

**GEN Course Proposal Form Info and Syllabus**  
***Stress, Health, and Disease***  
Anthony Au0 GTdHinase

## **Course Proposal Narrative**

### **New Learning Opportunities**

This course will give students the opportunity to learn about their own stress and how it can affect their health. Moreover, students will learn from each other and community members to better understand differing viewpoints and potentially developing empathy, making them more effective citizens. Finally, students will learn targeted writing skills and leave the class with a tangible written product in the form of a brochure.

### **Interdisciplinary Nature**

Understanding how stress affects health is unavoidably interdisciplinary, combining elements of psychology, medicine, physiology, epidemiology, and public health. The interdisciplinary nature can be seen in the history of the concept of stress. Hans Selye, who first described stress as we know it today, was an endocrinologist. Walter Cannon, a physiologist, coined the term "fight-or-flight" and wrote foundational work on homeostasis. Psychologists Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman have written extensively on stress and coping with a focus on cognitive links between the person and the environment. Epidemiological research has shown repeatedly that stress is an independent risk factor for chronic diseases, especially cardiovascular disease. Therefore, stress is a public health issue.

### **Difference from a Program Course in an Academic Discipline**

The interdisciplinary nature of this course makes this course different from a program course. The course will be of relevance to majors in psychology, physiology, health sciences, nursing, and public health, among others. Though a unit on stress is covered in PSYC 2212, Health Psychology, this course dives deep to ensure students understand the ways multiple disciplines inform understanding of the relationship between stress and illness.

## **Alignment of Course Goals to Assignments**

**Objective 11: Awareness of the achievements and perspectives of people of different nations and cultures, and of different races, genders and ethnicities.**

In the Humans of South Jersey assignment, students will go into the community and conduct interviews about stress, coping, and health with people “not like them.”

Representative quotes and pictures of the interviewees will be posted to a private Facebook group (or related

**STOCKTON UNIVERSITY**  
**School of Social and Behavioral Sciences**  
**Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences**

***COURSE SYLLABUS***

**Course Prefix and Number:**  
**Course Title:** Stress, Health, and Disease  
**Credit Hours:** 4

**Instructor:** Dr. Anthony W. Austin  
**Class Schedule:**  
**Classroom:**  
**Office:**  
**Office Hours:**  
or by appointment  
**Telephone:** 609-26-6411  
**Email:** [Anthony.austin@stockton.edu](mailto:Anthony.austin@stockton.edu)

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND READINGS**

stress and disease (e.g., cardiovascular disease, cancer, infectious illness), the pathophysiology of stress, and current issues and controversies in stress research.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Students should attain the following objectives after completion of this course:

1. Describe different ways of defining the construct of stress.
2. Explain potential mechanisms that link stress to disease.
3. Explain ways of coping to reduce stress.
4. Critically evaluate the literature linking stress to disease.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS/ASSESSMENTS:**

To succeed in this course, you will complete the following:

**Critical reviews of pra 792 reW\*nBT/F3 10.98 Tf1 0 0 1 72 544.6 Tm0 g0 G(To )-26 reW\*nBT/F1 10.98 Tf**



**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

- Stress Management Society: <http://www.stress.org.uk/>
- Stress and Anxiety Research Society: <http://www.star-society.org/>
- International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies:  
<http://www.istss.org//AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home>
- Stress Management Society: <http://www.stressmanagementsociety.com/>
- American Institute of Stress: <http://www.stress.org/>
- Society of Behavioral Medicine: <http://sbm.org>
- American Psychological Association, Division 38: <http://www.health-psych.org/>
- American Psychosomatic Society: <http://psychosomatic.org>

Aldwin, C.M. (2007). *Stress, coping, and development, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* Guilford.

Contrada, R., & Baum, A. (2010). *The handbook of stress science: biology, psychology, and health.* Springer: New York.

Horowitz, M.J. (2011). *Stress response syndromes, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.* Jason Aronson, Inc.

Lazarus, R.S. (2006). *Stress and emotion: a new synthesis.* Springer: New York.

Lazarus, R.S., & Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress, appraisal, and coping.* Springer: New York.

Rice, P.L. (1998). *Stress and health, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.* Cengage.

Sapolsky, R.M. (2004). *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* Henry Holt & Co: New York.

Seaward, B.L. (2012). *Managing stress: principles and strategies for health and well-being.* Jones & Bartlett Learning

**ACADEMIC EXIGENCIES:**

The instructor reserves the right to alter the course outline for academic exigencies.

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

	Topic	Assigned Reading	Assignment due
<b>WEEK 1</b>			
Tuesday, 1/21	Welcome and Overview		
Thursday, 1/23	Models of health & disease	Chapter 1	Discussion questions
<b>WEEK 2</b>			
Tuesday, 1/28	History of the stress concept	Chapter 2	Discussion questions

Thursday, 2/20	Methods in stress research	Tennen et al. (2000)	Discussion questions
<b>WEEK 6</b>			
Tuesday, 2/25	Coping	Cramer (2000)	Discussion questions
Thursday, 2/27	Coping	Folkman & Moskowitz (2000)	Discussion questions
<b>WEEK 7</b>			
Tuesday, 3/3	Coping	Lazarus (2000)	Discussion questions
Thursday, 3/5	Coping	Coyne & Racioppo (2000)	Discussion questions
<b>WEEK 8</b>			
Tuesday, 3/10	CNS regulation of the stress response	Chapter 5	Discussion questions
Thursday, 3/12	CNS regulation of the stress response	Chapter 5	
<b>WEEK 9</b>			
Tuesday, 3/17	No class – spring break		
Thursday, 3/19	No class – spring break		
<b>WEEK 10</b>			
Tuesday, 3/24	Stress and the endocrine system	Chapter 6	Discussion questions
Thursday, 3/26	SES & hormones	Cohen et al. (2006)	Discussion questions Critical review #1
<b>WEEK 11</b>			
Tuesday, 3/31	Stress and the immune system	Chapter 7	Discussion questions HPB post #1
Thursday, 4/2	Stress and the common cold	Cohen et al. (1991)	Discussion questions Critical review #2



Tuesday, 4/28 Stress and heart

<b>Week 16</b>			
Tuesday, 4/24	Behavior, stress, & health	Chapter 12	
Thursday, 4/26	Wrap up		Final draft of brochure
<b>Week 17</b>			
FINALS WEEK			

## APPENDIX A: Rubric for discussion participation

Participation is graded on a scale from 0 (lowest) through 4 (highest), using the criteria below. The criteria focus on what you demonstrate and do not presume to guess at what you know but do not demonstrate. This is because what you offer to the class is what you and others learn from. Half points may be given at the professor's discretion. Your score will be multiplied by 1.25 to place it on a 5 point scale.

Grade	Criteria
0	Absent.

