



Psychology 495 (3cr): Special Topics: Psychology of Stress (Summer 2019)

**Monday & Wednesday 12-1:55 pm
Duckering Building 344 (and via video)**

Instructor: Dr. Jen Peterson

Office: Gruening 706B

Phone: 907-474-5214 (please note: I am not in my office in the summer use email to contact me)

Email: jen.peterson@alaska.edu

Office Hours: By appointment

Prerequisites: Before taking this course, you must have successfully COMM F131F or COMM F141X; PSY F101 or permission of instructor.

Course Description

In this course, students will examine the major theories and research that describes how stress affects human health and well-being. Students will examine psychological and biological models detailing the interactive nature of stress effects. This class will explore the biological, psychological, social, emotional, and environmental influences involved in the stress response. Stress management and treatment techniques will be investigated and applied to one's daily life.

Learning objectives

Students who actively participate in this course will be able to:

- Define the methods of scientific inquiry as they relate to the psychology of stress
- Use the biopsychosocial model to describe how stress affects health and well-being
- Describe the effects of chronic stress on cognition, emotion, and the brain
- Explain the effects of acute and chronic stress on physical and psychological health
- Discuss the psychological components that influence an individual's response and resilience to stress
- Describe the effects of stress at various life stages on long-term well-being
- Describe how some groups of individuals may be more likely to experience life events that are inherently stressful.
- Discuss and define stress management and stress treatment techniques

Required Text:

Stress and Health: Biological and psychological interactions by William R. Lovallo 3rd edition

ISBN: 978-1-4833-4744-8

Blackboard:

- You will need to use Blackboard to access useful tools such as announcements, course documents, and grades.
- You can access Blackboard at the following link: <https://classes.alaska.edu/webapps/login/>
- Please save all of your assignments with **YOUR LAST NAME and ASSIGNMENT TITLE**. **All typed assignments must be submitted in .doc or .docx format.**

UA email: You are expected to use your university email account (xxx@alaska.edu). If this account is not your primary email account, you can adjust your settings so that all your messages are forwarded from the UA server to your primary account. However, you must email me directly from your UA account for grade related questions. If you email me and I haven't responded within 12-24 hours, do not assume I received the email. Please resend the email.

Course Format:

Lecture, discussions, activities, presentations, assignments, and a final exam.

Course Policies:

Attendance. Attendance and class participation are required. Absence in no way relieves you from the responsibility of completing assignments (or giving presentations). Arrive to class prepared to discuss the topics from the readings, to answer and ask questions, and to integrate class concepts into discussions. Class discussions are more interesting and productive when you arrive prepared. If you are not present, you will miss a lot of interesting information that is critical to your understanding of the course and its content.

General Absences. If you miss class, you are responsible for contacting Dr. Peterson concerning your absence and to discuss the possibilities for arranging alternative learning opportunities. Please make arrangements with a classmate to get notes for missing classes.

UAF-Sanctioned Absences. If you are scheduled to miss class for an academic requirement or to represent UAF in an official capacity (e.g., NCAA athletic competition, music performance), you must notify your instructor in writing prior to the event(s). The notification should list all scheduled absences and bear the signature of a UAF school official.

Late Assignments. Late assignments will be accepted with score reductions (see exceptions below). Assignments that are submitted late will be penalized 20% of the possible points for each calendar day (or portion thereof) that it is late. All assignments are due at midnight on the assigned day.

- Exceptions: No late discussion board posts or replies will be accepted, no late presentations may be given, and no late assignments will be accepted the last week of class (June 24-28).

Incomplete Grades. An incomplete grade (I) for the course will be assigned only if two conditions have been met:

- The student has completed 50% of coursework at the time of the request for an incomplete with a grade of “C” or better.
- And documented evidence is submitted to substantiate the fact that course completion was prevented (e.g. medical or family emergency).

** Failure to complete the course or portions of the course in a timely manner, whether due to negligence or indifference will result in an "F" letter grade for the course. UAF policy automatically changes “I” to “F” after one year.*

Academic Misconduct. Although you may consult with other students about assignments in this class, you must complete all assignments on your own. Handing in work that is based even partially on the work of other students constitutes academic misconduct and may be reported to the University for disciplinary action. Failing to properly cite sources of information is plagiarism (in other words, representing the ideas of others as your own). This includes information from classmates, books, websites, or any other source. You may not “reuse” assignments from previous or current classes to fulfil graded assignments in this course. Avoid copying and pasting from sources (such as websites), put information in your own words AND cite the source of the ideas. Providing your work to other students for their use also constitutes academic misconduct. Acts of academic misconduct will result in a grade of zero for the assignment(s) in question as well as possible additional disciplinary action.

