

Sul Ross State University
Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences

PSY 3311 – Health Psychology

Fall 2026 – Asynchronous Online Course



Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Gloria Hudson

Email: [Gloria.Hudson@sulross.edu]

Office Hours: Virtual, by appointment

Textbook: Brannon, L., Updegraff, J. A., & Feist, J. (10th ed.). Health Psychology: Introduction to Behavior and Health. Cengage Learning

"If you deliberately plan on being less than you are capable of being, then I warn you that you'll be unhappy for the rest of your life"

~Abraham Maslow

My name is Dr. Gloria Hudson, and I will be your instructor through this interesting journey we call the world of health psychology. My teaching philosophy centers on engagement, growth, and relevance. I believe students learn best when they can see how psychology connects to their everyday lives. That's exactly what we'll do in this course. Health Psychology explores the interplay between psychological, behavioral, and social factors and physical health. It examines how these factors influence the development, prevention, and management of illness, as well as the experience of living with illness. Key topics include stress, coping mechanisms, health behaviors, and the impact of illness on individuals and communities.

Course Description

This course explores the interdisciplinary field of health psychology, emphasizing the interaction between psychological factors and physical health. Topics include the biopsychosocial model, stress and coping, behavior change, chronic illness, pain, and health promotion. Students will critically examine the psychological underpinnings of health behaviors and apply research-based strategies to real-world health issues.

Course Format

This course is delivered asynchronously. There are no scheduled live sessions. All content will be available via Blackboard, and students are expected to meet deadlines as outlined in this syllabus.

Textbook

Brannon, L., Updegraff, J. A., & Feist, J. (10th ed.). Health Psychology: Introduction to Behavior and Health. Cengage Learning.

Cengage Textbook Instructions

Accessing Your Cengage MindTap Course

This course uses MindTap, Cengage's online learning platform, to provide access to your required textbook and course materials.

Step 1: Log in to Blackboard Ultra and open the Start Here module.

Step 2: Click the MindTap/Cengage link and sign in or create your Cengage account.

Important: Always access MindTap through Blackboard so your enrollment and grades sync correctly.

If Your Textbook Is Included Through the University:

Many Sul Ross State University students receive digital course materials through the Inclusive Access program. If your course materials are included, you do not need to purchase the textbook separately.

Simply register through the Blackboard MindTap link and your digital textbook should become available. If you are prompted to purchase access but believe your materials are included, contact the Sul Ross Bookstore or your instructor before purchasing.

If You Need to Purchase Access:

If your course materials are not included through Inclusive Access, follow the prompts in MindTap to purchase digital access.

Technical Support:

Cengage Support: <https://support.cengage.com>

MindTap Help: <https://help.cengage.com/mindtap>

For Blackboard issues, contact the Sul Ross State University IT Help Desk.

Student Success Tip: Access MindTap during the first week of class and verify that your textbook opens correctly before completing assignments.

Course Objectives

- Understand the biopsychosocial approach to health and illness.
- Analyze how psychological, social, and behavioral factors influence health.
- Describe key health psychology research methods and findings.
- Apply psychological principles to health behavior change.
- Evaluate psychological interventions for chronic illness and disease prevention.
- Communicate scientific knowledge in written and oral formats.

Midterm and Final Exams - Two (2) exams will be given during the course of this term. The majority of the questions for these two exams will be derived from the weekly quizzes. The dates of the exams are planned for the dates listed below in the class schedule. Please note that there will be no make-up exams unless it is an excused absence with corresponding documentation. **Midterm exams are scheduled during the week of October 12-16th, which will cover chapters 1-7. Final Exams are scheduled during the Week of December 7-11^h, and will be cumulative, covering chapters 1-13.**

Grading

Assignment	Points
Participation & Attendance	10%
Weekly Chapter Quizzes	15%

Weekly Reflection Chapter Papers	15%
Midterm Exam	20%
Health Behavior Change Project	20%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

Students are expected to complete weekly reading reflection paper assignments, weekly quizzes and to engage in thoughtful discussions considering these assignments. In addition, students will take an online midterm and online final exam (objective short answer, multiple choice and/or essay). Throughout the course, extra credit assignment will be made available at the instructor's discretion.

Late Assignments/Projects/Checklists

You are expected to meet assignment/checklist deadlines. I do not accept late assignments. For excused absences (university-authorized, legal or medical issues), speak with me **before the absence** so arrangements can be made.

Course Expectations: Asynchronous Online Learning

Time Commitment:

Expect to spend 6–9 hours per week on coursework, including reading, lectures, quizzes, discussions, and assignments. Complete all modules by the assigned due dates. Asynchronous does not mean self-paced—deadlines apply.

Engagement & Participation

Students are expected to log in to Blackboard at least 3 times per week to stay updated on announcements, assignments, and discussions. Regular participation in online discussion boards, reflection papers, or peer feedback is required when assigned.

Assignment Deadlines

All assignments must be submitted by the deadlines listed in the syllabus or on Blackboard. Late work policies are strictly enforced unless prior arrangements are made or documentation is provided.

