

PSY 4960, Advanced Seminar in Health Psychology, Fall 2007

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Class meets: 2:15 pm - 3:55 pm, Mon. and Fri., IH-202

The goal of the UMM undergraduate major in psychology is to *foster understanding of and the ability to apply the scientific method to the problems of the behavioral sciences and of individual and social human behavior by providing students with basic methods, logical skills and practice in applying them and by providing an introduction to core area of psychology.*

The senior seminar course is intended to serve as a capstone experience for psychology majors, which means that its purpose is to both unify and provide a broader context for knowledge about the field of psychology gained throughout the undergraduate years. To accomplish this, students will:

1. Demonstrate their ability to read and critically synthesize primary source material;
2. Add to the collective knowledge and understanding of the seminar class members through preparation and active participation;
3. Investigate a topic within the broad topic of “addictive behaviors” in depth;
4. Lead a seminar discussion focused on your chosen topic;
5. Communicate your findings in an extensive written report and public presentation.

Fall, 2007 topic: “Addictive behaviors”

*Def.: **Addictive behavior** - any activity, substance, object, or behavior that has become the major focus of a person's life to the exclusion of other activities, or that has begun to harm the individual or others physically, mentally, or socially is considered an addictive behavior.*

Although similar to terms such as “addictions” or “compulsions” are often used, “addictive behaviors” is broader and more descriptive in that the phrase doesn’t imply a *cause* for the pattern of behaviors as these other terms do.

Course outline

NOTE: The following dates are subject to change depending on how the seminar develops.

Aug. 31 – Sept. 21: Discussion of “addictive behaviors,” defining the issues, establishing what’s included, and exploring possible explanations for the patterns of behavior. We will also use these first sessions to narrow possible topic ideas and determine additional appropriate readings. These sessions will be facilitated by the instructor and will draw from the “initial readings” in the order shown (see below).

Sept. 10 – Sept. 21: Students will meet individually with the instructor to define individual topics for review and presentation. Readings for student-led seminars will be identified during these meetings.

Sept. 24 – Oct. 19: Student-led seminars on chosen topics and readings. Each week will include one student-led discussion with follow-up as needed.

Oct. 26 – Nov. 26: Students will focus on literature review and development of their papers and presentations. Weekly individual meetings with the instructor will be scheduled with additional meetings or class meetings as needed. Seminar sessions may be called for group feedback, to discuss projects, etc. Any sessions during this time will be scheduled at least three days in advance.

Dec. 3 – Dec. 14: Public presentations. Presentations will normally occur during the scheduled class time, however this is subject to change based on individual circumstances.

Required materials

There is no textbook. All of the required readings will either be distributed in class or placed on e-reserve through the library. I am expecting students to print or Xerox copies of reserve items for their own use. While time consuming, you will need these materials on-hand to work with them.

Initial readings: We'll develop a reading list as the semester progresses and our interests and needs become clearer. You'll be contributing to the development of this list. To start, however, we will read several articles that reflect different aspects of "addictive behaviors" in order to get you better acquainted with the field. Our initial readings include:

Everitt, B.J., & Robbins, T.W. (2005). Neural systems of reinforcement for drug addiction: From actions to habits to compulsion. *Nature Neuroscience*, 8 (11), 1481-1489.

Gold, M.S., & Star, J. (2005). Eating disorders. In J.H. Lowinson, P. Ruiz, R.B. Millman, & J.G. Langrod (Eds.), *Substance abuse: A comprehensive textbook, 4ed.* (pp. 469-488). Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins.

Blume, S.B., & Tavares, H. (2005). Pathologic gambling. In J.H. Lowinson, P. Ruiz, R.B. Millman, & J.G. Langrod (Eds.), *Substance abuse: A comprehensive textbook, 4ed.* (pp. 488-498). Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins.

Goodman, A. (2005). Sexual addiction: Nosology, diagnosis, etiology, and treatment. In J.H. Lowinson, P. Ruiz, R.B. Millman, & J.G. Langrod (Eds.), *Substance abuse: A comprehensive textbook, 4ed.* (pp. 504-539). Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins.

Widyanto, L., & Griffiths, M. (2006). 'Internet addiction': A critical review. *International Journal of Mental Health*, 4, 31-51.

Recommended: Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association: Fifth Edition (2001). See: <http://apastyle.apa.org/pubmanual.html>

Grades

Grades are determined from active participation in seminar discussions (15%), leading and helping facilitate seminar sessions related to your specific topic area (20%), literature review paper (45%), and public presentation of a summary of your review (20%). More specific information on each of these follows.

Explanation of course components

Seminar participation: A seminar is a course where the participants try to gain a deeper understanding of an issue in a specific area. Accordingly, this class requires substantial

preparation and participation by all students. The instructor will serve as a convener and facilitator rather than as lecturer. The course necessitates that students assume a more active, responsible role in learning than was likely required in your previous classes. First of all, course participation isn't possible if you're not in attendance. Therefore, I will take attendance. I can understand that there are very real reasons why someone might need to miss a class or two; you also need to understand that there isn't a good way to make-up missed participation in discussions. If something meriting a Chancellor's excuse will make you miss several class times, we can discuss possible written make-up assignments. Make sure you see a fellow student for information missed and clarify any questions about that material with me.

