

Self-Management

The Science and Art of Helping Yourself

Brian T. Yates, Ph.D.

Professor, Department of Psychology

Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember.

Involve me and I learn.

- Benjamin Franklin



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course description

This exclusively online course uses both traditional and experiential activities to teach *self-management*. A series of progressively more demanding assignments guides you in applying psychological tools for achieving goals you set for yourself. We explore self-management theories, practices, and research findings for weight loss, studying, self-esteem, smoking cessation, preventing or abating drug addiction and depression, improved time management, and enjoying life more.

You implement your self-management logs and semester project (your *Self-Study*) with support and feedback from me (your professor), from a doctoral-level Teaching Assistant (TA), and, if you choose to participate in the course Discussion Board, possibly from other students. Self-management is learned and done so much better when you have social support. We provide all we can within the limits of the law.

All information you provide in assignments uploaded to me and our Teaching Assistant is confidential, except for reports of discriminatory, domestic, or sexual violence, harassment, or discrimination, abuse of a child, or suicidal intent. I am required by federal law (Title IX) to report what is disclosed to me about these problems. You can, however, speak confidentially to someone who is not required to report these problems by contacting (a) AU's Office of Advocacy Services for Interpersonal and Sexual Violence (OASIS) at 202-885-7070, (b) AU's Counseling Center at 202-885-3500, (c) ordained clergy at AU (202-885-3320), or (d) medical professionals at AU's Health Center (202-885-3380).

learning objectives

This course first teaches you evidence-based behavioral, cognitive, dynamic, holistic, and other tools for changing and sustaining yourself. Next we examine the specific steps of most self-management projects:

- defining goals for self-management
- self-monitoring
- assessing determinants of problems

- deciding how to engineer self-interventions
- measuring and judging the success of self-interventions and how to improve them
- preventing relapse from self-management goals achieved, and otherwise sustaining self-management.

pedagogic means

Readings and mini-lectures give you the basic knowledge for self-management. Writing assignments help you learn the course material by using it to gain control over progressively more challenging areas of your life.

All readings, mini-lectures, exams, and assignments are online, on Blackboard. There are no class meetings. If you wish, you can arrange a “live” or online meeting with me or my TA by emailing me at brian.yates@mac.com for an appointment. Exercises detailed in templates you download from Blackboard move you through each assignment: 2 TOOLS logs, your Self-Study, and an optional extra-credit “big picture” project. Fill out the templates and upload them to Blackboard: they’re your project reports! Former students have given me permission to show you how they did their Self-Studies by allowing you to view their deidentified reports: these can be so helpful!

In the two TOOLS units, you log your use of specific self-management tools in day-to-day self-management. I think you’ll find that you’re already using several recognized self-management tools. I hope you’ll be inspired to try out several more. Together, these TOOLS logs should foster old and new self-management skills as well as integrating the course into your daily activities.

Your Self-Study focuses on topics such as better eating, exercise, weight control, smoking cessation, improved study habits, more fulfilling dating, career planning, deciding on a career, getting a job, or getting into graduate school: your choice! As this list shows, your project need not involve self-restraint. Instead, or also, your self-study can focus on improving your creativity, growing as a person, spiritual development, or just about anything you wish to pursue. Self-studies have 4 major STEPS; you’ll compose 4 reports: 1) Self-MONITORING, 2) Self-ANALYSIS, 3) Self-CHANGE, and 4) Self-MAINTENANCE.

