

Schedule: This is an asynchronous remote class, conducted fully online, no class meetings online or in person.

Instructor: Richard J. Contrada, Ph.D. Email: contrada@psych.rutgers.edu Office Hours: By Appointment

Please read this syllabus carefully and let me know if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

The Field of Psychological Stress and Coping. Stress is a major aspect of life with links to many areas of psychology. Its relevance spans from minor, everyday hassles to major stressful events and chronic conditions, some of which promote physical and mental disorders. Stress science involves biological, social, cognitive, and clinical subareas of psychology. Psychological stress interacts with phenomena of interest to neighboring fields, including biology, health sciences, and sociology. At the same time, stress is quintessentially psychological, most often arising from basic psychological processes such as social perception, cognition, evaluation, and emotion, and the responses available for us to deal with stress—many of which constitute what is described as coping—are psychological as well. Exposure to stressful experiences, and responses to its occurrence, are influenced by many psychological factors, including sex/gender, personality, and social relationships. Notions of “stress” and “coping” exist within the belief systems of members of the lay public, and within cultural (shared) representations such as popular/entertainment media, literature, advertising, and large-scale businesses and markets involving stress-related products and services.

Purposes. This course will provide an introduction to and survey of some of the core concepts and methods of the stress and coping field. It will also provide practical knowledge regarding healthy ways to avoid stress and to manage it when it occurs, as it inevitably does.

General Approach. This is the first time this course has been offered. As a result, while there are some aspects of the course that have been finalized and will not change, there are other areas where things will be flexible, and subject to change, based on how things go and feedback from students.

Week-to-Week Structure. Since this is an asynchronous remote course, meaning there will neither be in-person nor online class periods, we will use weeks rather than class sessions to structure class activity. The Course Outline presented below provides an overview of that structure.

Main Canvas Portal. We will be using Canvas in a number of different ways. Canvas contains this syllabus and will provide access to course materials. These include the required textbook and learning tools and resources that are associated with it, such as practice quizzes and assignments, additional readings, multimedia course materials, videorecorded lectures, and exams. We may also use Canvas for polls, class discussion, and other activities. All will be made available in Canvas under “**Modules**” unless otherwise indicated. Students are responsible for all information and materials on the Canvas course web pages. It is strongly recommended that you check Canvas at least twice a week and in response to Canvas email notifications, which are sent to your Rutgers email account.

Weekly Activities and Materials. With some variations, the general plan for each week is as follows:

- **Textbook Chapters:** One chapter will be assigned each week. The text, and all course tools and materials related to the text, will be accessed via the McGraw-Hill Connect link on the Canvas course website (see below).
- **Textbook Quizzes/Assignments:** There will be 1 practice quiz, and 1 or 2 assignments, related to each chapter.
- **Additional Readings:** Other readings will occasionally be provided via the Canvas Module for the week.
- **Multimedia:** Videos related to some topics will be assigned. Most are available on the Internet and can be accessed via links in the Course Outline and Canvas Module. Some will be in the Canvas Media Gallery. Please note that Canvas’s media features are not always compatible with Apple’s Safari web browser. Thus, for Mac Users, if there are issues viewing videos using Safari, please try Google Chrome or Firefox.
- **Videorecorded Lectures:** These will be in the Canvas Media Gallery (Mac Users see the note above).
- **Class Discussions:** We will try out the Canvas Discussion tool as a way for us to exchange reactions and questions about course materials, events in the news that are related to the course, and other topics.

Required Textbook: *Comprehensive Stress Management (15th Edition)*. Jerrold S. Greenberg (McGraw-Hill). An eBook version is accessible via the McGraw-Hill link on the Canvas course website. Presumably you purchased access to this eBook when you registered. Optionally, you can purchase at extra cost a physical version of the text from McGraw-Hill.

Required Online Course Materials: McGraw-Hill *Connect* Platform. Access to *Connect* is included with purchase of the eBook. Like the eBook, *Connect* can be accessed via the McGraw-Hill link on the Canvas course website.

McGraw Hill Technical Support is available if you encounter any problems. Reach out to them as they have hours where you can receive help almost immediately. Remember to get a case number. I will intervene if you have a case number and McGraw-Hill is unable to resolve the issue. Their hours of operation and contact information are below:

Customer Experience Group – P: 800-331-5094

ALL TIMES IN EST – Sunday: 12 PM – 12 AM; Monday – Thursday: 24 hours;

Friday: 12 AM – 9 PM; Saturday: 10 AM – 8 PM

Website: <https://mhedu.force.com/CXG/s/ContactUs>

Platform Status Center: <https://status.mcgrawhill.com/#/>

Exam Details

- Three exams
- All are open notes exams, but do not plan to look up each answer, as there may not be sufficient time
- From 60 to 75 multiple-choice and true-false questions each
- Designed to require 60 minutes each, but 90 minutes will be allotted
- Exam 1 covers material from the first set of classes that precede it
- **Exams 2 and 3 cover material since the previous exam. They will NOT be cumulative**

