

830:451 Adv Topics in Clinical and Abnormal Psychology
Psychology of Stress
Professor Richard Contrada
Til 111, M45 (1:10-3:50pm)

Prerequisite: General Psych 01:830: 101, Sr 830 Major & permission of instructor
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Scientific and lay approaches to understanding stress in many ways parallel one another. There have been significant advances in stress science since it was initiated over 100 years ago. Yet much remains to be understood. Stress has been studied by diverse disciplines but at its core it appears to involve psychological and biological processes, in other words, it constitutes or reflects a mind-body interaction. This course will examine theory and research on *psychological* stress. That is, it focuses on stress as a phenomenon that arises from perceptual and cognitive processes, involves emotion, and affects behavior. But the course will also examine theory and research on stress *biology*. The effects of psychological stress processes on the brain and body sets the stage for understanding how stress can contribute to mental and physical health problems. And stress typically occurs in a *social* context; it often arises from interpersonal situations, and we turn to other individuals and groups for support in coping with stress and its effects. Thus, the course will take a *biopsychosocial* approach, and will be relevant for students pursuing academic and career goals in various areas of psychology, including but not limited to clinical, social, and health psychology, as well as students with interests in medicine, sociology, public health, and nursing. Students will be taught how to read, summarize, and critique primary source materials drawn from the stress field, and will have the opportunity to discuss and write about stress-related topics of interest to them and that relate to their own research.