
Prepared by the Department of Health Sciences

Date of Departmental Approval: February 15, 2017

Date approved by Curriculum and Programs: March 22, 2017

Effective: Fall 2017

1. **Course Number:** HEA120
Course Title: Stress Management for Optimal Health
2. **Description:** A comprehensive approach to the subject of stress and its effects on health and disease. Stress concepts are addressed within a holistic framework appreciating the physiological, psychological, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects of individuals. Common physical, intra-personal, interpersonal, environmental, and global stressors are assessed. Current stress interventions are introduced. Emphasis is on integrating knowledge from several disciplines to provide an informed scientific foundation for stress management.
3. **Student Learning Outcomes** (Instructional objectives; intellectual skills)
Upon successful completion of this course, students are able to do the following:
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of the discovery of the stress response and its role in human adaptation.
 - Describe the pathways of the stress response and how derailment leads to diseases of adaptation and major health problems.
 - Describe how chronic stress impacts the brain and influences learning, memory, information processing, behavior, aging, mood, and the development of addictive and neuro degenerative diseases.
 - Identify within a holistic framework the variables of the stress response presented in the Conceptual Model of Stress Variables (Selye, H. and Smith, MJTS) and utilized in stress assessment and intervention.
 - Identify manifestations and interventions of the stress response manifested in complex and acute PTSD.
 - Synthesize knowledge of stress in selecting responses to life stressors demonstrating adaptive interpersonal communications, healthy boundaries, responding vs reacting, mindful listening, and self-regulation.
 - Utilize data from the Holmes Rahe Scale, Yerkes Dodson Curve, and current technologies that measure stress variables to select and implement appropriate stress management strategies that decrease the negative effects of hyper or hypo functioning of stress response pathways.
 - Research current technologies e.g. stress thermometers, pause watches, on line resources, videos e.g. Guided Imagery, Stress Logs and questionnaires, utilizing course approved web sites to select and use evidenced based technological tools and strategies that increase stress resilience.
 - Identify and critique available resources for accurate information regarding the topic of stress.
4. **Credits:** 3 credits
5. **Satisfies General Education Requirement:** Yes, Interdisciplinary Studies
6. **Prerequisites:** None. PSY101 (General Psychology) is recommended.
7. **Semester(s) Offered:** Fall, Spring
8. **Suggested General Guidelines for Evaluation:** Written work, exams, class participation.
9. **General Topical Outline (Optional):**

Stress Mechanisms.: H-P-A and H-A-S Axis

Mind-Body-Spirit Connections.

Sympathetic vs. parasympathetic, Relaxation Response.

Brain: Target organ for stress hormones- Neuroplasticity

limbic system, amygdala, hippocampus, and neocortex.

Impact on Brain's Information processing system, the

amygdala hijack.

Diseases of Adaptation: Cardiovascular, Respiratory, Gastrointestinal Musculoskeletal, Dermatological, Immune, Reproductive, Pain, Anxiety Disorders, PTSD, Dementias.

Stress Resilience: Developmental Dynamics.

Structure and Styles, Adults abused as Children, Complex PTSD, Co-dependency.

Stress Theorists-Epictetus Selye, Lazarus, Kobasa, Frankl, Antonovsky, McEwen.

Post Traumatic Growth.

Conditioning Factors, Dysfunctional and Functional family systems:

Impact on coping strategies and formation of personality, personality disorders.

Coping patterns: Self –Psychology concepts: False Self, Real Self, and Self Structure deficits. Transactional Analysis of ego states. Personality Disorders and impact on processing stressors. Analysis of Narcissistic, Borderline, Antisocial, Obsessive Compulsive and, Dependent traits as relate to processing stressors.

Self- talk, Schema, Learned helplessness.

Maladaptive coping patterns: impact on functioning and productivity. Stress related disorders from a holistic perspective.

Maladaptive coping cont. : Addictions, obsessive compulsive behaviors,

Intervention Strategies from: Rational Emotive Therapy, Cognitive Therapy, EMDR, Resource Installation, Transactional Analyses.

Concepts of Healthy Boundaries

Boundary violations.

Developing boundaries.

Setting boundaries as a stress reduction strategy.

Life transition Stressors: Situational crises.

Divorce, terrorist threats. Illness accidents, family conflict, critical incidents, terrorist threats.

Loss / Grief /Traumatic Stressors. Syntheses of physiology, developmental levels, processing of stressor to resolution. Trauma therapies: EMDR, CISD, etc.

Self–care Concepts: Nutrition, Emotional Self-Care, Physical Exercise, Mindfulness, Mind-shifting adequate sleep, time management, maintaining healthy boundaries, guided imagery, and safe place concepts.

Spirituality and Environmental Concepts.

Modifying psycho-social environment.

Modifying physical environment

Aesthetics, Music.