficult and stressful circumstances of an epidemic, not to arrive at moral judgments. In today's world, an epidemic can occur anywhere at any time, including here (SARS demonstrated that) and my goal in this course is to have you prepared to interpret human behaviour in a calm and scientifically sound fashion should you be faced with such a circumstance in your own life.

Attendance Policy

Because this course is a seminar, its success depends on the presence and participation of all class members. Moreover, in the compressed summer format, you will have no chance of mastering the material if you do not attend class. Documented illness/emergency (see below) is an acceptable reason to miss a class; however, if you miss more than one week of classes during this course due to illness, you would be strongly advised to drop the course, as it is unlikely you will be able to complete the course on schedule. Several forms of evaluation will be based on your in-class activities, and failure to attend the classes in which these activities occur for non-acceptable reasons will result in a grade of 0 on any missed component.

If you miss a class because you are ill and provide an Attending Physician's Statement **within 48 hours**, you will be permitted to submit any written material that you missed within one week without penalty. The value of any missed group or in-class activity (e.g. book club group answers) will be added to the overall value of your final exam.

Attendance the last week of term (Week 6) is particularly important there will be no other opportunity to carry out activities scheduled on those days (Book Club final reports and 2 minute presentations). If you miss these due to documented illness/emergency, the value of these components will be added to your final exam.

** Documented illness/emergency – this includes an illness for which you have a valid dated, completed and signed Attending Physician's Statement proving that you were seen by the physician

within 24 hours before or after the missed class, and this must be received by the Course Director (email a scanned copy) within 48 hours of the missed class. An acceptable “emergency” would include the sudden illness or injury of your child, spouse or other close family member, or a family death. Other “emergencies” are at the discretion of the Course Director and documentation will be required. Acceptable absences would **not** include a planned family event, trip out of town, etc.

Academic Integrity for Students

York university takes academic integrity very seriously, please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#)

It is recommended that you review Academic Integrity by completing the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and [Academic Honesty Quiz](#)

Test Banks:

The offering for sale of, buying of, and attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers), or any course specific test questions/answers is not permitted in the Faculty of Health. Any student found to be doing this may be considered to have breached the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as “Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation” (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or “encouraging, enabling or causing others” (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

Electronic Devices During a Test/Examination:

Electronic mobile devices of any kind are not allowed during a test or examination. Students are required to turn off and secure any electronic mobile device in their bag which is to be placed under the chair while a test/exam is in progress. Any student observed with an electronic device during a test/exam may be reported to the Undergraduate Office for a potential breach of Academic Honesty.

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](#)

Course Materials Copyright Information:

These course materials are designed for use as part of the **HH/PSYC 4190 3.0** course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#)

Course Schedule:

Note that each week will have an assigned reading list for the classes (1-2 papers/chapters) and reading assignments of approximately 60-100 pages for the book clubs; these will all be posted on the course Moodle site. The Tuesday class and the first half of the Thursday class will be a combination of lecture, discussion of the readings, and selected films related to the week's topic.

Week 1 (June 20/22) - Introduction to the course and to epidemics
(everything you need to know about viruses)

Week 2 (June 27/29) HIV/AIDS in North America (1981-present)
Book club meeting #1 (Thursday)

Week 3 (July 4/6) HIV/AIDS in Africa (1995 - present)
Book club meeting #2 (Thursday)

Week 4 (July 11/13) Ebola in Africa (and beyond) 1976 – present
Book club meeting #3 (Thursday)

Week 5 (July 18/20) Zika virus in Brazil and beyond (2015 – present)
Book club meeting #4 (Thursday)

Week 6 (July 25/27) Putting it all together week –
Tuesday: 2 Minute Wrap-Ups; Review and preparation for final exam
Thursday: Book Club finale - Summary and review of books by book clubs to whole class

Final Exam: The final exam period is August 2 – 11. The date of our exam will be announced as soon as it is known.

