

## **PSY 4960, Advanced Seminar in Health Psychology, Fall 2008**

**Instructor:** Jeff Ratliff-Crain, Ph.D.

**Office:** 20-B, Imholte Hall (Office hours: M,W 10-11, Tu 2:30 – 3:30 or by appt.)

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**Class meets: 4:00 pm - 5:40 pm, Tue. and Thur., IH-202**

The goal of the UMM undergraduate major in psychology is to *foster understanding of and the ability to apply the scientific method to the problems of the behavioral sciences and of individual and social human behavior by providing students with basic methods, logical skills and practice in applying them and by providing an introduction to core area of psychology.*

The senior seminar course is intended to serve as a capstone experience for psychology majors, which means that its purpose is to both unify and provide a broader context for knowledge about the field of psychology gained throughout the undergraduate years. To accomplish this, students will:

1. Demonstrate their ability to read and critically synthesize primary source material;
2. Add to the collective knowledge and understanding of the seminar class members through preparation and active participation;
3. Investigate a topic within the broad topic of “stress” in depth;
4. Lead a seminar discussion focused on your chosen topic;
5. Communicate your findings in an extensive written report and public presentation.

Fall, 2008 topic: “Stress”

*Def.: Stress* - The process by which environmental events threaten or challenge an organism's well-being and by which that organism responds to this threat.

Stress matters for psychology in a number of ways: It represents an emotional response to environmental events that can affect a person’s health and well-being; through coping responses we can understand how people’s responses to events can be adaptive or maladaptive and how those develop; it provides an avenue for understanding mind/body relationships; it represents challenges for prevention, intervention and treatment; “stress” can be a trigger or contributor to other psychological issues and problems ( e.g., addictions, emotional disorders).

### **Required materials**

1. Pan M. L. (2008). Preparing Literature Reviews Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches (3rd Ed.). Glendale, CA: Pyczak Publishers.
2. Materials placed on course reserve, placed on the course WebVista page, or distributed in class. The reading list will develop as the semester progresses. I am expecting that copies of materials to be discussed in class *will be brought to class*. Any required materials for class will be distributed at least four days in advance of the session where they’ll be used.

## **Recommended materials:**

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association: Fifth Edition (2001). See: <http://apastyle.apa.org/pubmanual.html> (The library and the psychology TA room have copies of the APA manual.)

## **Course outline**

*NOTE: The following dates are subject to change depending on how the seminar develops.*

**Aug. 28:** Introduction to the material and initial discussion on what is meant by a “literature review” in psychology.

*Reading—Pan Chapters 1 & 2*

**Sept. 2, 4 & 9:** Initial searches for stress-related literature and discussions of the topics found. We will also discuss search techniques and ways to evaluate quality and usefulness for materials found. Active participation in class is worth 10% of your final grade (see below).

*Reading—Pan Chapters 3 & 4 (Sept. 2, 4), Chapters 5 & 6 (Sept. 9). Additional readings as needed.*

**Sept. 11 - 18:** Students will share their topic ideas with the class on 9/11. We will also evaluate “model reviews” and discuss how the topics may fit into such models. Further search, group, and individual discussion with instructor over topics will occur during this time.

*Reading—Pan, “model reviews” and additional readings as needed.*

**Sept. 23 – Oct. 14:** Student-led seminars on chosen topics and readings. Each week will include one student-led discussion with follow-up as needed. This is worth 15% of your final grade.

*Readings to be distributed by students through instructor. These need to be available at least four days prior to your presentation.*

**Oct. 16:** Detailed outline for your final paper is due. Meeting this deadline is worth 5% of your final grade.

**-- Fall Break --**

**Oct. 23 – Nov. 12:** Students will focus on literature review and development of their papers. Weekly individual meetings with the instructor will be scheduled with additional meetings or class meetings as needed. Seminar sessions may be called for group feedback, to discuss projects, etc. Any sessions during this time will be scheduled at least three days in advance.

**Nov. 13: First draft of paper due at the start of class.** Meeting the first draft deadline is worth 5% of your final grade.

