

Syllabus
The Psychology of Self-Control (PSYC19H3)
Dr. Michael Inzlicht
Thursdays 12-2, SW128
Winter 2021

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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	TBD	30%
Term Paper	April 1, 11:59pm	35%
Final (non-cumulative)	TBD	35%

Note for the Pandemic Semester: Please note that while the course slides and syllabus were updated for winter 2021 semester during the COVID-19 global pandemic, the lectures were recorded in a previous winter semester. Because of this, **none of the dates mentioned in class are valid**. If you have any questions about dates, consult this syllabus or Quercus, which will be regularly updated. Also, note that although 95% of the lecture content is the same as the current semester requirement, there are a very small number of discrepancies. Whenever you note a discrepancy between lecture videos and slides/syllabus, the slides/syllabus are correct. For example, the grade breakdown in lectures is inaccurate for this term. As well, and very important, **the exam format will be different than what is discussed in lecture**; I will in fact release separate videos describing the midterm and final formats, which will both be online. Again, whenever you encounter a discrepancy between lectures and slides or the syllabus, the slides and syllabus are correct.

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 30% of your grade and the final, 35%. If you score higher on the midterm than the final, however, I will re-weight your midterm to 35% and the final, 30%. **Both midterm and final will be done online**, with both taking place on a date 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 via Quercus. 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

Office Hours

Office hours will be held virtually every Monday 1-2pm on Zoom using the Zoom ID: 865 6989 0473. If you cannot make this time, please email me and we will find a time that is mutually convenient. To join the Zoom meeting, click here: <https://utoronto.zoom.us/my/inzicht>

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 virtually during office hours even if it's to have a casual chat. If you have questions or concerns, always check the course syllabus and Quercus site first. If you don't find your answer there, consult the FAQ on Quercus. You could also try posting a question in the discussion forum. Your TA is also happy to help, please reach out!

FAQ

Please note there is a lengthy FAQ document on Quercus. This contains a collection of common questions I am asked by students. It is your responsibility to try to get your question answered by the documents I have made available, including the lengthy FAQ.

Kindness During COVID-19

No one asked to be stuck in a global pandemic. It sucks to have to do all our learning online with very little human interaction and none of the in-between class activities that make university so much fun. This is hard for all of us. I am sensitive to how difficult this is and will do my best to extend kindness during this time. We're all in this together so let's try to be extra patient and kind with one another.

Psychology Department Missed Term Work Policy, WINTER 2021

For missed term work (assignments and term tests) due to illness, emergency, or other mitigating circumstances, please follow the procedures outlined below.

Notes:

- The following reasons are not considered sufficient for missed term work: travel for leisure, weddings, personal commitments, work commitments, human error.
- Missed Final Exams are handled by the Registrar's Office and should be declared on eService: <http://www.utoronto.ca/registrar/missing-examination>
- 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>

Accommodations for Illness or Emergency:

For missed work due to ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY, please complete the following **two-step** process:

1. Complete the **Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form** (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>) and email it to Keely Hicks at keely.hicks@utoronto.ca ,
and

2. **Declare your absence** on [ACORN](#) (Profile & Settings > Absence Declaration)
Deadline: You must complete the above steps **within 3 business days** of the missed work.
Note: For this semester, we do not require any additional supporting documentation (ex. medical notes) to support your missed term work accommodation request.

Accommodations for Academic Conflicts:

For missed term work due to an ACADEMIC CONFLICT (i.e. two quizzes or tests scheduled at the same time), please complete the following process:

1. Complete the **Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form** (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), choosing "Other" as your reason for missed work and explaining the conflict in the space provided.
2. Take screenshots of your course homepages that demonstrate the conflict.
3. Email the form and screenshots to Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca).

Deadline: You should report the conflict to Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **at least two weeks (10 business days) before the date of the activity**, or as soon as possible if it was not possible to identify the conflict earlier.

Note: Multiple assignments due on the same day are not considered conflicts. Accommodations may only be possible in the case of quizzes and tests that are both scheduled during the same discrete period. Back-to-back tests/quizzes are not considered conflicts.

Note: Students are responsible for keeping their course timetables conflict-free. Students who choose to register in two synchronous courses with overlapping lecture/tutorial/lab schedules may not necessarily be accommodated.

