

**Topics in Psychology (PSY 4900)**  
**Health Psychology Seminar**  
Fall 2011  
TR 9:00 - 10:15 AM  
SS 347

**Professor's Name:** Dr. Lauren Fowler

**Professor's e-mail:** LFOWLER@WEBER.EDU

\*\*(This is BY FAR the best way to contact me)

**Professor's Office Phone:** 801-626-7620

**Office Hours:** MWF 9 - 9:30 AM, also by appointment

**Office Location:** SS 368

**Class Web Site:** <http://www.canvas.weber.edu/>

**Note:** As a seminar course, our class time is devoted to *informed* and *educated* discussion. A heavy emphasis is placed on reading and thinking about the material prior to each class session.

**I. Textbook:**

- a. Sapolsky, R. (2006). *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers*.
- b. Supplemental materials will be available through the course website and through e-reserve at the library.

**II. Canvas - the Course Website**

You are required to become familiar with and use the course website via Canvas: <https://www.canvas.weber.edu/> I will post documents on this site (e.g. copy of syllabus, powerpoint files, assignments, etc.) and will occasionally email students with announcements. Many of your readings will be posted here. For technical issues (e.g. having difficulties accessing Canvas or downloading a document) contact computer support by: a) calling 626-7777, or b) emailing [csupport@weber.edu](mailto:csupport@weber.edu), or, c) go to Lampros Hall and ask for assistance.

**III. Course Overview**

This course will focus on the psychological and physiological aspects of health, including the basic physiological systems involved in the stress response, regulatory behaviors, nutrition, exercise, addictive behaviors, chronic illness, prevention, and methods of changing related behaviors. Research shows that stress is one of the most frequently attributed causes of illness. In addition, the scientific community is rapidly adopting biopsychosocial models of health and illness to replace the traditional biomedical model. This interdisciplinary approach has all but extinguished mind-body dualism in its search for mechanisms of interaction between biological and behavioral systems that relate stressful situations to illness.

This course will offer opportunities for students to develop new ways to integrate theory and research on stress and illness with advances in the science of health and wellness. Students will apply their knowledge through exams, projects, and presentations. Active self-assessment of health will be a learning tool for this course.

#### **IV. Course Grade**

There will be three main forms of assessment: Examinations, weekly activities, and a final project.

##### **A. Examinations (30% of final grade):**

Students will be assessed on the preliminary content covered through lecture during the first 7 weeks of class. The exam will be given Oct 12 - 15<sup>th</sup> in the Social Sciences Testing Center. This exam will primarily cover material from the first 7 chapters of your text, but some additional readings will be provided. Students will also have a final exam (December 2<sup>nd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup>), which will be comprehensive. Exam 1 is worth 20%, while the Final Exam is worth 10%.

##### **B. Weekly Activities (40% of final grade):**

1. Class Participation (20%): A large part of this class is participation on a daily basis. You will be graded based on the quality and the quantity of participation. You will receive full credit unless I tell you in advance that you are in danger of losing credit. You will lose credit for not participating on a weekly basis, early departures and late arrivals, or repeated absences. This class is a small class, and we depend on everyone participating to help with learning. Evidence of being prepared for class (i.e. doing the reading before class) is expected.
2. Discussion Leader/Presentation (20%): After we cover selected content to build a basis of knowledge, students will take over the presentation of materials to the class. From October 18<sup>th</sup> - November 3<sup>rd</sup>, individual students will become discussion leaders for topics covered in class. Dr. Fowler will provide some readings and topics, and students will develop a list of additional readings and questions to be addressed by the class. Then individual students will have a class period to be discussion leader for those topics. More information will be

provided about this assignment, and a list of possible broad topics to cover will also be provided.

**C. Final Project (30% of final grade)**

Students will work on an individual project that will be the culmination of their knowledge gained through this class. They will incorporate information learned from the first 12 weeks of class and apply it to a specific topic associated with health psychology. Topics must be approved no later than October 27<sup>th</sup>. Student projects will be assessed based on the following:

1. Written Paper (20%): Students will write a research paper in APA style that reflects their review of the literature and the incorporation of information learned throughout the semester. First drafts of the papers are due no later than November 10<sup>th</sup>, and final drafts are due November 29<sup>th</sup>. More information on this paper will be provided on a separate handout.
2. Presentation (10%): Students will present their final projects to the class in a presentation during the last few weeks of the course (November 8<sup>th</sup> - December 1<sup>st</sup>). More information on the presentations will be provided on a separate handout.