Learning Goals: Stress and coping have multiple determinants, concomitants, and consequences, of which many fall into the domain of psychology. It is my purpose in teaching this class to foster familiarity and understanding of:

- The history, basic assumptions, main topic areas, concepts, and methods of psychological stress research
- The relationships between the stress and coping area and other areas of psychology
- How to think critically about the psychology of stress and coping
- The relationship between laboratory and non-laboratory research in the stress field
- The contributions of disciplines other than psychology to understanding psychological stress
- Social, cultural, economic, and political ramifications of stress and coping
- How to write clearly and cogently about stress and coping
- How to respond appropriately to peers' written and oral comments in discussion forums
- How to reduce one's own stress levels and those of family and friends
- How to help manage stress-related mental and physical health conditions and syndromes
- How to be a critical consumer of stress- and coping-related information presented in the media
- Academic, professional, and other career opportunities in the stress field
- Evolving/emerging/future problems of stress and coping and possible solutions

Note: These include [Psychology Department learning goals](#) as they relate to this course.

Exam preparation

- You will be given guidance on exam coverage and how to prepare for any exam. The practice quizzes, assignments, and other class activities are designed to help students learn course material.

Determination of Final Grades

- Exams: 60%
- Other: 40% (quizzes, assignments, etc., many graded for completion rather than being graded)

Course Outline

| Week | Topics, Textbook Chapters, Other Materials, Assignments, and Exams |
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| 1 | Introduction and Scientific Foundations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments 1 & 2 ○ Activity Based Assignment 1 • Week 1 Lecture • Discussion |
| 2 | Stress Psychophysiology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignment • Video: Killer Stress: National Geographic • <u>Discussion</u> |
| 3 | Stress and Illness/Disease <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Video: Portraits of Pain: Ernie Merritt • Ted Talk: The Biggest Health Threat Women Face • Discussion |
| 4 | Stress and the College Student <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Discussion |
| 5 | Intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Inevitability • Discussion |
| 6 | Life-Situation Interventions: Intrapersonal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Network - Mad as Hell Scene • Discussion <p>Exam I</p> |
| 7 | Life-Situation Interventions: Interpersonal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Harry and Ron fight Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows Pt. 1 • Discussion |
| 8 | Perception Interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 8 |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Ted Talk: How to Make Stress Your Friend • Ted Talk: The Optimistic Bias • Discussion |
| 9 | <p>Spirituality and Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • <u>Discussion</u> |
| 10 | <p>Meditation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 10 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Discussion |
| 11 | <p>Autogenic Training, Imagery, and Progressive Relaxation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Discussion <p>Exam II</p> |
| 12 | <p>Other Relaxation Techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Discussion |
| 13 | <p>Physiological Arousal Interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Discussion |
| 14 | <p>Strategies for Decreasing Stressful Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Video: The Skinny on Obesity: A Fast-Paced Fast Food Life • Video: The Health Hazards of Vaping • Video: Drinking in College: EVERYTHING you need to know • Discussion |
| 15 | <p>Diversity and Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Discussion |
| 16 | <p>Occupational Stress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion |
| 18 | Family Stress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 17 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Practice Quiz ○ Lab Assignments ○ Activity Based Assignments • Discussion |
| 19 | Exam III (During Finals Week as Scheduled by the University) |

“Chapters” refer to those of the Greenberg Text

Topic coverage, exam dates, and assignment dates are subject to change

Important Notes

1. ***Diversity, Climate, and Inclusivity.*** In teaching this course I am committed to ensuring an inclusive, diverse, and supportive environment for all students irrespective of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, immigration status, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, political affiliation, socioeconomic status, disability or medical history/conditions, veteran status, first generational/non-traditional student status, or any other characteristic protected by law. Rutgers University supports this [commitment](#).
2. This class necessarily involves material having to do with anatomy, stressful events and conditions, mental and physical health problems, and stress-related personal behaviors such as sex and drug/alcohol.
3. If you expect to miss/be late with course activities, please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date(s) and reasons. An email is automatically sent to me.
4. If you have trouble downloading materials from Canvas, please use the “Help” tab on the left side of the Canvas website and/or get help at one of the University computer labs, because it is unlikely that I will be able to help since the issues are usually local to your PC/browser/printer. Sometimes the problem is solved by: (a) making sure you respond to a question about copyright issues in a window that may be open but hidden somewhere on your screen; (b) saving the file before opening; (c) upgrading to the latest version of relevant software (e.g., Adobe Reader).
5. ***It is expected that you will make every effort to take all exams within the time frame in which they will be posted, which will allow for your other scheduled academic and work activity.*** Students unable to do so are asked to let me know in advance when this is possible.
6. ***Assignments must be completed based on the student’s own, independent work.*** Plagiarism is unacceptable. ***Rutgers Academic Integrity Policy:*** <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>. For additional information and resources regarding plagiarism see the information and links at the end of this syllabus.
7. Because the instructor for this course may not be on campus after the end of the semester, all students must complete and submit all work and take all exams prior to the end of the semester to receive a grade.
8. All grades will be posted electronically. Students are responsible for contacting the Instructor in a timely fashion if they believe they have not received credit for submitted assignments/exams they have taken.
9. ***It is expected that students will complete course evaluations for this class.*** Course evaluations, both the ratings and especially the comments, provide critical feedback for improving courses and for helping students to make decisions about course selection. Please help your fellow/future students by providing evaluative ratings and comments when the time comes at the end of the semester.

