

HUMAN BEHAVIOR COURSE 2004

GRADING

POSTING OF GRADES. During the course, exam grades will be posted outside Dr. Engel's office, B3066.

EXAM EMPHASIS. Not all topics will receive equal emphasis on examinations. Generally, lecture topics are weighted on the exams in proportion to the amount of class time spent on them. Topics that receive a little more emphasis on exams than one might expect from the amount of course time spent on them include neuropsychiatry, mood disorders, schizophrenia, substance use disorders, disorders resulting from situational stressors, anxiety disorders, suicide and violence. Topics less emphasized on exams than one might expect based on the amount of class time spent on them include development, small groups, personality disorders, and the section on special topics at the end of the course.

CHALLENGES TO EXAM QUESTIONS. Students will have five working days after exam grades are posted to challenge exam questions. Challenges are to be submitted electronically to the class representative, who collates them without editing into a single submission to Dr. Engel (cengel@usuhs.mil).

To successfully challenge an answer to any Human Behavior Course exam question, students must make their case based upon statements from the book, the lectures, and/or the way the question is worded. All course director decisions regarding exam question challenges are final.

EXAMINATIONS.

Block Exams: 120 points (three exams worth 40 points each)

All examinations will be administered in Lecture Room D. The format for all examinations is the same and consists of single-best-answer multiple choice and extended-matching questions.

Final Exam: 72 points

32 points on this examination will address cumulative course content. 40 points will cover the last course block only.

Small Groups (ATTENDANCE MANDATORY): 8 points (four groups worth up to 2 points each)

There are four small group sessions during the course. Any readings assigned for the small groups are testable for exam purposes. Students earn a grade from 0-2 points per small group session. Small group leaders evaluate and grade student participation (absent & unexcused=0; present=1; active in discussions=2). Student concerns or complaints regarding any small group may be addressed by email to Dr. Engel. Except for determinations regarding excused versus unexcused absences, however, small group leader grades are final. Small group evaluations of student performance can be decisive for students on the border between grades.

Bonus Points: 10 points possible

Up to 10 bonus points will be added to your final grade point average **after** letter grade cutoffs have been determined from examination and small group performance. These points can make a major difference in your overall grade. BONUS POINT ACTIVITIES ARE VOLUNTARY and amount to 'extra credit' work. Bonus points can have a significant impact on your final course grade. Bonus points are earned by successfully completing a **Psychiatry Academic Report (PAR)**, as described the corresponding section of the syllabus. Note that the PAR must be completed on time to be eligible for full credit.

FINAL COURSE GRADES.

Final grades will be disseminated to students at the end of the course. The final grade will reflect each exam score, each small group grade, and any bonus points received during the course. If you wish to have us email your final grade to you, please notify Dr. Engel or Jennifer Stecklein at or before the Final Exam.

FINAL COURSE POINT TOTAL (up to 210 points)

Block Exams (up to 120 pts) + Final Exam (up to 72 pts) + Small Group (8 pts) + Bonus Points

Dr. Engel will assign all students a preliminary course letter grade based on your course point total before bonus points are added. The ranges listed below are based on the class grades from previous years and serve as a guideline.

CLASS STANDING RELATIVE THE MEAN IN SD	GRADE
Greater than +1.1 SD from Class Mean	A
Class Mean to + 1.1 SD From Class Mean	B
-1.5 SD to Class Mean	C
-2.0 SD to -1.5 SD from Class Mean	D
Less than -2.0 SD from Class Mean	F

Once the class curve and individual grade cut points have been established, bonus points are added, and the final course point total and grade are determined. Academic Awards will be based on your final course point total that includes your bonus points. A letter grade of "I" (incomplete) will be given for failure to complete required assignments, tests, or the final course evaluation.

Some years, students score very well as a group, leading to an unfairly difficult class curve. To prevent this from occurring, any student with a final course point total of 90% or greater is insured an "A", 80% or greater at least a "B", 70% or greater at least a "C", and 65% or greater at least a "D."

ACADEMIC DIFFICULTIES.

What the department will do:

- **After the Block 2 Exam.** Any student with a cumulative point total of less than -2.0 SD who is scoring less than 65% on the first two examinations must meet with Dr. Engel to discuss the situation.
- **After the Block 3 Exam.** Any student with a cumulative point total of less than -2.0 SD who is scoring less than 65% on the first two examinations will be offered a plan of remedial action. The student and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs will be notified of the potential for academic deficiency.

What you can do:

- *Don't* wait for the last minute.
- *Don't* be afraid to ask for assistance.
- *Don't* take the course lightly. We do everything we can to get students successfully 'past the finish line'. However, every year four or five people struggle to get a 'C' final grade, and one or two students struggle to get a 'D' final grade. A small percent of students have failed the course (perhaps one student in every 200 or so that take the course) and must either take it again, complete a PAR after the course is over (getting in the way of spring USMLE exams), and/or have to take an extra clinical psychiatry rotation in the fourth year. Don't be one of these students!
- Do anticipate emerging academic or scheduling problems. Meet with Dr. Engel to prevent them. Dr. Engel maintains an open door policy for students, but 'drop-in' visits may sometimes be impossible, so please request an appointment via email ahead of time (cengel@usuhs.mil). Please suggest two or three possible meeting times and wait for Dr. Engel's reply.
- Do Contact Jennifer Stecklein B3066 (295-9799 or 9796 or jstecklein@usuhs.mil) if you have any trouble contacting Dr. Engel.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS.

Any student who does not display consistent seriousness of purpose and effort may be denied a letter grade above a C. Small group facilitator evaluations of student performance during small group sessions can be a decisive factor for students who are on the border between the A/B, B/C, or C/D grades. Dr. Engel reserves the right to change a student's letter grade if there is sufficient evidence of inappropriate, disruptive, or unethical behavior. This includes actions disruptive to other students or to faculty.