

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
PSYCHOLOGY OF EATING
50:830:434 AND 50:499:459
COURSE SYLLABUS
Spring 2023

Instructor:	Dr. Charlotte H. Markey	Lecture:	T/Th @ 2-3:20pm
e-mail:	chmarkey@camden.rutgers.edu	Classroom:	ARM 113
Office Phone:	856.225.6332	Office hours:	After class
Office:	415 Armitage		and by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

Welcome to the Psychology of Eating!

This course focuses on understanding the psychological processes underlying humans' development of eating behaviors and the adoption of both healthy and maladaptive cognitions and behaviors concerning food, eating, and our bodies. Issues to be addressed include: eating and health, food choice, the development of food preferences, motivation to eat, cultural influences on eating patterns, weight-regulation, body image, dieting behaviors, weight status, eating disorders, and treatment of unhealthy and clinical eating problems. The psychology of eating will be emphasized, with a focus on the context of eating. This class will be taught as a seminar and class interaction is expected.

The learning objectives of this course are consistent with the goals of the department. Course activities are designed to assess these learning objectives. Upon successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

- Identify key theories, concepts, and methods in the study of the psychology of eating.
- Critically analyze research in the field and distinguish it from popular (i.e., not empirically based) information about eating, weight, body image, and disordered eating.
- Effectively communicate ideas related to the psychology of eating (orally and in writing).
- Understand the importance of contextual and cultural factors in determining eating behaviors.
- Increase personal awareness of your own eating-related attitudes and behaviors.

COURSE READINGS:

Please read all assigned readings BEFORE they are covered in class. Articles and book chapters will be available on the class Canvas page in the module for the week. Many are news articles that briefly review the topic that we'll delve into in more detail in class. You may be asked to purchase or check-out a library book about dieting, depending on the presentation you choose to do (see below).

GENERAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1) ATTENDANCE AND CLASS PARTICIPATION (1 POINT PER IN PERSON CLASS + 4 POINTS DISCRETIONARY; 28 POINTS): Class attendance and participation is expected and particularly important because this class is a seminar (i.e., I will not usually be lecturing, rather we will all discuss the relevant topics). There are some hybrid components of this class (24 of the potential 28 class meetings are scheduled in person, but this could change). Because this class is a seminar much of the learning that will take place this semester will be *in the classroom*. I will keep track of attendance and if you are not in class, there is no way to make up these points directly (but extra credit options will be available). Thus, this component of your grade will be based on the following criteria: (1) Did you attend class? (If we end up having classes on Zoom due to the pandemic, this will mean participating in class over Zoom with your camera ON.) (2) Did you contribute to the intellectual climate in class (by listening to the professor and your classmates and participating in discussions and exercises)? (3) Did you come to class prepared for assignments described on the class schedule? And (4) Did you participate as requested in any hybrid/online components of the course?

2) WEEKLY QUIZZES (5 POINTS PER QUIZ + SYLLABUS QUIZ IS 8 POINTS = 63 POINTS): You will be evaluated on your reading of course materials and class attendance by completing quizzes each week. You will be allowed to miss one quiz, but you will not get extra credit (most likely!) for completing more than 11. No excuses for missing a quiz will be accepted given that you are allowed to miss one quiz (i.e., you must successfully complete 11 quizzes). Quizzes are intended to help keep you from falling behind with the class reading and provide credit for classroom learning. Quizzes are due each week on Thursday by midnight and will be available on Canvas.

3) READING QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS: 4 POINTS PER WEEK; 44 POINTS: Because each class will involve a discussion of the assigned readings, it is important that we all come to class prepared. In order to facilitate this preparation, you will be expected to turn in "evidence" that you have completed the readings in the form of reading questions and comments. See the Assignments tab (and/or class modules for weeks 1 and 2) for an example of what I'm looking for. I am expecting you to turn in two thoughtful questions each week and two comments that indicate that you have done the reading for the week. These comments/reflections only need to be 2-4 sentences each but need to make clear that you've done the class readings. Because of some class days reserved for presentations, there will be 11 weeks of the semester where this assignment is due; this will be indicated in class modules.

