

COURSE SYLLABUS

Texas A&M University San Antonio

Department of Arts and Sciences

PSYC3315-11 Health Psychology

Instructor: Cheng Yu, M.A.

Meeting Time: Mondays and Wednesdays 2PM–3:15PM

Location: Madla 237

Email: cyu@tamusa.edu

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 5PM–6PM. Madla 237

Course Catalog Description

Examines and defines the nature of illness and healing through the integration of biophysiological, psychoneuroimmunological, psychological and environmental factors. Examines stress and stress management techniques. Formerly PSYC 2350. TSI Restriction(s): Reading, Writing, and Math. Prerequisites: PSYC 2301, PSYC 2388 or BIOL 2316. Restrictions: Graduate level students may not enroll.

Required Course Materials

Health Psychology (OER). The access link will be provided on Blackboard.

Course Communication Policy

Primary Contact: Email is my preferred mode of communication outside of class. Please use your official **TAMUSA email account** to email mine directly; Blackboard messages are **not** preferred and may delay a response. Alternatively, you are welcome to visit during my scheduled office hours.

Subject Line Requirement: To ensure a prompt reply, your subject line **must** include the course and section number (e.g., PSYC3315-11) alongside your full legal name.

Response Window: I check emails Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, and typically reply within 24 hours during these business hours. Emails sent over the weekend will be addressed on the following Monday. If you haven't received a reply within 24 business hours, please resend your message in case it was routed to Junk.

Email Etiquette: Please maintain professional tone and formatting (avoid text-speak). Start a new email thread for new topics rather than replying to an unrelated prior email and clearly state your request so I can assist you efficiently. Plan ahead if you anticipate needing guidance before a deadline.

Course Schedule and Important Dates

Students should complete the assigned OER readings before the corresponding class meeting. Assigned readings consist of selected portions of each module. Module 2, *The Systems of the Body*, is not assigned as a separate unit. Essential physiological concepts will be incorporated into the units on stress, pain, and psychoneuroimmunology.

All quizzes, examinations, and Case File Project components will be completed in class using paper and pen. The instructor may adjust the schedule when necessary. Changes will be announced in class and posted in Blackboard.

Week	Date	OER Module and Course Content	Class Activity or Assessment
1	Monday Aug 24	Course introduction, syllabus, and course expectations	Lecture
	Wednesday Aug 26	AI policy, responsible AI use, source verification, academic integrity, and introduction to the biopsychosocial perspective	Lecture
2	Monday Aug 31	Module 1: Introduction to Health Psychology —the biopsychosocial model and mind–body relationships	Lecture
	Wednesday September 02	Health-psychology research methods and interpretation of health research	Lecture; Quiz 1 (Module 1)
3	Monday Sept 07	Labor Day	No Class
	Wednesday Sept 09	Module 1 continuation—culture, environmental context, and health disparities	Lecture; no quiz
4	Monday Sept 16	Module 3: Health Behaviors —health behavior and behavior-change theories	Lecture
	Monday Sept 21	Locus of control, cognitive-behavioral approaches, and the transtheoretical model	Lecture; Quiz 2 (Module 3)
5	Monday Sept 21	Module 4: Health-Promoting Behaviors —physical activity, prevention, screening, and vaccination	Lecture
	Wednesday Sept 23	Nutrition, sleep, and selected health-promotion interventions	Lecture; Quiz 3 (Module 4)
6	Monday Sept 28	Module 5: Health-Compromising Behaviors —substance use, smoking, and problematic eating behaviors	Lecture