Second, attending class is necessary for participation, but certainly isn't sufficient to be classified as "participation." You are expected to contribute to the conversations by asking questions, contributing ideas, questioning conclusions, suggesting ways the materials might apply to other issues, integrating points others have made, etc. To accomplish this you must carefully read the assigned readings *before* coming to class and think about the issues in the readings enough so that you can make a contribution to the discussion. It is expected that you will come to class with several open ended questions you can ask during the discussion. It is even a better idea to explore references other than those required to gain additional perspective on an issue. You may bring these resources to the discussion. [NOTE: We may share questions *before* sessions via e-mail or by posting these online. We'll discuss this in class.] Your grade will be based on the extent that your contributions help develop the topic-- that means the *quality* of your contributions will matter more than the *quantity*. The only real "rules" are that your comments are respectful (even when you disagree) and at least tangentially related to the topic.

Evidence that active preparation is not occurring will result in a significant reduction in your participation score.

Remember, you are responsible for the quality of the discussion. A good discussion does not involve 5 people each giving their opinion on an issue. A sophisticated discussion airs the strengths and weakness of all points of view. This is accomplished by asking questions and making connections between points raised about a particular side of an issue. Although there is not a set of correct questions to ask when exploring a topic, there are many ways to examine an issue. Developing and asking questions that will provoke dialogue among the other members of the class is your job.

Leading a seminar session: Each member of the class will be expected to facilitate one 100-minute seminar session during the term and to help facilitate follow-up discussions related to your specific topic. Discussion facilitators are not responsible for filling the 100 minutes of air time with their questions or evaluations of the reading-- that is the responsibility of the class. The facilitators are expected to guide the discussion on their topic. When you are the facilitator you should carefully listening to what the other class members are saying and direct the discussion so all sides of an issue are addressed. Therefore, the facilitators may raise questions, but they may also probe class members for deeper evaluations of the issues, or take an opposing view point from the rest of the class to act as a lightning rod for discussion. This means being familiar enough with your own topic that you can respond and react to questions and comments raised by the group.

The instructor will meet with each student individually in order to help determine readings and to narrow topics. Students will be given readings for discussion sessions *at least* one week prior to the discussion to allow preparation.

Review paper: You will need to conduct an in-depth review of literature relevant to a sub-area of our over-arching topic, *addictive behaviors*. The goal of a literature review is to organize, integrate, and evaluate previous research in order to clarify a particular problem or issue. It is expected that you, based on your review, will develop a clear conclusion that fits into one of the following categories: (a) A specific research proposal addressing an unanswered or theoretical issue raised in the review; (b) A clarifying theoretical conclusion in which you propose a structure by which the reviewed information can be understood; or (c) identify relations, contradictions, gaps, and inconsistencies in the literature, noting their significance and providing guidance as to future research that can clarify the field. In each case, some direction for future research should be clear. Anticipate the paper being 20-25 pages. There will not be a minimum number of citations as this will be dictated by the topic chosen. More specific information and guidance regarding the paper will be distributed in class. Refer to the *APA Publication, 5th ed.* for more information regarding style and paper preparation.

Your literature review will provide the primary means for demonstrating your understanding of psychology as a science and your ability to work with psychological literature.

Public presentation: One of the important aspects of the senior capstone course comes from learning from each other. Each of you will gain expertise in the sub-topics chosen for review. Further, science only functions if knowledge is shared and information is open to interpretation and evaluation. To satisfy these needs and to give you experience with an important means for sharing knowledge, students will give a public presentation of a summary of their work. Each presentation will be limited to 30 minutes with questions to follow. All students in a seminar section will be expected to attend each others' presentations *as well as two presentations from other seminar sections that meet this term*. Failure to attend will result in a reduction in your participation grade.

Presentation titles, dates and locations will be posted so psychology faculty and other interested members of the campus community can attend. Guidelines for presentations will be distributed in class.

DEFINITIONS OF GRADES & ACADEMIC WORKLOAD EXPECTATIONS

(The following information is provided as required by the University Senate.)

- A -- achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
 - B -- achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
 - C -- achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
 - D -- achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
 - S -- achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.
 - F (or N) -- Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I (see also I)
 - I -- (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student.
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Work load

For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as equivalent to an average of three hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to achieve an average grade in the course. For example, a student taking a four-credit course will be expected to put in 180 hours of work during the semester. That means that for a course that meets in two 100-minute sessions per week for 15 weeks, students will be expected to put in approximately 8 hours of work outside of class per week during the time the course meets.

Cheating and plagiarism policy

The University defines **scholastic dishonesty** as “submission of false records of academic achievement; cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement.” Scholastic dishonesty, in the form of cheating on exams, using a previous student’s paper, using online paper-writing services, etc., will result in a “0” for the assignment or exam, at the minimum, and possible removal from the course, at the maximum. Incidences of scholastic dishonesty will be reported, in writing, to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs.