

**Faculty of Health  
Department of Psychology  
PSYC 4370 3.0N: CURRENT ISSUES IN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY  
Wednesday/2:30-5:30/ Online via Zoom  
Winter term/2022**

---

**This course will be delivered by Zoom, synchronously, every Wednesday at 2:30 – 5:30 PM from Jan. 12, 2022 to April 6, 2022. This is a “live” integrated undergraduate and graduate seminar consisting of no more than 5 upper level psychology undergraduate students, 5 graduate students from the School of Kinesiology & Health Science, and 5 graduate students from the Department of Psychology. Lectures will be delivered synchronously by Prof. Katz and invited guests. Attendance and participation are expected each week and marks will be assigned for both of these activities.**

**Instructor and T.A. Information**

Instructor: Prof. Joel Katz

Office Hours: Flexible. Please email Prof. Katz to set up a Zoom meeting or phone call to discuss course related matters.

Email: [jkatz@yorku.ca](mailto: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: [eClass](#)**

Relevant course materials will be available on the course eClass site, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Relevant materials will also be made available during the class through Zoom file sharing.

**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's 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 multi-media 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.
6. Engage in evidence-based dialogue with course director and peers.
7. Demonstrate an ability to work with others.

### **Specific Learning Objectives**

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

1. Critique specific theories in health psychology which provide a conceptual framework for understanding health-compromising and health-enhancing behaviour.
2. 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.
3. Identify and describe several fascinating mind-body connections including phantom limbs, phantom limb pain, placebo analgesia, and the placebo response, as well explain some of the mechanisms underlying their experience.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. Develop and practice public speaking/presentation skills necessary to convey scientific material in a clear, concise, well-organized, and professional manner.

### **Required Text**

There is no required textbook for this course. In the first class, students will be provided with a comprehensive list of textbooks and other core literature in health psychology. Also provided will be required readings for each week, almost all of which are freely-available as open access articles including links to the URLs where the readings can be found.

## Course Requirements and Assessment:

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weighting
Attendance and Participation	April 13, 2022	15%
Written reflection 1	Feb. 16, 2022	10%
Oral presentation	March 9 – April 6, 2022	20%
Term paper	April 13, 2022	45%
Written relection 2	April 13, 2022	10%
<b>Total</b>		<b>100%</b>

## 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 virtually or by phone. Students will decide on the structure and content of the interview with help from the course instructor and will write a 2-3-page, double-spaced, narrative/reflection on the interview. Many websites can be found describing how to write a reflection paper. The 1st written reflection is worth 10%.

- b. **Process Reflection on their Class Presentation.** At the end of the course, students will be required to hand in a 2-3-page, double-spaced, process reflection reflecting upon what they learned from the process of formally presenting to 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. The 2nd 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%).

### **4. 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.

## Class Format and Attendance Policy

Attendance is essential. 15% of the total grade is based on student attendance and participation.

## 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 2021-22](#)

## Missed Tests/Midterm Exams/Late Assignment

For any missed quiz or late assignment, students MUST complete the following online form which will be received and reviewed in the Psychology undergraduate office. At this time, due to COVID-19 an Attending Physician’s Statement (APS) is not required, however, a reason for missing an evaluated component in the course must be provided.

[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 quiz or late assignment.

***NOTE to instructors: We cannot request APS during the Summer due to COVID-19. We recommend you are explicit about penalties for missing a test/exam/assignment, or any other evaluated course component. If you know when you will provide a make-up test, outline it at this point so it is clear for students. In addition, if you have expectations or examples of what is a legitimate reason for missing a test, please provide examples.***

## Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Fall/Winter 2021-22 Important Dates](#)

	Fall (Term F)	Year (Term Y)	Winter (Term W)
Last date to add a course <b>without permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 21	Sept. 21	Jan. 23
Last date to add a course <b>with permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 5	Oct. 26	Feb. 7
Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 12	Feb. 11	18-Mar
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of “W” on transcript – see note below)	Nov. 13 - Dec. 7	Feb. 12 - April 10	March 19 - April 10

## **Add and Drop Deadline Information**

There are deadlines for adding and dropping courses, both academic and financial. Since, for the most part, the dates are **different**, be sure to read the information carefully so that you understand the differences between the sessional dates below and the [Refund Tables](#).

You are strongly advised to pay close attention to the "Last date to enrol without permission of course instructor" deadlines. These deadlines represent the last date students have unrestricted access to the registration and enrolment system.

After that date, you must contact the professor/department offering the course to arrange permission.

You can drop courses using the registration and enrolment system up until the last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (drop deadline).

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**

Term papers will be submitted to plagiarism detection software

## **Electronic Device Policy**

This course will be delivered in an online format and therefore electronic devices (e.g., tablets, laptops) are permitted during class time for course-related purposes.

## **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.

## **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 university encourages students with disabilities to register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors as necessary. Please let me know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course.

<https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>

### **Excerpt from Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**

1. Pursuant to its commitment to sustaining an inclusive, equitable community in which all members are treated with respect and dignity, and consistent with applicable accessibility legislation, York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. This policy aims to eliminate systemic barriers to participation in academic activities by students with disabilities.

All students are expected to satisfy the essential learning outcomes of courses. Accommodations shall be consistent with, support and preserve the academic integrity of the curriculum and the academic standards of courses and programs. 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 PSYC 4370 3.0 – Current Issues in Health Psychology 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**

To be provided on the first day of class, Wednesday, Jan. 12, 2022.