Faculty of Health
Department of Psychology
PSYC 4370 3.0: CURRENT ISSUES IN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY
Wed/2:30-5:30/BSB 204
Winter/2020

Instructor and T.A. Information
Instructor: Joel Katz
Office: BSB 232
Office Phone: 736-2100, x40557
Office Hours: Weds 12-2PM
Email: jkatz@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 2240 3.00 (Biological Basis of Behaviour)
- HH/PSYC 3170 3.00 (Health Psychology)
- Must be in a Specialized Honours program in Psychology and have completed at least 84 credits; excluding (EDUC) education courses.

Course Credit Exclusions
Please refer to York Courses Website for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

Course website: Moodle

Course Description
This is an integrated graduate (PSYC 6455/KAHS 6143) - undergraduate (PSYC 4370) seminar course. It’s designed to provide an overview of selected topics in clinical and hospital-based health psychology. It is intended to introduce advanced undergraduate students to some of the current theoretical and practical issues in the field of health psychology through readings, class discussion, reflections, presentations, and online multimedia resources. The course will highlight the role of psychological, social, emotional, and behavioral factors in the prevention, etiology, and maintenance of physical and mental conditions.

Program Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

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

Specific Learning Objectives

The objectives of the course are to engage students so that they can:

- Critique specific theories in health psychology which provide a conceptual framework for understanding health-compromising and health-enhancing behaviour (e.g., Health Belief Model, Theory of Reasoned Action, Theory of Planned Behavior, Reactance Theory, Transtheoretical Model of Health Behavior Change).
- Evaluate and explain the ways in which psychological and emotional factors are involved in the prevention, etiology, and maintenance of common conditions and diseases such as chronic pain, heart disease, cancer, eating disorders.
- Identify and describe several fascinating mind-body connections including phantom limbs, phantom limb pain, placebo analgesia, and the placebo response, as well explain as the mechanisms underlying their experience.
- Critically evaluate current evidence and theory in health psychology related to preventive and therapeutic interventions for a variety of chronic diseases and conditions as well as addictive behaviours in which health-compromising and health-enhancing behaviours play a role.
- Apply critical thinking skills to published research in health psychology in order to evaluate the methodological quality, limitations, and conclusions that can reasonably be drawn.

Develop and practice public speaking/presentation skills necessary to convey scientific material in a clear, concise, well-organized, and professional manner.

Required Text

A weekly reading list is presented at the end of this document.

Course Requirements and Assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Date of Evaluation (if known)</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>Each class</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written reflection 1</td>
<td>Feb. 5, 2020</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>March 4 – April 1, 2020</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term paper</td>
<td>April 3, 2020</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written reflection 2</td>
<td>April 3, 2020</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Description of Assignments

Grades will be determined on the basis of four assignments plus attendance and participation as described below.

1. Attendance and Participation

Undergraduate students – 15%

Attendance and participation will be graded for each class (except the first) according to a 0-4 marking template/rubric which will be presented and described in the first class. The following rubric will be used and applied relative to the student’s level (Expectations for undergraduate students will be lower than for graduate students). Briefly, a grade of 0 is assigned if the student is absent, 1 if the student responds when asked to but doesn’t provide much of a response or is “off-base” and if the student doesn’t spontaneously contribute to class discussions; 2 if the student is adequately prepared for class, responds without much elaboration, generally does not spontaneously join in in class discussions; 3 if the student shows a good to very good understanding when engaged, contributes consistently and positively to class discussions, and generally shows active engagement with the topic and peers; 4 if the student shows excellent/outstanding preparation and understanding of class material and discussions, spontaneously and frequently joins in class discussions (without monopolizing), offers constructive feedback/responses to peers, and produces thoughtful, novel, and interesting ideas.

2. Written Reflections

Undergraduate students – 20%

a. Reflections on an Interview with a health psychologist. At the first class, students will be provided with a list of hospital- or community-based health psychologists who have agreed to be interviewed. Students will contact the psychologist of their choice and arrange a time to meet in person, by telephone or video call (Skype, FaceTime, Google Duo). Students will decide on the structure and content of the interview with help from the course instructor and will write a 2-3-page narrative/reflection on the interview.

b. Process Reflection on their Class Presentation. At the end of the course, students will be required to hand in a 2-3-page process reflection assignment reflecting upon what they learned from the process of presenting during the class. Possible topics to address include how their expectations of the presentation fit with the actual experience of presenting (did it go as expected, did anything unexpected occur and if so how did they handle it?); what they did that was effective/ineffective; aspects of the experience that were most challenging/difficult/easy; personal qualities that made the presentation more or less successful; whether and in what way their peers enhanced/diminished the experience, would they do it again and if so why and what they would change; and if not, why not?; what if anything they learned about themselves as a result of the presentation. Note that this assignment is not about cognitive reflection (i.e., content learning) but what they learned in the process of public speaking. Each written reflection is worth 10%.
3. Oral Presentation

Undergraduate students – 20%

This assignment involves leading a seminar on a topic chosen from a pre-selected list provided by the instructor. The student will be responsible for (i) presenting an overview of the topic of choice including a review of theoretical developments and recent empirical literature and (ii) leading the class in a discussion. Students responsible for the seminar may choose their own readings in consultation with the instructor. Students are expected to (i) select a topic and a date to lead the seminar by the second class, (ii) meet with the instructor at least one week before the presentation date to review progress and an outline and (iii) prepare a handout describing the aims and objectives of their session, summarizing briefly the content of the presentation and listing discussion points.

The presentation is to be 20-25 minutes in duration. Students will be graded on theoretical developments and empirical literature covered (5%), quality of slides (5%), leading class discussion (5%), class handout (5%).

