

PSY D33H3S (Sec 30)- Stress, Coping, & Mental Health

Course Outline (Summer 2011)

Class Meets: Tuesdays 5-7pm

(Classroom BV361)

Instructor: Anna Nagy (a.nagy@utoronto.ca)

Office: Portable 3, Rm 101

Home page: Blackboard ("The Portal")

Office Hours: Tuesdays from 7-8 pm (other hours by appt)

*******Please check the PSY D33 Blackboard page on a regular basis for important announcements*******

Pre-requisites—

Readings: Reading packages will be available at the UTSC Bookstore.

Note: Supplemental readings may be posted on Blackboard.

Course Description: This course provides an evidence-based overview of stress, its potential impact on physical and mental health, and an overview of various coping techniques. A critical review of prevalent theories and application of concepts will provide students with an understanding of how stress is operationalized from biological, psychological, and integrative perspectives; the practical implications of these models will also be discussed. Ultimately, students will come to understand the complexity of the individual stress response, and become aware of various techniques known to mitigate potential harmful effects of chronic reactivity. Students will also have an understanding of the relationship between stress and mental illness.

Learning Objectives: Upon completion of this course (includes class attendance, participation in exercises, readings, and assignments), students will be able to describe and discuss the prevalent models of stress; the physical and psychological consequences of stress; aspects contributing to individual differences in the stress response; and, factors and techniques of successful stress management. Critical interpretation of research is demonstrated and encouraged through class examples and discussion. Application of concepts is also supported through the completion of the major writing assignment.

Grading: Your final grade will be based on a final term paper (25%), project proposal (5%), one short written assignment (thought paper) (10%), a classroom presentation (15%), a final examination (35%), and weekly participation (10%). The final exam will consist of two comprehensive long essay questions; possible topics will be announced ahead of time so that you may adequately prepare (you will be given several topics to

prepare for—two questions will be drawn at the exam). The date for the final examination will be arranged by the Registrar and held during the official exam period.

Thought Paper: Please submit a 1-2 page (max!) thought paper on a topic of your choice (on an issue covered in class, or on an issue that stems from something discussed in class). Select an issue that struck you, or that is particularly meaningful and present an argument around it. Please incorporate two peer reviewed articles into your work.

The assignment is **due June 14th**.

Final Assignment: You have two choices for the final assignment:

1. Prepare a 12-15 page research review paper on a topic of your choice. The starting point of the paper should be based on research question relevant to the study of stress or trauma and its effects, or on coping techniques. Your task is to research the topic more fully, and to write a paper that contains a valid argument relating to the issue of interest. The paper must include approximately 15 references (12-20); all must be peer-reviewed primary journal articles. You may include additional references that are books or review papers, however, please be sure that the majority of your work is based on empirical studies. The format of the paper should conform to APA style. A detailed overview of the marking scheme and requirements for the paper will be posted on the course webpage closer to the deadline. This information is detailed and will be a helpful reference. It is expected that assignments will be handed in on the due date, unless prior appropriate arrangements have been made with your instructor. Late assignments will result in a loss of 4% of the total score for the paper per day. In other words, please hand them in on time☺!

2. Prepare a stress reduction manual. The stress reduction manual should first explore the stressors experienced by a particular group of people (using peer reviewed research), briefly reviewing the relevant research and incorporating appropriate theoretical perspectives. Thus, an appropriate context is required. Some examples of specific populations you might focus on include:

- different age group or generation (e.g. elderly or very young);
- specific careers (e.g. teachers, police officers, nurses, coaches, other health care workers);
- particular sectors of society (e.g. first year university students, competitive athletes, recreational exercisers);
- marginalized groups (e.g. First Nations, immigrants, specific ethnic groups, gender-based, or sexual orientation based).
- health issues (e.g. those suffering from a psychological disorder such as depression or anxiety; cancer victims; trauma victims)

Then, drawing from the literature to ensure that your methods are efficacious, design an additional section of the manual that the particular group can use to reduce stress (note: you may integrate the two sections throughout the manual if you feel this is more appropriate). Remember, you are writing the manual to

inform a target group, so use language that is appropriate. Be sure to incorporate evidence-based practice, and practice that is consistent with your explanation of stress (make sure to reference throughout). For example, you wouldn't explain stress as being purely physiological in nature, and then suggest a purely cognitive intervention. In sum, think critically, and apply both relevant theory and intervention practice.

Attach to the project a brief three page (max!) overview that explicitly addresses the relevancy of the theoretical perspective(s) you have chosen and the evidence supporting the efficacy of your intervention(s) from an academic perspective. Make sure your manual and overview are referenced using APA style.

