

PSYC 4850D - Psychological Aspects of Health and Wellbeing

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 01, CRN 42822,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

James Juergensen

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Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Associate Professor

Instructor Professional Qualifications:

Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from Case Western Reserve University (2014)

Master's in Experimental Psychology from Case Western Reserve University (2012)

Bachelor's in Psychology from Youngstown State University (2009)

Instructor Office Location: Beeghly Hall 4104

Instructor Office Phone: 330 941-1522

Course Description

4850. Seminar. Major topics in psychology selected by the instructor not covered in other courses. Prereq.: C or better in PSYC 2617. 3 s.h.

Professor's Additional Course Description:

This is not going to be a traditional Health Psychology course. If you look at textbooks in this field, you will see a series of topics including provider-patient relationships, the effects of smoking/drinking, illness cognitions, screening, stress, pain, HIV, heart disease, measuring health, etc. These are all very important topics. However, this course is going to be focused on the promotion of healthy behaviors. Most notably, we are going to read two books about how two major parts of healthy living, habit and exercise, can affect us. Additionally, we will be reading some influential scientific articles and watching some informative documentaries to help us gain a well-rounded perspective on what it really means to be healthy.

A major theme to this course will be the importance of analyzing/thinking critically about all sources of health information. We are not reading/watching content and accepting everything as fact; rather, we are going to investigate further and gather as much pertinent information before drawing conclusions.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Spark	John Ratey	2818440023439
Required	Power of Habit	Charles Duhigg	2818440023422
Required	Food addiction: a valid concept?. Neuropsychopharmacology, 43(13), 2506-2513. Gearhardt, A. N., Yokum, S., Orr, P. T., Stice, E., Corbin, W. R., & Brownell, K. D. (2011). Neural correlates of food addiction. Archives of general psychiatry, 68(8), 808-816.	Fletcher, P. C., & Kenny, P. J. (2018).	
Required	Nutrition and mental health: A review of current knowledge about the impact of diet on mental health. Frontiers in Nutrition, 9, 943998.	Grajek, M., Krupa-Kotara, K., Białek- Dratwa, A., Sobczyk, K., Grot, M., Kowalski, O., & Staśkiewicz, W. (2022).	

Required	Nutrition as metabolic treatment for anxiety. <i>Frontiers in psychiatry</i> , 12, 598119.	Norwitz, N. G., & Naidoo, U. (2021).
Required	The China Study: A Formal Analysis and Response	Minger, D. (2010).
Required	Sleep hygiene for optimizing recovery in athletes: review and recommendations. <i>International journal of sports medicine</i> , 40(08), 535-543.	Vitale, K. C., Owens, R., Hopkins, S. R., & Malhotra, A. (2019).
Required	Sleep interventions designed to improve athletic performance and recovery: a systematic review of current approaches. <i>Sports medicine</i> , 48(3), 683-703.	Bonnar, D., Bartel, K., Kakoschke, N., & Lang, C. (2018).
Required	Artificial sweeteners and cancer risk: Results from the NutriNet-Santé population-based cohort study. <i>PLoS medicine</i> , 19(3), e1003950.	Debras, C., Chazelas, E., Srouf, B., Druesne-Pecollo, N., Esseddik, Y., de Edelenyi, F. S., ... & Touvier, M. (2022).
Required	Caffeine as a factor influencing the functioning of the human body—friend or foe?. <i>Nutrients</i> , 13(9), 3088.	Rodak, K., Kokot, I., & Kratz, E. M. (2021).
Required	Caffeine intake and anxiety: a meta-analysis. <i>Frontiers in psychology</i> , 15, 1270246.	Liu, C., Wang, L., Zhang, C., Hu, Z., Tang, J., Xue, J., & Lu, W. (2024).
Required	The benefits of prebiotics and probiotics on mental health. <i>Cureus</i> , 15(8). Obayomi, O. V., Olaniran, A. F., & Owa, S. O. (2024). Unveiling the role of functional foods with emphasis on prebiotics and probiotics in human health: A review. <i>Journal of Functional Foods</i> , 119, 106337.	Bistas, K. G., Tabet, J. P., & Bistas, K. (2023).
Required	Animal proteins as important contributors to a healthy human diet. <i>Annual review of animal biosciences</i> , 5(1), 111-131.	Elmadfa, I., & Meyer, A. L. (2017).
Required	Association of animal and plant protein intake with all-cause and cause-specific mortality. <i>JAMA internal medicine</i> , 176(10), 1453-1463.	Song, M., Fung, T. T., Hu, F. B., Willett, W. C., Longo, V. D., Chan, A. T., & Giovannucci, E. L. (2016).
Required	Alcohol consumption and cardiovascular health. <i>The American journal of medicine</i> , 135(10), 1213-1230.	Krittanawong, C., Isath, A., Rosenson, R. S., Khawaja, M., Wang, Z., Fogg, S. E., ... & Lavie, C. J. (2022).
Required	Association between patterns of alcohol consumption (beverage type, frequency and consumption with food) and risk of adverse health outcomes: a prospective cohort study. <i>BMC medicine</i> , 19(1), 8.	Jani, B. D., McQueenie, R., Nicholl, B. I., Field, R., Hanlon, P., Gallacher, K. I., ... & Lewsey, J. (2021).
Required	Mapping the effectiveness and risks of GLP-1 receptor agonists. <i>Nature medicine</i> , 31(3), 951-962.	Xie, Y., Choi, T., & Al-Aly, Z. (2025).

