

PSYC73: Wellness and Resilience Laboratory

Winter 2023

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COURSE OVERVIEW

Class time and location:

Thursdays 1-3 pm SW316

Course Objective:

The university experience is both an exciting and stressful time for everyone. The increased freedom and independence can be daunting, leading many students to struggle in new ways or with emotions that seem to have increased in intensity. Conversely, research has shown that individuals who develop and use mental health and wellness strategies are more likely to be effective in their job roles, involved in strong relationships, physically and mentally healthy, and satisfied with their lives overall. The purpose of this course is to teach strategies for having resilience in the face of commonly experienced stressors and difficulties in order to help you live a happy, fulfilling, and successful life (in other words, *thrive*). This course will provide you with a set of strategies and skills for self-care and optimize your academic and social experiences while at the University of Toronto Scarborough and beyond. Utilizing lectures, readings, videos, discussion forums, practice exercises, group work and coaching, we aim to assist and encourage you in meeting the learning outcomes while developing your more resilient and skillful self.

Learning Outcomes:

- Directly practice a variety of mental health and wellness skills, habits, and routines that are focused on the goals of minimizing stress and optimizing well-being.
- Describe why intentionally 'practicing' these skills is critical to developing the fluency to use and reap the benefits from them, as well as teach these skills to others.
- Develop a resilience toolbox of skills and strategies that serves as the vehicle on your roadmap for your future, both in terms of personal development and careers in the clinical psychology/mental health workforce.

COURSE LOGISTICS

Quercus:

This course uses the University's learning management system, Quercus, to post information about the course. This includes posting readings and other materials required to complete class activities and course assignments, as well as sharing important announcements and updates. The site is dynamic and new information and resources will be posted regularly as we move through the term, so please make it a habit to log in to the site on a regular, even daily, basis. To access the course website, go to the U of T Quercus log-in page at <https://q.utoronto.ca>. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, you should see the link or "card" for Wellness and Resiliency Lab: PSYC73. You may need to scroll through other cards to find this. Click on the Wellness and Resiliency Lab: PSYC73 link to open our course area, view the latest announcements and access your course resources. There are Quercus help guides for students that you can access by clicking on the "?" icon in the left side column.

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT GRADES POSTED ONLINE: Please also note that any grades posted are for your information only, so you can view and track your progress through the course. No grades are considered official, including any posted in Quercus at any point in the term, until they have been formally approved and posted on ACORN at the end of the course. Please contact me as soon as possible if you think there is an error in any grade posted on Quercus.

Office Hours: Mondays at 9am (January 16-April 3)

Office hours are conducted in drop-in format through Zoom for the entirety of the semester (please use link below). You will be held in the waiting room until it is your turn to speak to the professor. Office hours should be used exclusively for course-related matters. Additional office hours can be made by appointment if the student has a work, personal, or class-related conflict at the normal time. Remotely attending office hours requires the student to participate from a location offering reasonable privacy and noise level. Students should turn on their camera and microphone and their Zoom name must reflect their preferred name plus last name.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/84258450131>

Meeting ID: 842 5845 0131

Passcode: 254363

Behavioural Expectations

Students, teaching assistants, and the professor is expected to be on time (by 10 minutes past the hour), pay attention, do not use your cell phone, or use your computer for non-class activities (e.g., Netflix, emails). This is a laboratory class – while it is not a “traditional” lab like you might see in a chemistry or neuroscience course, consider you and your classmates as both the experimenters and experiments! Together we will test out and practice different skills, so your attention, maturity, and respect are vital to everyone having an enjoyable and fruitful lab experience.

Trigger Warning and Mental Health Subject Matter

While we will discuss and practice emotion, mental health, and wellness skills and strategies, this course is not a therapeutic intervention. Class time and office hours are not to be used to discuss personal mental

health matters (either regarding the student or someone known to the student). Neither the professor or the teaching assistant will provide mental health advice and will instead refer the student to the Health and Wellness Centre on campus.

That being said, our discussions will often touch on difficult emotions, experiences, and behaviours. Students will be expected to write about and/or share personal experiences as part of the class. Some of the assignments and/or experiential exercises may be triggering to some students. Feel free to review the syllabus and reach out to the professor for ways to approach the class in a healthy way. Please note that there are multiple resources offered to students, including several via the Health and Wellness Centre (<https://www.utoronto.ca/hwc/>), as well as external services like helplines: Distress Centre (416-408-HELP), Good2Talk (866-925-5454). In addition, if you are currently experiencing a physical or mental health issue that will significantly interfere with your ability to participate in this class, you should seek out AccessAbility consultations as soon as possible so your grade is not affected.

