

Syllabus

The Psychology of Self-Control (PSYC19H3 LEC02)

Dr. Michael Inzlicht

Thursdays 1-3, IC220

Fall 2023

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Course Description

In this lecture course, we will do a deep dive on self-control, examining how people exercise control, bringing thoughts, emotions and behaviours into line with preferred standards. This course will expose students to several 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. 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.

Course Objectives

The main objective of this class is that you learn about the modern science of self-control. While learning about the psychology of self-control, I also hope to develop your capacity to critically evaluate scientific theory and data. That is, I hope to train you to become sophisticated consumers of science, which includes an appreciation that science is self-correcting and constantly evolving. I also hope to give you practice in becoming a better writer and communicator. Finally, by learning about self-control, I hope to give you strategies to help you reach your own personal goals.

Required Text

- Baumeister, R.F., & Tierney, J. (2012). *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)

<u>Evaluation:</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Midterm	TBD	40%
Term Paper	Nov 23rd, 11:59pm	15%
Final (non-cumulative)	TBD	45%

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 for each class. The amount of overlap between lectures and required readings will be minimal. What this means is that 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 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 40% of your grade and the final, 45%. If you score higher on the midterm than the final, however, I will re-weight your midterm to 45% and the final, 40%.

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 *Ouriginal* 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 the University's plagiarism detection tool 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 tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Office Hours

Office hours will be held in my office in SY168 every Thursday 12-1pm. If you cannot make this time, please email me and we will find a time that is mutually convenient.

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.

Disability-Related Accommodations

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.utsc.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.utsc@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.

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.

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. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.

The University of Toronto is a richly diverse community and as such is committed to providing an environment free of any form of harassment, misconduct, or discrimination. In this course, I seek to foster a civil, respectful, and open-minded climate in which we can all work together to develop a better understanding of key questions and debates through meaningful dialogue. As such, I expect all involved with this course to refrain from actions or behaviours that intimidate, humiliate, or demean persons or groups or that undermine their security or self-esteem based on traits related to race, religion, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, disability, receipt of public assistance or record of offences.

University Land Acknowledgement

I wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Accommodations

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 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 416-287-7560 or email ability.uts@utoronto.ca. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Recording of Classroom Material by Students

Recording or photographing any aspect of a university course - lecture, tutorial, seminar, lab, studio, practice session, field trip etc. – without prior approval of all involved and with written approval from the instructor is not permitted.

Department of Psychology Missed Term Work Policy

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

Procedure:

1. Complete the [Request for Missed Term Work Accommodations Form](#) ("MTW Form").
2. Email **BOTH** your MTW Form and Supporting Documentation to [<course email>](#) according to the instructions specified below.

Supporting Documentation Requirements and Deadlines:

Reason for Missed Work	Documentation required for a first absence in the term	Documentation required for subsequent absences in the term	Deadline for submitting MTW form and supporting documentation
Illness or Injury	ACORN Absence Declaration	UofT Verification of Illness Form	<u>WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS</u> of the missed work
Bereavement	ACORN Absence Declaration	A death certificate or funeral announcement	<u>WITHIN 2 BUSINESS DAYS</u> of the missed work
University-sponsored athletic or artistic obligation at the varsity/provincial/national level	ACORN Absence Declaration	A note from a university staff member (advisor, coach, residence staff, etc.) who can substantiate the obligation, sent directly to the course email	<u>10 BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE</u> of the missed deadline
Disability-related reasons for students registered with AccessAbility Services	For missed TERM TESTS , <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contact your AccessAbility consultant and have them write to the course email detailing the accommodations needed. For missed ASSIGNMENTS , <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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), send 		<u>PREFERABLY IN ADVANCE OF THE MISSED WORK, OR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE</u>

	<p>your Accommodation Letter to the course email and specify how many days extension you are requesting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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), contact your AccessAbility consultant and have them write to the course email detailing the accommodations needed. 	
Academic Conflict (e.g. two midterms at the same time)	Screenshot from Quercus demonstrating the conflict.	10 BUSINESS DAYS IN ADVANCE of the missed work
Religious Conflict	None required	

Notes:

- The following reasons are not considered sufficient for missed term work: social activities, recreational travel, technological issues, avoidance of assessments or deadlines, work commitments
- [Missed Final Exams](#) are handled by the Registrar’s Office and should be declared on eService.
- For ACORN absence declarations, the date you declare the absence is required to fall within the seven-day declaration period (i.e.) the absence cannot be submitted proactively or retroactively.
- 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](#).
- If you are unable to submit your request within the specified number of business days, you must still email your instructor within that window to explain the nature of the delay. Exceptions to the deadlines are made only under exceptional circumstances.
- Multiple assignments due on the same day are not considered academic conflicts. Students are expected to manage their time effectively to meet assignment deadlines.
- Back-to-back tests/quizzes are not considered academic 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.

Next Steps:

After submitting your documentation, you will receive a response from your instructor or TA. The course instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations 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.

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.** Examples: If you were granted an extension for a paper but are still unable to meet the new deadline, or if you miss a make-up term test, you must submit *another* MTW form and supply documentation according to the "subsequent absences" column in the chart above. *Note: In the case of a missed make-up test, an opportunity to write a second make-up test may not necessarily be provided.

Course Schedule

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Lecture 1 Sep 7	Introduction & brief history	B&T: Introduction
Lecture 2: Sep 14	Replication crisis; importance of self-control	Moffitt et al., 2011; Yong, 2015; Inzlicht, 2016
Lecture 3: Sep 21	Ego depletion	B&T: chapters 1, 2, & 4; Inzlicht & Berkman, 2015; Engber, 2016
Lecture 4: Sep 28	Cognitive and neural foundations of self-control	Hofmann et al., 2012
Lecture 5: Oct 5	Personality & Development	B&T: chapter 9; Roberts et al., 2014
Oct 12	READING WEEK	NO CLASS
Oct 19	Term Paper Q&A	
Oct 26	MIDTERM WEEK	Oct 25th, 5-7pm, HL170
Lecture 6: Nov 2	Goals & Motivation	B&T: chapters 3 & 5; Deci & Ryan, 2008
Lecture 7 Nov 9	Food, God, & People	B&T: chapters 8 & 10; Fain, 2015
Lecture 8: Nov 16	Addiction	B&T: chapter 8; McMillen, 2013
Lecture 9: Nov 23	Rethinking self-control Op-Ed Paper Due	B&T: chapters 7 & conclusion; Duckworth et al., 2016
Lecture 10: Nov 30	Improving self-control	B&T: chapter 6; Milkman et al., 2021

Note: B&T = Baumeister & Tierney book

Course Reader

All Course Readings can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/ab9kas7v>

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

Duckworth, A.L., Gendler, T.S., & Gross, J.J. (2016). Situation strategies for self-control. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 11, 35-55.

Lecture 10

Milkman, K.L. et al. (2021). Megastudies improve the impact of applied behavioural science. *Nature*, 600, 478-483. [**Note, although I recommend you read the entire article, you are only required to read pp. 478-483, stopping after the reference section**]