	Wednesday Sept 30	Relapse, recovery, and behavior modification	Lecture; Quiz 4 (Module 5)
7	Monday Oct 05	Module 6: Stress —stressors, appraisal, stress physiology, and allostatic load	Lecture
	Wednesday Oct 07	Stress, illness, and biopsychosocial health pathways	Quiz 5 (Module 6); Case File Part I
8	Monday Oct 12	Review of Modules 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6	Midterm Review
	Wednesday Oct 14	First-half course assessment	Midterm Examination
9	Monday Oct 19	Module 7: Coping, Resilience, and Social Support —coping, resilience, and optimism	Lecture
	Wednesday Oct 21	Social support, socioeconomic resources, relaxation, happiness, and positive affect	Lecture; Quiz 6 (Module 7)
10	Monday Oct 26	Module 8: Using Health Services —access to care and health-service utilization	Lecture
	Wednesday Oct 28	Module 9: Patients, Providers, and Treatments —patient–provider communication, treatment adherence, and health-care disparities	Lecture; Quiz 7 (Modules 8–9)
11	Monday Nov 02	Module 10: The Management of Pain and Discomfort —pain theories and gate-control theory	Lecture
	Wednesday Nov 04	Chronic pain and psychological pain management	Quiz 8 (Module 10); Case File Part II
12	Monday Nov 09	Module 11: Management of Chronic Illness —adjustment to diagnosis and quality of life	Lecture
	Wednesday Nov 11	Module 12: Psychological Issues in Advancing and Terminal Illness —palliative care, hospice, dying, and grief	Lecture; Quiz 9 (Modules 11–12)
13	Monday	Module 13: Psychoneuroimmunology and	Lecture

	Nov 16	Immune-Related Disorders —stress–immune pathways and inflammation	
	Wednesday Nov 18	Selected immune-related disorders	Lecture; Quiz 10 (Module 13)
14	Monday Nov 23	Course synthesis and Case File preparation; no new testable content	Review; no graded work
	Wednesday Nov 25	University Study Day	No Class
15	Monday Nov 30	Module 14: The Future of Health Psychology —digital health, health misinformation, responsible AI use, and emerging directions	Lecture
	Wednesday Dec 02	Comprehensive course application and second-half course review	Case File Part III; Final Examination Review
Final Week	Monday Dec. 7 — Final Examination, 2:00–3:50 p.m., Madla 237		

Examination Coverage

The **Midterm Examination** is non-cumulative and covers Modules 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 and other assigned material presented through October 7.

The **Final Examination** is non-cumulative and covers Modules 7–14 and other assigned material presented after the Midterm Examination.

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. Updates will be announced in class, via email, or on Blackboard, and students are responsible for tracking them. View the full TAMUSA Academic Calendar online.

Grading

Grades in this course are assessed strictly on an absolute, individual basis rather than a competitive curve. The instructor places no cap on the number of high marks awarded, meaning your final grade depends solely on your cumulative point total. For instance, according to the grading scale, accumulating 850 total points guarantees a “B,” whereas a final total of 642 points corresponds to a “D.”

Assessment and Grading

Graded Component	n	Points
In-Class Quizzes	10	10 points each
Midterm Exam	1	300 points each
Final Exam (not cumulative)	1	300 points each
Applied Health Psychology Case File Project	3	100 points each
Total	15	1,000

In-Class Quizzes: 100 points.

Ten in-class quizzes will be administered throughout the semester. Each quiz will contain five questions and will be worth 10 points. The quizzes will consist entirely of multiple-choice questions assessing the major concepts covered in this module. The quizzes are intended to be brief, low-pressure assessments that help students monitor their understanding and prepare for the Midterm and Final Examinations. Additional ungraded practice questions will be available through Blackboard for students who would like further preparation.

Attendance itself is not assigned a separate grade. However, quizzes are graded activities administered only during the scheduled in-person class meeting. Therefore, a student who does not attend class on a quiz day will miss the quiz and ordinarily receive a zero. Make-up quizzes will be provided only for university-approved or legally protected absences or other circumstances approved by the instructor. **Make-up requests are not retroactive.** Except in an unforeseen emergency, students must contact the instructor before the scheduled class meeting. Students may not wait until after the class has ended to report an absence or request a make-up quiz. In the event of an emergency that makes advance notice impossible, the student must contact the instructor as soon as reasonably possible.

Midterm Examination: 300 Points

The Midterm Examination will assess material presented during the first half of the course. It is not cumulative and will cover only the modules, lectures, readings, and classroom activities completed before the Midterm Examination. The examination will be administered in class using paper and pen. It will consist primarily of objective questions, including multiple-choice and scenario-based items. Students must complete the examination individually without the use of generative AI, electronic devices, or unauthorized materials.

Final Examination: 300 Points

The Final Examination will assess material presented during the second half of the course. It is not cumulative and will cover only the modules, lectures, readings, and classroom activities completed after the Midterm Examination.

The examination will be administered in class using paper and pen during the scheduled final examination period. Like the Midterm Examination, it will consist primarily of objective questions, including multiple-choice and scenario-based items. Students must complete the examination individually without the use of generative AI, electronic devices, or unauthorized materials.

Applied Health Psychology Case File Project: 300 Points

The Applied Health Psychology Case File Project is a comprehensive applied assessment completed individually in class. It functions similarly to an examination, but instead of primarily asking students to recognize or recall information, it requires students to integrate and apply course concepts to a standardized fictional health case.

The project is not a traditional research paper, take-home writing assignment, or oral presentation. Students will receive a structured paper-based case packet containing background information, health behaviors, psychosocial circumstances, healthcare experiences, and other relevant information. Responses will be completed through clearly defined tables, classifications, diagrams, decision-making questions, and brief written explanations. Each item will be evaluated using predetermined criteria to promote consistency and reduce subjective grading.

The project will be divided into three in-class parts:

Part 1: Biopsychosocial Case Conceptualization and Health Behavior — 100 Points

Students will identify and classify biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors in the case. They will also identify health-promoting and health-compromising behaviors and apply an appropriate theory of health behavior change.

Part 2: Stress, Coping, and Health Pathways — 100 Points

Students will analyze the individual's stressors, appraisal processes, coping strategies, social support, and relevant physiological pathways. They may be asked to complete a conceptual diagram demonstrating how stress and coping can influence health outcomes.

Part 3: Illness, Treatment, and Health Information — 100 Points

Students will examine issues involving chronic illness, pain, treatment adherence, patient-provider communication, and the evaluation of health information. Students may also be given short source excerpts and asked to determine whether a health claim is supported, partially supported, or unsupported by the available evidence.

Each part will be administered after the relevant course material has been taught. Although the complete project integrates several major areas of Health Psychology, students will be responsible only for the topics covered before each part is administered. All parts must be completed in class without generative AI, electronic assistance, or outside collaboration. Any materials permitted during the assessment will be announced by the instructor in advance.

Grade Letter Cutoff Table

Course Grade Letter	Percentage	Raw Score (total raw score points earned)
A	90% or more	900 or more
B	80 to 89%	800 to 899
C	70 to 79%	700 to 799
D	60 to 69%	600 to 699
F	59% or less	599 and less

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

University Email Policy and Course Communications: All correspondence between professors and students must occur via university email accounts. You must have your Jaguar email account ready and working. If it is not working, contact the help desk at helpdesk@tamusa.edu or at 210-784-HELP (4357). If you don't hear back within 48 hours, contact them again. They have many requests during the first part of the semester, so you may need to follow up with them.

Academic Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, Disability Support Services is located in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210. You can also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, visit us at the [website](#) or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. All students are encouraged to discuss their academic accommodation with Disability Support Services and their instructors as soon as possible.

Academic Learning Center: All currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio can utilize the Academic Learning Center for subject-area tutoring. The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *Tools* section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing tutoring@tamusa.edu, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202. Online tutoring is also available for after hours and weekend assistance.

While tutoring hours may change based on tutor schedules and availability, the current tutoring hours for MATH in the ALC are as follows:

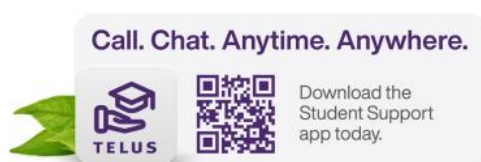
Appointments available MATH Walk in Tutoring – No appointment needed

	Appointments available	Walk in Tutoring – No appointment needed
MONDAY	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
TUESDAY	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
WEDNESDAY	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
THURSDAY	8 am – 6 pm	9 am – 5 pm
FRIDAY	8 am – 5 pm	11 am – 4 pm

Counseling/Mental Health Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment, visit our website, call 210-784-1331 or visit Madla 120 between the hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM.