Required	Healthy weight loss maintenance with exercise, GLP-1 receptor agonist, or both combined followed by one year without treatment: a post-treatment analysis of a randomised placebo-controlled trial. <i>EClinicalMedicine</i> , 69.	Jensen, S. B. K., Blond, M. B., Sandsdal, R. M., Olsen, L. M., Juhl, C. R., Lundgren, J. R., ... & Torekov, S. S. (2024).
Required	Healthy lifestyle and cancer risk: modifiable risk factors to prevent cancer. <i>Nutrients</i> , 16(6), 800.	Marino, P., Mininni, M., Deiana, G., Marino, G., Divella, R., Bochicchio, I., ... & Sanseverino, F. (2024).
Required	Healthy lifestyle and cancer survival: A multinational cohort study. <i>International Journal of Cancer</i> , 154(10), 1709-1718.	Bian, Z., Zhang, R., Yuan, S., Fan, R., Wang, L., Larsson, S. C., ... & Li, X. (2024).
Required	Sleep and mental health in undergraduate students with generally healthy sleep habits. <i>PloS one</i> , 11(6), e0156372.	Milojevich, H. M., & Lukowski, A. F. (2016).
Required	The impact of social media use on sleep and mental health in youth: a scoping review. <i>Current psychiatry reports</i> , 26(3), 104-119.	Yu, D. J., Wing, Y. K., Li, T. M., & Chan, N. Y. (2024).
Required	A short history of saturated fat: the making and unmaking of a scientific consensus. <i>Current Opinion in Endocrinology, Diabetes and Obesity</i> , 30(1), 65-71.	Teicholz, N. (2023).
Required	Dietary saturated fats and health: are the US guidelines evidence-based?. <i>Nutrients</i> , 13(10), 3305.	Astrup, A., Teicholz, N., Magkos, F., Bier, D. M., Brenna, J. T., King, J. C., ... & Krauss, R. M. (2021).
Required	Cardio Vs Strength Training: Which is Better for Overall Health. <i>International Journal of Computational Research and Development</i> , 9(2), 99-105.	Kumar, M. S., & Vinayakan, K. (2024).
Required	Adaptations to endurance and strength training. <i>Cold Spring Harbor perspectives in medicine</i> , 8(6), a029769.	Hughes, D. C., Ellefsen, S., & Baar, K. (2018).
Required	Cognitive reappraisal increases heart rate variability in response to an anger provocation. <i>Motivation and Emotion</i> , 35(1), 14-22.	Denson, T. F., Grisham, J. R., & Moulds, M. L. (2011).
Required	Effectiveness of emotion regulation strategies measured by self-report and EMG as a result of strategy used, negative emotion strength and participants' baseline HRV. <i>Scientific Reports</i> , 13(1), 6226.	Kobylińska, D., Lewczuk, K., Wizła, M., Marcowski, P., Blaison, C., Kastendieck, T., & Hess, U. (2023).

The books will be purchased through Perusall. All scientific articles will be accessible for free via Perusall.

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.



Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Day	Date	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
Tue	8/25		Course Introduction	
Thu	8/27		Project Discussion, Questions	
Tue	9/1	Spark Introduction and Chapter 1	Exercise and the Brain	SparkNote 1
Thu	9/3	Fletcher, P. C., & Kenny, P. J. (2018). Food addiction: a valid concept? <i>Neuropsychopharmacology</i> , 43(13), 2506-2513. Gearhardt, A. N., Yokum, S., Orr, P. T., Stice, E., Corbin, W. R., & Brownell, K. D. (2011). Neural correlates of food addiction. <i>Archives of general psychiatry</i> , 68(8), 808-816.	Food Addiction	Article Commentary 1
Tue	9/8	Spark Chapter 2	Learning and Exercise	RC 1 SparkNote 2
Thu	9/10	Grajek, M., Krupa-Kotara, K., Bialek-Dratwa, A., Sobczyk, K., Grot, M., Kowalski, O., & Staśkiewicz, W. (2022). Nutrition and mental health: A review of current knowledge about the impact of diet on mental health. <i>Frontiers in Nutrition</i> , 9, 943998. Norwitz, N. G., & Naidoo, U. (2021). Nutrition as metabolic treatment for anxiety. <i>Frontiers in psychiatry</i> , 12, 598119.	Diet and Mental Health	RC 2 Article Commentary 2
Tue	9/15	Spark Chapter 4	Anxiety and Exercise	RC 3 SparkNote 3
Thu	9/17		Forks Over Knives Part 1	
Tue	9/22	Spark Chapter 5	Depression and Exercise; Forks Over Knives Part 2	SparkNote 4
Thu	9/24	Minger, D. (2010). The China Study: A Formal Analysis and Response.	Discuss Response to China Study	RC 4 Article Commentary 3
Tue	9/29	Spark Chapter 7	Addiction and Exercise	RC 5 SparkNote 5
Thu	10/1	Vitale, K. C., Owens, R., Hopkins, S. R., & Malhotra, A. (2019). Sleep hygiene for optimizing recovery in athletes: review and recommendations. <i>International journal of sports medicine</i> , 40(08), 535-543. Bonnar, D., Bartel, K., Kakoschke, N., & Lang, C. (2018). Sleep interventions designed to improve athletic performance and recovery: a systematic review of current approaches. <i>Sports medicine</i> , 48(3), 683-703.	Sleep and Exercise Performance	RC 6 Article Commentary 4
Tue	10/6	Debras, C., Chazelas, E., Srouf, B., Druenes-Pecollo, N., Esseddik, Y., de Edelenyi, F. S., ... & Touvier, M. (2022). Artificial sweeteners and cancer risk: Results from the NutriNet-Santé population-based cohort study. <i>PLoS medicine</i> , 19(3), e1003950. Debras, C., Chazelas, E., Sellem, L., Porcher, R., Druenes-Pecollo, N., Esseddik, Y., ... & Touvier, M. (2022). Artificial sweeteners and risk of cardiovascular diseases: results from the prospective NutriNet-Santé cohort. <i>Bmj</i> , 378.	Artificial Sweeteners	RC 7 Article Commentary 5



Thu	10/8	Rodak, K., Kokot, I., & Kratz, E. M. (2021). Caffeine as a factor influencing the functioning of the human body—friend or foe?. <i>Nutrients</i> , 13(9), 3088. Liu, C., Wang, L., Zhang, C., Hu, Z., Tang, J., Xue, J., & Lu, W. (2024). Caffeine intake and anxiety: a meta-analysis. <i>Frontiers in psychology</i> , 15, 1270246.	Caffeine	RC 8 Article Commentary 6
Tue	10/13	Power of Habit Ch 1	The Habit Loop	RC 9 SparkNote 6
Thu	10/15	Bistas, K. G., Tabet, J. P., & Bistas, K. (2023). The benefits of prebiotics and probiotics on mental health. <i>Cureus</i> , 15(8). Obayomi, O. V., Olaniran, A. F., & Owa, S. O. (2024). Unveiling the role of functional foods with emphasis on prebiotics and probiotics in human health: A review. <i>Journal of Functional Foods</i> , 119, 106337.	Prebiotics and Probiotics	RC 10 Article Commentary 7
Tue	10/20		Game Changers Part 1	
Thu	10/22	Elmadfa, I., & Meyer, A. L. (2017). Animal proteins as important contributors to a healthy human diet. <i>Annual review of animal biosciences</i> , 5(1), 111-131. Song, M., Fung, T. T., Hu, F. B., Willett, W. C., Longo, V. D., Chan, A. T., & Giovannucci, E. L. (2016). Association of animal and plant protein intake with all-cause and cause-specific mortality. <i>JAMA internal medicine</i> , 176(10), 1453-1463.	Game Changers Part 2; Protein	Article Commentary 8
Tue	10/27	Power of Habit Ch 2	The Craving Brain	RC 11 SparkNote 7
Thu	10/29	Krittananawong, C., Isath, A., Rosenson, R. S., Khawaja, M., Wang, Z., Fogg, S. E., ... & Lavie, C. J. (2022). Alcohol consumption and cardiovascular health. <i>The American journal of medicine</i> , 135(10), 1213-1230. Jani, B. D., McQueenie, R., Nicholl, B. I., Field, R., Hanlon, P., Gallacher, K. I., ... & Lewsey, J. (2021). Association between patterns of alcohol consumption (beverage type, frequency and consumption with food) and risk of adverse health outcomes: a prospective cohort study. <i>BMC medicine</i> , 19(1), 8.	Alcohol	RC 12 Article Commentary 9
Tue	11/3	Power of Habit Ch 3	Habit Change	RC 13 SparkNote 8
Thu	11/5	Xie, Y., Choi, T., & Al-Aly, Z. (2025). Mapping the effectiveness and risks of GLP-1 receptor agonists. <i>Nature medicine</i> , 31(3), 951-962. Jensen, S. B. K., Blond, M. B., Sandsdal, R. M., Olsen, L. M., Juhl, C. R., Lundgren, J. R., ... & Torekov, S. S. (2024). Healthy weight loss maintenance with exercise, GLP-1 receptor agonist, or both combined followed by one year without treatment: a post-treatment analysis of a randomised placebo-controlled trial. <i>EClinicalMedicine</i> , 69.	GLP-1 For Weight Loss	RC 14 Article Commentary 10
Tue	11/10	Power of Habit Ch 7	Predicting Habits	RC 15 SparkNote 9