3) MEDIA PRESENTATION (15 POINTS): Each student will be asked to sign up for one class to be prepared to present a media clip that is related to the readings that day. This should be a video

that is available online and/or that a link can be shared with the professor. Most likely, your presentation will be a critique of eating-related messages in the media. Additional information about this assignment is in a separate hand out; you should upload your notes in preparation for this presentation to Canvas. Generally, you will be expected to collect 1 media message (e.g., YouTube clip, advertisement, T.V. commercials, etc.) about food, eating, body image, eating disorders, or whatever topic you are signed up to present about. You will be expected to use information from our course to help you relay whether or not these media messages are positive/ harmful/ helpful to people's attempts to be healthy. This presentation is intended to be relatively informal and you do not need to prepare slides for it, but you should come to class prepared.

4) GROUP PROJECT, "PARADOX PRESENTATION":

In this class we learn about a variety of research findings that may be the opposite of what you'd expect. In other words, the findings are paradoxical. For this project, you and your group are tasked with taking one of these paradoxes (e.g., dieting leads to weight gain as often or more than weight loss; being overweight does not necessarily lead to health problems; eating "anything" [i.e., intuitively] seems better for health than eating restrictively) and create a power point presentation and video where you explain this paradox. All groups will consist of ~3 people and groups must have the instructor approve their chosen paradox by April 11 to ensure that there is not too much overlap in what each group is focusing on. A separate handout will be provided with more information about this assignment, but it is worth a substantial portion of your grade (25%) and will require significant preparation.

ALTERNATIVE TO GROUP PROJECT: DIET BOOK PRESENTATION: If you do not want to complete a final *group* project, this alternative is offered on a "first come, first serve" basis to students and is due mid-semester. We will spend most of one class discussing dieting behaviors. There are many popular books (*The Keto Diet, The Carnivore Diet, The Plant Based Diet, The Obesity Code, etc.*) designed to help individuals achieve their weight-loss and weight-management goals. I would like each student in the class who signs up to do this presentation (we will limit it to ~5 students due to time constraints) to bring in a different one of these books to share with the class (we will coordinate who will bring in what during class). You will be responsible for bringing the book to class and reading the entire book so that you can describe it for the class. A worksheet and additional instruction will be provided to help you complete this assignment; you should upload this to Canvas. This presentation requires you to come to class prepared.

HEALTH NOTE: *If you have a history of disordered eating or concerns about your own eating behaviors or weight, please notify the instructor. If you believe that any of the readings or assignments required for this course may adversely affect your own efforts to maintain psychological and/or physical health, please notify the instructor and alternatives can be considered.*

GRADING (TOTAL POINTS = 200)

Grades will be computed as follows:

Attendance and participation	28 points
Quizzes	63 points
Media presentation	15 points
Weekly questions/comments	44 points
Group project	50 point

GRADING

180-200 points = A
170-179 points = B+
160-169 points = B
150-159 points = C+
140-149 points = C
120-139 points = D
<120 points = F

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES AND IMPORTANT RESOURCES

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM ME

There are a number of things you should expect from me (and any professor). My goal is to help you to learn important and valuable material in this course. To facilitate your learning, I will post announcements regularly (typically 1x per week) using the Announcements feature in Canvas. Please make sure your [Canvas Notifications](#) are set to alert you to new Announcements immediately. Respond to all of your email communications with me based on the communication guidelines below. I will reach out to you if I notice that you're falling behind or seem to be struggling. I want to help you succeed.

COMMUNICATION

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me throughout the semester with any questions or concerns you may have. It's a good thing to ask for help—it means you're paying attention and you know what you need—and you are **not** bothering me.

Of course, you should check both the syllabus and the Canvas class site before asking a question. If you need to email me, ***be sure to include your full name and the course title and section.*** Depending on when you send your email, you can expect a response usually within 24-48 hours. If 48 hours pass without a response, please email me again. I am typically slower in replying to emails in the evening and on weekends.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KEEP IN MIND

I have expectations of you as a student in this class. You should keep in mind that this class will be most rewarding for you if you are an active participant in class and view this experience as a collaborative enterprise. If you are in class, you will be expected to be attentive, participate, stay the entire class time, and be prepared for any activities and exams scheduled for that day. You will be asked to leave class if you do any of the following:

- ~Talk on your cell phone (turn phones off!)
- ~Text on your cell phone
- ~Open your lap top computer or tablet
- ~Pass notes to classmates
- ~Sleep

If we conduct any of the classes over Zoom (due to the pandemic, weather, etc.), you will be expected to have your camera ON for the majority of class. Given that the format of this class is not a lecture, you will need to plan to participate even if class is held online. Remember that

your attendance in this course is voluntary. If you do not wish to be in class or prefer to do other activities instead of being in class, then you should leave.

