

Syllabus
The Psychology of Self-Control (PSYC19H3)
Dr. Michael Inzlicht
Thursdays 12-2, SW128
Winter 2020

Instructor: Dr. Michael Inzlicht
Office: SY168
Phone: 416-208-4826
email: inzlicht.uts@gmail.com
Office Hours: Mondays 12:00 – 1:00

TA: Greg Depow
Office: SY162
Phone: 416-208-4868
mail: greg.depow@mail.utoronto.ca
Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description

According to prominent scholars, self-control is central to success across life domains, from school to work to relationships. Quite simply, self-control—also colloquially known as willpower—is thought to lead to the good life. In this lecture course, we will do a deep dive on self-control, examining how organisms exercise control, bringing thoughts, emotions and behaviours into line with preferred standards. This course will expose students to a number of classic and contemporary theories and empirical findings in the area of self-control. The topics covered in this course represent a broad selection of major themes in the field and each topic will provide students with the opportunity to develop their understanding of the field as well as learn how social, personality, and cognitive psychologists think about this topic. The topics covered in class include ego depletion, executive function, the neural bases of self-control, personality, motivation, goal setting, goal pursuit, and decision-making. Importantly, given recent controversies in the field of psychology, we will also spend a considerable time discussing the replication crisis, including what it means for our understanding of the psychology of self-control.

Required Text

- Baumeister, R.F., & Tierney, J. *Willpower: Rediscovering the greatest human strength*. Penguin Books
- Course Readings. The course reader will contain **required** course readings that consist of journal articles, but also magazine articles and blog posts. Available online through Quercus (under Course Documents)

Evaluation:	Date	Weight
Midterm	Feb 13	35%
Term Paper	March 26, 11:59pm	25%
Final (non-cumulative)	TBD	40%

Quercus

I will use Quercus to communicate with you (i.e. to make announcements) and so that you can each communicate with one another. Anything I hand-out in class will also be posted on Quercus; so the syllabus, class notes, class schedule, and reading list are all there. Quercus is also the place you go to log-on to and participate in the discussion board. I recommend getting quickly acquainted with Quercus and checking it on a regular basis throughout the semester for announcements and messages. Also, please make sure to update your Quercus account so that your correct email address is noted. You do not need to apply for Quercus access. If you are registered, you will automatically see this class when you log-on to the intranet. To access Quercus, log onto <http://www.utoronto.ca/>, and on the top left of the screen, you'll see a Quercus button which you should press, and then enter your UTORid and password, and voila you have access!

Discussion Forum

To help foster communication between each of you, I've created a discussion forum on Quercus. The forum should also be the first place you go when you have questions about course material. Please feel free to use this space as our virtual classroom. So, post clarification questions! These posts are valuable because they may echo many people's concerns. Remember, however, to respond to questions as well as this will enhance the classroom experience and create a self-sustaining internet community.

Lectures

The lecture slides will be posted on Quercus along with each class. The amount of overlap between lectures and required readings will vary across topics. What this means is that sometimes the lecture will be very different from the assigned readings for that week. Because exams will cover both lecture (50%) and readings (50%), you will need to both read and attend/watch the lectures.

Course Readings

The number of readings will vary per week and will sometimes include assigned chapters in our text plus additional articles that you can find on Quercus under "course readings". You can find the list of readings at the end of this syllabus. The textbook will be made available in the library in Course Reserves.

Exams

Both midterm and final will consist of multiple-choice questions (50% lectures, 50% readings). The mid-term is worth 35% of your grade and the final, 40%. Both midterm and final will take place on a date and location to be determined.

The midterm will cover lectures 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5. It will also cover all readings (from the Baumeister & Tierney and supplemental readings) assigned for lectures 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5

The final will be **non-cumulative** and will cover lectures 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10. It will also cover all readings (from the Baumeister & Tierney and supplemental readings) assigned for lectures 6, 7, 8, 9, & 10

Term Paper (Op-Ed project)

Each person will submit a 3-4 pages (750-1,000 words), typed, double-spaced term paper that takes the form of a newspaper Op-ed. Op-eds are not reportage or literature reviews, but are opinion articles in which the author takes a position on (makes an argument for) a social, political, educational, or cultural issue that relates to self-control. Details of the assignment will be specified later in the semester. Hard copies of papers will not be accepted—you will need to send a digital version of the paper to turnitin.com and Blackboard). Late papers will be docked 5% for each day that they are late.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site

Email Policy

My policy is to respond to emails within 2 *working* days of receipt. I am available to all my students and encourage you all to visit me during office hours even if it's to have a casual chat. However, given the size of the class and my already overflowing inbox, I am less encouraging of email. If you have questions or concerns, always check the course syllabus and Blackboard site first. If you don't find your answer there, consult the FAQ on Blackboard. You could also try posting a question in the discussion forum. If that doesn't work, contact your TA. If issues remain, come to my office hours.