Unit of course	Start dates & deadlines 5:00 PM <u>Washington DC</u> time	Assignments Blackboard provides all <u>Readings</u> (including Lecturettes) and Exams Blackboard also provides all <u>Project</u> templates and project report load links	Points
1. INTRODUCTION to Self-Management	1/17 through Thursday 1/26	<u>Readings</u> 1 Exam on our Syllabus and INTRODUCTION readings <u>Project</u> Use template to describe a self-management failure and success	➡ 50 ➡ 50
2. <u>Behavioral</u> TOOLS for self-management	1/27 through Thursday 2/09	<u>Readings</u> 2 Exams on TOOLS for self-management (25 points each) <u>Project</u> 10 entries in TOOL Log 1 (use template)	➡ 50 ➡ 50
3. <u>Cognitive</u> and <u>Affective</u> TOOLS for self-management	2/10 through Thursday 2/23	<u>Readings</u> 2 Exams on TOOLS for self-management (25 points each) <u>Project</u> 10 <u>more</u> entries in TOOL Log 2 (use template)	➡ 50 ➡ 50
4. 1st STEP: Self-MONITORING	2/25 through Thursday 3/09	<u>Readings</u> 2 Exams: Self-MONITORING + 1st FOCUS area (25 points each) <u>Project</u> Project Report 1: Self-MONITORING (use template)	➡ 50 ➡ 50
5. 2nd STEP: Self-ANALYSIS	3/10 through Thursday 3/30	<u>Readings</u> 2 Exams: Self-ANALYSIS + 2nd FOCUS area (25 points each) <u>Project</u> Project Report 2: Self-ANALYSIS (use template)	➡ 50 ➡ 50
6. 3rd STEP: Self-CHANGE	3/31 through Thursday 4/13	<u>Readings</u> 2 Exams: Self-CHANGE + 3rd FOCUS area (25 points each) <u>Project</u> Project Report 3: Self-CHANGE (use template)	➡ 50 ➡ 50
7. 4th STEP: begin Self-MAINTENANCE	4/14 through Thursday 4/27	<u>Readings</u> 2 Exams: Self-MAINTENANCE + 4th FOCUS area (25 points each) <u>Project</u> Project Report 4: Self-MAINTENANCE (use template)	➡ 50 ➡ 50
8. (optional) A SELF-MANAGED LIFE (extra credit!)	4/28 through Thursday 5/04 (<i>something to work on throughout the course!</i>)	<u>Readings</u> 1 Exam on A SELF-MANAGED LIFE (optional, extra credit) <u>Project</u> Omega Project Report (use template) (optional, extra credit)	➡ 10 ➡ 10
TOTAL		<i>before Unit 8 (which is all extra credit) ...</i>	700

Course Grade:	F	D	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A
minimum % of total points <i>before</i> extra credit	0%	60%	70%	73%	77%	80%	83%	87%	90%	93%
Total points needed for letter grade in top row	0	420	490	511	539	560	581	609	630	651

resources you need to learn self-management in this course

- Your intellect, time, energy, and honesty. I think these are the most important resources for learning and life.
- Fast, reliable, regular access to the internet. Dial-up connections won't do! Also, starting an exam or upload while walking, or in a moving car, train, boat, or airplane is pretty much guaranteed to result in broken connection and premature end to your exam or upload ... which can result in a zero score if you run out of time. Try to stay in one place while taking exams and uploading assignments.
- [Firefox](http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/) (<http://www.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/new/>) or [Chrome](https://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/) (<https://www.google.com/intl/en/chrome/browser/>) browsers, recommended by AU's Blackboard gurus as the least trouble-prone. I use Safari with few glitches... All are free, of course, as are Firefox, Chrome, and Safari apps for phones and tablets.
- Regular access to AU's Blackboard site. You'll use Blackboard to check the calendar, download the syllabus, get and do assignments, view videos, read readings and other materials, take exams, upload assignments, and get feedback from me and our TA on your self-management projects.
- Regular, reliable access to an email address to receive critically important course Announcements. If you don't check your American University email address regularly, make sure it automatically forwards from Blackboard to the email address you do check regularly. You can get help setting this up by visiting <http://www.american.edu/oit/email/Gmail-FAQ.cfm#forward> or call 202-885-2550. If you receive no emailed announcements from me in the first few days of the semester, call 202-885-2550 for help getting email from AU's Blackboard system sent to your email system. Read email related to our course daily. I do.
- On Blackboard I've provided you with [Youtube](#) links to my mini-lecture videos, links to some readings, and both .pdf and iBook versions of the tests I wrote for this course. All are free to you (well, you did pay the tuition). No other materials are required. Isn't that cool?

help for Blackboard, computer, Internet connections, other tech

Although our TA and I are enthusiastic users of technology for education, writing, research (and fun), please consult the experts about technical issues. When? Just about any time, day or night, Monday through Sunday:

- For help with Blackboard, please call AU's Blackboard gurus: 202-885-3904. They are amazing!
- For help with other computer hardware, software, or connection questions, please call AU's Information Technology (IT) support team at 202-885-2550. They are really great too.

examinations

The 7 required units include 1 to 2 exams each, as shown in the calendar earlier in this syllabus. Exams follow each unit's readings and mini-lectures. Take the exam(s) anytime between the start date for the unit and 5:00 PM in Washington DC on the deadline date for the unit. Some items on exams are Multiple Choice (you select the best answer), some are Multiple Answer (select all correct choices, and no incorrect answers), and some are True/False. As you would for any exam, please read the instructions and questions carefully. According to past students, you should need less than 15 minutes for each exam, but they won't shut off until double that. Exams can only be started once. Do start your exam at least 30 minutes before 5:00 PM on the final deadline day.

self-management projects (self-studies)

Use the Self-Management Project Templates provided on Blackboard. Retain all headings and instructions in the file. That way you'll not forget anything, and I can give you the best scores on the different sections.

For each unit, upload your completed assignment file to the Blackboard unit assignment section well before 5:00 PM on the deadline day for the unit. **Upload it in .pdf format** – not Word or Pages or another format. In Word, click "File" then "Save As..." and select "PDF" in the "Format..." menu. In Pages, click "File" and then "Export To" and select "PDF..." Need more help? AU IT at 202-885-2550 has your back.

Be sure to check the readability of what you've uploaded by immediately downloading it and making sure you can see your entire file. Also be certain you're uploading the version of the assignment that you want us to read. We score whatever you upload, even if it's incomplete or blank, so make sure you've uploaded the correct, final draft! Give yourself plenty of time to download the file you uploaded, and to check it, to be sure it's what you want us to score.

AU's tech folks at 202-885-1550 can help with these and similar operations. If we can't read your file, we can't score it and it'll get a zero. (Yikes!) Blank, corrupted, infected, or otherwise unreadable files will be scored zero too, regrettably. No exceptions. Sorry!

It's also your responsibility to be certain that the files you upload are free of viruses and other malware. AU provides free software to help; AU's IT staff (202-885-2550) can help you install and use it.

late exams and late papers always receive zero scores

An exam submitted or written report uploaded after 5:00 PM in Washington, DC of the deadline date for the unit are scored zero. Because there is plenty of time to take the exams and upload assignments, there are no exceptions to this. Really! Illness and computer and internet issues do not justify exceptions to this rule. Also, if you're in a different time zone you still need to get all assignments done by 5:00 Washington DC time: that's when the Blackboard servers will close access to exams and upload links for everyone.

Last-minute problems taking exams or uploading assignments are not always things I can deal with in the hours leading up to the deadline. Please, please, *please* plan to complete your work early—and get extra credit!

Meeting deadlines actually is a great self-management task and test – really appropriate for this course! My advice is to think of the deadlines as ultimate, final, no-excuses deadlines, *not* "when I'll try to get it done by" dates. (I know that's easy to do. I actually was a student once!) :-) Complete your exams days early, and upload your assignments early too. I give you extra points for doing this, as detailed below in the "Extra Credit" section. That way, if there is a problem, you have time to deal with it before the unit deadline.

how to back up your work

If you don't have your computer, tablet, or phone set to automatically backup (for iPhones and iPads: Settings, iCloud, Backup and select "On"), make a copy of your report drafts and of your self-monitoring data (so precious!) every time you add to 'em by emailing it to yourself with gmail, Mail on iCloud, or another service that you can access via the internet from any computer.

Apple computers come with TimeMachine, which automatically backs up all files on your computer regularly and recoverably to any external drive you attach. Plus, the free Apple wordprocessing (Pages), spreadsheet (Numbers), presentation (Keynote), Calendar, Contacts Reminders, Notes, and email (Mail) programs that come Apple device store your Pages, Numbers, Keynote files and your calendar and contexts in iCloud, where you can access and change them from any other Apple device to get your life back on track even if your computer crashes or changes its location without your knowledge or permission. Check to see that you've set your devices to use iCloud.