Accommodations. Students with disabilities who need accommodations, access to technology, or information about emergency building/campus evacuation processes should contact <https://www.uaf.edu/disability/>, Whitaker Building, Room 208, Phone: (907) 474-5655, TTY: (907) 474-1827, Fax: (907) 474-5688.

Support services. There are many services available if you are struggling academically or personally.

- The Writing Center (8th floor, Gruening Building)
- The Math Lab (305 Chapman) provide excellent advice, tutoring and assistance.
- Health and counseling services are available at the Student Health and Counseling Center (www.uaf.edu/chc).

- Services for Veterans are available from the Veterans Resource center. Contact Jackie Morton, Director, Department of Military and Veteran Services 907-474-7400, 104 Eielson Building. Email: jemorton@alaska.edu
- The Speaking Center is located on 5th floor of Gruening (474-5470 or fyspeak@uaf.edu). Coaches are available to help you organize, rehearse, and refine presentations.

Title IX Protection. University of Alaska Board of Regents has clearly stated in BOR Policy that discrimination, harassment and violence will not be tolerated on any campus of the University of Alaska. If you believe you are experiencing discrimination or any form of harassment including sexual harassment/misconduct/assault, you are encouraged to report that behavior.

- If you report to a faculty member or any university employee, they must notify the UAF Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident.
- Your choices for reporting include the following:
- You may access confidential counseling by contacting the UAF Health & Counseling Center at 474-7043;
- You may access support and file a Title IX report by contacting the UAF Title IX Coordinator at 474-6600;
- You may file a criminal complaint by contacting the University Police Department at 474-7721.

Student Protections and Service Statement: Every qualified student is welcome in my class. As needed, I am happy to work with you, disability services, veterans' services, rural student services, etc. to find reasonable accommodations. Students at this university are protected against sexual harassment and discrimination (Title IX), and minors have additional protections. As required, if I notice or am informed of certain types of misconduct, then I am required to report it to the appropriate authorities. For more information on your rights as a student and the resources available to you to resolve problems, please go to the following site:

<http://www.uaf.edu/oeo/resources/>



I support the Green Dot movement. The UAF Green Dot strategy is a violence prevention program based on empowering bystanders. For more information visit <https://greendot.alaska.edu/> or the UAF Green Dot Facebook page.

Classroom Disruptions. Please do not use your cell phone in class, if you must make a call (or text), please leave the room. You are welcome to use computers/tablets to take notes, but please do not engage in activities that will distract those around you (emailing, playing games, checking Facebook, internet shopping, so forth). Please do not talk while others are talking, but please join in class discussion. It is important that everyone has an opportunity to speak and to be able to hear others speak. Respect for the viewpoints of others will be strictly enforced. I encourage the discussion of different opinions, but please be respectful of everyone.

Readings and Class Time. We will cover (and you will be expected to read) two chapters per week with occasional additional readings. **Because this course is discussion based, it is important that you come to class prepared so that you can participate effectively in these discussions. This means you should finish reading the assigned chapters and articles before class.** The concepts we discuss during class will be paramount to your understanding of the course content and in guiding your oral and written assignments.

Evaluation: Grades will be determined based on your performance on the Prevention and Treatment Presentation, the Article Presentation and Discussion assignment, Participation Questions/Answers, and Thursday Concept Blocks Assignments.

- **Prevention and Treatment Presentations:** You will prepare a lesson about a stress reduction therapy, treatment, or stress prevention technique. This presentation will focus on either the prevention or treatment of stress related disorders. **Details on this assignment are included at the end of the syllabus.**
- **Article Presentation and Discussion:** You will present a research article on a topic relevant to the course. This will entail choosing the article, reading and assessing the content, creating a summary presentation, writing guideline questions for discussion, and leading a group discussion on the topics from the article. **Details on this assignment are included at the end of the syllabus.**
- **Participation Questions/Answers:** Each week you will submit three thought-provoking discussion questions (and answers) for the assigned reading. These questions are due each Sunday by end of day (11:59pm) prior to the week the corresponding chapters will be discussed in class. For example, week two (May 27 - May 31) will cover chapters three and four. The Q/A for these chapters is due on May 26th.
 - No Q/A is due for Chapter 1 & 2
 - Instructions for Participation Q/A:
 - Type out your list of questions with answers and submit them via blackboard each Sunday.
 - It is important that you incorporate the concepts discussed in class as part of the questions and answers. This means synthesizing psychological concepts, theory, and topics from your text with your opinions and beliefs to effectively answer your discussion questions.
 - Include the biopsychosocial aspects of stress when writing and answering your questions.
 - If more than one chapter is assigned for the week, provide a total of three questions with at least one question/answer from the other chapter.
 - See the calendar for due dates.

- Your lowest Q/A grade will be dropped
- **Thursday Concept Blocks.** Each Thursday you will create a concept block map covering the topics of the week. These blocks will link the key concepts of the week from the readings, presentations, and discussions and relate them to real life.

