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Effective Term: Fall 2026

San Diego Community College District
City College · Mesa College · Miramar College · College of Continuing Education

SAN DIEGO COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT
MESA COLLEGE
COURSE OUTLINE

Section I

SUBJECT AREA AND COURSE NUMBER:
Health Education 111

COURSE TITLE:
Stress and Public Health

Units:
3
Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course covers public health policy, scientific, theoretical and research-based frameworks of stress, the stress response, and stress management techniques. Topics include public health approaches to stress, the definition of stress, physiological and psychological effects of stress, sources and causes of stress, healthy and unhealthy coping behaviors, and health consequences of chronic stress. Numerous evidence-based techniques to manage and cope with stress will also be covered and practiced. This course is intended for students pursuing public health or similar majors or those interested in public health approaches to stress.

REQUISITES:

FIELD TRIP REQUIREMENTS:
May be required

Credit Status
D - Credit - Degree Applicable

Transfer Status
A - Transferable to both UC and CSU.

General Education Areas
Cal-GETC

C-ID:
PH

TOTAL LECTURE HOURS:
48.000 - 54.000

TOTAL LAB HOURS:
0.000 - 0.000

TOTAL OTHER HOURS:
0 - 0

TOTAL CONTACT HOURS:
48 - 54

OUTSIDE-OF-CLASS HOURS:
96.000-108.000

TOTAL STUDENT LEARNING HOURS:
144 - 162

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
Upon successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

Upon successful completion of the course the student will be able to:
1. Describe public health approaches to stress.
2. Define stress from physiological, psychological, sociological, and research-based perspectives.
3. Analyze scientific studies on stress and theories about stress-related personalities.
4. Compare and contrast the sympathetic and parasympathetic responses.
5. Describe the physiological effects of stress on the immune, endocrine, reproductive, and cardiovascular systems.
6. Describe the effects of stress on mental health and well-being.
7. Analyze causes of stress in society.
8. Describe the health consequences of chronic stress.
9. Identify and describe the consequences of unhealthy coping strategies.
10. Describe various effective evidence-based stress management techniques.
11. Design a personal stress management plan.

Section II

1. COURSE OUTLINE AND SCOPE:
A. Course Content:

The following topics are included in the framework of the course but are not intended as limits on content. The order of presentation and relative emphasis will vary with each instructor.

Course Lecture Content
- I. Public health approaches to stress
  - A. Role of government
    1. Legislative policy decisions
    2. Government agencies and regulations
  - B. Health care
    1. Stress related to access
       - a. Social determinants
         - i. Availability and quality of health services, health education, and healthcare delivery
         - ii. Impact of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status
         - iii. Health equity and diverse concerns on an individual, community, state, and national level
       - b. Financial
       - c. Geographic
    2. Mental health support systems
  - C. Academic research
  - D. Health Education
- II. Definitions
  - A. Stress from physiological, psychological, sociological and research-based perspectives
  - B. Stressors
  - C. Distress and eustress
  - D. Stress response
    1. General adaptation syndrome
    2. Fight or Flight/Alarm
       - a. Sympathetic nervous system
    3. Resistance
       - a. Parasympathetic nervous system
    4. Exhaustion
  - E. Chronic stress and allostatic load
- III. Researchers and scientific studies
  - A. Homeostasis by Canon
  - B. Fight-or-Flight by Selye
  - C. Transactional Model by Lazarus
  - D. Cardiovascular; Social Support by Ornish
  - E. Social Support by Spiegel
  - F. Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) by Ader and Cohen
  - G. Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) and Neuropeptides by Pert
  - H. Tend and Befriend and gender differences by Taylor
  - I. Life Events and Social Readjustment by Holmes and Rahe
  - J. Relaxation Response by Benson
- IV. Theories and research on stress-related personalities and disease
  - A. Type A behavior by Friedman and Rosenman
  - B. Type C personality by Temoshok
  - C. Type D personality by Denollet
- V. Physiological effects
  - A. Immune system
  - B. Endocrine system
  - C. Cardiovascular system
  - D. Reproductive system
  - E. Mental effects
- VI. Sources and causes of stress
  - A. Biological
  - B. Emotional
  - C. Psychological
  - D. Social/Relational
  - E. Occupational
  - F. Financial
  - G. Psychosocial
    1. Discrimination
    2. Trauma
  - H. Environmental
    1. Climate change
- VII. Health consequences of chronic stress
  - A. Immunocompetance
  - B. Cancer
  - C. Diabetes
  - D. Endocrine dysfunction
  - E. Muscular dysfunction
  - F. Sexual dysfunction
  - G. Chronic fatigue
  - H. Cold and flu
  - I. Mental health disorders
- VIII. Unhealthy coping behaviors
  - A. Alcohol
  - B. Tobacco/Vapes
  - C. Other drugs
  - D. Overeating/Undereating
  - E. Other unhealthy coping behaviors
- IX. Evidence-based stress management techniques
  - A. Time management
  - B. Social support
  - C. Imagery/Visualization
  - D. Biofeedback
  - E. Meditation
  - F. Wakeful hypometabolic integrated response
  - G. Progressive relaxation
  - H. Mindfulness
  - I. Exercise
  - J. Nutrition
  - K. Acupuncture
  - L. Massage
  - M. Deep breathing
  - N. Belief, faith and prayer
  - O. Communication
  - P. Journaling
  - Q. Viewpoints on stress
    1. The upside of stress
- X. Personal stress management plan