Communication

Use your SRSU email account for all course-related correspondence. Instructor will respond to emails within 48 hours (excluding weekends/holidays). Announcements will be posted regularly in Blackboard—students are responsible for reviewing them.

Technology Requirements

Reliable internet access and a functioning computer or device are required. Assignments may require the use of Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, or PDF software (free for SRSU students). Blackboard Learn is the official learning platform; technical issues must be reported to LMS support.

Academic Integrity

All work must be your own. Plagiarism, cheating, or falsifying work will result in disciplinary action per SRSU policies.

Accessibility & Support

Students with disabilities should contact Accessibility Services at the start of the semester. Academic support services, including the Tutoring Center and Library, are available online and on campus.

Virtual Office Hour Policy

As this is an asynchronous course, virtual office hours will be held weekly via Zoom or Microsoft Teams to support students' questions and progress.

- Virtual office hours are scheduled by appointment.
- Students may drop in during this time or email in advance to reserve a time slot.
- Additional one-on-one meetings may be scheduled by appointment.
- All links to virtual office hours will be posted in Blackboard Announcements and the 'Instructor Contact' section.
- Students are encouraged to attend with questions about course material, assignments, or feedback.

Required by Americans with Disability Act Statement (ADA) - ADA Statement

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mrs. Mary Schwartze Grisham, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Director at 432-837-8203 or email <mailto:mschwartze@sulross.edu>. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832.

Student Learning Outcomes

Throughout the Health Psychology (PSY 3311) course at Sul Ross State University, students will work toward achieving the following learning outcomes:

- - Apply the Biopsychosocial Model: Understand and articulate how biological, psychological, and social factors interact to influence health and illness.
- - Evaluate Health Behavior Theories: Analyze and compare major theories of health behavior (e.g., Health Belief Model, Theory of Planned Behavior, Transtheoretical Model) and their application to real-world health challenges.
- - Understand Stress and Coping Mechanisms: Identify physiological and psychological responses to stress, and evaluate coping strategies and their impact on health outcomes.
- - Assess Psychological Influences on Chronic Illness: Examine how psychological variables affect the onset, progression, and management of chronic illnesses such as heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.
- - Design and Critique Health Interventions: Create and assess behavior change interventions using evidence-based psychological principles.
- - Demonstrate Scientific Literacy in Health Psychology: Interpret and critique empirical research in health psychology, including understanding methodologies, ethical considerations, and statistical reasoning.

- - Communicate Effectively in Written and Oral Formats: Present complex health psychology concepts through well-organized writing and/or oral presentations appropriate for academic and applied settings.

Assessment Linked to Student Learning Outcomes and APA Guidelines Alignment

The following table outlines how key course assessments are linked to the Student Learning Outcomes and aligned with the American Psychological Association (APA) undergraduate learning goals:

Assessment	Student Learning Outcome(s) Addressed	APA Guidelines Alignment
Reflection Papers	SLOs 1, 2, 3, 7	Goal 1: Knowledge Base; Goal 3: Ethical & Social Responsibility; Goal 4: Communication
Health Behavior Change Project	SLOs 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7	Goal 2: Scientific Inquiry & Critical Thinking; Goal 4: Communication; Goal 5: Professional Development
Midterm Exam	SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4	Goal 1: Knowledge Base; Goal 2: Scientific Inquiry & Critical Thinking
Final Exam & Presentation	SLOs 1, 4, 5, 6, 7	Goal 1: Knowledge Base; Goal 2: Scientific Inquiry & Critical Thinking; Goal 4: Communication
Quizzes / Theory Assignments	SLOs 1, 2, 3	Goal 1: Knowledge Base; Goal 2: Scientific Inquiry & Critical Thinking

Major Assignments

1. Health Behavior Change Project:

Students will identify one health behavior (e.g., increasing exercise, reducing sugar intake), apply a behavior change theory to guide their approach, implement a change over 4 weeks, and write a final analysis paper reflecting on outcomes.

In this assignment, students will design, implement, and evaluate a personal health behavior change intervention. This project offers the opportunity to apply psychological theories and principles in a real-world context by engaging in a structured behavior change process over a period of four weeks.

Purpose

- Apply health psychology theories to real-life behavior
- Develop self-awareness regarding health habits

- Strengthen critical thinking and planning skills
- Reinforce scientific writing in APA format

Instructions

- - Identify a Target Behavior: Choose one modifiable health behavior relevant to personal wellness.
- - Choose a Behavior Change Theory: Select a theory covered in the course (e.g., Health Belief Model, Theory of Planned Behavior, Transtheoretical Model).
- - Implement Your Plan (4 Weeks): Track your behavior using logs, journals, or apps.
- - Write the Final Paper (5–7 pages, APA Format): Organize your analysis using APA guidelines.

Paper Structure

- - Title Page: APA formatted.
- - Abstract: Optional unless required (150–250 words).
- - 1. Introduction: Define the behavior, rationale, and theory.
- - 2. Method: Plan, tools, theory application.
- - 3. Results: Weekly progress, data summary.
- - 4. Discussion: Effectiveness, reflection, generalization.
- - 5. References: At least two scholarly references.
- - 6. Appendix (Optional): Charts, logs, supporting documents.

