Psychology of Workplace Safety  
Allied Health Sciences Department  

Syllabus – Spring 2019

Excluding materials for purchase, syllabus information may be subject to change. The most up-to-date syllabus is located within the course in HuskyCT.

Program Information

This is a three-credit undergraduate level course. It is an elective course in the Allied Health Sciences Occupational and Environmental Health and Safety Concentration (OEHS) and in the Allied Health Sciences Post-baccalaureate Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Certificate Program.

The developer of this course is Richard Dusto with revisions by Dr. Gary Sterner.

Course and Instructor Information

Course Title: Psychology of Workplace Safety  
Credits: 3  
Format: Online  
Prerequisites: Open only to BGS students and Allied Health Sciences OEHS concentration majors, juniors or higher, and OSH Certificate students; others with consent. Recommended preparation: One 1000-level or above psychology course.

Professor: Gary Sterner Ph.D  
Email: gary.sterner@uconn.edu  
After the first day of classes, students registered in the course should send messages to the instructor via the Messages tool in HuskyCT.

Availability: Unless otherwise noted, I will check into the course at least five days a week to monitor discussions and respond to HuskyCT Messages. If I expect to be away due to illness, travel or family obligations, I will make every attempt to notify you in advance.

Permission Requests: Students requesting permission to register should contact paul.bureau@uconn.edu. Include your Peoplesoft ID number and reason for taking the course.

Course Materials

Required course materials should be obtained before the first day of class.

Texts are available through a local or online bookstore. The UConn Co-op carries many materials that can be shipped via its online Textbooks To Go service. For more information, see Textbooks and Materials on our Enrolled Students page.

Required Materials:


Additional course readings and media are available within HuskyCT, through either an Internet link or Library Resources

Course Description

Examination of the human factors and behaviors found to have an impact upon the safety performance of employees in the workplace. Knowledge of relevant psychological methods, research findings and theories, and of intervention strategies to improve individual and organizational safety performance.
Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should have an understanding of the issues involved in workplace safety and should be able to apply the methods, concepts and theories that the science of psychology has found to be relevant to achieving safety in the workplace. In furtherance, you should be able to do the following:

1. list and describe commonly used motivational approaches
2. describe the differences between the behavior-based and person-based approaches
3. evaluate the effectiveness of behavior-based and person-based approaches and describe how each approach can be used to produce beneficial changes in people and organizations
4. describe the supporting mechanisms that are used to insure safe behaviors
5. describe the psychological methods and theoretical concepts relevant to workplace safety and discuss how they can be translated into techniques for gaining desirable safety performance in a variety of situations

Course Outline (and Calendar if Applicable)

Module 1: Introduction: Choosing the Right Approach
Module 2: Starting with Theory; Paradigm Shifts for Total Safety
Module 3: Human Barriers to Safety: Cognitive Factors and Social Influence
Module 4: Human Barriers to Safety: Sensation, Perception and Perceived Risk
Module 5: Stress vs. Distress
Module 6: The Learning of Safe vs. Unsafe Behavior: Basic Principles
Module 7: Identifying Critical Behaviors; Behavior Safety Analysis
Module 8: Intervening with Activators
Module 9: Intervening with Consequences
Module 10: Intervening as a Behavior-Change Agent: Coaching and Supportive Conversation
Module 11: Actively Caring
Module 12: The Person Based-Approach to Actively Caring
Module 13: Workplace Aggression and Workplace Safety

Course Requirements and Grading

Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Components</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief Papers (2 @ 15% each)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Requirements:

Discussion Participation

As a student in this course, you have the opportunity to play a significant part in your own learning by participating in the online discussions with your fellow students. The discussion is an important part of the course. You are to complete the assigned module readings before reading the module content and participating in the online discussions.

Regular participation in online discussions constitutes 30% of your final course grade. You will complete the assignment for each module by posting a message that contains your response to the assigned task, including answers to the specific questions it poses; your post will begin a new thread that others in the class may respond to. In addition, you will read all your peers' messages and respond to at least one peer with analytic comments that help clarify the topic and/or provide additional insight. Explain and justify any personal opinions in your postings. Your analyses should apply knowledge gained through assigned readings, material presented in the course, cited research, and relevant experience. Ensure all your messages are well written, edited and submitted by deadlines posted in HuskyCT's Course Schedule. Also, read the summary and analysis posted as "Instructor's Concluding Comments" following the completion of each discussion assignment. Each discussion topic will be graded using a 100 point scale.
Brief Papers

You are to write two short papers each worth 15% of your final course grade. Each paper will deal with a current issue in workplace safety. Specific details and parameters for each paper will be provided in the course. Papers are to be well written with proper grammar and spelling and submitted by their respective due dates listed in HuskyCT's Course Schedule. Papers will only be accepted if submitted as an attachment in an accepted format (Microsoft Word, Rich Text or PDF), and your name is included on the attached document. Do not use the built-in HTML editor in HuskyCT for your paper submissions. Each paper will be graded using a 100 point scale.

