

Aesthetics, Values, & Authority:  
***Treating Humans, Not Only the Disease:***  
***The Psychosocial Foundations of Human Behavior and Well-Being***  
The Honors College, Florida International University  
IDH 3034-U07 (80083)  
Fall 2018 Tuesdays and Thursdays: 11:00AM-12:15  
August 21 – December 2  
Classroom: GC 275A

**Instructor**

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Office hours: by appointment/scheduled Location: DM 233 (Honors College Offices)

**Overview**

Since the beginning of modern-day medicine at the turn of the last century, the medical field has been dominated by a disease-oriented model of treatment. In this paradigm, the medical doctor diagnosed and treated the patient's bio-physiological maladies, and nothing more. Little concern was paid to the psychosocial and behavioral causes of disease. The admissions process to enter medical schools reflected this paradigm with MCAT examinations exclusively assessing applicants' knowledge of biochemical principles, etc. Recent changes in the MCAT, as well as admissions entrance requirements, have signaled larger shifts in the medical field's conceptualization of health and the education of the next generation of medical doctors.

This course will attempt to provide students with an overview of the topics and ideas from the various fields of the social sciences (i.e., psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, communication) that can inform and expand their understanding of health. It will focus on the interplay between the individual (e.g., personality) and situational (e.g., societal) forces that impact health. In addition, this course will focus on developing students' research skills. Attention will be paid to understanding the basics of research design and methodology with an eye towards helping students develop the skills to evaluate and carry out basic research studies.

Activities for students to demonstrate their knowledge of the material will vary. Bloom's taxonomy will be the guiding principle for the development and evaluation of assignments. Bloom proposed that receiving an education involved moving through various levels of learning: remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. That is, it is not enough to simply recall information; rather, the key to learning from the assignments will be in the students' active participation in the creation of their work and their ability to explain the concepts, apply them to situations, draw connections, and justify their decisions.

This course will not be specifically geared toward students interested in taking the MCAT; therefore, all students with an interest in the psychosocial biological foundations of human behavior are welcome.

**Course Objectives/Outcomes:**

- Students will gain an understanding of the various ways in which psychology, sociology and biology interact to influence human behavior.
- Students will understand the influence of biological and psychological forces in shaping emotion and stress responses.
- Students will learn to recognize the influence of Western values on how they perceive themselves and others.
- Students will be willing to engage in discussion that includes salient analysis and debate.
- Students will develop the ability to interpret and evaluate scientific research articles.

- Students will develop basic abilities in research methodology and design.

### Required Texts

Barr, D. A. (2015). *Introduction to Biosocial Medicine: the social, psychological, and biological determinants of human behavior and well-being*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins | ISBN: 978-1-4214-1860-5  
(Listed as IBM in *Readings* below)

### Required Readings (Professor will provide PDF)

Check Blackboard for additional readings not listed in the syllabus

Free Resources:

<https://www.boundless.com/psychology/> (Listed as BP in *Readings* below)

<https://www.boundless.com/sociology/> (Listed as BS in *Readings* below)

<https://www.boundless.com/biology/> (Listed as BB in *Readings* below)

<https://www.boundless.com/physiology/> (Listed as BPh in *Readings* below)

### Attendance/Classroom Etiquette

While class attendance is not mandatory, this course is **heavily** reliant on student participation and interaction. Failure to attend class on a regular basis will deprive students of the needed context from which to understand the readings and assignments. It is the student's responsibility to check with his/her peers regarding missed work or discussions. It is **not** the responsibility of the professor to repeat lessons or announcements to students who missed class (whatever the reason may be).

There will be no make-up for missed work (no exceptions). Students are responsible for all material presented and all announcements made in class. Students are expected to read all emails sent by the professor and it will be assumed that the student is aware of all material and calendar changes and other messages communicated through email. Do not email the professor asking, "what did I miss?" Such queries do not merit a response.

Students are expected to be engaged in class discussion and interactions; therefore, use of electronic devices of any sort should be limited during class time. Place phone on SILENT (or the OFF button works too). The vibrate function can be just as distracting as the ringer function.

As a responsible adult, students may take calls, etc. but are asked to leave the room while making minimal interruption.

