**Course Description:**

Health psychology focuses on the relationship between behavior, health, and illness while trying to identify the predictors of health-compromising and health-enhancing factors. Through a dual focus on healthcare and psychology, students will examine illness identities in the national context. Special emphasis will be placed on cultural differences related to body image, quality of life, self-help, religious beliefs, alternative medicine, and rituals related to dying and death. Through an examination of the relevant literature, guest lectures and site visits, the course addresses philosophical questions about the perceptions and definitions of what it means to be ‘healthy’ or ‘unhealthy’ within the national context.

**Learning Objectives**

By completing the course students will:

- Evaluate the relationship between behavior, health and illness
- Examine the developments in behavioral patterns in relation to health over time and in various cultures, and in various ethnic and socio-economic groups in national society.
- Critically analyze the regional and national ways of targeting unhealthy lifestyle (diet, smoking, drugs etc): insight in the role of preventative medicine
- Demonstrate the effectiveness of psychological interventions for health promotion
- Appraise the non-rational, emotional side of coping with health and disease and the demand for alternatives for rational Western medicine: (religious) rituals, complementary medicine and self-help.

**Course Prerequisites**

Students should have completed a semester course in health studies, psychology, sociology, or medical anthropology.

**Methods of Instruction**
This course utilizes a number of teaching modes in order to engage students in the complex discussions surrounding healthcare and psychology. These will include interactive lectures, small group discussions on specific case studies, such as the complex role of clinical psychologists versus the patient, guest lectures on the different approaches to Health Psychology, as well as written assignments. Course readings and audiovisual material will also be utilized in conjunction with site visits in London will be used to augment the learning experience.

Assessment and Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Item</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual Presentation*</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Lifestyle websites (x 2)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervention design** (Group project)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper***</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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NB: Please note that students are expected to keep copies of their work. **Software and/or hardware issues are not acceptable excuses for non-submission OR late submission.**

Course Requirements

Presentations (weeks 2, 3 and 4):
Students will conduct a 15-minute individual presentation on one of the themes discussed. They may use other audio visual equipment such as a film if preferred.

Health Lifestyle websites (x 2 during weeks 2 and 4):
Students will choose two websites which promote healthy lifestyles where they will write a response to the aims of the website. Students will specifically address how health psychology, such as theories of how people understand their own health needs and how they behave, can allow us to analyse these websites.

Intervention Design (Group project in weeks 5 and 6):
In small groups, students will design an intervention campaign. The campaign must utilize theories of health behaviour and address specific health behaviours (e.g. smoking cessation, substance abuse or over exercising etc.). This assignment will be graded based on the design of the final intervention, how well the group performs as a group and the use and choice of health psychology theories.

Final Paper
A 2000-word final paper is required. This paper must be an in depth analysis of one of the topics discussed in class. All papers are research papers and must therefore have proper annotation.

**Participation:**
Participation is valued as meaningful contribution in the digital and tangible classroom, utilizing the resources and materials presented to students as part of the course. Meaningful contribution requires students to be prepared in advance of each class session and to have regular attendance. Students must clearly demonstrate they have engaged with the materials as directed, for example, through classroom discussions, online discussion boards, peer-to-peer feedback (after presentations), interaction with guest speakers, and attentiveness on co-curricular and outside-of-classroom activities.

**Attendance Policy**

Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and all unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade for any affected CIEE course. Due to the intensive schedules for Open Campus and Short Term programs, unexcused absences that constitute more than 10% of the total course will result in a written warning.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

For CIEE classes, excessively tardy (over 15 minutes late) students must be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event, as well as to Internship, Service Learning, or required field placement. Students who miss class for personal travel, including unforeseen delays that arise as a result of personal travel, will be marked as absent and unexcused. No make-up or re-sit opportunity will be provided.

Attendance policies also apply to any required class excursion, with the exception that some class excursions cannot accommodate any tardiness, and students risk being marked as absent if they fail to be present at the appointed time.

Unexcused absences will lead to the following penalties:
### Weekly Schedule:

#### Week 1

**Introduction to Health Psychology**
In this introductory session we will provide an overview of the course content and the requirements during different weeks of the program. We will then introduce the field of health psychology. How do you define health and illness? Why is psychology relevant to broader definitions of health? How does the biomedical model compare to a biopsychosocial approach? We will discuss these and other important issues in this scientific field.

**Readings:** Rosenberg 1992, Ogden 2012, Wedding 2006

#### Week 2

**Class 2.1**

**Health Psychology Models and Health Lifestyle Websites**
We will introduce the main models and frameworks used to understand health behaviours in the field of health psychology. We will discuss the potential strengths and weaknesses of these models in the context of social and cultural understandings of health, behaviour and illness.

**Class 2.2**
We will provide details and discuss the health websites that will be relevant for the assignment. This week we will go on our first field visit to the Gordon museum of Pathology, which is the largest museum dedicated to the study of pathology in the UK.
Site Visit: Gordon Museum of Pathology (King’s College, London)

Assignments:
Analysis of Health Lifestyle website 1

Week 3
Class 3.1
Psychological Interventions in Health Behaviour and Illness
This week focuses on major public health challenges and health behaviour change with reference to some of the models of health psychology covered in Week 2. We will specifically focus on obesity and physical activity and look at attempts at intervention in this area.


Class 3.2
Assignments: Individual presentations

Week 4
Class 4.1
Adherence to Medication
We will discuss the missing link between effective healthcare treatments and optimal health outcomes. Non-adherence to medication and treatment plans is very common and is a major health as well as economic concern. This lecture will discuss research in this area making reference to some health psychology models.


Class 4.2
Site Visit: Wellcome Collection (Euston Road).
Assignments:
Analysis of Health Lifestyle website 2 (due Friday by 6pm)

Week 5
Class 5.1
Models of Stress and Psychobiology
Stress can mean different things to different people and as a concept it is not easy to define. We will look at the history of stress research and the models in this area. We will also explore how stress can impact physical health and how we can measure stress.


Class 5.2
Guest Speaker: In psychobiology
Assignments: Health Intervention Campaign (in class)

Week 6
Class 6.1

Emotions, Health and Wellbeing and Sleep Research

This week we will look at the body-mind association and investigate the role of emotions in physical and mental health. Coping and social support are key moderators in this relationship. This ties into the Week 5 lectures on the underlying psychobiological mechanisms of stress. Different intervention modalities will be discussed that have been shown to be effective for psychological health outcomes. A guest lecturer will deliver a lecture on sleep and health.


Class 6.2

Guest Speaker: Sleep research
Assignments: Health Intervention Campaign (in class)

Textbook:


Required Readings:


**Online Resources:**


http://journals.sagepub.com/home/hpq