Not an Apple device user? No problem! Windows now comes with File History and Windows Backup and Restore, two backup programs that can work like TimeMachine. Also, from what I understand Office 365, Google Docs and Chrome systems store your files in the Cloud like Apple's free software does, accessible with apps on your phone or tablet as well as on your computer. Really, there's no good reason to ever lose your writing, your data, your work!

extra credit

Extra credit has proven to be a great way to help my students pace themselves to get done what needs to get done well ahead of deadlines. If you miss a deadline, these also can be great ways to rescue your course grade.

Complete all exams in the unit 48+ hours before the unit deadline: 3 extra credit points x 7 units = 21 points

Don't wait until the end of the unit to take all the exams – they're supposed to help you learn the material at a more abstract level *before* you apply it! Receive 3 extra credit points for completing all the exams in a unit of the course at least 48 hours before the deadline for that

unit. These dates are spread throughout the course in a way that should help you pace yourself to learn what you need to learn before applying it in assignments, and keep stress manageable.

Successfully upload your project 24+ hours before the unit deadline: 3 extra credit points x 7 units = 21 points

Pretty much the same deal as exams: why wait until the final deadline for all work for a unit? Get 3 extra points for each report you successfully upload to Blackboard at least 24 hours before the deadline for the unit. With 7 reports due in our course, you could get up to 21 points just for turning in your project reports by the self-pacing deadlines! Do this *and* early exams: 42 points or 60% of a grade!

Extra credit posting to the Discussion Board Forum for a Unit: up to 3 extra credit points x 7 units = 21 points

Each unit of our course includes a social component for better learning and more fun. Be social! Ask questions! Teach others; learn from others! *And* get up to 3 extra points for each Discussion Board forum you post to in Blackboard by its unit deadline. With 7 forums (one for each unit in our course), you could get up to 21 more extra credit points just for posting to the forums by the forum deadlines (shown in Blackboard)! It pays to post: make 'em good!

Extra credit for working on *Self-Managed Life*: up to 20 more possible extra credit points!

You can work on the final, optional unit, *A Self-Managed Life*, throughout the course. There's a relatively brief exam (up to 10 points of extra credit, and relatively brief report (also up to 10 points of extra credit)... both due by the last day of the course. And, yes, you can get "early extra credit" for completing this optional exam 48+ hours before the unit deadline, and for uploading the paper 24+ hours before the unit deadline.

learning with challenges

If you are a student with physical or other disabilities and experience difficulty in this course, please contact me. Our university offers special services to help. Contact [Academic Support and Access Center](#) (202-885-3360, Mary Graydon Center [MGC] Room 243). They offer resources and consultation for all students, as well as services for students with learning disabilities and ADHD (attention deficit

hyperactivity disorder). If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a timely manner with a letter from the Academic Support and Access Center so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

letters of recommendation

Recommendations from professors can be an important part of applications for internships, employment, and graduate school. Most recommendation forms ask for much more than a glowing letter with specific examples of the positive traits attributed by the professor to the student. The typical recommendation form requires the professor to rate the student's diligence, industry, honesty, leadership capacity, intelligence, ability to work with others, aptitude for teaching and for research, and more.

This is difficult to do with accuracy or honesty for students in my online courses, with whom interactions typically are limited to several emails ... even an in-office visit. I've tried. A recommendation form that is full of "no information" checks rather than "excellent" ratings is not very impressive.

So, it's long been my policy to write letters of recommendation only for students who I've come to know by supervising their research in my Program Evaluation Research Lab (PERL) for Independent Study credit for at least a semester. Working in a lab with a professor and her or his graduate students actually is a great way to learn what psychology's all about ... that's the way almost every professor in our department got her or his start! And you can get Psychology course credit for it too.

