

BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of Nutrition and Health Science, College of Health
NUTR 643 Energy Balance, Obesity, and Weight Control
Summer 2026 Syllabus

Course Instructor: **Hayley Berger MS, RDN, LDN** (she/her)

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Course format: **Online (Asynchronous)**

Office hours: Held on Zoom by appointment.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO NOTE

- **The best way to contact me is via e-mail or Canvas message**
- When sending me an email, please **use your BSU email address and specify “NUTR 643” in the email subject line.** I will do my best to respond to your email within 24 hours of business days and 48 hours on weekends.
- **The syllabus and course schedule document are subject to change as necessary at any time – I will provide prior notice of any change via email or Canvas announcement if any, and the most current course schedule can always be found in the Syllabus tab on Canvas.**

COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In-depth study of the components of energy balance, theories regarding the etiology of obesity, and the impact of obesity and dieting on health. Includes evaluation of current weight control techniques and identification of the best methods for maintaining optimal body weight. **Only open to NUTD majors. 3 credits.**

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Following successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- a. Identify the components involved in energy balance.
- b. Explain the influence of energy imbalance on weight.
- c. Explain putative causal factors associated with the development of obesity.
- d. Discuss potential health consequences of obesity with respect to chronic diseases.
- e. Identify tools utilized to assess obesity.
- f. Explain the effects of cultural attitudes and biases towards individuals with obesity.
- g. Explain the current position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics regarding interventions used to treat overweight and obesity.
- h. Examine the tenants of the Health At Every Size (HAES) paradigm and determine whether HAES is relevant during weight-related interactions between the RDN/NDTR and clients.
- i. Evaluate research conducted on the metabolic consequences associated with weight cycling.
- j. Critically evaluate nutrition research focused on obesity amelioration across the lifespan.
- k. Critically evaluate the scientific merits of popular modalities for the treatment of obesity, including surgical approaches.

COURSE RATIONALE

With the prevalence of overweight and obesity in the United States increasing and the number of individuals currently trying to lose weight, health professionals need to have a clear understanding of causes and consequences of obesity.

COURSE TEXTBOOK – none required**COURSE FORMAT**

This course is split up into Modules. Each week, the module will open at 12:00am Monday and all assignments will be due by 11:59pm Sunday. The content for each module will vary but will contain relevant information for that week's topic including webinars, articles, short videos, and other reference material. You are responsible for reviewing the material prior to completing the weekly assignments. Please regularly check in to the modules for additional information and instruction.

GRADING

The tentative evaluation components table below breaks down points totals for each graded item so that you are able to plan ahead.

GRADING SCALE

A	94-100%	C	74-76.9%
A-	90-93.9%	C-	70-73.9%
B+	87-89.9%	D+	67-69.9%
B	84-86.9%	D	64-66.9%
B-	80-83.9%	D-	60-63.9%
C+	77-79.9%	F	<60%

EVALUATION COMPONENTS

Component	Point Value
Introduction Video	6
Reflections (8 @ 5 points each)	40
Applications (8 @ 11 points each, 1 at 16 points)	104
Quizzes (9 @ 10 points each)	90
Final "Exam"	150
Weight Loss Plan Evaluation Project	75
Total Points	465

STUDENT COURSE EVALUATION

I appreciate all feedback. Your opinion and evaluation of this class are important tools that I will use to improve the course for the future. Students will be contacted with an email link to the course evaluations during the semester. I encourage you to complete these evaluations honestly.

COURSE POLICIES

UNIVERSITY STATEMENT

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's [Disability Services Office](#) coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

GRADE POLICY

All course content will be posted on Ball State University's web-based site, Canvas. All students with a BSU username may log onto the [Canvas site](#). **I do not accept late work, except for documented emergencies or prior discussion with me.** Technical issues are not valid excuses for late work unless the problem stems from Canvas servers. Assignments must be turned in via Canvas prior to the end of due date as specified. In the absence of mistakes, fraud, bad faith, or incompetence, I will be the key decision-maker on the assignment of grades. For information on **grade appeal**, visit the [Grade Appeals webpage](#). If you have a question regarding a grade you received, please contact me at the time the item is returned or released on Canvas or shortly thereafter. All grade discrepancies (excluding the final project) must be resolved before you turn in your final project.

COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK POLICY

Please feel free to email me if you have any questions or concerns about your performance in class. ***The best way to contact me is via e-mail. When sending me an email, please use your BSU email address and specify your name and NUTR 643 in the email subject line.*** I will try to return email within 24 hours during business days and within 48 hours on the weekend. Any e-mails received after 5 pm may not get answered until the next morning or workweek day. If you do not hear back from me within 48 hours, please re-send your email. If you have a time-sensitive question regarding an upcoming due date, please be in touch at least 24 hours before the due date. I will make every effort to grade your submitted work no later than 5 business days of submission.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance in Ball State University online classes is measured by your active participation in course activities (logging in to an online course does not, by itself, demonstrate attendance). In this class, you are responsible for keeping up with the weekly course activities, lectures, assignments, and exams. It is recommended that you log into your canvas course dashboard 3 to 4 times a week and check your official Ball State email account daily to view announcements and prepare for class. If you foresee barriers to completing work during a given week, please get in touch with me as soon as possible. [Section 1.6.9 of the Code](#) outlines your rights to be excused for funerals/bereavement, pregnancy, and jury duty. This page includes the appeals policy for when a student and faculty member have a conflict about the interpretation of the policy. Students involved in intercollegiate athletics, Ball State University-sponsored events, or military duties should get in touch with me as soon as possible (ideally, the first two weeks of the semester) so that we can discuss appropriate accommodations regarding completing the course requirements.

ACADEMIC ETHICS AND PLAGIARISM POLICY

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the Department of Nutrition and Health Science, the College of Health, and Ball State University. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, the Department of Nutrition and Health Science, the College of Health, and Ball State University are committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. The Student Academic Ethics Policy can be found under the Student Code in the Calendar of Events Handbook. The Academic Ethics policy in section VII of the *Code*. The [Student Academic Ethics Policy](#) contains definitions and procedures for handling alleged violations.

Plagiarism is not acceptable. Unless otherwise indicated for all assignments, you must work independently by yourself. Sharing of files is not permitted for any reason. Other examples of academic integrity violations **include but are not limited to:**

- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not
- Use or possession of a file created by someone else
- Reusing work from another semester, course, or section (even your own work) Fraudulent submission of work
- Using unauthorized materials during exams
- Impersonating someone else or having them impersonate you
- Making fraudulent or dishonest statements regarding your work Soliciting others to complete work for you
- Posting course files and resources on study or content-sharing websites

Plagiarism Detection: Ball State University subscribes to SimCheck, a plagiarism prevention service, through Canvas. You **may** be asked to submit written assignments to SimCheck as part of this course. You may indicate in writing to me that you refuse to participate in the plagiarism detection process, in which case I may then use other electronic means to verify the originality of your work.

AI STATEMENT

As you work on and submit assignments this semester, know that using generative AI tools to complete your assignments is a violation on of Ball State's [Academic Ethics Policy](#) unless the AI use is explicitly approved by the faculty member. In general, students may not submit any work generated by an AI program as their own. Doing so is plagiarism. In courses and assignments where AI use is permitted, faculty will have guidelines for that use. Work created outside of those guidelines will be considered an Academic Ethics Policy violation. If a student's grade is affected by an academic ethics violation, faculty are required to report the violation to the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs who oversees the Student Academic Ethics policy and maintains records of its violations.

No Generative AI Use: All work conducted and/or submitted in this course should reflect your own ideas and demonstrate your current knowledge, abilities, and skills. Therefore, generative AI should not be used to complete any portion of the assignment(s). Doing so constitutes a violation of Ball State University's Student Academic Ethics Policy.

CIVILITY STATEMENT

In a civil course environment, whether in person or online, the atmosphere is to be a safe place to learn, express and question. As such, respectful behavior is expected at all times. Students may disagree, question, and counter viewpoints presented without fear of attack or reprimand.

FERPA AND PRIVACY

As a student, your educational records are considered confidential. Under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances, your records will not be released without your written and signed consent. However, some directory information may be released to third parties without your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn more about student rights to privacy by reading [Ball State's FERPA and Privacy and Protection](#).

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's [Statement on Freedom of Expression](#), the resources on Ball State's [Freedom of Expression webpage](#), and [Ball State's Beneficence Pledge](#).

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

You are responsible for keeping up with the course schedule, studying the lecture slides, or viewing other recommended study tools like short video or audio-recorded lectures if any, reading the following chapters and other materials posted on Canvas, and completing the assignments. Each week begins on Monday and ends on Sunday, with assignments due Sunday at 11:59 pm, other than exceptions as noted in the course schedule. Use the course schedule to guide you through each week.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week	Dates	Topic	Assignments Due
1	May 11-17	Introduction to Weight Management Assessment of Body Weight and Composition: Adults	Introduction Video Week 1 Reflect Week 1 Application Week 1 Quiz
2	May 18-24	Assessment of Body Weight and Composition: Pediatrics	Week 2 Reflect Week 2 Application Week 2 Quiz
3	May 25-31	Pathology of Obesity	Week 3 Reflect Week 3 Application Week 3 Quiz
4	June 1-7	Eating Disorders and Weight Bias	Week 4 Reflect Week 4 Application Week 4 Quiz
5	June 8-14	Obesity Treatment Modality: Nutrition Therapy	Week 5 Reflect Week 5 Application Week 5 Quiz
6	June 15-21	Obesity Treatment Modality: Exercise and Health at Every Size	Week 6 Reflect Week 6 Application Week 6 Quiz
7	June 22-28	Obesity Treatment Modalities: Pharmacological Interventions	Week 7 Reflect Week 7 Application Week 7 Quiz Evaluating Diet Plans Presentation
8	June 29- July 5	Obesity Treatment Modality: Surgical Interventions	Week 8 Application Week 8 Quiz
9	July 6-12	Weight Loss Maintenance	Week 9 Reflect Week 9 Application Week 9 Quiz
10	July 13-17	Final "Exam"	