B. Reading Assignments:

Reading assignments are required and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Assigned textbook.
Supplemental reading assignments provided by the instructor.
Stress related articles in local newspapers such as The San Diego Union.
Stress related articles in periodicals and journals such as the Journal of Public Health.

C. Writing Assignments:

Writing assignments are required and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Critical assessment of a public health stress article published in a local newspaper, or journal.
Critical analysis of a public health policy related to stress.
Critical analysis of mitigating negative coping strategies and promoting positive coping techniques.

D. Appropriate Outside Assignments:

Outside assignments may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Researching a specific public health stress related topic.
Reading and then critiquing a published research on stress.
Summarizing current research on stress.

E. Appropriate Assignments that Demonstrate Critical Thinking:

Critical thinking assignments are required and may include, but are not limited to, the following:

Critically analyzing controversial public health stress management decisions.
Critically analyzing socially inequitable health care approaches to chronic stress management through history and in modern times.
Comparing and contrasting traditionally Eastern and Western approaches to chronic stress management.

2. METHODS OF EVALUATION:
A student's grade will be based on multiple measures of performance unless the course requires no grade. Multiple measures may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Essay/Paper
- Exams
- Homework
- Participation
- Quizzes
- Research Project

3. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:
Methods of instruction may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Lecture
- Computer Assisted Instruction
- Lecture Discussion
- Learning Modules
- Audio-Visual
- Collaborative Learning
- Distance Education (Fully Online)
- Other:
  - Student presentation of research.
  - Lecture presentation on reproductive options and methods of contraception followed by instructor-guided discussions and group presentations on the topic.
  - Readings on scientific studies on stress and theories about stress-related personality types followed by small group discussions and an individual writing assignment.
  - Discussion on the personal effects of stress on physical and mental well-being followed by written assignments where students experiment with and reflect on evidence-based stress management techniques.

4. REQUIRED TEXTS AND SUPPLIES:
Textbooks may include, but are not limited to:

ZERO COST TEXTBOOK(S)/OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE(S):
1. Urich, Allen; The Pennsylvania State University, Methods for Stress Management, 1st, Pennsylvania State University, 2017

TEXTBOOKS:
1. Anisman, Hymie; Matheson, Kimberly, An Introduction to Stress and Health, 2nd, SAGE Publications Ltd, 2023, ISBN:9781529778717
2. Seaward, Brian Luke, Essentials of Managing Stress, 5th, Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2019, ISBN:9781284180725

PERIODICALS:

MANUAL: SOFTWARE: OTHER LEARNING MATERIALS: SUPPLIES:

5. ORIGINATION DATA
ORIGINATOR:
Nathan Resch
CO-CONTRIBUTOR(S):
Kelsey Brown
ORIGINATION DATE:
03/13/2025