FAQ

Please note there is a lengthy FAQ document on Blackboard. This contains a collection of common questions I am asked by students. **If you have a question that appears on the FAQ, I will not answer it by email.** It is your responsibility to try to get your question answered by the documents I have made available, including the lengthy FAQ.

Policy for missed Term Work due to Medical Illness or Other Emergency

All students citing a documented reason for missed term work must submit their request for accommodations **within three (3) business days** of the deadline for the missed work.

Students must submit **BOTH** of the following:

- (1.) A completed **Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form** (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), and
- (2.) **Appropriate documentation** to verify your illness or emergency, as described below.

Appropriate documentation:

For missed **TERM TESTS** due to **ILLNESS**:

- Submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), along with an **original** copy of the official UTSC Verification of Illness Form (uoft.me/UTSC-Verification-Of-Illness-Form) or an **original** copy of the record of visitation to a hospital emergency room. Forms are to be completed in full, clearly indicating the start date, anticipated end date, and severity of illness. The physician's registration number and business stamp are required.
- Note: If an end date of "ongoing" is specified, the medical note will be assumed to cover a period of two weeks. If no end date / an "unknown" end date is specified, the note will be assumed to cover a period of three business days (starting from illness start date.)

For missed **TERM TESTS** due to **ACCESSABILITY REASONS**:

- Meet with your **AccessAbility consultant** and have them email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) detailing the accommodations required.

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to **ILLNESS**:

- Submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), along with a **hardcopy** of the Self-Declaration of Student Illness Form (uoft.me/PSY-self-declare-form).

For missed **ASSIGNMENTS** due to **ACCESSABILITY REASONS**:

- If your desired accommodation is **within the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (ex. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” and you need 3 days), submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>) and attach a copy of your letter. **Specify how many days extension you are requesting** on the request form.
- If your desired accommodation is **outside the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (ex. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” but you need more time than that) you will need to meet with your **AccessAbility consultant** and have them email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) detailing the accommodations required.

For missed term tests or assignments in **OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES**:

Submit the Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), along with:

- In the case of a **death of a family member or friend**, please provide a copy of a death certificate.
- For U of T varsity-level or professional **athletic commitments**, an email from your coach or varsity administrator should be sent directly to Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well in advance** of the missed work, detailing the dates and nature of the commitment.
- For **religious accommodations**, please email (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well in advance** of the missed work.
- For circumstances **outside of these guidelines**, please email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) on or before the date of the test / assignment deadline to describe your circumstances and ask what documentation would be appropriate

Documents covering the following situations are NOT acceptable: medical prescriptions, personal travel, weddings/personal/work commitments.

Procedure:

Submit your (1.) [request form](#) and (2.) [medical/self-declaration](#)/other documents in person **WITHIN 3 BUSINESS DAYS** of the missed term test or assignment.

Submit to: Keely Hicks, Room SW420B, Monday – Friday, 9 AM – 4 PM. (Slide forms under door if out of office.)

After submitting your documentation, within approximately one to five business days, you will receive a response from your instructor detailing the accommodations to be made (if any).

You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily, as accommodations may be time-critical.

You should continue to work on your assignments to the best of your ability, as extension accommodations may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency.

If an accommodation has been granted but you are unable to meet the conditions of the accommodation (ex. you need a longer extension, or you missed a make-up test), you will need to repeat the missed term work procedure and submit additional forms to request further accommodation. Note that in the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not be provided.

Completion of this form does NOT guarantee that accommodations will be made. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations (if any) will be made. Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may result in a denial of your request for accommodation.

Missed Accommodations

If an accommodation is granted but a continued illness/emergency prevents you from meeting the requirements of your accommodation, you must repeat the missed term work procedure to request additional accommodations.

(E.g.) If you miss a make-up midterm, you would need to submit another Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations form. If your original medical note / documentation included the date of the make-up midterm, then only the Request form is required. If the date of the make-up midterm fell outside of the dates indicated on your original medical note/other documentation, then a new medical note/other appropriate documentation must also be submitted.