Overall, this is your chance to be creative! You may incorporate photographs, diagrams, videos, exercises, and/or any other addendums to enhance your project. However, all work must be properly referenced, acknowledging all sources of information; and, your manual must incorporate relevant research showing your methods to be effective. You must incorporate a minimum of ten references, all of which must be peer reviewed journal articles. Additional references may be drawn from edited books and review papers. Moreover, please be mindful of copyright rules and regulations. Do not incorporate anything copyrighted into your manual without explicit permission from the owner(s) of the material.

General Assignment Information:

A detailed overview of the marking scheme, requirements for the assignment, and project proposal form will be posted on the course webpage. This information will be a helpful reference. Please submit the project proposal form to me by **June 7th**.

Projects are due on the last day of class (Tuesday, August 2nd).

It is expected that assignments will be handed in on the due date (in class), unless prior appropriate arrangements have been made with the instructor. Late assignments will result in a loss of 4% of the total score for the paper per day. In other words, please hand them in on time☺!

Academic Integrity: Please see <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize> for guidelines on how not to plagiarize. It is expected that all sources of ideas and information will be properly acknowledged. See also: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/documentation> ; scroll down to 'APA style guide'

Note: Adherence to the Student Code of Conduct and the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters will be strictly enforced in this course.

Group Presentation: Students will be expected to participate in one group presentation, with one or two classmates during the last few weeks of class. This is an opportunity to be creative and to have some fun, as well as to improve your presentation skills! Students will select a topic relevant to stress/coping & mental health (readings should not have been specifically covered in a previous class, although you may build on a topic), and present on the topic for 30 minutes (research to be conducted within the last 5 years). Your task is to introduce your classmates to new research, and to engage them in discussion. For example, you may want to prepare a set of discussion questions ahead of time, and introduce appropriate and relevant real-life examples. The presentation should include interactive components that demonstrate an application of the concepts. You may use audio-visual material, debates, games, group-work, or other creative endeavours to make the material more interesting. Please check with your instructor a week prior to your presentation for additional help and resources. More information will be provided once classes begin.

Lecture Notes: Much of the material will be presented in the form of interactive class exercises and discussions, so attendance is important to do well in this course. Please read the corresponding assigned readings prior to class each week. When used, powerpoint slides will be posted.

Office Hours: See above for hours and location. If you have any questions, or are having difficulty with the course material, please come and see me during office hours. You may also e-mail me with any questions.

Good luck and welcome to Psy D33 ☺!

COURSE OUTLINE (Tentative—Subject to Change)

Week of:	Topic
May 10	Introduction; What is Stress?
May 17	History of the Stress Concept; The Emotional & Intellectual Basis of Stress
May 24	The Social Basis of Stress
May 31	Physiological Basis of Stress Stress and Health
June 7	Stress and Health (con't) Mental Health/Psychopathology
June 14	Mind-Body Connection
June 21	Reading week—no class!!
June 28	Children and Stress (epi-genetics)
July 5	Trauma (PTSD)
July 12	Occupational (work) stress (Burnout)
July 19	Stress Mgt/Coping Strategies: Rethinking/Reframing Student Presentations
July 26	Stress Mgt/Coping Strategies: Social Support Student Presentations
August 2	Stress Mgt/Coping Strategies: Physical Interventions (exercise, yoga, nutrition) Stress Mgt/Coping Strategies: Reducing/Organization/Time Mgt Student Presentations

Projects are due August 2nd in class!

(See Reading List for weekly assigned readings)

Reminder: Please check Blackboard weekly for important announcements!

Note: Exam will cover material from both discussion and readings.

Psy D33H3S- Stress, Coping, & Mental Health (Summer 2011)

READING LIST

Week of:

May 10 Introduction; What is Stress?

**May 17 History of the Stress Concept
 The Emotional & Intellectual Basis of Stress**

Selye, H. (1993). History of the stress concept. In L. Golberger & S. Breznitz (Eds.). *Handbook of Stress. Theoretical and Clinical Aspects* (pp 7-17). New York: The Free Press.

Lazarus, R.S. (1993). From psychological stress to the emotions: A history of changing outlooks. *Annu Review Psychology, 44*, 1-21.

May 24 The Social Basis of Stress

Hobfoll, Stevan E. (2001). The influence of culture, community and the nested self in the stress process: Advancing conservation of resources theory. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 50*(3), 337-367.

Marmot, Michael (2005). Social determinants of health inequalities. *The Lancet, 365*, 1099-1104.

May 31 Physiological Basis of Stress/Stress & Health

Allen, R. (1983). Psychophysiology of the stress response. *Human Stress: Its Nature and Control*. (pp. 54-84)

McEwen, B. (2005). Stressed or stressed out: What is the difference? *Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience*, 30(5), 315-318.