10. ***All grades are final and non-negotiable.*** Some students may feel they “just missed” the next highest final course grade, for example, because they were sick or under a lot of stress during exam periods. But remember, you will have come that close to the next highest grade based in part on fairly easy assignments, exercises, exams that may include bonus questions, and possible exam grade curves. Also, if I were to lower the cutoff to raise the letter grade for a student who “just misses” the next highest grade, there would be another student who scored slightly lower who now would “just miss” the new cutoff, and the logical conclusion would be to keep lowering the cutoff until everyone receives an “A”. Such grades would be meaningless.
11. ***There are no individualized extra credit opportunities.*** I cannot negotiate extra credit opportunities for individual students because it would not be fair to the others. And I cannot work separately with each student until all students are satisfied with their grades. Note that many of the assignments and exercises are simple and only require following straightforward directions; several do not even have right or wrong answers, and just require thoughtfulness and effort in expressing your beliefs/opinions. A lot of information will be provided to guide efforts to prepare for the exams, including practice quizzes and specifics about what will and will not be covered. Please do not contact me to request further extra credit opportunities or just to let me know you were not satisfied with your grade. I do not under any circumstances offer individualized “extra credit” opportunities because I believe a grading system is only fair if it is based on the same exams/assignments for all students.
12. The lectures and course web page are my personal intellectual property. I view the sale or purchase of these materials as a violation of copyright laws.

Student-Wellness/Support Services

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS): <http://health.rutgers.edu/medical-counseling-services/counseling/>

(848) 932-7884/17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA): www.vpva.rutgers.edu/

(848) 932-1181/3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

(848) 445-6800/LSH, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/getting-registered>.

Just In Case Web App: <http://www.justincaseforcolleges.com/faq/>

Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Caring Contact: <https://caringcontact.org/>
(908) 232-2880; A listening/support community

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
(800) 273-8255; 24/7 support for people in distress

Cheating and Plagiarism

(Adapted from the spring 2010 syllabus for Prof. Andy Egan's 01:730: 252 Eating Right:

The Ethics of Food Choices and Food Policies)

Longer version: Cheating or plagiarizing deprives you of the educational benefits of preparing these materials appropriately. It is personally dishonest to cheat on a test or to hand in a paper based on the unacknowledged words or ideas of someone else. It is also unfair, since it gives you an undeserved advantage over fellow students who are graded on their own work. In this class we will take cheating very seriously. Suspected cases of cheating/plagiarism may be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs. I advise you to familiarize yourself with University policy on Academic Integrity: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

Since what counts as plagiarism is not always clear, I quote the definition given in Rutgers' policy: "Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the use of another person's words, ideas, or results without giving that person appropriate credit." To avoid plagiarism, every direct quotation must be identified by quotation marks or appropriate indentation and both direct quotation and paraphrasing must be cited properly according to the accepted format for the particular discipline or as required by the instructor in a course. Some common examples of plagiarism are:

- Copying word for word from an oral, printed, or electronic source without proper attribution
- Paraphrasing without proper attribution
- Submitting a purchased or downloaded term paper or other materials to satisfy a course requirement
- Incorporating into one's work graphs, drawings, photographs, diagrams, tables, spreadsheets, computer programs, or other non-textual material from other sources without proper attribution.

A SPECIAL NOTE: Students often assume that because information is available on the Web it is public information, does not need to be formally referenced, and can be used without attribution. This is a mistake. *All* information and ideas that you derive from other sources, whether written, spoken, or electronic, must be attributed to their original source. Such sources include not just written or electronic materials, but people with whom you may discuss your ideas, such as your roommate, friends, or family members. They deserve credit for their contributions too!

Judgments about plagiarism can be subtle. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask for guidance from your TA.

Useful Links

Online schedule of classes: <http://sis.rutgers.edu/soc/>

Building search: <https://maps.rutgers.edu/>

Plagiarism/Documenting your work:

General academic integrity Link: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

The Camden plagiarism tutorial (INTERACTIVE):
<http://library.camden.rutgers.edu/EducationalModules/Plagiarism/>

Consult don't plagiarize: Document your research! For tips about how to take notes so that you don't plagiarize by accident. http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/avoid_plagiarism

Online learning tools from Rutgers University Libraries including Rutgers RIOT, Searchpath and RefWorks: <http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/tutorials>

Academic support programs: <http://newbrunswick.rutgers.edu/academics/academic-support>

Final Exams:

Policies: <http://nbregistrar.rutgers.edu/facstaff/examrules.htm> and
<https://www.sas.rutgers.edu/cms/sasoue/policies-resources/exams/15-policies-resources/policies/65-final-exams-policies>

Schedule: <http://finalexams.rutgers.edu/>