

HONR 279P: Understanding and Coping With Stress

Instructor: David H. Hyde, Ph.D.
Fall 2005, TuTh: 11:00-12:15

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Office Hours: TuTh: 10:00-11:00 & 12:30-1:00
M & W: 9am to 12pm

There are two basic parts to this course, as implied in the title of the course - Understanding and Coping With Stress. First, is the nature of stress... what it is, where it comes from, and what it can do to us. Second, we will explore the concept of stress management - specific things that can be learned to reduce the feelings of stress in our lives. Throughout the semester we will be looking at a variety of ways to become more pro-active as opposed to re-active; to feel more *in control* as opposed to feeling out of control and overwhelmed.

Stress will always be a part of our lives so it can probably be beneficial if we can learn to cope with the stresses of life in an effective and constructive manner. However, managing stress is not a simple task... there are no 'magic potions'; no 'magic bullets'. Stress management is an active process involving the acquisition (or refinement) of specific skills and behaviors, and learning how and when to apply those skills/behaviors. Hopefully this course can provide you with some useful insights.

Course Materials

Carlson, Richard. <u>Don't Sweat the Small Stuff</u>	[ISBN: 0-7868-8185-2]
Goleman, Daniel. <u>Emotional Intelligence</u>	[ISBN: 0-553-09503-X]
Johnson, Spencer. <u>Who Moved My Cheese?</u>	[ISBN: 0-399-14446-3]

Grades

Grades will be based upon total points earned throughout the semester: Total of 370 points.

Assignments = 270 pts

Final Exam = 100 pts

A+	=	370 - 359	B	=	322 - 311	C-	=	274 - 263
A	=	358 - 347	B-	=	310 - 299	D+	=	262 - 251
A-	=	346 - 335	C+	=	298 - 287	D	=	250 - 239
B+	=	334 - 323	C	=	286 - 275	D-	=	238 - 227
			Below 227 = F+					

Assignments

Briefly, the assignments include:

- **Student 'Autobio':** A paper about yourself... you'll love it!!!
- **Goal Writing:** Weekly, intermediate and long term goals.
- **Reading Assignments:** We will be using three books - all are relatively easy reads. Don't Sweat The Small Stuff and Who Moved My Cheese? are quite entertaining with many practical applications. Both have been on the best seller list for extended periods of time. Emotional Intelligence is a bit more scientific and provides an excellent explanation of the interaction between stress and our emotions. (All three books are available from Amazon.com or BarnesandNoble.com and are regularly discounted at Barnes and Noble book stores... just in case you might be interested in saving \$)
- **Miscellaneous Assignments:** Relatively short written assignments. Some are related to the readings, some are completed in class, some outside of class, some from the web.
- **Final Exam:** The final exam will be a paper based on the course
Even though this has never been an issue in this class please be aware that late assignments will not be accepted without a medical excuse from a physician.

Attendance

It is my assumption that one of the reasons you have decided to take this course is to learn something about stress and even more importantly, about stress management. Attendance will be taken regularly, primarily so I can learn names. In most courses there is a direct relationship between class attendance and grades. If one of your goals is to get an "A" in this course, please do the work and come to class. Class participation or discussion seems to be an important aspect of

courses in the Honor's Program. If you miss class it is your responsibility to contact a fellow student to catch up on any material you have missed. If you are missing a significant number of classes due to an illness, or for personal reasons, please contact me during the 'situation' so we can work out a solution. Please do not 'disappear' for 4 or 5 weeks, suddenly reappear with a great tan and the excuse that you have been caring for a sick grandmother in Hawaii, and expect to make up missed work.

Participation

Please try to participate in discussions - this is your class. Some can do this more easily than others and hopefully everyone will feel free to share information, ask questions and express personal opinions. Please respect the comments and opinions of others.

Grading and Evaluation

The process of grading and evaluation are obviously important to students. Grades derived from examinations involving questions with specific answers [true-false, multiple "guess", matching, listing etc.] are somewhat "objective" in nature and relatively easy to evaluate since there is usually a single, correct response. Frequently disagreement centers around the construction of the question and whether it was a "good" or "fair" question. Grades are also determined from a more "subjective" process of evaluation. This includes essays and many of your assignments which frequently do not have a single, correct answer but are evaluated, in part, based upon the student's ability to express him/herself. The majority of your assignments are subjectively evaluated. After reading your answer, and based upon what you have written and the manner in which you have expressed yourself, I assign a letter grade [A, B, C...] to your response and then equate it to a specific point value that contributes toward your final grade. When completing course work for evaluation, keep in mind that in the Undergraduate Catalog letter grades are defined in the following manner:

- A - denotes excellent mastery of the subject and outstanding scholarship
- B - denotes good mastery of the subject and good scholarship
- C - denotes acceptable mastery of the subject and good scholarship
- D - denotes borderline understanding of the subject
- F - denotes failure to understand the subject and unsatisfactory performance

"Mastery of the subject" is how well the student *identifies and explains* specific concepts, ideas, theories, etc. **"Scholarship"** has more to do with the *quality* of the work: how well thoughts and ideas are organized and expressed [correct spelling and grammar; neatness; typewritten, when appropriate] and completing assignments when they are due. All course work submitted will be evaluated using the criteria stated above. Final grades are determined from the total number of points accumulated during the semester.

If you do not understand an assignment, or your grade on an assignment or an exam, please see me as soon as possible.

Academic Integrity

The University is an academic community. Its fundamental purpose is the pursuit of knowledge. Like all other communities, the University can function properly only if its members adhere to clearly established goals and values. Essential to the fundamental purpose of the University is the commitment to the principles of truth and academic honesty. Accordingly, The Code of Academic Integrity is designed to ensure that the principle of academic honesty is upheld. While all members of the University share this responsibility, The Code of Academic Integrity is designed so that special responsibility for upholding the principle of academic honesty lies with the students. Definitions of Academic Dishonesty: any of the following acts, when committed by a student, shall constitute academic dishonesty: (a) **Cheating**: intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. (b) **Fabrication**: intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. (c) **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty**: intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this Code. (d) **Plagiarism**: intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise. For more information, please examine the following website:

<<http://www.inform.umd.edu/CampusInfo/Departments/PRES/policies/iii100a.html>>

And finally...

If you have any comments, problems, concerns, questions or want to see/contact me for any reason, please do not hesitate. I have included my e-mail address (which I encourage you to use), office phone number (best time to call is between 7 & 9 am) and office hours on the front of the syllabus. The office hours are more a matter of protocol since I am on campus nearly every day from about 6 am until around 3:00pm.

