

Psychology 491 (A01)  
Self-damaging behaviors  
Winter 2016, MTh 10:00-11:20 a.m.  
Clearihue Building C113

Instructor: Dr. Brianna Turner, Dept. of Psychology

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Office Hours: Mondays 2:30-4:30

Course website: Information about the links to the readings, presentations, and papers will be posted on Moodle.

### Course Description

Many people engage in behaviors knowing they may have negative health consequences. In this course, we will work to answer two questions: First, why do people engage in these potentially harmful behaviors? Second, how can we help people reduce or stop these behaviors? The course will provide an overview of current theories of motivation and behavior, and will examine recent empirical findings that can explain why people do harmful things to themselves. Students will be expected to participate in weekly discussions, act as discussion leader, turn in four brief thought papers, and complete a final paper. The course should appeal to students with interest in clinical and counseling psychology, life-span development, social psychology, and health sciences.

### Prerequisites

The pre-requisites for this course are Psyc 201 and a minimum third-year standing. Students who remain in courses for which they do not have the prerequisites do so at their own risk. Those who complete courses without prerequisites are not exempt from having to complete the prerequisite course(s) at some later date if such courses are required for the degree program. Given the demand for this course students who do not attend class in the first week (and do not provide prompt notification to the instructor if valid circumstances prevent attendance) will likely be dropped from class registration.

### Registration

The final day to add courses is September 23. Please check your registration before this date to ensure you are registered only in courses you have been attending.

### Textbook & Readings

There is no textbook for this course. Most of the readings are available as electronic files through the UVic library (i.e., e-journals, e-books). The readings not available as electronic files have been put on course reserve in the library. Information about the different readings (e.g., links) is available on the Moodle website.

### Grading

Your course grade will be based on in-class participation (15%; attendance will be taken on a random basis), serving as discussion leader (15%), four short (1 single-spaced page) thought papers (4 x 5% each = 20%), and the final paper + paper proposal (10% paper proposal, 40%

final paper). Final grades will be determined based on the following distribution:

A+	= 90-100%	B+	= 77-79%	C+	= 65-69%	F ≤	49%
A	= 85-89%	B	= 73-76%	C	= 60-64%		
A-	= 80-84%	B-	= 70-72%	D	= 50-59%		

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the Important Course Policy Information (attached).

Class Participation. As a seminar-style course, the quality of our weekly discussions has a crucial impact on the quality of the course. Therefore, students are expected to prepare for class (i.e., have completed readings in advance), regularly attend, and actively participate in class discussions. Attendance will be considered in assigning participation marks.

Discussion Leader. Each student will serve as the discussion leader for one class. The discussion leader will provide: (a) a 20-minute summary of the readings; (b) a list of five discussion questions which will be sent to classmates at least 2-3 days before class (by 10 a.m. Friday for Monday classes; by 10 a.m. Tuesday for Thursday classes); (c) moderation of discussion. Not more than 2 students may sign up for one topic. Students must present all the readings assigned for the topic they select. Detailed information on the format and requirements of the discussion leader responsibilities will be provided on Moodle.

Thought Papers. You will complete four short (1 single-spaced page) thought papers throughout the course. Please see the Schedule below for deadlines. Thought papers will be responses to brief “writing prompts” (a central question or controversy from the material so far) provided by the instructor. Prompts will be available on Moodle at least one week before each thought paper is due; however, I recommend that you wait until after we have had a chance to discuss the readings as a group before finalizing your thought paper so that you can make use of our discussions in your response. Each thought paper is worth 5%, for a total of 20%.

Final Paper. The final paper is intended to provide you with the opportunity to explore theories of self-damaging behavior and their implications in more detail. The paper will have two parts: 1) you will provide an account of why people engage in a particular self-damaging behavior, based on one or more theories we covered in this course, and 2) you will propose an intervention that could reduce the behavior, based on the theory you covered in section 1. The intervention you propose could be a prevention program, therapeutic approach, biological treatment, or public outreach campaign (e.g., youtube, social media). You should also discuss strengths and limitations of the intervention you selected (why might it work, and why might it not work, based on what we’ve learned about behavior change). I would suggest choosing one self-damaging behavior that we have discussed in this course to focus on (if you would like to focus on a behavior that we have not discussed, or intend to target multiple behaviors, please come to my office hours to discuss this with me first). Papers should incorporate a minimum of 6 references, at least 3 of which must not be on the reading list. Assignments received after 10 a.m. on the due day will receive a deduction of 10% per day.

Length: 9-12 pages, including title page and references

Due: Thursday, Dec. 1, 10:00 a.m. (to be handed in at the beginning of class). Only

hard copies are accepted.

Late penalty fee: 10 points are subtracted for each 24 hours

Format: APA standard (1 inch margins all around, double spaced, 12 point font)

Final Paper Proposal. In order to get feedback on your ideas for your final paper, you will exchange an outline of your paper with a peer. Outlines will be due on November 7, and we will use the class time in November 14 to provide feedback to one another. Your paper proposal should include the following sections: Summary of the behavior and theory you will focus on and why you chose it, list of references you plan to use, and a summary of the intervention you plan to propose. Failure to submit an outline or to participate in the peer review discussion will result in a 10% reduction from the final paper grade. I strongly encourage you to use my office hours to discuss your ideas and outline.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS & DUE DATES**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Class Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>
1	Sept 8	Introduction and overview	
2	Sept 12, 15	What are self-damaging behaviors?	
3	Sept 19, 22	Risk, causality and the development of etiological models	Thought Paper 1 Due Sept 19 @ 10 a.m.
4	Sept 26, 29	Biological Systems 1: Reward and inhibitory control	Thought Paper 2 Due Sept 26 @ 10 a.m.
5	Oct 3, 6	Biological Systems 2: Arousal and regulatory systems	
6	Oct 13	Cognitive Systems: Decision-making	
7	Oct 17, 20	Emotional Systems 1: Negative valence	
8	Oct 24, 27	Emotional Systems 2: Positive valence	Thought Paper 3 Due Oct 27 @ 10 a.m.
9	Oct 31, Nov 3	Social Systems: Peers, families, cultures	
10	Nov 7	Integrative models of self-damaging behaviors	Final Paper Proposal Due Nov 7 @ 10 a.m.
11	Nov 14, 17	Intervention & Prevention 1	Peer Review of Proposals Nov 14
12	Nov 21, 24	Intervention & Prevention 2	Thought Paper 4 Due Nov 24 @ 10 a.m.
13	Nov 28, Dec 1	Intervention & Prevention 3; Summary and wrap-up	Final Paper Due Dec 1 @ 10 a.m.