Assignments and Marking Schemes

Attendance/Participation: (Worth 15% of final grade)

Students are expected to attend every class. Remember, this is a lab course and you must be present to participate in experiential learning. Students can miss one class without penalty. After that, missed classes will result in loss of points toward your final grade (to understand the policy on allowable absences, please refer to the missed term work policy below). If you miss class, please inform the professor as soon as possible. Note, you are responsible for reviewing class materials, completing the homework, and obtaining notes from a classmate if you cannot attend class for any reason.

The second component to this evaluation involves the quality of classroom participation throughout the experiential learning in the course. Students are expected to come prepared having completed the weekly reading and video assignment before class, as these readings/videos are necessary for class discussion. Students are also expected to fully participate in all experiential elements of the class. Students will be assigned 1, 2, or 3 points per attended class for minimal, adequate, or excellent classroom participation.

Weekly Homework: Due each Monday by 11:59pm (Worth 20% of final grade)

Homework assignments consist of a 2-3 page reflection (double spaced, 12 point font, 1 inch margins) that will differ each week and will generally include the following key components: 1) Skills Practice Reflection; 2) Lecture and Reading Reflection. Homework assignments will be deducted by 10% (1pt out of 10 total points) for each day they are late (starting at 12:01am on Tuesdays).

Gratitude Practice: Due each Monday by 11:59pm (Worth 10% of final grade)

Gratitude practice is an important element in building resilience and encouraging positive emotions. Each week students will post 3-6 sentences on the designated Discussion Board on Quercus detailing three things (items, people, events) that they are grateful for. They can also include ways they are practicing gratitude. Students are encouraged to read other students post and comment, as well as gain inspiration from others' ideas. Students will be assigned 1 (submitted late, criteria not fully satisfied), 2 (criteria not fully satisfied OR submitted late, criteria satisfied), or 3 (criteria satisfied) points per attended class. Grades will be entered by class on Thursday and students who have not submitted by that time will get a 0.

Class Project: Due March 5 by 11:59pm (Worth 20% of final grade)

Students will be placed in groups of three at the beginning of the course. Groups will decide on a wellness/resiliency topic relevant to postsecondary mental health to explore over the subsequent 8 weeks. Topics might include difficulties faced by international students, stress associated with co-op program, managing finances, sleep hygiene, transitions from high school to university, and navigating the mental health system. Students will collaboratively decide on a topic and discuss it with Dr. Uliaszek by **January 26th in class**. There are two primary objectives to this project: 1) review relevant literature around the chosen topic and 2) select a specific skill or technique that would be valuable for other postsecondary students. Student groups will be expected to collaboratively make a powerpoint slide deck reviewing the relevant research and then describing the specific skill or technique. This presentation will be done on zoom and recorded (not presented in class), and then submitted via Quercus. See missed term work policy for information on late submissions.

Final Exam: (Worth 35% of final grade)

There will be a comprehensive exam during finals week. This will include 50 multiple-choice and true/false questions. This will be a two-hour test primarily covering lecture material, as well as weekly readings/videos.

Extra Credit: Due April 10 by 11:59pm (Replaces one missed or lower marked assignment)
 Submit a final homework assignment (Homework #12) to replace one missed or lower marked assignment.

Course Details

	Topic	Assignments and Dates
Week 1	Introduction to Mental Health and Wellness Lab <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course goals and class requirements • Define class-relevant terms 	Class: January 12
Week 2	Awareness through Mindfulness-Based Practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits of mindfulness 	Homework #1 due: January 16 Class: January 19
Week 3	Values Clarification and Commitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What matters most to you • How to live within your values 	Homework #2 due: January 23 Class: January 26
Week 4	Habits, Willpower, and Distress Tolerance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to withstand difficult experiences • How to be healthy and kind to yourself 	Homework #3 due: January 30 Class: February 2
Week 5	Reality Acceptance Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gratitude 	Homework #4 due: February 6 Class: February 9
Week 6	Choosing your Attention and Practicing Gratitude <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending to positive aspects of life 	Homework #5 due: February 13 Class: February 16
	READING WEEK	
Week 7	Model of Emotion: Identifying Targets for Interventions and Cultivating Positive Emotions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing vulnerability to negative emotions 	Homework #6 due: February 27 Class: March 2
Week 8	Identifying Unhelpful Thoughts and Changing them to Helpful Thoughts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive restructuring 	Homework #7 due: March 6 Class: March 9
Week 9	Managing Intense Negative Emotions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research-based strategies to reduce the intensity of negative emotions 	Homework #8 due: March 13 Class: March 16
Week 10	Developing Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking for something you need • Building relationships • Maintaining self-respect 	Homework #9 due: March 20 Class: March 23
Week 11	Balancing Options and Intensity in Interpersonal Effectiveness Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to build authentic relationships 	Homework #10 due: March 27 Class: March 30

Week 12	Therapeutic Lifestyle Changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting relaxing and recreational activities • Engaging in religious or spiritual activities 	Homework #11 due: April 3 Class: April 6
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Course and Departmental Policies

Submission of Coursework:

All coursework should be submitted via Quercus as a file attachment. No assignments should be sent via email to the professor or teaching assistant.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:

The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. The University of Toronto does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

AccessAbility Services:

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office (<http://www.utoronto.ca/ability/>) as soon as possible.