Sapolsky, R. (2004). Stroke, heart attacks, and voodoo death. In *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers* (pp 37-56). New York: Holt and Company.

**June 7 Stress and Health (con't)
Mental Health/Psychopathology**

Esch, T., Stefano, G., Fricchione, G., & Benson, H. (2002). The role of stress in neurogenerative diseases and mental disorders. *Neuroendocrinology Letters*, 23, 199-208.

Kiecolt-Glaser, J. , McGuire, L, Robles, T. & Glaser, R. (2002). Psychoneuroimmunology: Psychological influences on immune function and health. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 70(3), 537-547.

Lupien, S., McEwen, B., Gunnar, M., & Heim, C. (2009). Effects of stress throughout the lifespan on brain, behaviour, and cognition. *Nature Reviews—Neuroscience*, 10, 434-445.

June 14 Mind-Body Connection

Bingel, U., Wanigasekera, V., Wiech, K., et al. (2011). The Effect of treatment expectation on drug efficacy: Imaging the analgesic benefit of the opioid remifentanyl. *Science Translational Medicine*, 3 (70), 1-9.

Gollub, R. & Kong, J. (2011). For placebo effects in medicine, seeing is believing. *Science Translational Medicine*, 3 (70), 1-5.

Moerman, D. & Jonas, W. (2002). Deconstructing the placebo effect and finding the meaning response. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, 136, 471-476.

June 21 Reading week—no class!

June 28 Children and Stress (epi-genetics)

Hyman, S. (2009). How adversity gets under the skin. *Nature Neuroscience*, 12, 241-243.

Lupien, S., McEwen, B., Gunnar, M. & Heim, C. (2009). Effects of stress throughout the lifespan on the brain, behaviour, and cognition. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, 10, 434-445.

McGowen P. et al. (2009). Epigenetic regulation of the glucocorticoid receptor in human brain associates with childhood abuse. *Nature Neuroscience*, 12, 342-348.

July 5 Trauma (PTSD)

Hobfoll, S., Spielberger, C., Breznitz, S., Figley, C., Folkman, S., Lepper-Green, B., et al. (1991). War related stress: addressing the stress of war and other traumatic events. *American Psychologist*, 46(8), 848-855.

Yehuda, R. (2004). Risk and resilience in ptsd. *The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 65 (1),29-36.

July 12 Occupational (work) stress (Burnout)

Collins, S. & Long, A. (2003). Working with the psychological effects of trauma: Consequences for mental health workers—a literature review. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 10, 417-424.

Maslach, C. (2003). Job Burnout: New directions in research and intervention. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 12(5), 189-193.

Pruessner, J., Hellhammer, D., Kirschbaum, C. (1999). Burnout, perceived stress, and cortisol responses to awakening. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 61, 197-204.

July 19 Stress Mgt/Coping Strategies: Rethinking/Reframing

Abrams, M. & Ellis, A. (1994) Rational emotive behaviour therapy in the treatment of stress. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 22(1), pp 39-50

Sapolsky, R. (2004) Managing Stress. In *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers* (pp. 385-418)

July 26 Stress Mgt/Coping Strategies: Social Support

Cohen, S. & Wills, T.A. (1985). Stress, social support and the buffering hypothesis. *Psych Bulletin*, 98(2), 310-357.

August 2 Stress Mgt/Coping Strategies: Physical Interventions (exercise, yoga, nutrition)

Baer, Ruth (2003). Mindfulness training as a clinical intervention: A conceptual and empirical review, *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 10(2), 125-143.

Blumenthal, J. , Sherwood, A., Babyak, M. , Watkins, L., Waugh, R. , Georgiades, A., et al. (2005). Effects of exercise and stress management training on markers of cardiovascular risk in patients with ischemic heart disease. *JAMA*, 293, 1626-1634.

Esch, T., Fricchione, G., & Stephano, G (2003). The therapeutic use of the relaxation response in stress related diseases. *Med Sci Monitor*, 9(2), RA23-34.

Sapolsky, R. (2004). Ulcers, the runs, and hot fudge sundaes. In *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers* (pp. 71-91).

Stress Mgt/Coping Strategies: Reducing/Organization/Time Mgt

Jones, M. C. & Johnston, D. (2000). Reducing distress in first level and student nurses: a review of the applied stress management literature, *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 32(1), 66-74.

Misra, R. & McKean, M. (2000). College students' academic stress and its relation to their anxiety, time management, and leisure satisfaction. *American Journal of Health Studies*, 16(1), 41-51.