

Psychology 407 Section 2
Health Psychology
Schedule No. 28814
San Diego State University

Spring 2000

Instructor:	James Sallis, Ph.D.		
Office:	6363 Alvarado Court, Suite 250. If needed, you can turn in assignments to receptionist in Suite 100 (Psychology Clinic)		
Telephone:	594-4815		
Office Hours:	By appointment		
Class Meetings:	Wednesday, 1500-1740 (3:00-5:40); Life Sciences 246		
Text:	Health and Human Behavior Kaplan, Sallis, and Patterson. McGraw-Hill, 1993.		
On Reserve:	Manage Your Life R.L. Williams and J.D. Long. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991. Also available in bookstore		
	Examples of behavior change case reports.		
Grading:	Based on a maximum of 135 points		
	Seven biweekly tests (drop one test)		60 points
	Health Behavior Change project		60 points
	Truth in Media report		10 points
	Verbal Report		5 points
	Optional report	on studies	5
points max	Optional report on web sites		5 points max

Course Outline For **Health Psychology**
Dr. Sallis
Spring 2000

WK	DATE	TOPICS	CHAPTER	TEST
1.	2/2	Why and what is health psychology	1 & 2	
2.	2/9	Behavior, health, and illness	3	
3.*	2/16	Psychology and the health care system	4 & 5	TEST 1
ASSIGNMENT: Turn in description of target behavior and your motivation for changing. Keep a diary with notes about your target behavior and possible controlling factors.				
4.	2/23	Stress, coping, and social support	6 & 7	
ASSIGNMENT: Start self-monitoring your target behavior				
5.	3/1	Chronic pain and diabetes	8 & 9	TEST 2
6.	3/8	Cardiovascular diseases	10	
ASSIGNMENT: Turn in behavior change project proposal				
7.	3/15	Cancer	11	TEST 3
8.	3/22	Student health issue day	none	
ASSIGNMENT: Be ready to present your verbal report				
9.	3/29	HIV-disease	12	TEST 4
10.*	4/5	Diet	14	
11.	4/12	Injury, violence, and substance abuse	13	TEST 5
ASSIGNMENT: Turn in progress summary				
	4/19	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS	
12.*	4/26	Physical activity	15	
ASSIGNMENT: Turn in Truth in Media report				
13.	5/3	Smoking	16	TEST 6
14.	5/10	Obesity & Person factors	17 & 18	
15.	5/17	Community interventions	19	TEST 7
Optional Report due				

WEDNESDAY, MAY 24, 3 PM IS LAST DAY TO TURN IN BEHAVIOR CHANGE PAPER.

HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY: SPRING 2000
MOST OF WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GRADING IN THIS COURSE

TESTS

There are seven scheduled tests. They are mostly multiple choice, but there are some brief written items. All tests are worth 10 points each. The lowest score will be dropped, so tests can contribute 60 points toward the 135. Tests will cover lectures and chapters from the previous two weeks (in most cases). Tests will **not** cover chapters assigned for that class. One exception is the test during the last class period, which will cover chapters 17, 18, and 19. Tests will be taken during the last 15-20 minutes of the class period.

VERBAL REPORT

Week 8, 3/22. Each student will make a 2 minute statement about a health issue of your choice. There are two purposes of this special class period. The first is to make sure we touch on health topics that are of concern to students. Each of you will choose a health topic that interests you and make a very short presentation. Your statement can expand on a topic we have already covered or bring up a subject that will not otherwise be discussed. You can tell a case history of a friend or relative who had a particular disease; share your own experience with a disease or health behavior; summarize an interesting journal article; motivate the class to try a self-cure or preventive measure; inform us about an alternative therapy, a health fraud, an experience with the health care system, or anything else relevant to health psychology.

The second purpose of the assignment is to make sure everyone contributes to the class discussion at least once. Public speaking is an important skill for everyone, and this is a simple way to get started. Verbal reports can be made from your seat; you do not have to come in front of the class. If you are nervous about speaking to groups, you can write out your statement and read it. If you are petrified of public speaking, you can refuse, but you lose the 5 points. Most students find this to be a positive experience, because it is a chance to get up on your soap box.

We will have brief discussion or comment on each verbal report. If you want to ask a question to the class or instructor at the end of your report, that is fine.

Grading will be based on sticking to the 2 minute time limit, relevance to health psychology, apparent preparation, and effectiveness of presentation. No written document is required.

******ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE TYPED******
DOUBLE SPACE REPORTS AND USE APA STYLE

HEALTH BEHAVIOR CHANGE PROJECT

Each student will conduct a personal health behavior change program and write it up as a case report. The project is described in another handout. Grading is based on quality of the following assignments. The written reports are being graded, not the success of the actual behavior change program.

There are five parts to this assignment.

1. **Week 3, 2/16.** One paragraph description of the target behavior and why you want to change it. Examples of behavioral targets are doing daily relaxation exercises or reducing your alcohol intake. You can choose a behavior that will help you maintain good health, or if you have a medical condition, you can select a behavior that is part of your treatment, like regular self-testing for diabetics. You need to choose one well defined category of behavior and describe your motivation for changing it. Define your behavior as specifically as possible. Make sure you can quantify your behavior by counting it or timing it. Instead of choosing "changing my diet" or even "reducing my fat intake", identify a more specific target such as "reducing frequency of eating at fast food restaurants" or "reducing servings of fried foods" or "eating chocolate less often." Even though your ultimate goal may be to lose weight, lower your cholesterol, or stabilize your blood sugar, do not choose the physiological outcomes as targets. Targets are behaviors that will help you change a physiological variable.

After the Class #3 class, start keeping a diary about your behavior. Just make some notes about how much you did it, what the situations were, and possible factors that influenced the behavior. These notes will be useful in getting ready for your self-monitoring. (5 points)

Weeks 4 and 5. Conduct baseline self-monitoring. Make sure you have defined your target behavior very specifically. Create a self-monitoring form to keep track of your target behavior, antecedents, and consequences. Monitor your behavior daily for the next two weeks. If your target behavior is physical activity, but you are not doing any, monitor the other ways you spend your time. Take a close look at the results and identify factors that are controlling the target behavior. Controlling factors can be thoughts, feelings, other people, or the situation you are in. Your behavior plan should include methods for changing the controlling factors you identify during baseline self-monitoring.

2. **Week 6, 3/8. Five to eight page proposal.** Use APA writing style. APA publication manuals are in the reference room of the library. Write a scientific introduction and describe the methods you will use for intervention and evaluation. You must include references to scientific journals and books. It is OK to use some additional references to magazine or newspaper articles or to internet sites. There must be some evidence that you have gone to the library and looked up recent scientific literature on your target behavior or health problem.

The introduction should cover (a) the connection between the target behavior and health outcomes as well as (b) examples of studies that tested methods of changing this or a related behavior. You should include a minimum of 5 references in this section, and most of them should be from the scientific literature, preferably journal articles.

The case history section should describe you in general. It is important to describe your history with the target behavior, how it developed, how you have tried to change it in the past, and what factors are controlling it that you will change with your program. You can write in the first person ("I").

Specific and detailed methods of intervention and measurement need to be written. I need to know exactly what behavior change methods you will use. These should be written in enough detail so that someone else could do the same thing. You also need to describe how you will measure and graph your behavior. These sections should not just name the methods you are going to use. You need to write a short paragraph on each intervention method telling how you will apply the approaches in your life. (15 points)

3. **Week 11, 4/12.** One page progress summary, specifying how you are coming along and what changes you have made in your program. There needs to be some analysis of why the program is progressing well or is having problems. (5 points)

4. **Week 16. FINAL REPORT IS DUE BY 3:00PM WEDNESDAY, MAY 24.** TURN IN REPORT TO THE CLINIC RECEPTIONIST OR TO MY MAIL BOX AT 6363 ALVARADO COURT, SUITE 100. Completed case report must generally be in APA style, but don't worry about all the details. You should improve and expand your introduction, case history, and methods, as needed, based on the feedback you received on your proposal. Add results and discussion sections, plus graphs to document changes in your behavior. Approximately 20 pages. (35 points) Points are deducted for late papers.

TRUTH IN MEDIA REPORT

Every week there seems to be a health study that makes the national news. It is all over TV, radio, and newspapers for a few days. The news is usually dramatic so that you get worried, you think about changing your lifestyle, or you conclude that health researchers are idiots who can't make up their minds. But how much do you really learn about the subject, and how much do you really learn about the study? Are the findings accurately summed up in the newspaper headline? Is the 15-second TV interview with the main investigator edited to give the best summary of the study or to highlight the most sensational finding?

Have you ever wondered what really happened in the studies that are reported in the news? Here is your chance to find out. Pick out a health study that was reported in a large newspaper or news magazine (Time, Newsweek, etc.) in 1999 or 2000. Though it would be preferable to find one

on a health psychology topic, any health study will do. Then look up the actual study in the scientific journal. Read the news report. Think about the main points. Then read the study. What are the main points the authors make? What do you think are the most important findings? How do your conclusions and the authors' conclusions differ from what was reported in the media?