All mental health services provided by the SCC are free and confidential (as the law allows). The Student Counseling Center provides brief individual and group therapy, crisis intervention, consultation, case management, and prevention services. *Crisis support is available 24/7/365 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 or through the TELUS student support App.*

The TELUS Student Support App provides a variety of mental health resources to including 24/7/365 support for in the moment distress, crisis support, an anonymous peer-to-peer support network, mental health screenings, podcasts, and articles to improve your mental wellbeing.



Emergency Preparedness: JagE Alert is Texas A&M University-San Antonio's mass notification system. In the event of an emergency, such as inclement weather, students, staff and faculty, who are registered, will have the option to receive a text message, email with instructions and updates. To register or update your information visit: <https://tamusa.bbcportal.com/>. More information on emergency response may be found at: [Emergency Operations Plan](#) and the [Emergency Action Plan](#). Download the SafeZone App (<https://safezoneapp.com/>) for emergencies or call (210) 784-1911. Non-Emergency (210) 784-1900.

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended by the published Census Date (the first week of class). Any student receiving federal financial aid who does not attend prior to the published Census Date (the first week of class) will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

Jaguar Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center (WLDCC):

The WLDCC provides support to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Writing tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. The WLDCC offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. Students can schedule appointments with the WLDCC in JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. Students wanting to work in realtime with a tutor can schedule an “Online Appointment.” Students wishing to receive asynchronous, written feedback from a tutor can schedule an “eTutoring” appointment. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our [website](#). The WLDCC can also be reached by emailing wldcc@tamusa.edu.

Meeting Basic Needs: Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to submit a [CARE report](#) for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable them to direct you to available resources. A food pantry is available on campus; click [here](#) for hours and contact information.

Military Affairs: Veterans and active-duty military personnel are welcomed and encouraged to visit the Office of Military Affairs for any question involving federal or state VA Education Benefits. Visit the Patriots’ Casa building, room 202, or to contact the Office of Military Affairs with any questions at military.va@tamusa.edu or (210)784-1397.

Religious Observances: Texas A&M University-San Antonio recognizes the wide variety of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or course work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6)

non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Statement of Harassment and Discrimination: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to the fundamental principles of academic freedom, equal opportunity, and human dignity. To fulfill its multiple missions as an institution of higher learning, A&M-San Antonio encourages a climate that values and nurtures collegiality and the uniqueness of the individual on our campus and within our state, nation, and world. All decisions and actions involving students and employees are to be based on applicable law and individual merit. Texas A&M University-San Antonio, in accordance with applicable federal and state law, prohibits discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or pregnancy/parenting status. Individuals who believe they have experienced harassment or discrimination prohibited by this statement are encouraged to contact the University's Civil Rights Officer at 210-784-2061 or titleix@tamusa.edu.

Texas A&M University-San Antonio faculty are committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of sex discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic or dating violence, or stalking based on sex, know that help and support are available. A&M-San Antonio's Title IX Coordinator can support those impacted by such conduct in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The university strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the Title IX Coordinator. Please be aware that all A&M-San Antonio employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as counselors and trained victim advocates) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the university. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment, sexual violence, or other related sex-based misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the university's Title IX Coordinator (titleix@tamusa.edu, 210-784-2061, CAB 439K). If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting requirement, you can contact the Student Counseling Center at (210) 784-1331 or visit them in Madla 120.

Pregnant/Parenting Students: Texas A&M-San Antonio does not require a pregnant or parenting student, solely because of that status or issues related to that status, to (1) take a leave of absence or withdraw from their degree or certificate program; (2) limit the student's studies; (3) participate in an alternative program; (4) change the student's major, degree, or certificate

program; or (5) refrain from joining or cease participating in any course, activity, or program at the University. The university will provide such reasonable accommodations to pregnant students as would be provided to a student with a temporary medical condition that are related to the health and safety of the student and the student's unborn child. These could include maintaining a safe distance from substances, areas, and activities known to be hazardous to pregnant individuals and their unborn child; excused absences because of illness or medical appointments; modified due dates for assignments; rescheduled tests/exams; taking a leave of absence; and being provided access to instructional materials and video recordings of lectures for excused absences, if these would be provided to any other student with an excused absence. Pregnant/parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator with any questions or concerns related to their status (titleix@tamusa.edu; 210-784-2061; CAB 439K).

