



UNSW Course Outline

PSYC7220 Psychology of Health and Illness - 2023

Course Code : PSYC7220
Year : 2023
Term : Term 2
Teaching Period : T2
Delivery Mode : In person
Delivery Format : Standard
Delivery Location : Kensington

General Course Information

Course Code : PSYC7220
Year : 2023
Term : Term 2
Teaching Period : T2
Is a multi-term course? : No
Faculty : Faculty of Science
Academic Unit : School of Psychology
Delivery Mode : In person
Delivery Format : Standard
Delivery Location : Kensington
Campus : Sydney
Study Level : Postgraduate
Units of Credit : 6

Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

This course focuses on the applications of psychological principles, derived from human and

animal research, to human health and rehabilitation including health promotion, risk factor reduction, psychological assessment, management and remediation of medical and neurological disorders, with a special focus on chronic illnesses. It forms part of postgraduate level training in Clinical Psychology and develops the knowledge and skills of candidates in working in health-related clinical settings.

Course Aims

The aim of this course is to present an overview of the major theoretical and applied issues in behavioural medicine, health psychology, and the practice of clinical psychology in health settings. Core themes include understanding and modifying health behaviours, stress and coping, public health interventions, and management of chronic illness. The course presents prevailing theories of psychological features of health behaviours and selected physical disorders; covers key assessment issues in health and well-being; and outlines intervention strategies and treatment outcome literature for specific problems.

Relationship to Other Courses

Not applicable

Course Learning Outcome

Course Learning Outcomes
CL01 : Compare and contrast prevalent theories of health behaviours through the critical review of health and psychology literature.
CL02 : Develop behaviour change and health promotion strategies in the context of psychology-related health problems.
CL03 : Describe the diagnosis, assessment and treatment issues relevant to common psychology-related health problems.

Course Learning Outcomes	Assessment Item
CL01 : Compare and contrast prevalent theories of health behaviours through the critical review of health and psychology literature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioural Change Report • Examination
CL02 : Develop behaviour change and health promotion strategies in the context of psychology-related health problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behavioural Change Report
CL03 : Describe the diagnosis, assessment and treatment issues relevant to common psychology-related health problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examination

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System

Learning and Teaching in this course

It is expected that students are aware of UNSW Assessment policy and understand how to apply for special consideration if they are unable to complete an assignment due to illness and/or misadventure.

It is expected that students have read through the School of Psychology Student Guide, Program Guide and statement on Inherent Requirements of the Master of Psychology programs on the Program website.

Seminar attendance is compulsory to ensure students are consistently working towards achieving the foundational graduate competencies required by the APAC Accreditation Standards. These Accreditation Standards are incorporated in Program and Course Learning Outcomes. Attendance is monitored. Failure to meet these specified attendance requirements may result in course failure. Explanations for an occasional absence from a class or requests for permission to be absent from a class should be discussed with the lecturer/tutor, and where applicable, accompanied by a medical certificate.

All news updates and announcements will be made on the 'Announcements' forum on the Moodle page and/or by email. It is the student's responsibility to check Moodle and their student emails regularly to keep up to date.

Students registered with Equitable Learning Services must contact the Course Convenor immediately if they intend to request any special arrangements for later in the course, or if any special arrangements need to be made regarding access to the course material. An Equitable Learning Plan must be emailed to the course coordinator as soon as they are made available.

Additional Course Information

The course is designed to provide a broad overview of principles in health psychology, and to address many of the Competencies for health psychologists outlined by the Australian Psychological Society. The teaching approach is designed to give students both theoretical understanding and practical skills related to health psychology.

To achieve the learning outcomes outlined above, you will need to attend all of the seminars. Attendance is compulsory. You will be given a reading list for each seminar by the course coordinator, if applicable.

The end-of-session essay and written assignment will each provide you with an opportunity to test your understanding of the Learning Outcomes outlined above.

Assessments

Assessment Structure

Assessment Item	Weight	Relevant Dates
Behavioural Change Report Assessment Format Individual	50%	Start Date Week 1 Due Date Week 5 and Week 10
Examination Assessment Format Individual	50%	Start Date Exam period Due Date Exam period

Assessment Details

Behavioural Change Report

You will be required to submit an assessment which comprises a written report (approximately 10 A4 pages) related to health behaviours. You will need to choose a health behaviour or set of behaviours and make a specific plan for changing the behaviour(s). This plan can be in the form of increasing health-promoting behaviours, or reducing health-risk behaviours. You will need to review some of the background literature that will inform which framework you intend to operate within while attempting to change the behaviour.

That is, you will need to outline the rationale for the approach that you choose, and the background literature should inform this rationale. This background material will be reviewed in the introduction to your paper and should be approximately 3-4 pages. Next, you will need to create a specific and detailed plan for how to implement over a period of several weeks the change in health behaviour that you have identified. This plan will include the specific strategies used in trying to change the behaviours, your goals, the steps taken to overcome obstacles, and the specific means through which you will evaluate progress toward your behavioural change goals.

The next step is putting this plan into action and recording the specific outcomes for approximately 4-6 weeks. Finally, you will write a summary and discussion based on the findings of your change attempt, reflecting on what the experience was like, what it says about the literature that you reviewed, and what ideas you have for how it could have been done differently, etc. (another 3-4 pages).

The background and rationale for the assignment is due in Week 5; the data tracking and summary/discussion is due in Week 10. Feedback is provided through marker comments, and you will receive feedback for the first part before the due date of the second part.

All assessments use competency-based standards. You must receive satisfactory on all assessment items to pass the course.

