PSYCHOLOGY 470 (Section 001)
Psychological Perspectives on Real-World Problems
– Course Syllabus –

Class Time: Fall 2018 Tues/Thurs 1:00 - 2:20 PM
Location: EV2 2002

COURSE INSTRUCTORS: ***COURSE TA:***

K. Yourie Kim   **Mona Zhu**   **Martyn Gabel**
Office: PAS 4230   **Office:** PAS 4044   **Office:** PAS 3203
Office Hours: **Office Hours:**   **Office Hours:**
Wednesdays,   Tuesdays,   Thursdays,
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM   4:00 PM - 6:00 PM   12:00 PM - 1:00 PM

Course email: Please read through the **Housekeeping** section below for more detail

Course Description

What makes it so difficult to hit the gym regularly? Why are there still so few women in leadership roles despite advancements in gender equality? Why is it so hard to combat climate change? These are some of the real-world problems that psychologists are investigating every day. In this course, we will be joining in on this investigation by examining how different psychological principles can: (1) help us understand these problems, and (2) present potential strategies for addressing them. Throughout the term, students will have the opportunity to exercise their knowledge via group discussions and hands-on/applied projects. By the end of the course, students will walk away with the tools needed to critically assess different real-world problems they may face by examining these issues through a psychological lens.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to:

1. Read and assess academic papers critically for psychological principles/theories and how they are applied in real-world problems/issues
2. Articulate how psychological principles can be used to explain real-world issues
3. Apply psychological principles/theories to find potential solutions for real-world problems at the individual, community, or societal level

Course Format

As a capstone course, the current course will involve small and large group discussions, as well as a course project where students can apply their knowledge to real-world problems. Each week, we will be introducing a new topic during class on Tuesday (i.e., lecture), followed by discussions of that topic during the Thursday class to help students start thinking about how real-world problems can be informed by psychological theories/principles.

Housekeeping

To avoid any confusion/issues and to make things easier for all parties, we ask that you please follow these guidelines when sending us emails.

Questions: Please check the syllabus **BEFORE** emailing the instructor/TA with questions. All questions and emails related to the course should be sent to **psych470.sec001@gmail.com**. Please **do not** send emails to our uWaterloo email addresses as we need a system to keep track of which section of the course students are in.

Email inquiries will be answered within 24 hours of receipt (not including weekends). Email inquiries should be limited to one question; students who have multiple questions should visit during office hours or schedule an appointment to meet with the instructors or TA. Note that due to the number of students in this class, emails may not be answered 24 hours before project deadlines; please plan accordingly.

Appointments Outside Office Hours: If students would like to set up appointments outside of the instructor/TA office hours, please specify in the body of the email (1) the reason for the appointment, (2) a list of potential meeting times and (3) with whom you would like to set up the appointment. The more information and context you can provide in your first email, the better we will be able to help you.

Course Update/Information: Students are responsible for checking LEARN regularly and any email sent to their official uWaterloo email address for any course update and time-sensitive information.

Course Assessments

10 Weekly Quizzes (based on readings)	30% (3% each)
Project Proposal (upon completion)	5%
Poster Presentation	20%
Final Report	
Final Proposal	20%
Data Collection/Recommendations	25%

Course Readings

Whether one is interested in careers in academia or the private sector, being able to understand and articulate information from primary and secondary source material will be an important skill to develop. The weekly readings for the course will involve peer-reviewed journal or popular press articles. In the case of journal articles, the material is typically much more challenging than textbooks so you should be prepared to read a given article more than once. All readings will be available on LEARN at least one week before each Thursday class.

We will be providing you with some questions to help guide your reading of the weekly articles. These questions will be posted on LEARN.

Weekly Quizzes

At the beginning of each Thursday session, students will individually complete a short quiz about the readings and discussion of the week. The quiz will consist of 2-3 questions based on the article. There will be a total of 10 quizzes throughout the course. However, we do understand that extraneous circumstances may come up. Therefore, to accommodate these circumstances, we allow a **maximum of 2 quizzes** that can be made up; however, students MUST contact us by 10:00 AM the following Friday, at the latest. Quizzes may only be made up in person during one of the instructors' or TA's office hours.

Course Project

The course project is designed to help students to realize how psychological principles/theories may manifest in a real-world context as well as how these principles can also help to inform social and workplace issues, or be used to create behavioural interventions. Students will be applying their knowledge from lectures, in-class discussions, or from their own literature search and propose a solution to a real-world problem of their own choosing. Each component of the project is discussed in more detail below.