Write a 5-page paper comparing the scientific report with the news report. Cover the following points.

Summarize the media report.

Summarize the scientific report.

What are the areas of agreement?

What are the areas of disagreement?

Was the study fairly reported in the media?

What are the benefits of media interest in health research?

What are the problems that could be caused by inaccurate media reports?

What, if anything, should the media and scientists do differently?

List your references.

Media Report is due on Week 12, 4/26.

OPTIONAL REPORTS

There are two types of optional reports you can do. You can do a maximum of one of each type. You must get the topics OK'ed by me.

OPTIONAL REPORT ON HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY STUDIES

If you want or need additional points, or if you get turned on by a particular topic, you can do a 5-page report. You will need to choose a topic related to health psychology, and find at least two studies on that topic. It would be most interesting to find two studies with similar purposes, such as studies that evaluate two different smoking cessation programs; or two studies that examine how diet is related to cancer. It is also OK to choose two studies that give a broad view of an area, such as a study on how stress affects diet and another on a stress management program. The studies should be published in 1997 or more recently. In the report, please include the following sections:

Introduction to the topic. Why is this an important topic? Describe the disease or behavior, if necessary. You can cite another paper for background on the topic. Aim for one page or less.

Summarize both studies. You don't need to go into too much detail here. A one-page summary of each study would be fine. Mention the purpose of the study, the subjects, interventions if any, and main findings.

Compare and contrast the two studies. What do you learn about the topic by reading both studies? Are there any direct agreements or disagreements between the studies? What new ideas does the combination of studies lead to? If one study is much better than the other one, discuss the reasons for this. This part can be 2 or 3 pages.

List your references at the end in APA style.

OPTIONAL REPORT ON HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY WEB SITES

Choose a topic related to health psychology. It could be a health behavior, stress, a disease related to behavior, or a disease that it is difficult for people to cope with. You could review web sites of health psychology or behavioral medicine organizations. Choose your topic early in the semester, and have it OK'ed by me. Then find at least 3 web sites that deal with your topic. Don't just write about the first three you find; look around for the three best.

I would like you to write reviews of these web sites, like you are a critic for a newspaper. Point out the good and bad points, and make suggestions for improvement. Please cover the following topics, but you can also write about other relevant topics.

Give the web address and name of the sponsoring organization.

Comment on the attractiveness and ease of use of the site.

How useful would this web site be for a practicing health psychologist? Is there information that would be helpful in treating a patient? How clear and detailed is the information? Comment on the scientific quality of the information.

How useful would this web site be for a consumer? Pretend you want to make changes in your own life or find out about a disease you have just been diagnosed with. Would this web site inform you, help you cope, help you change, or help you cure yourself? Does there seem to be a scientific basis to the information?

You might also want to make comparisons across sites. What were the strongest and weakest points of each site.

Try to keep this to 5 pages.

Grades for both papers will be based on quality of the research, quality of writing, and the extent to which the paper addresses the guidelines above.

Optional Reports are due on Week 15, 5/17.

NOTES

1. Grades are based on a percentage of the maximum points, as follows:
A=90-100;
B=80-89;
C=70-79;
D=60-69.
2. There are no make-up tests.
3. If you cannot turn in an assignment in class, leave it in my mail box at 6363 Alvarado Court, Suite 100.
4. If you want your final report returned, attach a SASE.
5. The Williams and Long book, as well as examples of case studies, will be on reserve in the library.
6. There is no final exam.

HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY: SPRING 2000
HEALTH BEHAVIOR CHANGE PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to give the student experience in identifying behaviors related to health and devising appropriate behavior change programs. In addition, the student will have an opportunity to change a personal behavior that may improve current or future health. The student will document current understanding of the health effects of the target behavior and will review some of the literature on the methods of treatment that are chosen. This is meant to be more than an academic exercise, because lifelong patterns of healthful behavior may be begun as a result of this assignment.

The project will be based upon the class lecture on behavior change (week 2), Chapter 3 of the text, and the book, Manage Your Life by Williams and Long that is on reserve and available in the bookstore. The Week 2 lecture provides a basis for choosing a target behavior that is related to the major health problems in industrialized societies. You must choose a behavior that could have or has had important effects on your health, rather than annoying habits such as nail-biting or social eccentricities. In the lecture, models for conceptualizing and planning behavior change programs, and methods for carrying them out, are discussed. The methods are covered in more detail in the Williams and Long book. They guide you step by step in assessing your lifestyle and choosing goals. They also have chapters that give specific advice on changing selected health behaviors. This book should be consulted often during the program, and the reference lists in the text and the Williams and Long book are a good beginning for your literature review.