Assessment Length

Approximately 10 pages

Submission notes

Send by email

Assessment information

Not applicable

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

Examination

You will need to complete a take-home examination essay which assesses all course content. This will be released and due in the University examination period. Your grade will be released during the University release of examination results period. You may request feedback on the final exam from the course convenor.

All assessments use competency-based standards. You must receive satisfactory on all assessment items to pass the course.

Assessment Length

Approximately 1/2 - 1 page per question

Submission notes

Submit by email

Assessment information

Not applicable

Assignment submission Turnitin type

This is not a Turnitin assignment

General Assessment Information

Not applicable

Grading Basis

Satisfactory

Requirements to pass course

Not applicable

Course Schedule

Teaching Week/Module	Activity Type	Content
Week 1 : 29 May - 2 June	Seminar	Models of health behaviour and behaviour change (Vartanian)
Week 2 : 5 June - 9 June	Seminar	Obesity and weight management (Vartanian)

Week 3 : 12 June - 16 June	Seminar	No seminar - public holiday
Week 4 : 19 June - 23 June	Seminar	Stress, coping, and stress management (Liddell)
Week 5 : 26 June - 30 June	Seminar	Psycho-oncology (Hetherington)
Week 6 : 3 July - 7 July	Seminar	Chronic fatigue (Li)
Week 7 : 10 July - 14 July	Seminar	e-health (Newby)
Week 8 : 17 July - 21 July	Seminar	Medically unexplained symptoms (Faasse)
Week 9 : 24 July - 28 July	Seminar	Chronic pain - part 1 (Merritt)
Week 10 : 31 July - 4 August	Seminar	Chronic pain - part 2 (Merritt)

Attendance Requirements

Please note that lecture recordings are not available for this course. Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and contact the Course Authority to make alternative arrangements for classes missed.

General Schedule Information

Each week this course typically consists of 2 hours of lecture material. Students are expected to take an additional 4 hours each week of self-determined study to complete assessments, readings, and exam preparation. Order of topics covered subject to change.

Course Resources

Prescribed Resources

There are no set readings for this course. Readings will be provided by the individual seminar leader.

Recommended Resources

Not applicable

Additional Costs

Not applicable

Course Evaluation and Development

Student feedback is used in selecting seminar topics, as well as in the balance of theoretical vs. practical content.

Staff Details

Position	Name	Email	Location	Phone	Availability	Education Learning Support Contact	Primary Contact
Convenor	Lenny Vartanian	l.vartanian@unsw.edu.au	Mathews 1111	9065 6594	By appointment	Yes	Yes

Other Useful Information

Academic Information

Upon your enrolment at UNSW, you share responsibility with us for maintaining a safe, harmonious and tolerant University environment.

You are required to:

- Comply with the University's conditions of enrolment.
- Act responsibly, ethically, safely and with integrity.
- Observe standards of equity and respect in dealing with every member of the UNSW community.
- Engage in lawful behaviour.
- Use and care for University resources in a responsible and appropriate manner.
- Maintain the University's reputation and good standing.

For more information, visit the [UNSW Student Code of Conduct Website](#).

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Referencing is a way of acknowledging the sources of information that you use to research your assignments. You need to provide a reference whenever you draw on someone else's words, ideas or research. Not referencing other people's work can constitute plagiarism.

Further information about referencing styles can be located at <https://student.unsw.edu.au/referencing>

Academic integrity is fundamental to success at university. Academic integrity can be defined as a commitment to six fundamental values in academic pursuits: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage. At UNSW, this means that your work must be your own, and others' ideas should be appropriately acknowledged. If you don't follow these rules, plagiarism may be detected in your work.

Further information about academic integrity and **plagiarism** can be located at:

- The Current Students site <https://student.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism>, and
- The ELISE training site <http://subjectguides.library.unsw.edu.au/elise/presentation>

The Student Conduct and Integrity Unit provides further resources to assist you to understand your conduct obligations as a student: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/conduct>

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Penalty for Late Submissions

UNSW has a standard late submission penalty of:

- 5% per day,
- for all assessments where a penalty applies,
- capped at five days (120 hours) from the assessment deadline, after which a student cannot submit an assessment, and
- no permitted variation.

Any variations to the above will be explicitly stated in the Course Outline for a given course or assessment task.

Students are expected to manage their time to meet deadlines and to request extensions as early as possible before the deadline.

Special Consideration

If circumstances prevent you from attending/completing an assessment task, you must officially apply for special consideration, usually within 3 days of the sitting date/due date. You can apply by logging onto myUNSW and following the link in the My Student Profile Tab. Medical documentation or other documentation explaining your absence must be submitted with your application. Once your application has been assessed, you will be contacted via your student email address to be advised of the official outcome and any actions that need to be taken from there. For more information about special consideration, please visit: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/special-consideration>

Important note: UNSW has a “fit to sit/submit” rule, which means that if you sit an exam or submit a piece of assessment, you are declaring yourself fit to do so and cannot later apply for Special Consideration. This is to ensure that if you feel unwell or are faced with significant circumstances beyond your control that affect your ability to study, you do not sit an examination or submit an assessment that does not reflect your best performance. Instead, you should apply for Special Consideration as soon as you realise you are not well enough or are otherwise unable to sit or submit an assessment.

Faculty-specific Information

Additional support for students

- The Current Students Gateway: <https://student.unsw.edu.au>
- Student support: <https://www.student.unsw.edu.au/support>
- Academic Skills and Support: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/academic-skills>
- Student Wellbeing, Health and Safety: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/wellbeing>
- Equitable Learning Services: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/els>
- UNSW IT Service Centre: <https://www.myit.unsw.edu.au>

School Contact Information

School of Psychology

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