Grading:

Assessment	Percentage of Grade
Prevention/Treatment Presentation	30
Article Presentation and Discussion	25
Participation Questions and Answers	25
Thursday Concept Blocks	20

Final Grades:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	<60%

PSY 495 Psych of Stress Course Calendar

Course Schedule **	Dates	Topic	Read	Assignments
Week 1	May 20-24	*Psychosocial models of health & disease *History of the concept of stress	CH 1 & 2	
Week 2	May 27-31 *May 27 holiday	*Homeostatic regulation: Normal function & stress hormones *Physical and psychological stress	CH 3 & 4	Sunday May 26th Q/A CH 3 & 4 Due
Week 3	June 3-7	*Central nervous system integration of the psychological stress response *Stress & the endocrine system	CH 5 & 6	Sunday June 2 Q/A CH 5 & 6 Due
Week 4	June 10 - 14	*The immune system stress & behavior *Helplessness coping & health	CH 7 & 8	Sunday June 9 Q/A CH 7 & 8 Due
Week 5	June 17 - 21	*Genes, stress, & balance *Individual differences in reactivity to stress	CH 9 & 10	Sunday June 16 Q/A CH 9 & 10 Due
Week 6	June 24 - 28	*Health implications of exaggerated and blunted stress reactivity *Behavior, stress, & health	CH 11 & 12	Sunday June 23 Q/A CH 11 & 12 Due

**This is a tentative schedule that may be adjusted; advance notice of all changes will be given in class and via Blackboard

***All assignments are due at midnight Alaska time on the date specified

Psychology of Stress Article Presentation/Discussion Instructions

Purpose of this Assignment: Humans are directly and indirectly affected by stress in an myriad of ways. The way humans interpret, interact with, and respond to stressors is important to our health and well-being and the main focus of this course. One very important and effective way to learn is through discussion. This assignment asks you to give an overview of an article and to lead a class discussion.

Part One: Preparation & Materials

1. Sign up for a time and date to present. The sign-up sheet is located on blackboard under the “content” tab. You must present on the day you are scheduled. If you need to change your presentation date, please find a classmate who is willing to switch dates.
2. Read a journal article (peer reviewed, academic source) relating to stress and human functioning. Make notes and research anything you do not understand. Ask me (prior to your presentation date) if you need help or have questions.
3. Create a visual aid to lead your discussion. This can be a powerpoint, a handout, an outline or whatever you would like.
 - Your visual aid must provide a summary of your article. Describe and define the main concepts of the paper.
 - You must turn in a digital copy of your visual aid. Email this document to me before your presentation.
 - This is so that it can be shared with the class.

Part Two: Discussion

4. Present your visual aid. Discuss the main ideas of the article. The presentation portion of this assignment should be about 10 minutes.
5. Discussion. This should be the focus of this assignment. Provide the class with several discussion questions relating to the article. Use practical application of the topic. This means that you should relate the research article to “real life”. Moderate the discussion by asking questions and facilitating the interaction between students. The discussion portion should last between 5 - 10 minutes. Use questions and answers to relate the article to concepts from the text, class discussions, and other course materials.
6. The total duration of your article presentation to the class should be between 15 and 20 minutes (part 1 & 2). You need to practice to ensure that you stay within these timelines. Extremely short or long assignments will lose points.
7. Be prepared to answer questions from the audience.



Psychology of Stress: Treatment/Prevention Presentation Instructions

For this assignment you will prepare and present a lesson on stress reduction, prevention, or treatment.

Part One: Preparation & Materials

1. Sign up for a time and date to present. The sign-up sheet is located on blackboard under the “content” tab. You must present on the day you are scheduled. If you need to change your presentation date, find a classmate who will switch days.
2. Gather at least 3 academic sources and use them to create a lesson on a particular topic related to stress reduction, prevention, or treatment.
 - Provide a thorough overview of the topic.
 - For example: How does this treatment work? How is it beneficial? What are the expected outcomes while utilizing this technique?
 - Cite the sources of information on each slide.
 - Relate the topic to concepts from your text, class discussions, and journal articles from the course.
 - For example: If you present information about a specific coping strategy discuss how this coping strategy is similar to or different from other types of coping discussed in the text and journal articles from class.
3. Prepare a visual presentation (handout and/or slides) to support your presentation.
 - Send a copy of your visual(s) to me prior to class so that I can share it with the class
 - Include a references page at the end of your presentation with all of your sources listed
4. Provide an example or a demonstration of the technique.
 - Teach your classmates how to use the technique you have described.

Part Two: Presentation

4. The total duration of your lesson to the class should be 20 minutes (+/- 2 minutes). Practice your presentation to ensure that you stay within these timelines. Extremely short or long assignments will lose points.
5. Be prepared to answer questions from the audience.