The project will be written up like a case report. There are examples of case reports in some journals, such as the Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry. A few example case reports from journals are on reserve. Use these examples to give you an idea about how case reports should look. However, I want you to give a more elaborate introduction and more detailed intervention methods than you see in these brief articles. I have not put any examples of past student reports on file, because I don't want you to slavishly follow what they do. I want you to develop your own approach, based on these guidelines.

The finished report should be about 20 TYPEWRITTEN double-spaced pages, including graphs and references. Below I have outlined the sections and issues that should be addressed in each section. The report is to be written in APA style. The Publication Guide (3rd or 4th ed.) is available in the library. I do not want you to be obsessive about APA style, but the guidelines should be followed generally. The sample paper in the Publication Guide is particularly useful.

At a minimum, your paper should have these components:

1. Title page
2. Centered headings for each major section (see below)
3. Subheadings within most of the sections
4. References cited by author in the text
5. Reference list at the end, in APA style
6. Graph of your results

Target Behavior

It is important to select a single behavior to change, and make sure that your target is a behavior. Although you may be interested in preventing or treating a specific medical condition, or you want to alter a physiological variable, do not select a physiological target. Choose a well-defined behavior. You should be prepared to learn that changing a behavior is difficult. You should expect to have set-backs and failures over the course of the semester. Other issues will distract you, or you will lose enthusiasm after the first few weeks. The best programs make changes slowly. At the end of the semester, don't expect a major personal transformation. You will just be getting started with the lifestyle change, but hopefully you will continue for a lifetime.

Before writing the proposal you will self-monitor your target behavior for two weeks. There are two major purposes. The first is to establish the beginning level of your target behavior. Do not try to change your behavior during the baseline self-monitoring. You will use these results to compare what happens after you start your program. Thus, it is important that you are able to count or otherwise measure your behavior quantitatively.

Second, baseline self-monitoring helps you learn about the factors that control your behavior. You need to pay close attention so you can identify the antecedents and consequences that influence your behavior. Look for psychological, social, and situational controlling factors. We will discuss examples of these. You will design your behavior change program to change those antecedent and consequence controlling factors.

I INTRODUCTION

- a. Describe the relationship between the behavior you have selected and health outcomes. Go to the library and find some recent scientific articles that describe the association between the behavior and health. You may need to look in the medical literature, but sometimes these issues will be summarized in health psychology or behavioral medicine journals. Rely mainly on journals and scholarly books. Do not simply summarize what is in your textbook. Do not use mainly magazine articles or books for the lay public or internet sites, although you can supplement scientific information from these sources. The purpose is for you to learn the scientific rationale for changing your target behavior, and the state of knowledge is often not well summarized in publications for the lay person. You will need a minimum of 5 scientific references in this section. Learn to use MEDLINE and PSYCHLIT databases to find relevant articles.
- b. What behavioral interventions have been used in the past? Find one or two studies that report attempts to change your target behavior. If you are changing a behavior that has not been studied, find a similar behavior. For example, if you want to reduce your chocolate intake, find articles on dietary fat reduction. These articles will usually be in health psychology or behavioral medicine journals, but sometimes they are in medical journals. What were their successes and problems? What can you learn from these studies that you can use in your own program?
- c. This section should be about 2 to 4 pages.

II CASE HISTORY

- a. Briefly describe yourself, your relevant life situation, and history which is related to the target behavior. Be concise; there is no need to give your autobiography.
- b. Tell why you chose the behavior; what you expect to gain by changing it; and problems you anticipate.
- c. You can comment on the antecedents and consequences that appear to control this behavior that you discovered during your baseline self-monitoring.
- d. This section should be 1 to 2 pages.

III METHODS

- a. Describe your preliminary observations (including baseline self-monitoring). What did you learn and how did this lead you to choose these interventions? This is an important part of the paper. What controlling antecedents and consequences did you discover during your self-monitoring? You need to demonstrate that your intervention is designed to change the factors that control your behavior.
- b. Develop a simple behavior change program that is customized to your specific situation. Describe the intervention in detail. Write a brief paragraph on each component of your program. Tell exactly what was done, when, and by whom. What is the reason for each component? You should strongly consider including

self-monitoring, social support, self-talk, a reward system, and stimulus control. Are you addressing antecedents and consequences? Are you changing the environment so that it supports your behavior? Don't just list these techniques and say you are using them. Give details on what you are doing to implement these techniques. You should plan to use variations on the behavior change techniques that are presented in the books or in class, because these methods have been shown to work by many studies. Don't just make up interventions off the top of your head. You can be creative, but you should be able to describe how your methods are derived from behavior change theories. This should be the longest and most detailed part of your paper.