Texas A&M-San Antonio has also designated the Title IX Coordinator as the liaison officer for current or incoming students who are the parent or guardian of a child younger than 18 years of age. The Title IX Coordinator can provide students with information regarding support services and other resources.

Young Jaguars can support parenting students with daycare if students meet this criteria: (1) must be enrolled in classes at Texas A&M-San Antonio in the current semester, (2) must be Pell eligible or a single parent, (3) child(ren) must be aged 3 to 12-years-old, and (4) child(ren) must be enrolled in Pre-K-3 through 6th grade. Hours of operation is Monday-Thursday 3:30pm-9:00pm. For more information, please contact Young Jaguars at youngjaguars@tamusa.edu or call (210) 784-2636.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities: The following statement of students' rights and responsibilities is intended to reflect the philosophical base upon which University Student Rules are built. This philosophy acknowledges the existence of both rights and responsibilities, which is inherent to an individual not only as a student at Texas A&M University-San Antonio but also as a citizen of this country.

Students' Rights

1. A student shall have the right to participate in a free exchange of ideas, and there shall be no University rule or administrative rule that in any way abridges the rights of freedom of speech, expression, petition and peaceful assembly as set forth in the U.S. Constitution.
2. Each student shall have the right to participate in all areas and activities of the University, free from any form of discrimination, including harassment, on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, disability, age, and pregnancy/parenting or veteran status in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

3. A student has the right to personal privacy except as otherwise provided by law, and this will be observed by students and University authorities alike.
4. Each student subject to disciplinary action arising from violations of university student rules shall be assured a fundamentally fair process.

Students' Responsibilities

1. A student has the responsibility to respect the rights and property of others, including other students, the faculty, and administration.
2. A student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with the published University Student Rules found in the Student Handbook, [Student Code of Conduct](#), on our website, and University Catalog, and to comply with them, as well as with federal, state, and local laws.
3. A student has the responsibility to recognize that student actions reflect upon the individuals involved and upon the entire University community.
4. A student has the responsibility to recognize the University's obligation to provide a safe environment for learning.
5. A student has the responsibility to check their university email for any updates or official university notifications.

We expect that students will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful, and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, or disability. Conduct that infringes on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#) or visit the resources available in the [OSRR website](#)

Important Fall 2026 Dates:

Dates	Event
August 20	Tuition & Fee Payments deadline
August 24	First day of class
September 7	Labor Day Holiday – No Classes / University Closed

September 9	Census Date – Students not paid in full or enrolled in a payment plan by 4:59 pm may be dropped for non-payment
October 5 – October 16	Midterm grading period
November 13	Last day to drop with an automatic “W”
November 25	Study Day – No classes
November 26-November 28	Thanksgiving Holiday – No Classes / University Closed
November 30	Last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University
December 4	Last day of classes
December 5 – December 11	Final exams
December 15	Commencement

The complete [academic calendar](#) is available online

Use of Generative AI Permitted Under Some Circumstances or With Explicit Permission

There are situations and contexts within this course where you may be asked to use artificial intelligence (AI) tools to explore how they can be used. Outside of those circumstances, you should not use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any student work (assignments, activities, discussion responses, etc.) that is part of your evaluation in this course. Any student work submitted using AI tools should clearly indicate with attribution what work is the student’s work and what part is generated by the AI. In such cases, no more than 25% of the student work should be generated by AI. If any part of this is confusing or uncertain, students should reach out to their instructor for clarification before submitting work for grading. Use of AI-generated content without the instructor’s permission and/or proper attribution in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio’s standards of academic integrity.

NOTE: Guidance for how to cite AI-generators, like ChatGPT, can be found here <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>