Book Club choices:

Below is a brief description of the four books on the Book Club list. You will join a group that will read and discuss one of these books. **DO NOT BUY A BOOK UNTIL AFTER THE FIRST CLASS.** A book will only be used if there are enough people interested in reading it to form a book club group (minimum 3).

Each of these books is available on-line in electronic form from [Chapters-Indigo](#) (CI)(Kobo) and/or [Amazon](#) (AZ) (Kindle); paperbacks are also available for most books but they may not have rapid delivery dates so check carefully before purchasing on-line. Some are available in certain Chapters or Indigo stores in Toronto (check their website). The York Bookstore will have a small number of copies of each book. Some books are available through the York Library (YUL) or the Toronto Public Library (TPL), but you will need the book for the entire 6 weeks of the course, so this should be a back-up only. You are strongly advised to look up each book on Amazon, and read the publisher's summary and some of the reader reviews. In some cases, you will be able to see sample portions of the book. Not everyone will enjoy or be comfortable with all of these books. The content will be discussed in detail in the first class before you commit to a particular Book Club.

(1) There is no me without you: one woman's odyssey to rescue Africa's children (2006)

Melissa Fay Green (author)

This book provides a view of HIV/AIDS as it affected communities in Africa, in this case specifically in Ethiopia. The author is an American, so this is to some degree, an outsider's view of the developing orphan crisis that resulted from the AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa

AZ (Kindle, paperback), CI (Kobo, paperback), TPL

(2) No time to lose: a life in pursuit of deadly viruses (2012)

Peter Piot (author)

For those who find the scientific side of epidemics more intriguing than the patient experience, this is the autobiography of the scientist who was part of the team who first identified Ebola virus. He later went on to work on AIDS and became founding director of UNAIDS, the United Nations group specifically tasked with organizing the international response to HIV/AIDS. Provides a lot of insights into the politics behind international health organizations.

AM (Kindle, paperback), CI (Kobo, paperback), YUL (Steacie), TPL (book and eBook)

(3) And the Band Played On (1986; republished 2007 – 20th anniversary edition)

Randy Schiltz (author)

The most famous book ever written about the AIDS epidemic in America. The author was a journalist in San Francisco who reported on the growing epidemic of HIV/AIDS among gay men in America beginning in 1981, before HIV had been discovered. It reads like a novel but is in fact a journalistic account of events that happened over the period 1980- 1986. Schiltz succumbed to

AIDS himself in the early 1990's. This book is not for those who do not want to be exposed to very graphic descriptions of sexual encounters in the 1980's gay scene; it is very explicit and may make some readers uncomfortable. Like any book written over 30 years ago, it is dated and some things reported by Shiltz would now be described differently or viewed in a different light based on more recent events. However, as a first hand account of living inside this epidemic, this book is the best one out there. It is the longest book on the list; you will only be required to read about half of it, but you will likely read to the end after the course, if you don't get through it in the 6 weeks of the course.

AZ (Kindle, paperback), IC (paperback), YUL (Scott), TPL (book and eBook)

(4) My own country (1995)

Abraham Verghese (author)

Another first-hand account of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in America in the 1980's and 1990's, this one told by a physician. Verghese, who grew up in Ethiopia and studied in India, went to rural USA (eastern Tennessee) as a physician in the mid 1980's. When HIV/AIDS arrived, Verghese became the local "AIDS doctor". His story of the wide range of patients he treated from all walks of life, the attitudes (good and bad) he encountered, the stigma that surrounded the disease in this community, and his reflections on his own experience as a doctor and as an "outsider" (from the perspective of the local population) provides a very valuable perspective on this period in North American life. The book does contain medical descriptions of sexual diseases and other medical conditions that may not be for the squeamish, but if you are interested in patient-physician relationships, this is an excellent book.

AZ (Kindle, paperback), IC (Kobo, paperback), TPL (eBook)