

PSYC 3009 Syllabus
Health Psychology, PSYC 3009, Section A, 3 Credits
Fall 2026

Instructor Information

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General Course Information:

Description: This course provides an overview of how health psychologists use psychological science to promote health, prevent illness, and improve healthcare. Health psychology examines how biological, psychological, and social factors influence physical and mental health. Topics include stress and health, coping with chronic illness, patient and family experiences, and disease prevention and health promotion.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain major theories and models in health psychology, including how biological, psychological, and social factors interact to influence health and illness.
2. Apply health psychology frameworks to analyze health behaviors and real-world health challenges.
3. Interpret and evaluate empirical research in health psychology, including study design, findings, and limitations.
4. Analyze factors that influence health behavior and contribute to health disparities.
5. Assess psychological processes involved in coping with acute and chronic illness.
6. Communicate health psychology concepts clearly and effectively in written and/or oral formats.

Required Course Materials:

Text: Straub, R. (2023). *Health Psychology* (7th Ed). Macmillan Learning, Worth Publishers.
You can purchase the text from the Georgia Tech Barnes & Noble campus bookstore.

Grading Policy:

Final grades in this course are based on a total of 400 points. Students can monitor their progress throughout the semester by tracking points earned across all graded components.

Course grades are determined as follows:

- Quizzes: 100 points
- Article Critiques: 100 points
- Attendance and In-Class Exercises: 100 points
- Applied Behavior Change Project: 100 points

Total: 400 points

Final letter grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

- 360–400 points: A
- 320–359 points: B
- 280–319 points: C
- 240–279 points: D
- Below 240 points: F

At Georgia Tech, final course grades are awarded on a scale of A-F with no +/- grades permitted. A grade of C or higher is required to pass the course for students enrolled on a Pass/Fail basis.

Grades are calculated based on total points earned across all assignments and assessments. No additional weighting is applied beyond the point values listed above. Students are expected to monitor their progress through the course grading system.

Description of Graded Components:

- **End of Module (EoM) Quizzes**
Short quizzes will be administered at the end of most modules to assess understanding of lecture and course materials. Quizzes are low-stakes, open for a limited window, and must be completed by the posted deadline. Late submissions and make-ups are not permitted.
- **Article Critiques**
Students will complete four written critiques of peer-reviewed research articles (25 points each). These assignments develop skills in summarizing research, applying course concepts, and evaluating empirical work. Each critique should be 3–5 double-spaced pages and submitted via Canvas. Detailed instructions and a rubric will be provided.
- **Applied Health Behavior Change Project**
Students will complete a group-based project applying health psychology theories to a real-world health behavior. The project includes a written submission and a brief in-class presentation. Peer evaluations will be used to assess individual contributions. Additional guidelines and a rubric will be provided.
- **Attendance and In-Class Activities**
In-class activities will be used to support engagement and assess participation. These may include discussions, applied exercises, or brief written responses completed during class. Because these activities occur in real time, they cannot be made up. One activity score will be dropped at the end of the semester.

Course Policies:

Attendance and/or Participation

Attendance and participation are assessed through in-class activities. Because these activities occur during class, students are expected to be present and engaged. Absences may be excused in

accordance with Institute policies, including those communicated through the Office of the Dean of Students. Students should notify the instructor within 24 hours of a missed class due to illness or emergency, when feasible. Accommodations for approved Institute activities and religious observances will be provided in accordance with University policy.

Academic Integrity

Georgia Tech aims to cultivate a community based on trust, academic integrity, and honor. Students are expected to act according to the highest ethical standards. Review Georgia Tech's Honor Code and the student Code of Conduct.

Any student suspected of cheating or plagiarism on a quiz, exam, or assignment will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity, who will investigate the incident and identify the appropriate penalty for violations.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with learning needs that require special accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services (404-894-2563) as soon as possible to make an appointment to discuss your special needs and to obtain an accommodations letter. Please also e-mail me as soon as possible in order to set up a time to discuss your learning needs.

Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement

At Georgia Tech, we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. The [Student-Faculty Expectations](#) articulate some basic expectations that you can have of me and that I have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, I encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

Collaboration, Group Work, and Use of Generative AI

Students may collaborate on in-class assignments. The Applied Health Behavior Change Project is a group-based assignment. Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must reflect each student's own independent thinking and writing.

In this class we treat AI-based assistance, such as ChatGPT and Copilot, the same way we treat collaboration with other people: for both individual and team-based assignments, you are welcome to talk about your ideas and work with other people, both inside and outside the class, as well as with AI-based assistants.

However, all work you submit must be your own. You should never include in your assignment anything that was not written directly by you without proper citation (including quotation marks and in-line citation for direct quotes).

Including anything you did not write in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as an academic misconduct case. If you are unsure where the line is between collaborating with AI and copying AI, we recommend the following heuristics:

Heuristic 1: Never hit “Copy” within your conversation with an AI assistant. You can copy your own work into your own conversation, but do not copy anything from the conversation back into your assignment.

Instead, use your interaction with the AI assistant as a learning experience, then let your assignment reflect your improved understanding.

Heuristic 2: Do not have your assignment and the AI agent open at the same time. Similar to the above, use your conversation with the AI as a learning experience, then close the interaction down, open your assignment, and let your assignment reflect your revised knowledge.

This heuristic includes avoiding using AI directly integrated into your composition environment: just as you should not let a classmate write content or code directly into your submission, so also you should avoid using tools that directly add content to your submission.

Deviating from these heuristics does not automatically qualify as academic misconduct; however, following these heuristics essentially guarantees your collaboration will not cross the line into misconduct.

Extensions, Late Assignments, & Re-Scheduled/Missed Exams

All assignments, including quizzes, article critiques, and the project, must be submitted by the posted deadlines in Canvas. Deadlines are firm, and assignments close in Canvas at 10:00 pm on the due date. Quizzes cannot be rescheduled or made up.

In cases of significant illness or emergency, students should contact the Office of the Dean of Students as soon as possible to request support and documentation. The instructor will honor official notifications from the Office regarding excused absences. Students should also notify the instructor within 24 hours of a missed class or assignment, when feasible.

Extensions for non-quiz assignments may be provided only in accordance with Institute policies for approved circumstances, including official Institute activities and religious observances. Advance notice is required when possible.

Inclement Weather and Digital Learning Days

In the event of inclement weather, emergency campus closures, or Institute-declared Digital Learning Days, Georgia Tech may shift courses to remote instruction or adjust normal operations. Students are responsible for monitoring official Institute communications and Canvas announcements for updates related to scheduling, modality changes, and assignment adjustments.

Information about campus closures and emergency notifications can be found at:
Georgia Tech Emergency Preparedness: <https://www.emergency.gatech.edu>
Campus Status and Alerts: <https://www.alert.gatech.edu>

Student Use of Mobile Devices in the Classroom

Laptops and tablets may be used for note-taking. However, students are encouraged to use them in ways that support attention and engagement during class.

Cell phones should be set to silent or vibrate and used only when necessary. Devices may be used for course-related activities when instructed. Students are expected to minimize distractions and use technology in ways that support their own learning and the learning environment.

Campus Resources for Students

Undergraduate Student Academic Success Resources:

A list of resources for undergraduate students' academic success and information about advising can be found at [Success at Tech](#).

- Academic Support: Academic Success and Advising (a unit in the Office of Undergraduate Education & Student Success) provides free support for your courses. Students can attend scheduled supplemental review (PLUS) sessions, stop by Drop-In Tutoring, or schedule a one-on-one appointment through Knack. To explore what options work best for you, please visit us online at success.gatech.edu/tutoring, email us at tutoring@gatech.edu, or come see us at Clough Undergraduate Learning Commons, Suite 283.

Student Well-Being

At Georgia Tech, we are concerned about your overall physical, social, and mental well-being. A comprehensive list of wellness related resources has been compiled and maintained by the Office of the Vice President for Student Engagement and Well-being ([student-resource-guide \(gatech.edu\)](#)).