

SYLLABUS

**DEPAUL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL FOR NEW LEARNING
COURSE TITLE: SW 215 STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR HEALTH AND
WELLNESS**

This course is offered twice this quarter at two different locations

TERM: Summer 2009

Dates: 6/15, 6/22, 6/29, 7/6, 7/13, 7/20, 7/27, 8/3, 8/10, 8/17, 8/24

Day: Mondays

Location: O'Hare Campus

Time: 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM

Dates: 6/16, 6/23, 6/30, 7/7, 7/14, 7/21, 7/28, 8/4, 8/11, 8/18, 8/25

Day: Tuesday

Location: Loop Campus

Time: 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

INSTRUCTOR: Yirser Ra Hotep (Elvrid Lawrence), MSW

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Competencies: BA 1999 competencies-S-2-A, S-3-X, H-3-F, H-3-X

S-2-A: Can describe, differentiate, and explain form, function and variation within biological systems.

S-3-X: Can assess health care practices based on an understanding of the biological and social factors that contribute to definitions of health.

H-3-F: Can understand the interrelationship among intellectual, psychological, spiritual, and physical health in one's own life.

H-3-X

Course can be taken for two competencies.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

BIOGRAPHY

Yirser Ra Hotep (Elvrid Lawrence) has over 30 years of experience as a master practitioner and instructor of Yoga and Tai Chi Chu'an. He has developed a practice as a stress management consultant through his company, YogaSkills Stress Management and Wellness Consultants. Through YogaSkills he provides stress reduction and wellness services for a variety of corporate and public sector clients and individuals. He has presented workshops, lectures and demonstrations through out the U.S., in Cuba, the Caribbean and Africa. During 2001 he was featured in Ebony magazine, Chicago Parent Magazine, the Chicago Tribune Newspaper, WGN Television and ABC Television for his work with Yoga in the African American community and for pre-school children and those with special needs. He has produced a set of instructional Yoga videotapes; meditation audiotapes and is the author of a soon to be released book on Yoga.

Yirser holds a Masters degree in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago and a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Illinois at Chicago. In his teaching he seeks to meld ancient spiritual practices with academic research and rigor.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Stress is a little understood phenomenon that affects every aspect of human life. Some estimate that two-thirds of all illnesses are related to stress induced conditions that manifest physically in the body. By controlling or managing the forces that produce stress humans are able to bring about improvement in health and wellness status. In this course we will explore the interaction of stress and environment on individual and group wellbeing. We will use a multi-faceted model of stress that incorporates an understanding of the interplay of physiology, psychology, culture and environment in producing states of health and its counterpart: dis-ease. This model is based upon a holistic orientation to the nature of wellness. Under the idea of holism is the concept that there is inter-dependence among all the parts of the whole. An illness in one part of the body is the result of a general imbalance in the entire system. Illness among the members of a group is related to some imbalance in the entire group or the environment as a whole. In order to optimize health we must therefore address ecological issues as they relate to the individual and to the larger "organism" of society on up to the planet level.

Within the context of this holistic orientation we will address the role of stress in the scheme of these multiple factors. This approach has three advantages for the student:

1. Gain the ability to understand, assess and evaluate the holistic model of stress.
2. Gain understanding and personal insight into the physiology of stress and stress reduction methods.
3. Gain the ability to manage and reduce stress for self and to train others.

Class topics will include an:

- Overview of the holistic approaches to health and wellness
- The physiology of stress and it's impact on health
- Nutrition
- Stress feedback loops
- Negative behaviors
- Respiration and deep breathing
- Alternative stress reduction methods

Students will be able to meet the requirements for Competence **S-2-A** in the following ways:

1. Articulate an important aspect of the holistic model of health and wellness.
2. Describe physiological responses to stress and how they can be affected by stress reduction techniques.
3. Assess the role of diet and nutrition in the promotion and maintenance of a healthy lifestyle.
4. Can demonstrate a personal approach to stress management by applying techniques learned in class.