Thu	11/12	Marino, P., Mininni, M., Deiana, G., Marino, G., Divella, R., Bochicchio, I., ... & Sanseverino, F. (2024). Healthy lifestyle and cancer risk: modifiable risk factors to prevent cancer. <i>Nutrients</i> , 16(6), 800. Bian, Z., Zhang, R., Yuan, S., Fan, R., Wang, L., Larsson, S. C., ... & Li, X. (2024). Healthy lifestyle and cancer survival: A multinational cohort study. <i>International Journal of Cancer</i> , 154(10), 1709-1718.	Cancer and Lifestyle	RC 16 Article Commentary 11
Tue	11/17	Power of Habit Ch 9	Neurology of Free Will	RC 17 SparkNote 10
Thu	11/19	Milojevic, H. M., & Lukowski, A. F. (2016). Sleep and mental health in undergraduate students with generally healthy sleep habits. <i>PloS one</i> , 11(6), e0156372. Yu, D. J., Wing, Y. K., Li, T. M., & Chan, N. Y. (2024). The impact of social media use on sleep and mental health in youth: a scoping review. <i>Current psychiatry reports</i> , 26(3), 104-119.	Sleep and Mental Health	RC 18 Article Commentary 12
Tue	11/24	Teicholz, N. (2023). A short history of saturated fat: the making and unmaking of a scientific consensus. <i>Current Opinion in Endocrinology, Diabetes and Obesity</i> , 30(1), 65-71. Astrup, A., Teicholz, N., Magkos, F., Bier, D. M., Brenna, J. T., King, J. C., ... & Krauss, R. M. (2021). Dietary saturated fats and health: are the US guidelines evidence-based?. <i>Nutrients</i> , 13(10), 3305.	Fat Fiction Part 1	Article Commentary 13
Thu	11/26		Happy Thanksgiving! No Class	
Tue	12/1	Kumar, M. S., & Vinayakan, K. (2024). Cardio Vs Strength Training: Which is Better for Overall Health. <i>International Journal of Computational Research and Development</i> , 9(2), 99-105. Hughes, D. C., Ellefsen, S., & Baar, K. (2018). Adaptations to endurance and strength training. <i>Cold Spring Harbor perspectives in medicine</i> , 8(6), a029769.	Fat Fiction Part 2; Types of Exercise	RC 19 Article Commentary 14
Thu	12/3	Denson, T. F., Grisham, J. R., & Moulds, M. L. (2011). Cognitive reappraisal increases heart rate variability in response to an anger provocation. <i>Motivation and Emotion</i> , 35(1), 14-22. Kobylińska, D., Lewczuk, K., Wizła, M., Marcowski, P., Blaison, C., Kastendieck, T., & Hess, U. (2023). Effectiveness of emotion regulation strategies measured by self-report and EMG as a result of strategy used, negative emotion strength and participants' baseline HRV. <i>Scientific Reports</i> , 13(1), 6226.	Heart Rate Variability	RC 20 Article Commentary 15
Tue	12/8		Finals Week No Class	
Thu	12/10		Final Presentations/Discussions December 10th 1:00-3:00	

The course schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better learning.