Being unaware of course requirements and expectations is not an excuse for failing to complete any of the assignments in this course. **Power point slides presented in class will not be available** except in class (i.e., these will NOT be posted on the web). For the most part, class discussions will be based on the assigned readings; if you miss one of our classes, you are expected to obtain class notes from a classmate and to stay on top of any of the material you missed. It is your responsibility to become informed of any announcements made in class, although I will do my best to reiterate any announcements made verbally in writing using the Canvas announcements feature. I also expect you to reply to emails that I send to you (personal emails, not announcements made to the class).

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Academic dishonesty will NOT be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating on exams and plagiarism. Students caught participating in academic dishonesty will receive a score of zero on the relevant assignment. In addition, instances of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Scholastic Conduct Committee. Sanctions for academic dishonesty range from failing an assignment to failing a course or expulsion from the University. As a student at the Rutgers you are expected adhere to the Student Code of Conduct as well. To review the academic integrity policy, go to <https://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity> To review the code, go to: <https://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/student-conduct>

INCLUSIVITY

I am committed to diversity and inclusion in this course – both in terms of the material we discuss and in terms of appreciating that we all come from different backgrounds and have unique experiences and histories. Please email me if you would like to be referred to by a different name than the name that will appear on my roster. Rutgers *does* allow students to request a preferred name change on official university documents and systems, [which can be submitted](#) at this link if you're interested. However, I understand that all students may not have the ability to have their preferred name displayed officially, and I will use any preferred name you make me aware of informally in this course.

FOOD AND HOUSING SECURITY

When students face challenges securing food and/or housing, making learning a priority can be difficult. If you're in this situation, please reach out to the [Dean of Students](#). If you feel comfortable, please also let me know, and I will do what I am able to connect you to appropriate resources offered by our campus—you are not alone in dealing with these issues.

DEAN OF STUDENTS – CARES TEAM

College is a time when you may be testing your independence and/or striving to find yourself. It's not uncommon for these journeys to have rough points. The Dean of Students Office is here to assist you by strategically and effectively handling and referring student concerns/needs across all areas of the campus and University as needed. For some students, personal, emotional, psychological, academic, or other challenges may hinder their ability to succeed both in and outside of the classroom. The Dean of Students Office serves as your initial contact if you need assistance with these challenges. You can learn more about the free services by calling 856-225-

6050, emailing deanofstudents@camden.rutgers.edu, or visiting the website at <http://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/>

WELLNESS CENTER – HEALTH AND WELLBEING RESOURCES

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in college, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. The Wellness Center Medical and Counseling staff can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential medical and mental health services available on campus by calling 856-225-6005, visiting the website at <https://wellnesscenter.camden.rutgers.edu/> or visiting the Wellness Center on the 2nd Floor of the Campus Center.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form at <https://webapps.rutgers.edu/student-ods/forms/registration> and see <https://success.camden.rutgers.edu/disability-services>. Please keep in mind that The Psychology of Eating is a discussion-based seminar; I will not be sharing class slides (they are for organizational purposes only) nor will video or audio recordings of class be available. If you feel that this class will not be a good fit for your learning needs, please consider taking a different course.

LEARNING CENTER – LEARNING SPECIALISTS AND TUTORING

I am committed to making course content accessible to all students. The Learning Center provides Learning Specialists who can help you build a learning plan based on your strengths and needs. Tutors, study groups and more services are available you for free. Many services are available in virtual formats and after normal business hours. In addition, if English is not your first language and this causes you concern about the course, the Learning Center can help. You can learn more about these services by calling 856-225-6442, emailing rclc@camden.rutgers.edu or learningcenter@camden.rutgers.edu, or visiting the website <https://learn.camden.rutgers.edu/> You can schedule an appointment with Learning Specialist to create a plan of action using the website.

NATIONAL AND STATE RESOURCES FOR WELL-BEING

Crisis Text Line: text HOME to 741741

Crisis Text Line for Students of Color: text STEVE to 741741

National Domestic Violence Helpline: 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522

the National Substance Abuse helpline, SAMHSA's National Helpline, [1-800-662-HELP \(4357\)](https://1-800-662-HELP)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255

NJ HOPE line- <https://njhopeline.com/>

The Sexual Assault helpline at 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

Trevor Lifeline (LGBTQ+): 1-866-488-7386
and the National Substance Abuse helpline, SAMHSA's National Helpline, [1-800-662-HELP](tel:1-800-662-HELP)
[\(4357\)](#) **GENERAL COURSE POLICIES:**