Project Proposal: Students will identify an issue, problem, or behaviour that they would like to see changed. Students should pick an issue or problem that they are passionate about, find meaningful, or is self-relevant. This way, students will not only have the opportunity to apply their knowledge from the course, but the solutions will be meaningful and unique to their experience.

Students will have the option of choosing **one of two types** of projects: a behavioural intervention or propose a solution for a social or workplace issue. More details about the different types of project proposal will be discussed in class. Once the proposal has been approved by the instructors/TA, students may begin literature search and/or data collection.

Poster Presentation: Students will present their project visually in poster format. This provides an opportunity for students to showcase their knowledge as well as to exchange ideas between peers.

Final Report: The final report aims for students to assess the strategies that they proposed in their projects. In order to guide students' writing, the report will the consist of answering a set of questions about their chosen behavioral intervention/social or workplace issue. More details about the final report will be provided in class.

Detailed Course Schedule

TIMELINE	TOPICS & READINGS
Week 1 Sept 4-7	Course Introduction
Theme 1: Past Experience Influences Present Perception	
Week 2 Sept 10-14	Our Heuristics About People and Social Groups
Week 3 Sept 17-21	From Fake News to Poor Habits: Heuristics and Biases
Theme 2: Interpersonal Dynamics	
Week 4 Sept 24-28	From Heuristics to Social Behaviours
Week 5 Oct 1-5	Cooperation and Conformity
Theme 3: Explicit and Implicit Influences on Behaviours	
Week 6 Oct 8-12	Nudging People in the "Right" Direction (Thurs class only)
Week 7 Oct 15-19	When Social Norms Don't Help: Challenges and Strategies
Week 8 Oct 22-26	Ethics of Behaviour Intervention **Project Proposal Due Monday, October 22nd, 12:00 AM**
Theme 4: Impact of Environment	
Week 9 Oct 29-Nov 2	People Matter: The Influence of Social Culture
Week 10 Nov 5-9	Context Matters: The Hidden Effects of Environmental Cues
Theme 5: Technology	
Week 11 Nov 12-16	Is Technology Simply Creating New Heuristics To Manage? **Latest start date for collecting data for the behavioural intervention project is Monday, November 9th**
Week 12 Nov 19-23	Is Technology Making Us Dumber?
Week 13 Nov 26-30	**Poster presentation; posters must be handed in to instructors' office by Monday, November 26th at 5 PM**

Laptop Use

The use of a laptop in class is an effective means by which to take notes and record comments related to course content. However, some students use a laptop in class to browse the internet, engage in email correspondence, and/or work on material associated with other courses. These activities distract those in adjacent seats and interfere with their efforts to learn. For this reason, all students who intend to use a laptop in class for activities unrelated to the course should sit in the last row of the classroom.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage and the Arts Academic Integrity webpage for more information.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

Concerns About a Course Policy or Decision

Informal Stage: We in the Psychology Department take great pride in the high quality of our program and our instructors. Though infrequent, we know that students occasionally find themselves in situations of conflict with their instructors over course policies or grade assessments. If such a conflict arises, the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Affairs (Richard Eibach) is available for consultation and to mediate a resolution between the student and instructor: Email: reibach@uwaterloo.ca; Ph 519-888-4567 ext. 38790

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact Richard Eibach, the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Affairs who will provide further assistance; reibach@uwaterloo.ca.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Note for students with disabilities: The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Accommodation for course requirements
- Students requesting accommodation for course requirements (assignments, midterm tests, final exams, etc.) due to illness should do the following:
    - Consult the University's [examination regulations](#) for information about procedures and policies for requesting accommodations
    - Seek medical treatment as soon as possible
    - Obtain documentation of the illness with a completed uWaterloo [Verification of Illness Form](#)
    - Submit that form to the instructor within 48 hours. Students in Centre for Extended Learning (CEL) courses must submit their confirmation of the illness to CEL
    - (if possible) inform the instructor by the due date for the course requirement that you will be unable to meet the deadline and that documentation will be forthcoming.

Official version of the course outline

If there is a discrepancy between the hard copy outline (i.e., if students were provided with a hard copy at the first class) and the outline posted on LEARN, the outline on LEARN will be deemed the official version. Outlines on LEARN may change as instructors develop a course, but they become final as of the first class meeting for the term.