Grading Criteria

Component	Points
Behavior Identification & Theory	20
Implementation & Tracking	20
Paper Organization & Clarity	20
Application of Theory	20
APA Format & References	10
Critical Reflection	10
Total	100

Submission Guidelines

- Format: Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Length: 5–7 double-spaced pages (excluding title and references)
- Font: 12-point Times New Roman
- Citation Style: APA 7th Edition
- Submission: Upload to Blackboard by December 8, 2026 at 11:59 PM

2. Weekly Chapter Reflection Papers:

Each week, students will complete a short reflection paper (1–2 pages) that connects concepts from the assigned chapter in the textbook **Health Psychology: Introduction to Behavior and Health** (10th ed.) by Brannon, Updegraff, & Feist with personal experience, current events, or popular media representations of health.

Purpose

- Reinforce weekly learning objectives
- Apply psychological theories and concepts to real-world scenarios
- Foster critical thinking and self-awareness
- Improve writing and scientific communication skills

Instructions

Each reflection paper should:

- Be 1–2 double-spaced pages (250–500 words)
- Focus on one or two key ideas from the assigned chapter
- Apply the concept(s) to a personal experience, news article, or media portrayal
- Include thoughtful analysis, not just summary
- Demonstrate understanding of the concept and its implications for health behavior
- Be written in APA style (no title page necessary, include in-text citations if appropriate)

Format Guidelines

- Font: 12-point Times New Roman
- Spacing: Double-spaced
- Length: 1–2 pages (not including references)
- Margins: 1 inch all around
- File Format: Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Submission: Upload weekly to Blackboard by Sunday(s) at 11:59 PM

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Points
Understanding of Chapter Concept(s)	10
Application to Real-world/Personal Example	10
Critical Thinking and Insight	10
Writing Quality and Clarity	5
APA Style and Formatting	5
Total per Paper	40

Course Schedule Aligned with Fall 2026 Academic Calendar*(This schedule and the topics listed below are subject to modification by the instructor.)*

Week	Dates	Topic	Reading (Chapter)
1	Aug 24–28	Introduction to Health Psychology Model	Ch 1
2 9/1-Labor Day	Aug 31–Sept 4	Conducting Health	Ch 2
3	Sept 7–11	Seeking & Receiving Health Care	Ch 3
4	Sept 14–18	Adhering to Healthy Behavior	Ch 4
5	Sept 21–25	Defining, Measuring & Managing Stress	Ch 5
6	Sept 28–Oct 2	Understanding Stress, Immunity & Diseases	Ch 6
7	Oct 5–9	Understanding & Managing Pain	Ch 7
8	Oct 12–16	Midterm Review and Examination Midterm 10/19/26	Ch 1–7
9	Oct 19–23	Considering Alternative Approaches	Ch 8
10	Oct 26–30	Behavioral Factors in Cardiovascular Disease	Ch 9
11	Nov 2–6	Behavioral Factors in Cancer	Ch 10
12	Nov 9–13	Living w/ Chronic Illness	Ch 11
13	Nov 16–20	Smoking Tobacco	Ch 12
14	Nov 23–27	Thanksgiving Break	Thanksgiving Break
15	Nov 30–Dec 4	Using Alcohol & Other Drugs	Ch 13
16	Dec 7–11	Health Behavior Change Project and Final Exam	Comprehensive

Weekly Quizzes and Chapter Reflection Posts

Weekly quizzes and reflection chapter posts will be administered through Blackboard and are designed to reinforce key concepts from the weekly readings. Each quiz opens on Monday at 12:00 AM and is due by the following Sunday at 11:59 PM (beginning Week 2 through Week 15). Students must complete the quizzes and chapter reflection posts independently and within the designated timeframe. No late submissions will be accepted without prior approval.

Quiz Schedule & Chapter Reflection Logs

Week	Quiz Title / Content	Due Date(s) (Sunday(s) by Midnight)
2	Quiz 1 & Reflection Log: Chapter 1	Sept 7
3	Quiz 2 & Reflection Log: Chapter 2	Sept 14
4	Quiz 3 & Reflection Log: Chapter 3	Sept 21
5	Quiz 4 & Reflection Log: Chapter 4	Sept 28
6	Quiz 5 & Reflection Log: Chapter 5 Strategies	Oct 5
7	Quiz 6 & Reflection Log: Chapter 6	Oct 12
8	Quiz 7 & Reflection Log: Chapter 7	Oct 19
9	Quiz 8 & Reflection Log: Chapter 8	Oct 26
10	Quiz 9 & Reflection Log: Chapter 9	Nov 2
11	Quiz 10 & Reflection Log: Chapter 10	Nov 9
12	Quiz 11 & Reflection Log: Chapter 11	Nov 16
13	Quiz 12 & Reflection Log: Chapter 12	Nov 23
14	Quiz 13 & Reflection Log: Chapter 13	Nov 30
15	Course Wrap-Up Health & Behavior Project due by 12/8/26 Final Exam 12/7/26	Dec 7