**Nov. 18 - 20:** Individual meetings with instructor to receive feedback on your initial draft.

**Nov. 25:** Meet as a group to discuss the public presentation.

**Dec. 2 & 4:** Practice talks as a group.

**Dec. 8 – Dec. 11:** Public presentations. Presentations will occur during the scheduled class times and other times in order to complete them by the last day of classes. Your public presentation is worth 20% of your final grade.

**Dec. 15:** Your complete, final paper is due on the date of the scheduled final for this course (Dec. 15) by 4:30 pm at my office (IH-20B). The paper should be printed, *not* delivered electronically. The final paper is worth 40% of your final grade. Late papers will be deducted 5%. [A Chancellor's excuse or similar documentation justifying an "Incomplete" will be needed for a paper to be accepted after finals week.]

## Grades

**Grades** are determined from:

Active participation in seminar discussions	10%
Leading a seminar session related to your topic	15%
Complete literature review paper	45%
Public presentation of a summary of your review	20%
Meeting outline deadline	5%
<u>Meeting first draft deadline</u>	5%
TOTAL =	100%

More specific information on each of these follows.

## Explanation of course components

**Seminar participation:** A seminar is a course where the participants try to gain a deeper understanding of an issue in a specific area. Accordingly, this class requires substantial preparation and participation by all students. The instructor will serve as a convener and facilitator rather than as lecturer. The course necessitates that students assume a more active, responsible role in learning than was likely required in your previous classes. First of all, course participation isn't possible if you're not in attendance. Therefore, I will take attendance. I can understand that there are very real reasons why someone might need to miss a class or two; you also need to understand that there isn't a good way to make-up missed participation in discussions. If something meriting a Chancellor's excuse will make you miss several class times, we can discuss possible written make-up assignments. Make sure you see a fellow student for information missed and clarify any questions about that material with me.

Second, attending class is necessary for participation, but certainly isn't sufficient to be classified as "participation." You are expected to contribute to the conversations by asking questions, contributing ideas, questioning conclusions, suggesting ways the materials might apply to other issues, integrating points others have made, etc. To accomplish this you must carefully read the assigned readings before coming to class and think about the issues in the readings enough so that you can make a contribution to the discussion. Your grade will be based on the extent that your contributions help develop the topic-- that means the *quality* of your contributions will matter more than the *quantity*. The only real "rules" are that your comments are respectful (even when you disagree) and at least tangentially related to the topic.

Evidence that active preparation is not occurring will result in a significant reduction in your participation score.

Remember, you are responsible for the quality of the discussion. A good discussion does not involve 7 people each giving their opinion on an issue. A sophisticated discussion airs the strengths and weakness of all points of view. This is accomplished by asking questions and making connections between points raised about a particular side of an issue. Although there is not a set of correct questions to ask when exploring a topic, there are many ways to examine an issue. Developing and asking questions that will provoke dialogue among the other members of the class is your job.

**Leading a seminar session:** Each member of the class will be expected to facilitate one 100-minute seminar session during the term and to help facilitate follow-up discussions related to your specific topic. Discussion facilitators are not responsible for filling the 100 minutes of air time with their questions or evaluations of the reading-- that is the responsibility of the class. The facilitators are expected to guide the discussion on their topic. When you are the facilitator you should carefully listening to what the other class members are saying and direct the discussion so all sides of an issue are addressed. Therefore, the facilitators may raise questions, but they may also probe class members for deeper evaluations of the issues, or take an opposing view point from the rest of the class to act as a lightning rod for discussion. This means being familiar enough with your own topic that you can respond and react to questions and comments raised by the group.

Students not presenting in a given session will come to class with at least 3 thoughtful open ended questions which can be asked during the discussion. You will turn these typed questions into me at the end of these seminar sessions. I encourage you to explore references other than those required in order to gain an additional perspective on an issue. Please bring these resources to the discussion.

The instructor will meet with each student individually in order to help determine readings and to narrow topics. Students will be given readings for discussion sessions *at least* four days prior to the discussion to allow preparation.