If you're interested in a recommendation from me, I invite you to read up on the sort of research I do and consider collaborating with me and other students on pushing the frontiers of evaluation of the outcomes and costs of psychological services. Check out the PERL website I developed and maintain at brianyates.net/PERL/

And thanks in advance for your understanding.

emergency preparedness

We're totally online, so no problem! Download templates when units start. Keep on watching, listening, seeing, reading, learning, taking exams, uploading assignment templates completed, and posting posts. Check your email for announcements, as always.

academic integrity

Unfortunately, my experience has shown that a few of my students have needed the following made explicit, so I must burden you with it as well. Please read the following with special care.

All exams are **closed-book**, **closed-notes**, and **closed** everything else. You must not seek or accept help from, and you must not provide help to, other people for the exams and other assignments. Also, all self-monitoring information must be true, not made-up or copied from anything or anybody. If you do not follow these rules precisely and completely, you are in violation of AU's rules of academic integrity. It's wrong, and it's not worth it either if you think that way.

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the [University's Academic Integrity Code](#). By registering for classes at AU, you are acknowledging your awareness of the Code and obligating yourself to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur. The standard sanction for violations of the code is failure in the course. Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general, or as they relate to the requirements of this course in particular.

Copying or paraphrasing examples used to illustrate how to do projects is plagiarism. (Yes, this has been a problem in the past.)

All of your exam responses, and all your self-management projects, must be completely original: it must be your own writing, done for the first time for this course. All material drawn from other sources, whether a direct quote or a close paraphrasing (a "putting in your own words") must be placed within quotation marks and must be followed immediately by a reference citation (a footnote or APA-style

citation with a References section at the end of your paper). To do otherwise is plagiarism, which is a violation of the Academic Integrity Code of American University. Also, I will not accept use of any material from a paper you have written for another course: do not do this, under any circumstances!

All suspected plagiarism, including paraphrasing without quotation marks and without reference citation, will be reported to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences with a recommendation for disciplinary action. This is a University regulation.

The College of Arts and Sciences says the following, which I endorse:

I take plagiarism and academic dishonesty very seriously, and I am required to report cases to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, whose policy is to fail students for the course. Please read the university's Academic Integrity Code closely at www.american.edu/academics/integrity/ and be sure to ask me if you have any questions.

In writing papers, you must properly cite all sources (1) directly quoted, (2) paraphrased, or (3) consulted in any fashion. Sources include all printed material as well as the Internet. Proper citation means using a standard citation format: MLA, APA, or Chicago.

It is also considered plagiarism if you merely rework source material, placing an author's thoughts in other words without contributing your own ideas. For that reason, you must include some kind of source note whenever drawing on someone else's interpretation. A source note can be a sentence or more in your paper, or it can be a footnote. A source note should clarify the extent to which your interpretation is indebted to your source, explaining both (1) what you use and (2) where you depart or differ from the source.

It is also considered plagiarism to submit drafts, response papers, and other informal assignments without properly citing sources and acknowledging intellectual debts. Failure for the course is the typical sanction in such cases. I expect all work that you do on homework, on take-home exams, and on in-class exams to be your own work. Consulting with and sharing answers with other students violates the Academic Integrity Code, so too does consulting outside resources such as notes, textbooks, and the Internet.

Consulting with and sharing answers for exams with other students violates the Academic Integrity Code, as does consulting outside resources such as notes, textbooks, and the Internet.

Please join me in pledging that all projects for this course will be kept confidential within the self-management group. All course material, including projects and discussion board postings, should be kept confidential by all of us unless I, the professor, judge them to pose a clear and present danger to the student or other people. All information you provide is confidential, aside from reports of sexual violence, sexual harassment, sexual discrimination, abuse of a child, or suicidal intent, which I must report by federal law.

Also, please understand that I provide my video talks and lectures, and my self-management texts in iBook and .pdf formats, for your use in this course only. I hope these help you learn the material in the course; they are, however, my intellectual property according to American University regulations. You should not provide links or copies of any of my videos or texts for use by anyone else.

By continuing enrollment in this course, I assume that you agree to the above. If you have any questions, please contact me directly and as soon as possible at brian.yates@mac.com ... and *thanks* for being in my course!