### Course Assignments

*Research Critiques/Summaries (Individual Assignment)*

- In order to better understand the role of research in clinical practice, students will be required to review **three** different empirical articles on a topic of their choice.
  - All articles must be related to health matters; however, they may come from a variety of disciplines.
  - For simplicity, you may use the *PsychInfo* database that is available online, through the FIU Library.
- A **three-page critique** will be submitted, along with a copy of the article. The first page or so will be devoted to providing a brief overview of the article: study variables, theory being tested, methodology employed, sample characteristics, etc.
  - The remainder of paper will be devoted to *critiquing* the article: are the inferences made by the author justifiable given the data? What important variables may have been missing? What are the

implications of the findings beyond what the author states? How could this research have been improved? What questions remain?

All papers must conform to the following regulations: typed, double-spaced, proofread, free of major grammatical errors, front and back printed, and stapled. Any citations used will follow standard APA style.

On the top, right-hand corner, include the following information: Full Name, Panther ID, Course & Section, and Course Title.

#### *Bi-weekly Current Affairs Discussion (Team Assignment)*

- Every other week, one team will provide a reading to the class about a current topic in the news. The topic need not be political in nature, though it must have a health focus.
- The team will prepare an oral summary of the article, but more importantly, provide an analysis as to its importance to our understanding of current trends in health and wellbeing.
  - In addition, the team will develop five discussion questions to be submitted in writing to the professor the day of the team's discussion. Teams will be assessed not only on the novelty of the topic chosen but also their ability to engage the entire class in discussion, as well as their ability to collaborate with each other. (15 mins for discussion)
- The current politicization of knowledge is making it more difficult to discover the truth in a biased-free manner (or as close to biased-free as we can get). Therefore, I'm limiting the sources from which you may draw your current affairs articles to the following news media outlets:
  - *The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Economist, National Public Radio, The Washington Post, The Atlantic Monthly, BBC News, Marketplace*
  - Notice the omission of all the major cable news channels.

#### *Book Chapter Discussions (Team Assignment)*

- Every other week, one team will prepare a summary and chapter discussion from the main text, *Introduction to Biosocial Medicine*, or other assigned reading. Chapter assignments will be decided after the first week of classes.
  - Teams will provide to the professor a **written summary and analysis** of the chapter (three-page max). This summary should also include major take-away points (if you forget everything you've read, what were the big main ideas?), implications for practice, agreement or disagreement with the points raised by the author (and why).
  - Teams will lead a class discussion on the chapter and may include a classroom activity. Teams will be assessed not only on the novelty of their presentation of the material but also their ability to engage the entire class in discussion, as well as their ability to collaborate with each other. (40 mins for discussion)

#### *Creative Ad Health Campaign (Team Assignment)*

- Based on the theory and research of the topics discussed in class, create an ad campaign for a health issue of your choice. Any medium of presentation is available (i.e., live theatrical performance, painting, sculpture, graphic design, musical, etc.).
- Teams will be assessed not only on the novelty and creativity of the ad campaign but also their ability to integrate the course material into their final product.
- Group Design and Requirements
  - Seven groups (four groups of four students, and three groups of three students)
  - Presentation eight minute maximum, strictly enforced

- On-time start of class will be strictly enforced
- If using any form of digital visual aid, send an electronic copy to Dr. Rodriguez **the day before the final presentation.**

### *In-Class Activities and Quizzes*

Unscheduled and unannounced. The student must be present to submit.

All written work must consistently adhere to an accepted style of formal writing, i.e. American Psychological Association (APA). Students are advised to carefully proofread *all* papers before submitting them. Students who need extra help with their writing should make use of the university's free tutoring services: *On-Campus Learning Center: PC 247; Online Learning Center: w3.fiu.edu*. All students must adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy of the Honors College and Florida International University.

Assignments are due on the day indicated in this syllabus or as announced by the professor. No late assignments will be permitted. All assignments that are written are to be printed out and turned in during the class meeting on the day it is due. Assignments WILL NOT be accepted via email; DO NOT email papers, unless specifically instructed to do so.

### **Grading Scale**

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	F
93	89	85	80	75	70	65	60	55

### **Religious Observances**

Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students whose religious practices coincide with class requirements or scheduling. Please make sure to notify your instructor *at the beginning of the semester* of which dates you will be absent or any anticipated problems with completing course work.

### **Physical, Mental and Sensory Challenges**

Every effort will be made, where feasible and practical, to accommodate students who are so challenged. Should you require accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center, if you have not done so already.

### **Academic Misconduct Procedures and Penalties**

In The Honors College, the term "honor" refers both to academic accomplishment and character. Students in Honors should therefore adhere to and be held to the highest standards of personal academic accountability. Academic dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, is antithetical to the very definition of being an Honors student at FIU. Consequently, an Honors College student found responsible for academic misconduct will be dismissed from the College.