Accommodations for Religious Conflicts:

For missed term work due to a RELIGIOUS CONFLICT, please complete the following process:

1. Complete the **Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form** (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>), choosing "Other" as your reason for missed work and noting "Religious conflict" in the space provided.
2. Email the form to Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca).

Deadline: You should report the conflict to Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **at least two weeks (10 business days) before the date of the activity**, or as soon as possible if it was not possible to identify the conflict earlier.

Accommodations for Time Zone Conflicts:

If you are physically in a different time zone and a quiz or midterm is scheduled outside of 7:00am to midnight in your local time, please complete the following process:

1. Complete the **Time Zone Conflict Form** (<https://uoft.me/PSY-TimeZone>), and
2. Email the form to Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca)

Deadline: You should report the conflict to Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **at least two weeks (10 business days) before the date of the activity**, or as soon as possible, if it was not possible to identify the conflict earlier.

Accommodations for Students Registered with AccessAbility Services:

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

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

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):
 1. Complete the **Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form** (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>).
 2. Email the form and your **Accommodation Letter** to Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca).
- 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):
 1. **Contact your AccessAbility consultant** and have them email Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) detailing the accommodations required.

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 and declare your extended absence on ACORN.

Importance of Three Business Day window:

If you are unable to submit your documents within the three business day window, **you must email Keely (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) within the three business day window** to explain the nature of the delay, and when you will be able to provide your documents. Exceptions to the documentation deadline will only be made under **exceptional circumstances**.

Questions?

If you have any questions about this Missed Term Work policy, please contact Keely Hicks (keely.hicks@utoronto.ca) **well before** the date of the test / assignment deadline to describe your circumstances and inquire about procedures.

Academic Integrity

The responsibilities of all parties to the integrity of the teaching and learning relationship are defined in the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (August 1995)

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

This Code is concerned with the responsibilities of faculty members and students, not as they belong to administrative or professional or social groups, but as they co-operate in all phases of the teaching and learning relationship.

Such co-operation is threatened when teacher or student forsakes respect for the other--and for others involved in learning--in favour of self-interest, when truth becomes a hostage of expediency. On behalf of teacher and student and in fulfillment of its own principles and ideals, the University has a responsibility to ensure that academic achievement is not obscured or undermined by cheating or misrepresentation, that the evaluative process meets the highest standards of fairness and honesty, and that malevolent or even mischievous disruption is not allowed to threaten the educational process. These are areas in which teacher and student necessarily share a common interest as well as common responsibilities.

AccessAbility Services

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach the instructor and/or the AccessAbility Services Office (in SW-302) as soon as possible. Your instructor will work with you and AccessAbility Services to ensure you can achieve your learning goals in this course. Enquiries are confidential. The UTSC AccessAbility Services staff members are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations.

Course Schedule

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Lecture 1 Jan 14	Introduction & brief history	B&T: Introduction
Lecture 2: Jan 21	Replication crisis; importance of self-control	Moffitt et al., 2011; Yong, 2015; Inzlicht, 2016
Lecture 3: Jan 28	Ego depletion	B&T: chapters 1, 2, & 4; Inzlicht & Berkman, 2015; Engber, 2016
Lecture 4: Feb 4	Cognitive and neural foundations of self-control	Hofmann et al., 2012
Lecture 5 Feb 11	Personality & Development	B&T: chapter 9; Roberts et al., 2014
Feb 18	READING WEEK	NO CLASS
Feb 25	MIDTERM WEEK	NO CLASS
March 4	LIVE CLASS on ZOOM for term paper Q&A	Watch video for instructions of op-ed term paper
Lecture 6: March 11	Goals & Motivation	B&T: chapters 3 & 5; Deci & Ryan, 2008
Lecture 7 March 18	Food, God, & People	B&T: chapters 8 & 10; Fain, 2015
Lecture 8: March 25	Addiction	B&T: chapter 8; McMillen, 2013
Lecture 9: April 1	Rethinking self-control Op-Ed Paper Due	B&T: chapters 7 & conclusion; Fujita, 2011
Lecture 10: April 8	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/2lpPum1>

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.