Term Paper

Undergraduate students – 45%

The term paper is to be on a topic of the students’ choice related to material covered in the course and selected from a pre-determined list. Students may select a topic not on the list after consultation with and approval from the course instructor. The term paper is to be on a topic unrelated to the student’s presentation and is due on the last day of classes. The paper should follow the guidelines for formatting and referencing outlined in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition). Students are expected to meet with the instructor to discuss the topic of their paper and to submit an outline of the paper for feedback.

For undergraduate students, the term paper should be 10 typed, double-spaced pages excluding references.

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 89, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - Grading Scheme for 2019-20
**Missed Tests/Midterm Exams/Late Assignment:**

For any missed tests, midterm exam 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 48 hours of the original deadline will result in a grade of zero for the missed tests, midterm exam or late assignments.

In addition, to the online form, students documented reason for a missed tests, midterm exam or late assignments such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., MUST submit official documentation (e.g. Attending Physician Statement)

**Add/Drop Deadlines**

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Fall/Winter 2019-20 - Important Dates](#)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>FALL  (F)</th>
<th>YEAR  (Y)</th>
<th>WINTER (W)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)</td>
<td>Sept. 17</td>
<td>Sept. 17</td>
<td>Jan. 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)</td>
<td>Oct. 1</td>
<td>Oct. 22</td>
<td>Feb. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)</td>
<td>Nov. 8</td>
<td>Feb. 3</td>
<td>March 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of “W” on transcript – see note below)</td>
<td>Nov. 9 - Dec. 3</td>
<td>Feb. 4 - Apr. 5</td>
<td>March 14 - Apr. 5</td>
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*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**

Written assignments will be submitted to plagiarism detection software.

**Electronic Device Policy**

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance and participation will be graded for each class (except the first) according to a 0-4 marking template/rubric which will be presented and described in the first class. The following rubric will be used and applied relative to the student’s level (Expectations for undergraduate students will be lower than for graduate students). Briefly, a grade of 0 is assigned if the student is absent, 1 if the student responds when asked to but doesn’t provide much of a response or is
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**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 information [SPARK Academic Integrity modules](#). These modules explain principles of academic honesty.

**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 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**

**CURRENT ISSUES IN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY**  
**PSYC 4370 3.0**  
**WINTER 2020**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter/Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 8</td>
<td>Introduction: History and evolving status of Health Psychology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Jan. 15</td>
<td>Health belief models and theories of health behaviour change</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jan. 22</td>
<td>Phantom limbs and phantom limb pain: Prototypical examples of the mind-body connection</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Jan. 29</td>
<td>Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for chronic health conditions</td>
<td><strong>Dr. Aliza Weinrib</strong>, Psychologist, Transitional Pain Service, Department of Anesthesia and Pain Management, Toronto General Hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Feb. 5</td>
<td>Yoga for chronic health conditions – psychological and emotion effects</td>
<td><strong>Dr. Kathryn Curtis</strong>, Postdoctoral Fellow &amp; Psychologist, Transitional Pain Service Department of Anesthesia &amp; Pain Management, Toronto General Hospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feb. 12</td>
<td>Health psychology in a hospital oncology setting: Psychosocial approaches to diagnosis and management across the disease trajectory</td>
<td><strong>Dr. Andrew Matthew</strong>, Prostate Cancer Prevention Clinic, Princess Margaret Hospital</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feb. 19</td>
<td>Co-Curricular Week – No Classes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Feb. 26</td>
<td>Effects of social isolation on health and wellbeing</td>
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**Dr. Sander Hitzig**, Scientist, Sunnybrook Health Science Centre, St. John's Rehab

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>March 4</td>
<td>Student presentations and discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>March 11</td>
<td>Student presentations and discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>March 18</td>
<td>Student presentations and discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>March 25</td>
<td>Student presentations and discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>April 1</td>
<td>Student presentations and discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF WEEKLY TOPICS AND READINGS


## Jan. 15, 2020

### WEEK 2 - Health Belief Models and Theories of Health Behaviour Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### Additional Readings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Jan. 22, 2020

WEEK 3 – (a) Pain: mechanisms and management

(b) Phantom limbs and phantom limb pain: Prototypical examples of the mind-body connection


   [https://f1000research.com/articles/8-1167/v1](https://f1000research.com/articles/8-1167/v1)


### Additional Readings:


   [https://vimeo.com/88634321](https://vimeo.com/88634321)


**WEEK 4 - Dr. Aliza Weinrib - Acceptance and Commitment Therapy for chronic health conditions**


**Additional Reading**


**Feb. 5, 2020**

**WEEK 5 – Dr. Kathryn Curtis - Yoga for chronic health conditions – psychological and emotional effects**


Additional Readings:


Feb. 12, 2020

**WEEK 6 - Dr. Andrew Matthew - Health psychology in a hospital oncology setting:**

*Psychosocial approaches to diagnosis and management across the disease trajectory*


Additional Readings


**Feb. 19, 2020 - Reading Week – no classes**

**Feb. 26, 2020**

**WEEK 8 – Dr. Sander Hitzig - Effects of social isolation on health and wellbeing**


**Additional Readings:**


**March 4, 2020**

**WEEK 9 – Student Presentations – Topics and Readings to be Assigned**

**March 11, 2020**

**WEEK 10 – Student Presentations – Topics and Readings to be Assigned**

**March 18, 2020**

**WEEK 11 – Student Presentations – Topics and Readings to be Assigned**

**March 25, 2020**

**WEEK 12 – Student Presentations – Topics and Readings to be Assigned**

**April 1, 2020**
WEEK 13 – Student Presentations – Topics and Readings to be Assigned