



South Central College

PSYC 220 Health Psychology

Course Outcome Summary

Course Information

Description Health psychology is a subfield of psychology that addresses the mental, emotional, behavioral, and societal factors that influence the onset, duration, recovery, and prevention of illness and the promotion of wellness. Students will explore the theoretical foundations of health psychology and the role of psychological research and principles relevant to the field. Students will be exposed to a variety of topics including stress and coping, preventative behaviors and attitudes, treatment options, and management of pain and illness. Students will gain an understanding of the academic issues and a respect for the human experience related to health, illness, and disease. (MNTC 5: History/Social & Behavioral Sciences) Prerequisite: PSYC100 or consent of instructor

Total Credits 4

Pre/Corequisites

PSYC100 or consent of instructor.

Institutional Core Competencies

Communication - Students will be able to demonstrate appropriate and effective interactions with others to achieve their personal, academic, and professional objectives.

Course Competencies

- 1. Develop an understanding of the historical and theoretical foundations that comprise the field of health psychology and demonstrate the ability to explain how and why the field emerged.**

Learning Objectives

Explore the historical foundation of health psychology and how it emerged as its own field of study.
Review theoretical and scientific models used in health psychology including the biopsychosocial model.

- 2. Identify the role of psychological research and principles and apply research methods relevant to the field of health psychology.**

Learning Objectives

Explore research designs and methods typically used in health psychology to develop new knowledge as well as to evaluate and assess health-related programs and practices.
Review key research studies and critically evaluate the quality and value of existing and emerging psychological research related to health and illness.
Discover and apply core psychological principles to behavioral, cognitive, and social issues related to health and illness.

Articulate the code of ethics used in conducting psychological research.

Apply research methods, psychological principles, and key research findings by preparing a formal research project that adheres to the formatting expectations of the American Psychological Association.

3. Explore the relationship between culture and gender and health.

Learning Objectives

Consider the field of health psychology within the contexts of gender and race/ethnicity.
Examine the relationship between health and social inequity.

4. Summarize the biological systems and processes that affect health, including the nervous, endocrine, cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive, immune, and reproductive systems.

Learning Objectives

Categorize the key features and roles of key biological systems (nervous, endocrine, cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive, immune, and reproductive).

Explore disorders related to key biological systems (nervous, endocrine, cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive, immune, and reproductive) and the short- and long-term impact on physical and mental health.

5. Identify the physiological and psychological sources of stress, the stress response, and the coping mechanisms used to manage stress.

Learning Objectives

Define stress and explore the key physiological, psychological, and societal causes of stress.

Detail the short-term and long-term physiological and psychological impact of stress.

Review and evaluate examples of coping mechanisms used to manage stress including the role of social support and formal stress management programs.

6. Demonstrate an understanding of the cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors that compromise health and increase the likelihood of illness and disease.

Learning Objectives

Describe how basic psychological principles (e.g., operant conditioning) explain and impact negative health attitudes and behavioral change.

Review common disorders, addictions, and other behavior patterns that compromise health, such as eating disorders, obesity, smoking, substance abuse, and risk-taking behavior.

Detail the cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences that lead to problem health behaviors.

Explore the short- and long-term impact of problem health behaviors.

Review and critique existing approaches and generate new solutions for preventing or minimizing problem health behaviors.

7. Exhibit an understanding of the cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors that prevent illness and disease and promote health.

Learning Objectives

Describe how basic psychological principles (e.g., operant conditioning) explain and impact positive health attitudes and behavioral change.

Review and evaluate the theoretical and applied psychological approaches used to promote positive health behaviors.

Explore current approaches used to impact positive health behaviors and/or prevent negative health behaviors, such as accident prevention, healthy eating habits, weight control, and professional help.

Review and critique existing approaches and generate new solutions for preventing or minimizing problem health behaviors.

8. Demonstrate an understanding of the issues surrounding the patient in the treatment setting.

Learning Objectives

Review the key features and primary functions of traditional medical treatment options such as hospital services.

Explore the nature of patient-provider relations.

9. Identify the issues surrounding pain and pain management.

Learning Objectives

Explore the nature of pain including how pain is measured, its physiology, and psychosocial issues.

Examine and critique techniques employed to manage acute and chronic pain.

10. Exhibit an understanding of the issue surrounding the management of chronic and terminal illness.

Learning Objectives

Detail issues related to chronic illness including quality of life, emotional responses, coping mechanisms, and psychological interventions.

Summarize the risk factors, treatment options, and coping mechanisms of specific chronic and terminal illnesses such as diabetes, cancer, and HIV/AIDS.

Explore the issues related to death across the lifespan, psychological issues of advancing illness, care for the terminally ill, and experiences of the bereaved.

11. Explore alternative forms of medical treatment.

Learning Objectives

Examine the meaning of alternative medicine and explore its use across time.

Explore various forms of alternative medicine.

Analyze the effectiveness of alternative medicine.

12. Explore the future of health psychology including trends and challenges.

Learning Objectives

Review current research, practices, and trends in health psychology.

Determine major challenges related to health and illness and consider how to address issues utilizing research and practices developed in the field of health psychology.

SCC Accessibility Statement

South Central College strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you have a disability and need accommodations for access to this class, contact the Academic Support Center to request and discuss accommodations. North Mankato: Room B-132, (507) 389-7222; Faribault: Room A-116, (507) 332-7222.

Additional information and forms can be found at: www.southcentral.edu/disability

This material can be made available in alternative formats by contacting the Academic Support Center at 507-389-7222.