S-3-X students will meet their requirement by:

- Demonstrating an understanding of appropriate vs. inappropriate responses to environmental sources of stress.
- Describe how environmental factors affect physiological and mental states in relationship to stress.
- Describe and give examples of unhealthy behaviors that are related to cultural, social, and economic or other environmental factors.

H-3-F students will meet their requirement by:

Demonstrating an internalization of the principles that underpin the psycho-social-physiological approach to health.

DEMONSTRATION OF COMPETENCIES

- Class attendance and participation
- Journal Recordings
- Reading articles, books and information on the internet
- Research Paper
- Applying techniques learned in class

Learning will also be facilitated through guest speakers, video presentations and the practice of meditation and Yoga in class. Students will be able to experience states of relaxation and learn to regulate physiological stress responses. Students are expected to practice stress management techniques learned in class and to document if and how it has helped you in dealing with stress in your personal life.

The research paper will be a minimum of ten to 12 double-spaced pages. It will detail a stress management strategy or explore a health and wellness issue(s) related to your competency.

Journal assignments are due beginning with the second class. They are to be turned in every other week thereafter. Journal assignments must be typed; no more than one page long and demonstrate your experience in applying stress management principles in your life.

Group discussion will also be encouraged. The sharing of personal experiences and challenges with stress will be of particular importance in helping the group to work through difficulties.

GRADING:

Class attendance and participation, completion of all assignments and quality of work determine grades. Your paper accounts for a significant portion of your grade. Class attendance, turning journal assignments on time and class participation are very important.

All DePaul University policies concerning integrity will be honored and enforced.

CLASS 1.

Understanding the Physiology of Stress:

In this class will explore the physiological basis of the phenomenon that we call “Stress”. Students will also be introduced to basic relaxation techniques.

- What is Stress?
- What is the physiological basis of stress?
- What are the sources of stress?
- How does Stress affect the body?
- How does stress affect the mind?
- What are the consequences of chronic stress on health?
- What are the Personality Types in relation to stress?
- What is the connection between mind, body, emotions, behavior and stress?
- How can one breathe stress away?

Assignments for class two:

1. Read Chapters 1 to 4 in “The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook”. Take the Stress Self Assessment Questionnaires and practice the breathing and relaxation techniques.
2. Write a journal based upon your experiences practicing the deep breathing exercises. Turn in this journal the second class.

CLASS 2.

In this class students will participate in a full Yoga class. Students need to wear or bring workout clothes, a Yoga mat or a towel to put on the floor.

1. What is Yoga?
2. Understanding the physiological effects of Yoga.
3. The benefits of Yoga
4. The difference between Yoga and exercise
5. Yoga: The Ultimate Stress Management System

Yoga is an ancient art/science of rejuvenation and revitalization that students should include in their lifestyle and practice on a regular basis to improve health and wellness status and eliminate stress. Students will learn basic breathing, relaxation, postures and movements. Students should continue their practice of Yoga for the entire quarter. Students should **wear workout clothes**. You will also need a Yoga mat or a towel for this class.

- Turn in first Journal Assignment during the second class.
- Continue to practice the Yoga techniques in the YogaSkills Video Vol. 1 and the other stress management and relaxation techniques in Chapters 3 and 4 of the workbook.
- Monitor your progress in managing stress to include in your next journal due the 4th week of class.

Readings in Preparation for Class # 3:

- The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook: Chapters 5, Meditation, Chapter 6, Visualization
- Spontaneous Healing: Chapters 1 through 5.

CLASS 3.

Understanding the Dynamic Connection between Stress Management, Health and Wellness

What is the Healing System?

How is the body able to heal itself?

What is Meditation and how does it work?

What is the value of visualization in managing stress?

Social and Cultural Aspects of Stress

Video Presentation: Medical Mysteries. This video compares and contrasts ancient and modern medical approaches and asks the question, “which one is better”?