**E. Grading Scale**

The course grade will be assigned according to the scale indicated below:

<u>Numeric Score</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>
90-100	A
80-89	B
75-79	C
Below 75	E

**V. Course Outline:**

**Unit 1 Material:**

Chapters 1 - 6 from Sapolsky text. Additional readings will be provided. Traditional lecture format.

Assessment: Exam (Oct 12<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>) and class participation

## Unit 2 Material

General topics covered through discussion in class. Readings, questions, discussions, and topics will be selected by discussion group leaders.

Assessment: Discussion leader/presentations and class participation (October 18<sup>th</sup> - November 3<sup>rd</sup>)

## Unit 3 Material

Specific topics presented to class by individual presenters. Topics, presentations, and readings will be selected by presentation leader.

Assessment: Class presentations (November 8<sup>th</sup> - December 1<sup>st</sup>) and final papers (November 29<sup>th</sup>)

## VI. Additional Information

### A. Attendance

Attendance is required for this class and will be monitored. Students will not be penalized for missing 3 of the class sessions. **\*\*IF you miss class, there are two things you can do to get the material you missed. You may look on Blackboard for the relevant articles, and/or you may get notes from a classmate. DO NOT not email me or come to my office to ask what you missed.** It is your responsibility to attend class or, if you cannot, contact a classmate to catch up. Please DO email me or come to my office for any other purpose if you think I can be of help. If you miss more than 3 of the scheduled classes, or if you consistently arrive late or leave early, or if you miss a class for which you are the discussion leader, your grade will be penalized.

### B. Class Courtesy

Please be courteous of others when coming late to or leaving early from class. Do not make a habit of arriving late or leaving early as many (including me) find it very distracting. The following behaviors are rude when they take place during class time: a) holding private conversations, b) sleeping, c) reading other material, or d) doing other work. Eating and drinking in class may be permitted, so long as it is not disruptive to the learning environment.

**\*\*POLICY FOR ELECTRONIC DEVICES: ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES ARE TO BE OFF AND OUT OF SIGHT/REACH DURING CLASS AND**

**TESTS.** Any disruptive behavior will be addressed immediately, and if the behavior does not cease, you will be asked to leave class. **Students repeatedly engaging in rude behavior will be counseled to drop the course.**

### **C. Grade Appeals**

If, after receiving an exam back during class, you think a mistake has been made in the grading of your work, please do not ask about this during class. Write/type down on a sheet of paper what your questions are, provide reference to notes in class or specific pages from the book, and turn in these questions to the instructor at the end of the class period. You will receive a response, and any grade adjustment necessary, within one week. **THIS IS THE ONLY WAY** that your concerns will be addressed. **ONLY** written questions and comments **THAT YOU SUPPORT** will be evaluated.

### **D. Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism/Cheating**

I encourage students to work and study together whenever possible. **However, students must hand in their own work.** Whenever you try to pass off someone's work that is not your own, that is cheating. If you cheat on ANY assignment, you will receive a grade of **E (Failing) for the course.** Plagiarism is when you represent someone else's ideas or words as your own. For a very detailed description of plagiarism, please go to the class web site and review the **PLAGIARISM** description in the **HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM** document. You are responsible for knowing what constitutes plagiarism. ANY plagiarism (even unintentional) will result in a failing grade in the course. Please refer to the following web site for a complete listing of infringements that constitute cheating:  
<http://documents.weber.edu/ppm/6-22.htm>.

### **E. Completing all Work**

All assignments must be completed in order for students to pass the course. **Students will receive a grade of UW (unofficial withdrawal) if any work is missing when the final grades are computed.**

### **F. Students with Disabilities**

Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary.

#### **G. Students' Rights and Responsibilities**

Please refer to the following web site for a complete listing of all WSU student rights and responsibilities:

<http://documents.weber.edu/ppm/6-22.htm>

**\*\*The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. By continuing in the course after reading the syllabus, you are indicating that you accept the terms of the syllabus.**