Final Paper

The final paper constitutes 40% of your final course grade. It requires that you apply knowledge gained through this course (relevant findings, concepts and theoretical approaches) to analyze a work situation (case study) with safety issues and to recommend corrective actions. Specific details and parameters for the paper will be provided in the course. Your paper is to be well written with proper grammar and spelling and submitted by the respective due date listed in HuskyCT's Course Schedule. A paper will only be accepted if submitted as an attachment in an accepted format (Microsoft Word, Rich Text or PDF), and your name is included on the attached document. Do not use the built-in HTML editor in HuskyCT for your paper submissions. The final paper will be graded using a 100 point scale.

Your final course grade is computed as a weighted average based on your grade for each course component and the percent of the final grade represented by each component.

Final Numerical Grade = .3*[Average Discussion Participation Grade] +.15*[First Brief Paper Grade] +.15*[Second Brief Paper Grade] +.4*[Final Paper Grade]

You may earn several extra (bonus) points, to be added to your Final Numerical Grade, based on your optional participation in the discussion of a number of extra topics (current events involving workplace safety) introduced by the instructor during the course.

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>GPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-66</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-62</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;60</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due Dates and Late Policy

All course due dates are identified in the Course Schedule. Deadlines are based on Eastern Standard Time; if you are in a different time zone, please adjust your submittal times accordingly. The instructor reserves the right to change dates accordingly as the semester progresses. All changes will be communicated in an appropriate manner.
Late Policy

Each assignment has a due date posted in the Course Schedule. Unexcused failure to complete assignments in a timely manner will reduce your grade for that module according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Penalty</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within 24 hours after due date</td>
<td>10% penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within 1-2 days after due date</td>
<td>25% penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within 3-5 days after due date</td>
<td>50% penalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 5 days after due date</td>
<td>Zero credit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feedback and Grades

I will make every effort to provide feedback and grades within two weeks of module end dates and paper due dates (not including spring break). To keep track of your performance in the course, refer to MyGrades in HuskyCT.

Student Responsibilities and Resources

As a member of the University of Connecticut student community, you are held to certain standards and academic policies. In addition, there are numerous resources available to help you succeed in your academic work. Review these important standards, policies and resources, which include:

- The Student Code
  - Academic Integrity
  - Resources on Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism
- Copyrighted Materials
- Netiquette and Communication
- Adding or Dropping a Course
- Academic Calendar
- Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Inappropriate Romantic Relationships
- Sexual Assault Reporting Policy

Students with Disabilities

Students needing special accommodations should work with the University's Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD). You may contact CSD by calling (860) 486-2020 or by emailing csd@uconn.edu. If your request for accommodation is approved, CSD will send an accommodation letter directly to your instructor(s) so that special arrangements can be made. (Note: Student requests for accommodation must be filed each semester.)

Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility using two sets of standards: the WCAG 2.0 standards issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued in the United States federal government.” (Retrieved March 24, 2013 from Blackboard’s website)

Software Requirements

The technical requirements for this course include:

- Word processing software
- Adobe Acrobat Reader
- Reliable internet access
- PowerPoint or PowePoint Viewer
- Video player such as Microsoft Media, RealMedia Player, etc.
Technical and Academic Help provides a guide to technical and academic assistance.

This course is completely facilitated online using the learning management platform, HuskyCT. If you have difficulty accessing HuskyCT, you have access to the in person/live person support options available during regular business hours through the Help Center. You also have 24x7 Course Support including access to live chat, phone, and support documents.

Minimum Technical Skills

To be successful in this course, you will need the following technical skills:

- Use electronic mail with attachments.
- Save files in commonly used word processing program formats.
- Copy and paste text, graphics or hyperlinks.
- Work within two or more browser windows simultaneously.
- Open and access PDF files.

University students are expected to demonstrate competency in Computer Technology. Explore the Computer Technology Competencies page for more information.

Evaluation of the Course

Students will be provided an opportunity to evaluate instruction in this course using the University's standard procedures, which are administered by the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE).

Additional informal formative surveys may also be administered within the course as an optional evaluation tool.