An Honors faculty member may bring charges of academic misconduct against an Honors student if the faculty member suspects plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. The faculty member will decide whether to pursue informal resolution, file formal resolution charges, or take no further action, and will follow the procedures outlined in the Honors College website.

### **Academic Misconduct Policy**

Registration in this course implies an acceptance of and compliance with the Honors College policies for students and the FIU Code of Academic Integrity. Please refer to the following documents for additional information:

FIU Code of Academic Integrity: <http://undergrad.fiu.edu/academic-integrity/index.html>.

FIU Honors College Plagiarism Policy: <http://honors.fiu.edu/students/policies/#misconduct>.

### **Student Portfolios**

The Honors College will be using a portfolio method to assess students' learning outcomes. The portfolio method allows for maximum flexibility in gauging student learning. You will decide (with instructor consultation) what "artifacts" or assignments to include for consideration in your portfolios to demonstrate successful achievement of each of the student learning outcomes. See <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/portfolio/>.

Portfolios provide a rich context for students to show what they have learned and to explain their learning process. Because the Honors curriculum is meant to be thought provoking and reflective, student self-assessment through portfolios will facilitate learning and provide in-depth assessment.

Each Honors College course includes at least one assignment that could potentially fit portfolio requirements.

### **Community Service**

As always, Honors College students must also complete 20 volunteer service hours. These hours DO NOT count toward the 20 citizenship points discussed above. See <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/community-service/>.

### **Honors Education in the ARTS (HEARTS)**

The HEARTS program is designed to give Honors College students opportunities to "explore and appreciate different artistic and cultural traditions and modes of artistic expression. HEARTS will also serve as a clearinghouse (and curatorial framework) for our students to experience the arts on campus and in the community by providing them with information about cultural activities and access to performances with free or discounted tickets. See: <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/hearts/>.

### **Global Learning Objectives**

This course has been certified as meeting the university's Global Learning requirement. The current affairs assignment will satisfy all three of the Honors College Global Learning Objectives.

*Global Awareness:* Through your engagement in the current affairs assignment, you will demonstrate knowledge of the interrelated dynamics (social-cultural, political, economic, etc.) that shape the diverse thinking of multiple figures in diverse cultural contexts.

*Global Perspective:* Through your engagement in the current affairs assignment, you will be able to analyze the multiple causal forces that shape the perspectives of historical individuals — economic, political, sociological, technological, cultural, etc.

*Global Engagement:* Through your engagement in the current affairs assignment and research proposal, you will demonstrate a willingness to engage in evidence-based investigation in order to solve a global issue.

*Global Learning Co-Curricular Activity:* You will perform at least twenty hours of Community Service per academic year either through the Honors College service partnerships or through other community service projects and/or events. If you want to apply this service to your graduation portfolio, be sure to document your hours.

This syllabus and the following calendar are tentative and thus subject to change. Changes will be announced in class or by email sent to students' FIU address.

## COURSE CALENDAR (subject to change)

*All dates are tentative, and the instructor holds the right to change due dates and presentation dates, providing ample notice to students.*