Importance of Three Business Day window:

If you are unable to submit your documents in-person within the three business day window, **you must email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) within the three business day window** to explain when you will be able to bring your documents in person. Exceptions to the documentation deadline will only be made under **exceptional circumstances**. Attach scans of your documentation, and be prepared to bring your documents to Keely in-person as soon as you are well. Late documents may not be accepted.

NOTE: Assignments due at end of term

Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, you would need to file a petition with the Registrar's Office (<https://www.utoronto.ca/registrar/term-work>).

NOTE: Final Exams

This policy applies only to missed assignments and term tests. Missed final exams are handled by the Registrar's Office (<http://www.utoronto.ca/registrar/missing-examination>).

Course Schedule

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Lecture 1 Jan 9	Introduction & brief history	B&T: Introduction
Lecture 2: Jan 16	Replication crisis; importance of self-control	Moffitt et al., 2011; Yong, 2015; Inzlicht, 2016
Lecture 3: Jan 23	Ego depletion	B&T: chapters 1, 2, & 4; Inzlicht & Berkman, 2015; Engber, 2016
Lecture 4: Jan 30	Cognitive and neural foundations of self-control	Hofmann et al., 2012
Lecture 5 Feb 6	Personality & Development	B&T: chapter 9; Roberts et al., 2014
Feb 13	MIDTERM	
Feb 20	READING WEEK	NO CLASS
Feb 28	NO CLASS	Watch video for instructions of op-ed term paper
Lecture 6: March 5	Goals & Motivation	B&T: chapters 3 & 5; Deci & Ryan, 2008
Lecture 7 March 12	Food, God, & People	B&T: chapters 8 & 10; Fain, 2015
Lecture 8: March 19	Addiction	B&T: chapter 8; McMillen, 2013
Lecture 9: March 26	Rethinking self-control Op-Ed Paper Due	B&T: chapters 7 & conclusion; Fujita, 2011
Lecture 10: April 2	Improving self-control	B&T: chapter 6; Inzlicht, Legault, & Teper, 2014

Note: B&T = Baumeister & Tierney book

Course Reader

All Course Readings can be found here: <https://bit.ly/2EsfSpD>

Lecture 2

Inzlicht, M. (2016, March 25). *The replication crisis is my crisis*. Retrieved from <https://undark.org/article/the-replication-crisis-is-my-crisis/>

Moffitt, T. E., et al., (2011). A gradient of childhood self-control predicts health, wealth, and public safety. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 108, 2693-2698.

Yong, E. (2015, August 27). *How reliable are psychology studies?* Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2015/08/psychology-studies-reliability-reproducibility-nosek/402466/>

Lecture 3

Engber, D. (2016, March 6). *Everything is crumbling*. Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/cover_story/2016/03/ego_depletion_an_influent_theory_in_psychology_may_have_just_been_debunked.html

Inzlicht, M., & Berkman, E. (2015). Six questions for the resource model of control (and some answers). *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 9/10, 511-524.

Lecture 4

Hofmann, W., Schmeichel, B. J., & Baddeley, A. D. (2012). Executive functions and self-regulation. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 16, 174–80.

Lecture 5

Roberts, B.W., Lejuez, C., Krueger, R.F., Richards, J.M., & Hill, P.L. (2014). What is conscientiousness and how can it be assessed? *Developmental Psychology*, 50, 1315-1330. **[Note, although I recommend you read the entire article, you are only required to read pp. 1315-1321, stopping at the section titled “Methods of assessing Conscientiousness”]**

Lecture 6

Deci, E.L., & Ryan, R.M. (2008). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation, development, and health. *Canadian Psychology*, 49, 182-185.

Lecture 7

Fain, J. (2015, June 1). In “*Eating Lab*,” a psychologist spills secrets on why diets fail. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2015/06/01/411217634/in-eating-lab-psychologist-spills-secrets-on-why-diets-fail>

Lecture 8

McMillen, S. (2013). *Rat Park*. Retrieved from <http://www.stuartmcmillen.com/comic/rat-park/#page-1>

Lecture 9

Fujita, K. (2011). On conceptualizing self-control as more than effortful inhibition of impulses. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 15, 352-366.

Lecture 10

Inzlicht, M., Legault, L., & Teper, R. (2014). Exploring the mechanisms of self-control improvement. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 23, 302-307.