- c. What interventions will you use to insure maintenance of gains? Consider environmental changes and social support. What will you do if you relapse?
- d. Write a separate section describing how you will measure your behavior. Your target behavior must be quantifiable. That means you must be able to count it or time it. You can count servings of ice cream, pieces of fruit, relaxation sessions, and alcoholic drinks. You can measure the time you exercise, watch TV, or play on the computer. Clearly define the behavior to be observed. Specify your method of measuring your progress. Include any forms used.
- e. This section is often weak because it is not specific or detailed. Merely stating that you will use self-rewards does not describe which self-rewards will be used, how they were selected, how often they will be used, or how they will be applied. The purpose of the methods section is to tell someone how they can replicate your program. You also need to demonstrate to me your intervention is based on careful thought and planning.
- f. This section is often 4 to 8 pages.

IV RESULTS

- a. Describe the results of the program. Tell in words what the graph shows. What changed and what did not change? Which intervention methods were effective and ineffective for you?
- b. Describe your successes as well as difficulties you encountered. What changes did you have to make in your program during the project?
- c. Include a graph to summarize the results during baseline and after you started the program. The graph is required. You can draw the graph by hand; it does not have to be typed or printed from a computer.
- d. This section is usually 2 to 4 pages.

V DISCUSSION

The purpose of this section is to give meaning to your results. Help the reader understand what happened, and tell what the project meant to you. Here is your chance to use your creativity and maybe to philosophize a little. Answer some or all of these questions in the Discussion.

- a. Do you feel the program was successful for you? Why or why not? What parts of the program worked best and worst?
- b. Do you think the methods that worked for you would be useful for others? Why or why not?
- c. From your personal point of view, what did you learn? How did you benefit, if at all?
- d. What would you do differently, if you could start again?
- e. What public policy or legislative changes would you recommend to aid other people who wanted to change the same behavior?
- f. This section can be 2 to 4 pages.

VI REFERENCES

- a. You must go to the library to look up references for this project. Learn to use the computerized systems for searching the psychological and medical literatures (5th floor).
- b. You are expected to have a minimum of five relevant scientific references listed at the end of your report. These should be cited appropriately in your introduction and methods sections.
- b. References should be primarily from scientific journals and books; but you can supplement these with references to self-help books, magazines or web sites.
- c. You should have about one page of references, typed in APA style.

TIMING OF ASSIGNMENTS

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| week 3 | a. Choose a target behavior. Turn in a one page description of the target behavior and why you want to change it. |
| | b. Begin preliminary observations of the behavior. Keep a systematic diary. |
| | c. Begin literature review. |
| weeks 4&5 | a. Develop intervention program. |
| | b. Choose measurement method for behavior. |
| | c. Conduct formal baseline data collection. |
| week 6 | Turn in 5 to 8 page health behavior change proposal, which includes: introduction, with references; case history; methods; forms and graphs you will use. |
| week 6 | Begin behavior change program, keeping in mind feedback you received. |
| week 11 | Turn in one page progress summary. |
| exam week | Turn in completed report in APA style; about 20 pages. |

TIPS ON GRADING

1. Quality is more important than length. However, you cannot have an excellent Method section that is only one page. Length guidelines are just suggestions. Using really big type that makes your paper look long is not an effective way to get a better grade.
2. I give a separate grade for each major section of the paper, so they all need to be good. The grades for these sections are added for the total grade: introduction, case history, intervention methods, evaluation methods, results, discussion, general quality (including adherence to APA style). The intervention method section is worth the most, and case history is worth the least.
3. If you only use 5 scientific references, you are unlikely to get an "A". For an "A" I expect you to dig into the literature and write an introduction that shows you have informed yourself on the topic.
4. I am not going to correct your English, but I will deduct points from general quality if there are many misspelled words and examples of poor grammar. With spelling checkers there is little excuse for spelling errors.
5. We will discuss the project several times in class. If you have questions about the project, please ask them. If the instructions are not clear, ask me to clarify.
6. You are almost ready to graduate from the university, and this paper is a major part of your grade. Therefore, I expect you to take this assignment seriously and perform at a high level. To get a high grade you must show that you have learned the academic material, you have applied the theories and principles to your program, and you have put considerable effort into writing this report.