<b>Class Meeting</b>	<b>Topic of Discussion</b>	<b>Readings/Assignments (Links on Blackboard)</b>
Tuesday Aug 21	Overview of syllabus, review course expectations, discuss group and individual assignments, begin discussion of course themes: psychosocial basis of behavior and its relation to health and well-being	
Thursday Aug 23	Overview of Research Methods and Design	<i>Readings:</i> BP, Ch 2, Sec 1 (The Scientific Method)
Tuesday Aug 28	Theories and Hypothesis Testing	<b><i>Due: Current Affairs Discussion #1</i></b>
Thursday Aug 30	Research Design: the heart of the scientific method	<i>Readings:</i> BP Ch 2, Secs 2&3 (Types of Research Studies & Methods of Collecting Data)
Tuesday Sep 04	Crash course in stats...just the basics	<i>Readings:</i> BP Ch 2, Sec 4 (Analyzing and Interpreting Data)
Thursday Sep 06	Overview of psychological theories: what causes behavior?	<i>Readings:</i> IBM (Ch1, Understanding Human Behavior) <b><i>Due: Chapter Discussion (Ch 1)</i></b>
Tuesday Sep 11	The Psychobiological Perspective: Neural communication, brain functioning, sensation and perception	<i>Readings:</i> BB Ch 36 (Sensory Systems); BP Ch 4 Sec 2 (Sensory Processes); BPh Ch 13 & 15 (Nervous System and Special Senses) <b><i>Due: Current Affairs Discussion #2</i></b>
Thursday Sep 13	The Psychobiological Perspective: Neural communication, brain functioning, sensation and perception	<i>Readings:</i> BP Ch 4, Sec 3 & 4 (Perception) <b><i>Due: Article Critique #1</i></b>
Tuesday Sep 18		<i>Readings:</i> IBM (Ch 8, The Brain & Behavior), <b><i>Due: Chapter Discussion (Ch 8)</i></b>
Thursday Sep 20	Memory and Cognition: Functioning, cognition and attention, language formation	<i>Readings:</i> BP Ch 8 (Cognition), Ch 7 (Memory), BP Ch 9 (Language) <b><i>Due: Current Affairs Discussion #3</i></b>
Tuesday Sep 25		
Thursday Sep 27		
Tuesday Oct 2	Memory and Cognition: Functioning, cognition and attention, language formation	<i>Readings:</i> IBM (Ch 9, Cognition, Behavior, & Well-Being) <b><i>Due: Chapter Discussion (Ch 9)</i></b>
Thursday Oct 4		<b><i>Due: Current Affairs Discussion #4</i></b>
Tuesday Oct 9	Motivation and Emotion: Needs, Drives, Bio Perspective on Emotions, Cognitive Perspective on Emotions	<i>Readings:</i> BP Ch 11 (Motivation), Ch 12 (Emotion) <i>Readings:</i> IBM (Ch 6, Motivation & Behavior) <b><i>Due: Chapter Discussion (Ch 6)</i></b>

Thursday Oct 11	Motivation and Emotion: Needs, Drives, Bio Perspective on Emotions, Cognitive Perspective on Emotions	<b>Due: Article Critique #2</b>
Tuesday Oct 16		
Thursday Oct 18	Behavioral Conditioning and Learning: Associative Learning (Classical and Operant Conditioning), Social Learning	Readings: BP Ch 6, Secs 2 & 3 (Classical and Operant Conditioning) Readings: IBM (Ch 2, Behavior & Well-Being) <b>Due: Chapter Discussion (Ch 2)</b>
Tuesday Oct 23	Behavioral Conditioning and Learning: Associative Learning (Classical and Operant Conditioning), Social Learning	Readings: BP Ch 6, Sec 4 (Social Learning Theory) <b>Due: Current Affairs Discussion #5</b>
Thursday Oct 25		
Tuesday Oct 30	Personality and Identity: Psychoanalytic Perspective, Empirical Perspective (OCEAN), Biological Perspective	Readings: IBM (Ch 7, Personality, Behavior, & Well-Being) <b>Due: Chapter Discussion (Ch 7)</b>
Thursday Nov 01	Personality and Identity: Psychoanalytic Perspective, Empirical Perspective (OCEAN), Biological Perspective	Readings: BP Ch 15 (Personality) <b>Due: Current Affairs Discussion #6</b>
Tuesday Nov 06		
Thursday Nov 08	Identity and Social Interaction: Situational effects on behavior, attribution theory, social influence, and group identity	Readings: BP Ch 19 (Social Psychology), Ch 19 Sec 3 (Social Influence) <b>Due: Current Affairs Discussion #7</b>
Tuesday Nov 13	Identity and Social Interaction: Situational effects on behavior, attribution theory, social influence, and group identity	Readings: IBM (Ch 5, Identity & Behavior) <b>Due: Chapter Discussion (Ch 5)</b>
Thursday Nov 15		
Tuesday Nov 20	Understanding Stress and Well-Being: Diathesis-stress model, transactional theories, resource theories, biological and cognitive bases	BB Ch 37 Secs 3 & 5 (Hormonal Regulation of Stress and Endocrine Glands); BP Ch 16 (Stress and Health Psychology) <b>Due: Article Critique #3</b>
Thursday Nov 22	Thanksgiving Day Holiday...NO CLASS!!!	
Tuesday Nov 27	Understanding Stress and Well-Being: Diathesis-stress model, transactional theories, resource theories, biological and cognitive bases	<b>Due: Chapter Discussion (TBD)</b> <b>Due: Current Affairs Discussion #8</b>
Thursday Nov 29	Presentation of Ad Campaigns	<b>Due: Presentation of Ad Campaigns</b>
Dec 4 & 6	Final week of classes	<b>GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR FINALS!!!</b>