COURSE TITLE: Stress Management

COURSE NUMBER: PSY 316

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides the student with an understanding of the causes and symptoms of stress and burnout. The emphasis is on prevention strategies and the development of individual coping skills, including proper exercise, nutrition, breathing techniques, biofeedback, time management, and progressive relaxation.

As Psychology professionals, we recognize that reactions to trauma come in many forms. The content of this course, and discussions about trauma from different perspectives, may bring about unexpected and unsettling reactions. Responses to trauma are often strategies that survivors have developed to keep themselves safe, and therefore really reflect strength and resiliency. Recognizing how trauma impacts anyone is an important part of skill building for creating trauma-informed services and systems. Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor at any time during the course if you would like to discuss, privately, your reactions to the content we are reviewing and/or the discussions we are having.

MAJOR INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS:

GOAL A:
The student will understand research and theory in the study of stress.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

A-1 Define key terms in the field of stress research.
A-2 Describe the different kinds of research methods used in stress research.
A-3 Examine key theorists and researchers including, but not limited to, Selye, Holmes and Rahe, Freud, Jung, Kubler-Ross, Buscaglia, Frankl, Dyer, Maslow, and Seligman.

GOAL B:
Understand the effects of stress on physiological systems.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:
B-1 Describe stress and relaxation responses in the body (e.g., cardiovascular system, gastrointestinal system, smooth and skeletal muscular systems).
B-2 Describe the anatomy and physiology of the brain.
B-3 Describe how the brain functions to prepare the rest of the body to react.
B-4 Describe the endocrine system organs that are related to stress.
B-5 List the changes that occur in the body in response to increased secretion of the catecholamines.
B-7 Examine the changes that occur in the body as a result of sympathetic system stimulation in response to stress.
B-8 Discuss the relationship between stress and physical illness (e.g., cardiovascular disease, allergies, cancer).

GOAL C:
Understand the psychological effects of stress.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

C-1 Explain the psychological effects that stress can create.
C-2 Differentiate stress and burnout.
C-3 Examine sources of stress and burnout, e.g., self or institutional situation, or societal at sources.
C-4 Differentiate between stress and personality traits.
C-5 Discuss the relationship of resiliency to stress.
C-6 Discuss the relationship of hardiness to stress.

GOAL D:
Understand coping mechanisms and ways to manage stress.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

D-1 Discuss the importance of a comprehensive approach to stress management.
D-2 Discuss the relationship of social support to stress management and
D-3 Describe the barriers that often interfere with the development of a strong social support system.
D-4 Demonstrate an understanding of the connection between stress and human spirituality.
D-5 Discuss health methods of stress management (e.g., meditation, autogenic training, imagery, relaxation techniques, exercise).

GOAL E:
Understand diversity and stress.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:
E-1 Discuss the nature of diversity and the relationship between diversity and stress.
E-2 Discuss several indices of health as they relate to minorities.
E-3 Discuss the relationship between poverty, educational level, poor health, and stress.
E-4 Discuss the relationship between family life factors, health, and stress.
E-5 Discuss the relationship between age, physical disability, and stress.
E-6 Discuss the relationship between sexual orientation and stress.

GOAL F:
The student will understand stress and reactions to stress, avoidance and ways to cope that may be personally utilized.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

F-1 Discuss the importance of making a commitment to controlling stress in life.
F-2 Identify personal factors that cause stress in your own life.
F-3 Identify your avoidance, reduction and coping strategies including: cognitive restructuring, behavior modification, journal writing, art and humor therapy, problem solving and resource management.
F-4 Evaluate effective and ineffective strategies in your own personal style.
F-5 Develop new personal constructive coping skills to meet diverse situations.
F-6 Develop a personal plan of action to implement ways to change ineffective coping skills.
F-7 Define and understand relaxation techniques and develop a mechanism to employ the techniques in your own life.
F-8 Develop a plan to teach others about stress management.

GOAL G:
Use appropriate written and oral communication skills.

Learning Outcomes: The student will:

G-1 Communicate information orally in a logical and grammatical manner.
G-2 Present written information using standard APA style.