AccessAbility Services staff (located in Rm AA142, Arts and Administration Building) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. Please contact 416-287-7560 (tel/TTY) or email ability.utoronto.ca for more information. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Syllabus Changes:

The professor may make changes to the course syllabus based on pacing and needs of the class, or other unexpected events. These will not impair your ability to succeed in the class, and you will be notified when this occurs through Quercus.

Course Materials and Access:

This course is limited to registered students only. Allowing unregistered students or other people access to the class or any class-related materials is not permitted. As outlined in the Provost's guidelines on Appropriate Use of Information and Communication Technology, for reasons of privacy as well as protection of copyright, distributing video or audio recordings from this class is prohibited unless written permission has been granted by the professor or for students with specific accommodations to do so. In this course, you are permitted to download materials for your own academic use, but you should not copy, share, or use them for any other purpose without the explicit permission of the professor.

Email Communication:

Please keep your emails professional, concise, and clear: start with an informative title that includes the course name and some detail on your question (i.e., "PSYC73 - question about Mindfulness"). Emails to the professor should address her as "Dr. Uliaszek" or "Professor Uliaszek". The most effective emails are short, focused on a single question, and demonstrate some effort on your part to explain your understanding or where you are stuck.

Academic Integrity:

The University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences in papers and assignments include using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement, submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor, making up sources or facts, obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment. On tests and exams cheating includes using or possessing unauthorized aids, looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test, misrepresenting your identity, or falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

Religious Accommodations

The University has a commitment concerning accommodation for religious observances. I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. According to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (like a test, or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

Masks in the Classroom

While the mask mandate has been paused as of 1 July 2022, the use of medical masks continues to be strongly encouraged at U of T Scarborough in indoor settings where physical distancing is not possible. We ask everyone to respect each other's decisions, comfort levels, and health needs. Masks are available at all building entrances at U of T Scarborough and in all classrooms.

Psychology Department Missed Term Work Policy: Winter 2023

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

Note:

- 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.
- Instructors cannot accept term work any later than five business days after the last day of class. Beyond this date, accommodations are only possible via the Registrar's Office [petition process](#).

The email address to submit missed term work accommodation requests in **PSYC73** is:
amanda.uliaszek@utoronto.ca

ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY accommodations:

For missed work due to ILLNESS OR EMERGENCY, complete the following process:

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
2. Declare your absence on [ACORN](#) (Profile & Settings > Absence Declaration)
3. Email **both** of the following items to the course email **WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS** of the missed work:
 - a. the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#)
 - *AND***
 - b. a screenshot of your Self-Declared Absence on ACORN

Note:

- *If you are unable to submit your request within 2 business days, you must still email your instructor within the 2 business day window to explain the nature of the delay. Exceptions to the 2 business day deadline will only be made under exceptional circumstances.*
- *If your absence is declared on ACORN, we do not require any additional supporting documentation (e.g. medical notes) to support your missed term work accommodation request.*

ACADEMIC CONFLICT accommodations:

For missed term work due to an ACADEMIC CONFLICT (e.g. two midterms at the same time):

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
2. Take screenshots of your course Quercus pages that demonstrate the conflict.
3. Email the form and screenshots to the course email **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. Requests sent after the activity deadline may not be accommodated.

Note:

- *Multiple assignments due on the same day are not considered conflicts. Students are expected to manage their time effectively to meet assignment deadlines.*

- *Back-to-back tests/quizzes are not considered conflicts. Only overlapping activities are conflicts.*
- *Students are responsible for keeping their course timetables conflict-free. Students who register in two courses with overlapping lecture/tutorial/lab schedules will not be accommodated.*

RELIGIOUS CONFLICT accommodations:

For missed term work due to a RELIGIOUS CONFLICT:

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
2. Email the form to the course **email 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. Requests sent after the activity deadline may not be accommodated.

ACCESSABILITY SERVICES accommodations:

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

- **Contact your AccessAbility consultant** and have them email the course email detailing accommodations required.

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

- If your desired accommodation is **within the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (e.g. your letter includes “extensions of up to 7 days” and you need 3 days):
 1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#).
 2. Email the form ***AND*** your **Accommodation Letter** to the course email specifying how many days extension you are requesting.
- If your desired accommodation is **outside the scope** of your Accommodation Letter (e.g. 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 the course email detailing the accommodations required.