**Note:** There will be no class October 10 (Thanksgiving) or November 10 (Winter Break).

**Important Course Policy Information**  
**Winter 2016-2017**

**Prerequisites**

Students who remain in courses for which they do not have the prerequisites do so at their own risk. Students who complete courses without prerequisites ARE NOT exempt from having to complete the prerequisite course(s) if such courses are required for the degree program.

**Program Requirements**

For more information see pages 383-386 of the UVic Calendar 2016-17.

**Registration Status**

Students are responsible for verifying their registration status. Registration status may be verified using My Page, View Schedule. Course adds and drops will not be processed after the deadlines set out in the current UVic Calendar.

**Commitment to Inclusivity and Diversity**

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and supportive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

***In the Event of Illness, Accident or Family Affliction (See UVic Calendar, 2016-17, p. 59-60)***

- ***What to do if you miss an exam other than one scheduled during the formal examination period***

Do not apply at Records Services for a "Request for Academic Concession". Instead submit documentation of the illness, accident or family affliction directly to your course instructor (or designated teaching assistant).

- ***What to do if you miss an exam scheduled during the formal exam period***  
**Apply at Records Services for a "Request for Academic Concession", normally within 10 working days of the end of the formal examination period. Records Services will forward the form to the instructor. If the concession is granted the instructor will determine how to deal with the situation (for example, a deferred exam). Where a concession is not applied for or where such application is denied, an N grade will be entered on the student's academic record.**

**OR, you can download the Request for Academic Concession form here:**

**<http://www.uvic.ca/registrar/assets/docs/record-forms/rac.pdf>**

- ***What to do if you require additional time to complete course requirements***  
**Apply at Records Services for a "Request for Academic Concession", normally within 10 working days of the end of the formal examination period. Records Services will forward the form to the instructor. If the concession is granted the instructor will determine how to deal with the situation. Where a concession is not applied for or where such application is denied, an N grade will be entered on the student's academic record.**

**OR, you can download the Request for Academic Concession form here:**

**<http://www.uvic.ca/registrar/assets/docs/record-forms/rac.pdf>**

**Policy on Academic Integrity including Plagiarism and Cheating**

The Department of Psychology fully endorses and intends to enforce rigorously the Senate Policy on Academic integrity (<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2016-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html>), p. 55-58, UVic Calendar 2016-17). It is of utmost importance that students who do their work honestly be protected from those who do not. Because this policy is in place to ensure that

students carry out and benefit from the learning activities assigned in each course, it is expected that students will cooperate in its implementation.

The offences defined by the policy can be summarized briefly as follows:

1. **Plagiarism.** You must make sure that the work you submit is your work and not someone else's. There are proper procedures for citing the works of others. The student is responsible for being aware of and using these procedures.
2. **Multiple Submission.** Only under exceptional circumstances may a work submitted to fulfill an academic requirement be used to satisfy another similar requirement. The student is responsible for clarifying this with the instructor(s) involved.
3. **Falsifying Materials Subject to Academic Evaluation.** This includes falsification of data, use of commercially prepared essays, using information from the Internet without proper citation, citing sources from which material is not actually obtained, etc.
4. **Cheating on Assignments, Tests, and Examinations.** You may not copy the work of others in or out of class; you may not give your work to others for the purpose of copying; you may not use unauthorized material or equipment during examinations or tests; and you may not impersonate or allow yourself to be impersonated by another at an examination. The Department of Psychology has a policy of not making old examinations available for study purposes. Therefore, use of old exams without the express written permission of the instructor constitutes cheating by the user, and abetting of cheating by the person who provided the exam.
5. **Being an Accessory to Offences.** This means that helping another student to cheat (for instance, by showing or communicating to them answers to an assignment, or by allowing them to view answers on an exam) is an academic offence.

Instructors are expected to make every effort to prevent cheating and plagiarism. This may include the assignment of seating for examinations, asking students to move during examinations, requests to see student identification cards, and other measures as appropriate. Instructors also have available to them a variety of tools and procedures to check for Internet and electronic media-based cheating. In instances of suspected or actual plagiarism or cheating, instructors, following prescribed procedures, are authorized to take steps consistent with the degree of the offence. These measures will range from a zero on the test or assignment or a failing grade for the course, probation within a program to temporary or even permanent suspension from the University.

Rights of Appeal are described in the Policy on Academic Integrity in the University calendar (on p. 55-58 in 2016-17).

**The definitive source** for information on Academic Integrity is the University Calendar (p. 55-58 in 2016-17) (<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2016-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html>)

**Other useful resources on Plagiarism and Cheating include:**

1. The Learning Skills program: <http://www.coun.uvic.ca/learning/index.html>
2. The Ombudsperson's office: <http://www.uvss.uvic.ca/ombudsperson/pubsguides/plagiarism.pdf>