Reading Assignments for Class #4:

- Spontaneous Healing: Read Chapters 6 through 10 and Chapter 14 “.
- Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook: Chapters 7, 8 and 9.
- Continue to Practice Yoga techniques from YogaSkills Vol. 1. .

CLASS 4.

Nutrition, Stress and Health

PowerPoint Presentation on Nutrition and Stress

Discussion of reading assignments

Visit to a Natural Food Store: On your own visit a health food store of your choice such as WholeFoods Market, Trader Joes, etc. Additional information will be provided in class. (This will not be a class field trip).

Turn in Second Journal

- Define Applied Relaxation Training
- What are the benefits of self-hypnosis?
- What is Autogenics?
- Video Presentation: “Supersize Me”
- The Politics of Health and Wellness in America

In preparation for Class # 5 read:

Spontaneous Healing: Chapters 15 through 19

CLASS 5.

Topic: Holistic Modalities

In this class we will explore various ideas such as Holistic Health, Alternative Medicine, Complimentary Medicine, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Modern Medicine, Western Medicine and others. We will also explore the various Holistic Healing Modalities and how they work.

- Discuss Chapters 15 through 19 in Spontaneous Healing
- Creating a Stress Management and Wellness Program: Group Project

Discussion Points:

- What is the life-force?
- What is Homeopathy?
- Interaction of individuals, social systems and the environment
- Define traditional medicine, alternative medicine and complimentary medicine.
- What is Ayurvedic Medicine?
- Name and define several alternative healing modalities (Chapter 16, Considering Alternatives), in Weil.
- What are the “Seven Strategies of Successful Patients”? (Chapter 17), Weil.
- What is Allopathy?: The politics and economics of modern medicine

Class 6.

Topic: Food, Nutrition, Health and Stress in Post-Industrial American Society

In this class we explore issues of nutrition, health and illness in American society. We will explore such questions as what are the root causes of the current health crisis in America and how is this related to our own behaviors.

- **Video Presentation: “Supersize Generation: Kids and Obesity”**
- **Video Presentation: “Tobacco Wars”**
- **Turn in Journal #3: Reflect on your continued practice and progress in incorporating stress management strategies.**

Reading Assignments for class # 7:

Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook: Chapter 14, Refuting Irrational Ideas. Take the “Beliefs Inventory” and other exercises in this chapter. Be prepared to discuss your findings and insights in class # 7.

Class 7.

Refuting Irrational Ideas:

- What are Irrational Ideas?
- What is Self Talk?
- What is the origin of irrational ideas?
- What is the value of refuting irrational ideas?
- What techniques are employed in refuting these dysfunctional ideas?

Reading Assignments for Class #8:

- Read Chapters 15, 16 and 18 in the Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook on Coping Skills Training, Goal Setting and Time Management and Job Stress Management.

- Do the surveys and self-assessments in these chapters and reflect upon them in your fourth journal assignment the 8th week.

Class 8.

Topic: Stress in the Workplace: In this class we will explore the dynamics of managing the stress that results from organizational change in the workplace. We will discuss 18 ways to avoid manage stress associated with organizational change. Lecture will focus on the “Type “C” Personality” The Stress Hardy Individual. The Type C personality is the prototype for the person best suited to handle and manage stress.

- How to manage stress at work
- Time Management
- Goal Setting
- Turn in Journal # 4

Class 9.

- Continue discussion on Job stress, time management and goal setting
- Refining the stress management and wellness plan
- Open Discussion

Class 10.

- Class presentations: Class members will provide a 5 to10 minute summary of their research paper or wellness plan
- Turn in 5th and final Journal Assignment.

Class 11.

- Finish class presentations.
- Evaluations

Required Texts:

1. The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook by, Davis, McKay and Eshelman
2. Spontaneous Healing, by Andrew Weil

Optional:

- The YogaSkills Instructional Yoga DVD Series

- The YogaSkills Journey to Amenta Meditation CD Set
- Timeless Healing, Herbert Benson