**Review paper:** You will need to conduct an in-depth review of literature relevant to a sub-area of our over-arching topic, *stress*. The goal of a literature review is to organize, integrate, and evaluate previous research in order to clarify a particular problem or issue. It is expected that you, based on your review, will develop a clear conclusion that fits into one of the following categories: (a) A specific research proposal addressing an unanswered or theoretical issue raised in the review; (b) A clarifying theoretical conclusion in which you propose a structure by which the reviewed information can be understood; or (c) identify relations, contradictions, gaps, and inconsistencies in the literature, noting their significance and providing guidance as to future research that can clarify the field. In each case, some direction for future research should be clear. Anticipate the paper being 20-25 pages with approximately 20-25 primary sources cited. More specific information and guidance regarding the paper will be distributed in class. Refer to the *APA Publication, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.* for more information regarding style and paper preparation.

Your literature review will provide the primary means for demonstrating your understanding of psychology as a science and your ability to work with psychological literature.

***Detailed Outline.*** An outline is crucial for a literature review. Chapter 7 of the Pan text provides details regarding how to prepare a topic outline for the first draft. In addition to providing a topic outline you will need to ***fill in*** your outline. For example, the first part of your outline will be the introduction and the second section of the introduction is “establishing the importance of the topic”. You will need to provide specific information and examples demonstrating the importance of your topic. You can provide these details in list format.

***First Draft.*** Before writing your first draft of your literature review make sure to thoroughly read chapters 8-12 of the Pan text and review the model reviews. Note that not all of the information within these chapters will apply to every student’s literature review. For example, chapter 11 discusses how to build tables to summarize literature. For some students this method will be very helpful when presenting literature they have reviewed, however, for other students it may not be appropriate.

**Public presentation:** One of the important aspects of the senior capstone course comes from learning from each other. Each of you will gain expertise in the sub-topics chosen for review. Further, science only functions if knowledge is shared and information is open to interpretation and evaluation. To satisfy these needs and to give you experience with an important means for sharing knowledge, students will give a public presentation of a summary of their work. Each presentation will be limited to 30 minutes with questions to follow. All students in a seminar section will be expected to attend each others’ presentations *as well as two presentations from other seminar sections that meet this term*. Failure to attend will result in a 50% reduction in your participation grade.

Presentation titles, dates and locations will be posted so psychology faculty and other interested members of the campus community can attend. Guidelines for presentations will be distributed in class.

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**Relevant resources:**

**Disability Services:**

If you have a disability, please contact the Center for Advising and Learning, Disability Services in Room 362 in the Library (589-6163) so someone can contact me to arrange for appropriate accommodations. This is University protocol.

**Academic Assistance Center:**

If you would like assistance in learning how to improve your study skills or you would like a tutor please contact Kathryn Klopfleisch at (589-6179).

**Writing Room:**

If you would like assistance in writing your research paper please contact Tisha Turk in room 327 Briggs (589-6299)

## DEFINITIONS OF GRADES & ACADEMIC WORKLOAD EXPECTATIONS

(The following information is provided as required by the University Senate.)

- A -- achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.  
(90-100%)
- B -- achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.  
(80-89%)
- C -- achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.  
(70-79%)
- D -- achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements. (60-69%)
- S -- achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- (70%) or better.
- F (or N) -- Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I (see also I)
- I -- (Incomplete) Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances, e.g., hospitalization, a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. Requires a written agreement between instructor and student.
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### **Work load**

For undergraduate courses, one credit is defined as equivalent to an average of three hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to achieve an average grade in the course. For example, a student taking a four-credit course will be expected to put in 180 hours of work during the semester. That means that for a course that meets in two 100-minute sessions per week for 15 weeks, students will be expected to put in approximately 8 hours of work outside of class per week during the time the course meets.

### **Cheating and plagiarism policy**

The University defines **scholastic dishonesty** as “submission of false records of academic achievement; cheating on assignments or examinations; plagiarizing; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement.” Scholastic dishonesty, in the form of cheating on exams, using a previous student’s paper, using online paper-writing services, etc., will result in a “0” for the assignment or exam, at the minimum, and possible removal from the course, at the maximum. Incidences of scholastic dishonesty will be reported, in writing, to the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs.