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**Psychology 501.23**

**Eating Disorders**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Kristin M. von Ranson	<b>Lecture Location:</b>	Administration 253
<b>Phone:</b>	403-220-7085	<b>Lecture Days/Time:</b>	Thurs. 15:30-18:15
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<b>Office Hours:</b>	By appointment		

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**Course Description and Goals**

This course covers major topics in the field of eating disorders, including core and associated symptoms (what eating disorders and related problems look like), diagnoses (how we classify eating disorders), etiology (what causes eating disorders), prevention (how we can prevent eating disorders), assessment (how we measure eating disorders), treatment (how we intervene), and implications (the effects that disorders have on the individual, their family and society). Students will have opportunities to consider eating disorders from different perspectives (e.g., sociocultural, biological) and will gain experience critically evaluating eating disorder-related research. My overall goal is to create an environment where we can all be actively engaged in learning about these important and relevant topics. The course is structured for learning to occur in multiple ways, including via readings, discussions, lectures, videos, writing assignments, and student presentations. This is a seminar course, so it is critical that you arrive prepared and that you contribute actively throughout.

By the end of this course, you will be able to describe the characteristic symptoms of eating disorders and related issues (e.g., body image, body dysmorphic disorder), as well as some key psychological theories, treatment and prevention strategies, and research findings. Throughout the course, you will be expected to effectively communicate their ideas and thinking in written form, in formal presentations, and in informal discussions.

**Prerequisites**

Psyc 312 (Experimental Design and Quantitative Methods for Psychology) and consent of the Department

**Required Texts**

Agras, W. S. (2010). *The Oxford Handbook of Eating Disorders*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
Liu, A. (2011). *Restoring Our Bodies, Reclaiming Our Lives: Guidance and Reflections on Recovery from Eating Disorders*. Boston: Trumpeter Books

Both texts will be available in the University Bookstore. Article and chapter readings, and due dates, will be available via Blackboard (<https://blackboard.ucalgary.ca>).

## Evaluation

### Summary:

- Participation: 20% of course grade
- In-class presentation: 15% of course grade
- Research critiques (3): 15% of course grade in total (5% each)
- Seminar paper: 50% of course grade in total

### *Class participation*

It is expected that you will prepare for and participate in class discussions. Effective participation involves:

- (1) Coming to class, and arriving on time.
- (2) Complete the reading and the assigned written work before class.
- (3) Taking notes on the readings and other assignments to help you organize your thoughts in preparation for making points in class.
- (4) Coming to class with at least three comments or questions you wish to offer.
- (5) Making comments and asking questions that pertain to your thoughts, opinions, and experiences AND the facts and arguments presented in the assigned readings.
- (6) Listening carefully to what others have to say.
- (7) To help create a safe, productive environment for discussion, students are asked to present questions and comments in a respectful manner, to listen to others with an open mind, and to maintain confidentiality of any personal experiences shared in class.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Attendance is required. If you miss more than one class, please provide me with a University excuse (see below). Please speak to me if you anticipate needing to miss a class.

I will provide feedback and provisional class participation marks to each student midway through the course to let you know how you are doing. Students who attend and actively and thoughtfully participate in each class discussion, as described above, will achieve full credit for participation.

### *Research critiques*

To facilitate class discussion and to help students improve their writing, each student will complete three short writing assignments between January 11<sup>th</sup> and March 19<sup>th</sup>. For these assignments, I will ask you to find one recent (2006 or later) empirical article (e.g., see *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, or *European Eating Disorders Review*) pertaining to the assigned readings for a class, and to write a 2-page summary and critique of the article. A hard copy of the critique and article are due to me at the start of the relevant class. If you are unable to attend class on the day a research critique is due, you are responsible for trading dates with a classmate and letting me know. Critiques not submitted on the day they are due will receive a 0. We will determine the schedule of due dates for each student during the first class.

Guidelines for the research critiques. In writing your research critiques, do the following.

- (1) Explain, briefly, the theoretical background, i.e., the rationale, of the study. What theory, previous findings, and logic led up to the present study?
- (2) Explain the hypotheses being tested. What specifically is being predicted, based on the rationale?
- (3) Summarize the methodology. Who were the participants? What was done to measure the key variables? What is the research design?
- (4) Summarize the results in relation to the hypotheses. What was found, in relation to what was

- predicted?
- (5) Summarize the implications of the study, according to the discussion presented by the author(s). What did THEY conclude?
  - (6) \*\*What do YOU conclude, based on your reading of the results and based on your understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the study? What was convincing about the study? What was not convincing?

*Note:* Each research critique must be no more 2 pages long, double-spaced, with 11- to 12-point font and a minimum of 1-inch margins. Remember that you are providing a summary and critical analysis, not a retelling, of the study.

Seminar Paper (200 possible points in total, divided as indicated below)

A major focus of the course is the Seminar Paper. It has six purposes:

- (1) To enable you to research and organize information about a topic of special interest related to eating disorders that is not covered extensively, well, or at all in class.
- (2) To enable you to explore a specific question, issue, or theory concerning a topic. For example, a paper on *Dieting* is not acceptable because it is too vague; a paper on *Is Dieting a Risk Factor for Disordered Eating?* or *Dieting and Binge-Eating Disorder* or *Ethnic Differences in Body Image and Dieting* are acceptable topics because they involve a question, issue or theory.
- (3) To encourage you to integrate information and ideas from class material with their own specific interests.
- (4) To enable you to conduct a critical, integrative review of the literature that considers a model or models, including theory, methodology, and data on a specific topic, and to generate one or more specific research hypotheses.
- (5) To enable you to receive and use intensive direction about their research and writing.
- (6) To provide a basis for your class presentation.

Possible Topics for Seminar Papers

Risks and benefits of athletics	Bodybuilding, body image, and steroids
Sexual orientation and eating disorders	Eating disorders and substance misuse
Are eating disorders addictions?	Eating disorders in prepubertal children
Compulsive overeating and BED	Genetics of disordered eating
Stice's dual pathway model of bulimia nervosa	Pro-anorexia/pro-bulimia web sites
Pregnancy, body image, and disordered eating	The abuse of exercise
Emotions, distress, and overeating	Dating, sexual development, and body image
Body dysmorphic disorder	Neuroimaging and eating disorders
Eating disorders and OCD	Body image and cosmetic surgery
Mood disorders and eating disorders	Weight-related teasing and criticism
Atypical and/or subclinical eating disorders	Lowe's concept of weight suppression
Sexual abuse and disordered eating	Calorie restriction for longevity

Proposal (25 points).

Each student is required to select a paper topic and submit a written proposal by the start of class on **Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup>**. The proposal should be 1 to 2 double-spaced, typed pages. It should provide a working title, an explanation of 2-4 specific issues or questions you wish to address, and at least five references (in APA style) for your initial sources. These references should be research articles, chapters in books, or special topic books. It is inappropriate to rely heavily on a textbook (e.g., introductory or abnormal psychology) or on popular press articles. You are encouraged to meet with me before January 27<sup>th</sup> to discuss a possible topic, sources, etc.

First Draft (75 points).

The paper is due to me by the start of class on **Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup>**. The paper must be typed, double-spaced, with at least 1-inch margins and formatted using APA style (e.g., headings, citations, and references). The maximum length is 20 pages. This paper is not to be considered a "rough draft." It is to be the best job you can do, a final product in your eyes. There will be a penalty of 5 points for each day late, including weekends. In order to encourage the reading and use of empirical papers and with appropriate exceptions (e.g., a paper on the history of bulimia nervosa), *at least five (5) of the cited references must be research papers* (i.e., papers presenting statistical results) from *research-oriented journals*. You are encouraged to meet with me to discuss this paper as needed as you are researching and writing it.

Between March 22<sup>nd</sup> and March 29<sup>th</sup>, that is, in most instances before the student has to make her/his in-class presentation, I will critically evaluate each paper and return to you written recommendations for revision. The paper and written evaluation(s) will be returned by the start of class on March 29<sup>th</sup>, if not before.

Completed Seminar Paper (100 points).

Students must turn in a final revision of their seminar paper. The revisions will be determined by (1) my feedback on the paper; (2) independent efforts by the student; and (3) in some cases, feedback from students and from me in the course of class presentations.

The maximum length of the completed paper is 20 pages, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and APA-style citations and references. The completed seminar paper must also be accompanied by the previous draft (no matter how much you have scribbled on it). The final revision is due no later than 4:30 p.m. on **Monday, April 16<sup>th</sup>**. Late submissions will be subject to a penalty of 10% per day, including weekends. *Students must turn in a completed, good faith revision of their first effort in order to pass the class.*

Class Presentation

Presentations in 400-level psychology courses are common. The experience will not only help you consolidate your knowledge in an area, but will help prepare you for future oral reports, whether in graduate school of any kind (such as medical school, business school, or a master's or doctoral program) or the business world.