Accommodation Procedure:

After submitting your documentation, you will receive a response from your instructor or TA. This form does not guarantee that you will be accommodated. 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. **You are responsible for checking your official U of T email and Quercus course announcements daily**, as accommodations may be time-critical.

For missed assignments, **do not wait for the instructor’s response to resume work on your assignment**. Extensions may be as short as one business day, depending on the nature of the illness/emergency. Complete your assignment as soon as you’re able, and email it to your instructor.

For an **anticipated absence** (e.g. a scheduled surgery or an illness with a prolonged recovery period), if you would like to request accommodations in advance, submit a [Verification of Illness Form](#) completed by your doctor AND the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#) to the course email. Absences can be declared up to 14 days into the future on ACORN.

Missed Accommodations

If an accommodation is granted but a continued illness/emergency prevents you from meeting its requirements, you must repeat the missed term work procedure to request additional accommodations. **Please make it clear in your subject line that you are requesting a second accommodation**. E.g. If you are given an extension but are still sick and need more time, or if you miss a make-up term test, you must submit *another* [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#) and declare your extended

absence on ACORN. *Note: In the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not necessarily be provided.

These readings and videos prepare you for your homework assignment and lecture discussion. Readings are in blue and videos are in white.

Prepare for...	Click on links
<p>Homework 1 Lecture 2</p>	<p>The Road to Resilience</p> <p>John Kabat-Zinn: Defining Mindfulness (Read article AND watch video)</p> <p>Bernard, T. (2011). Six benefits of practicing mindfulness outside of meditation.</p> <hr/> <p>What is Positive Psychology</p> <p>How to make Stress your Friend</p> <p>What is Mindfulness</p> <p>Mindfulness Buzzwords</p> <p>Mindfulness Teaching</p> <p>All it Takes is 10 Minutes of Mindfulness</p>
<p>Homework 2 Lecture 3</p>	<p>What are values and why you need them for a fulfilling life.</p> <hr/> <p>WOOP There it is</p> <p>Passenger on the Bus</p>
<p>Homework 3 Lecture 4</p>	<p>Weir, K. (2012). What you need to know about willpower: The psychological science of self-control. <i>American Psychological Association</i>, 1-17.</p> <hr/> <p>Four Surprising Ways to Increase Your Willpower</p>
<p>Homework 4 Lecture 5</p>	<p>Hall (2012). Radical Acceptance: Sometimes problems can't be solved.</p> <p>If Your Goal in Therapy is to "Be Happy" You might Want to Rethink That. Here's Why.</p> <hr/> <p>How Marsha Linehan Learned Radical Acceptance</p>

<p>Homework 5 Lecture 5</p>	<p><u>Emmons, R. (2010). Why gratitude is good. <i>Greater Good Magazine</i>, 7 scientifically proven benefits of mindfulness, <i>Forbes</i></u></p> <p><u>Healthbeat (2017). Giving thanks can make you happier. <i>Harvard Health Publishing</i>,</u></p> <p><u>How to Take in the Good</u></p> <p><u>What Good is Gratitude</u></p> <p><u>The Power of Gratitude</u></p>
<p>Homework 6 Lecture 7</p>	<p>Mazza et al., 2016. DBT Skills in Schools: STEPS-A, 422, 457 (see Reading and Viewing module)</p> <p><u>Positive Emotions Open Our Mind</u></p>
<p>Homework 7 Lecture 8</p>	<p><u>Tsipursky G. (2016). How to manage your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. <i>Psychology Today</i>,</u></p> <p><u>Boyes, A. (2013). Cognitive restructuring. <i>Psychology Today</i>,</u></p> <p><u>Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Techniques</u></p> <p><u>Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Explained</u></p> <p><u>Automatic Thoughts</u></p>
<p>Homework 8 Lecture 9</p>	<p><u>Wachter, A. (2013). Emotions 101: How to reveal and heal what you feel. <i>Huffington Post</i>,</u></p> <p><u>Getting Stuck in the Negatives</u></p>
<p>Homework 9 Lecture 10</p>	<p>Mazza et al., 2016. DBT Skills in Schools: STEPS-A, 466-474 (see Reading and Viewing module)</p> <p><u>Interpersonal Effectiveness</u></p>
<p>Homework 10 Lecture 11</p>	<p>Mazza et al., 2016. DBT Skills in Schools: STEPS-A, 466-474 (see Reading and Viewing module)</p> <p><u>The Power of Vulnerability</u></p>

Homework 11
Lecture 12

[Beyond Tender Loving Care: TLCs' Promise Health and Happiness. \(Read summary and then click the "Related Journal Article" Link on the top left of the page and read the journal article.](#)

[The link between sleep and mood. Harvard Medical School,](#)

[Sleep is your superpower](#)