During approximately the last four weeks of class, students will present material from their seminar papers. The in-class presentations will be 20-25 minutes long, including at least 5 minutes for discussion and/or questions. Each student must meet at least two weeks beforehand with me to propose an outline and a strategy for the material to be presented, as well as to select something for other students to read in preparation for the presentation. Missed presentations will receive a grade of 0. In the

unfortunate event that a student is unable to attend class on the day of his/her presentation, he/she is responsible for trading with a classmate and informing me in advance.

### Important Notes with Respect to Grading

This is a discussion-based course. The discussions will rely heavily on the assigned work, so *it is crucial that you complete all assigned readings and papers on time.*

All work must be handed in, even if it is late. *Failure to hand in any assignment will result in an automatic F in the course.*

It is the student's responsibility to be aware of, and to follow diligently, the University's policies for academic integrity (see below). If you have questions about how they apply to this course, consult with me. In general, it is acceptable to speak with other students in order to clarify the assignment and assist each other in locating references. However, all written work must be your own, original creation, with proper citations.

### **Grading Scale**

A+	96-100%	B+	80-84%	C+	67-71%	D+	54-58%
A	90-95%	B	76-79%	C	63-66%	D	50-53%
A-	85-89%	B-	72-75%	C-	59-62%	F	0-49%

To determine final letter grades, final percentage grades will be rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage (e.g., 89.5% will be rounded up to 90% = A but 89.4% will be rounded down to 89% = A-).

### **Tentative Class Schedule**

Date	Topic
R Jan 12	Class begins. Introduction, organization, course goals
R Jan 19	
F Jan 20	<i>Last day to drop a course with tuition refund.</i>
M Jan 23	<i>Last day for registration/change of registration.</i>
R Jan 26	Paper proposal due.
R Feb 2	
R Feb 9	
R Feb 16	
R Feb 23	<i>Reading days. No lecture.</i>
R Mar 1	Provisional class participation marks will be distributed.
R Mar 8	Paper first draft due.
R Mar 15	
R Mar 22	Class presentations.
R Mar 29	Class presentations.
R Apr 5	Class presentations.
R Apr 12	Last class. Class presentations.
F Apr 13	<i>Last day to withdraw.</i>

**Reappraisal of Grades**

A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (e.g., term paper, essay, test) has been unfairly graded, may have the work re-graded as follows. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within 15 days of being notified about the mark or of the item's return to the class. If not satisfied, the student shall immediately take the matter to the Head of the department offering the course, who will arrange for a reassessment of the work within the next 15 days. The reappraisal of term work may cause the grade to be raised, lowered, or to remain the same. If the student is not satisfied with the decision and wishes to appeal, the student shall address a letter of appeal to the Dean of the faculty offering the course within 15 days of the unfavourable decision. In the letter, the student must clearly and fully state the decision being appealed, the grounds for appeal, and the remedies being sought, along with any special circumstances that warrant an appeal of the reappraisal. The student should include as much written documentation as possible.

**Plagiarism and Other Academic Misconduct**

Intellectual honesty is the cornerstone of the development and acquisition of knowledge and requires that the contribution of others be acknowledged. Consequently, plagiarism or cheating on any assignment is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense. Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Students should examine sections of the University Calendar that present a Statement of Intellectual honesty and definitions and penalties associated with Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct.

**Academic Accommodation**

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 403-220-8237. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than 14 days after the start of this course.

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act**

The FOIP legislation disallows the practice of having student's retrieve tests and assignments from a public place. Therefore, tests and assignments may be returned to students during class/lab, or during office hours, or via the Department Office (Admin 275), or will be made available only for viewing during exam review sessions scheduled by the Department. Tests and assignments will be shredded after one year. Instructors should take care to not link students' names with their grades, UCIDs, or other FOIP-sensitive information.

### Evacuation Assembly Point

In case of an emergency evacuation during class, students must gather at the designated assembly point nearest to the classroom. The list of assembly points is found at

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>.

Please check this website and note the nearest assembly point for this course.

### Student Organizations

Psychology students may wish to join the Psychology Undergraduate Students' Association (PSYCHS). They are located in Administration 170 and may be contacted at 403-220-5567.

**Student Union VP Academic:** Phone: 403-220-3911

[suvpaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suvpaca@ucalgary.ca)

**Student Union Faculty Rep.:**

Phone: 403-220-3913

[socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca)

**Important Dates** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-schedule.html>

The last day to drop this course with no "W" notation and **still receive a tuition fee refund** is **January 20, 2012**. Last day for registration/change of registration is **January 23, 2012**. The last day to withdraw from this course is **Apr 13, 2012**.