

Stress and Human Health

Course: HE 242| Section Number: HE242.Z1 | Fall Term 2026

Instructor Information

Name: Morgan Tarpey
Email: morgan.tarpey@doj.oregon.gov
Website: <https://oregoncoast.edu>
Office Room: NA
Office Phone: NA
Office Hours: By Appointment
Secondary Contact: Dr. Sarah Whiteford, Dean of CTE and Academic Pathways,
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Course Information

Class Room: Online
Class Meeting time: Online
Textbook: Methods for Stress Management by Allen Ulrich (2017) is a free, open-access textbook available online: <https://psu.pb.unizin.org/kines082/> You do not need to purchase any textbook for this course. All readings will be provided online at no cost.
Materials/Equipment: Access to a computer and the Internet.
Learning Management System: All courses are web-enhanced, and all students are required to have access to Canvas which can be accessed through the main OCCC website at OregonCoast.edu. All faculty must use Canvas gradebook so that students can easily track their grades.

Important dates

Last day to drop* with a refund in first week: See the [2026-2027 Academic Calendar](#)
Last day to withdraw* with a 'W': See the [2026-2027 Academic Calendar](#)

**Be aware that dropping/withdrawing from a course may affect your financial aid*

Students are responsible for adding, dropping, and withdrawing from classes by published deadlines. The drop and withdraw deadlines are on the academic calendar. Beginning the second week, until the deadline published on the academic calendar each term, students may withdraw from classes. A mark of "W" will appear on their transcript. Tuition and fees remain on the student account when a student chooses to withdraw from a class.

Syllabus Changes

This syllabus serves only as a guide to this course. The instructor reserves the right to change any part of this syllabus at any time due to any variety of circumstances. Methods and criteria used to evaluate student performance may also change. If and when

changes occur, students will be informed in writing. Students are responsible to keep informed of syllabus changes as they occur by attending and participating in class and communicating with the instructor.

Course Description

Explores and analyzes stress and its relationship to human health. Examines various personal stressors and the links between stress and disease. Covers how to manage stress with healthy coping and relaxation techniques by using current research and multiple perspectives. Evaluates personal stressors and surveys numerous methods to manage stress. HE 242 is a 4-credit course. Prerequisites: WR 121 recommended.

Course Outcomes

Upon completion of the course students should be able to:

- Describe the relationship between stress, human health, behaviors, and perceptions.
- Recognize signs and symptoms of stress.
- Summarize the physiological response to stress and how it impacts human health.
- Identify stressors and possible root causes using health models.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of stress management strategies and relaxation techniques on a personal level.
- Explore information from credible research on stress and health.

Student Conduct

Academic Integrity

Learning is built on the fundamental qualities of honesty, fairness, respect, and trust. At Oregon Coast Community College, academic integrity is a shared endeavor characterized by truth, personal responsibility and high academic standards. Any violation of academic integrity devalues the individual and the community. One important aspect of academic integrity is academic honesty.

Violations of academic honesty include:

- Plagiarism
- Collusion/Inappropriate Assistance
- Cheating
- Fabrication/Falsification/Alteration
- Unauthorized Multiple Submission
- Sabotage and Tampering

A student who violates academic honesty will be subject to disciplinary action according to Student Rights and Responsibilities.

Artificial Intelligence Policy

Limited use of generative AI tools is permitted in this course as a learning and editing aid, but not as a substitute for completing your own work. You may use AI to clarify a course

concept, brainstorm possible topics before you begin an assignment, or review work you have already written for grammar, organization, or clarity. You may not use AI to write or substantially rewrite any part of an assignment or discussion post, answer assignment questions for you, generate personal reflections, or make the connections between course concepts and your own experiences.

For example, if an assignment asks you to describe a stressor in your life and connect it to a concept from the course, you may ask AI to explain that concept in simpler language. You may also write your response yourself and then ask AI to identify areas that are unclear or could be better organized. You may not give AI the assignment prompt and ask it to create a response.

The ideas, analysis, reflection, and application in anything you submit must be your own. AI may support your learning and writing process, but it may not produce the work that I am evaluating. When in doubt about whether a particular use of AI is appropriate, ask me before using it.

Policy on Mobile Communication Devices

Unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are not permitted to operate cell phones or pagers during class or laboratory sessions, as these devices disrupt learning and teaching activities. There may be times during class when you will be permitted to use a mobile device to participate in course activities. Otherwise, students should use such communication devices only during class breaks outside the classrooms. Discuss exceptions with Instructor.

Students Rights and Responsibilities

The Student Rights and Responsibilities in the Student Handbook establishes students' freedom and protections as well as expectations of appropriate behavior and ethical academic work [<https://catalog.oregoncoastcc.org/student-handbook>].

Children on OCCC Property

Students are not allowed to bring children to classes or leave them unattended on campus. We expect compliance from both students and faculty regarding this policy.

Enrolled Minors

The college offers programs that allow minors (students under 18) to enroll in college courses. Students are advised to foster relationships that are age appropriate with classmates.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes in which they are enrolled.

Students must attend and complete required assignments for the first week of the course or be administratively dropped from the course for non-attendance, unless arrangements have been made with the instructor in advance. Attendance is taken in all classes in the first week of the term. Instructors typically continue to take attendance all term.

Repeated absences will affect your grade.

Students are responsible for dropping or withdrawing from registered classes by talking with your Success Coach and completing the official drop/withdrawal process (see [Withdrawal | Oregon Coast Community College](#).) Students who stop attending or have excessive absences and who fail to drop or withdraw from a class by the published deadline may earn a grade of F or NP according to the grade system option selected by the student. Students who fail to attend or stop attending classes and fail to drop those classes by the published drop deadline will be responsible for the associated tuition and fees.

Students may not attend classes they are not registered for.

Course Information

For this course, you will complete five assignments, five class discussion posts, and a final project. There is an opportunity for extra credit in week one. Detailed instructions, resources, and due dates will be posted when assigned.

Assignments: 50%

There will be five assignments worth 10% each. The format of the assignments is different every week and may include tasks such as writing exercises, multiple choice quizzes, and activities outside the online learning environment.

Class Discussion Posts: 30%

There will be five discussion board posts worth 6% each. Answer the question(s) listed in the discussion board link. Start a new thread with your answer and reply to at least one other student's post for full credit.

Final Project, Stress Management Plan: 20%

The goal of this project is for students to apply the knowledge they have gained throughout the course to create a personalized stress management plan. This plan will demonstrate your understanding of physiological, psychological, and sociological aspects of stress, as well as the effectiveness of various stress management and relaxation techniques.

Extra Credit: Complete the Week 1 Quiz for up to 5 points added to your lowest assignment grade at the end of the term (not exceeding a total of 100%).

Grades

Grading Scale

A = 90% - 100%
B = 80% - 89%
C = 70% - 79%
D = 60% - 69%
F = 0% - 59%

Quality of Response

The criteria below describe the level of understanding and application demonstrated in your work.

0–25% — Little or no demonstrated understanding

Response is missing, incorrect, off-topic, or shows little engagement with course material. Ideas are stated without meaningful explanation or support.

Example: “Stress is bad for your health.”

25–50% — Beginning understanding

Response shows some understanding but is vague, incomplete, or relies mostly on general knowledge. Connections to course concepts are limited or unclear.

Example: “I learned that stress affects the body and can cause health problems.”

50–75% — Developing understanding

Response shows a generally accurate understanding and includes some explanation, examples, or application. Connections to course concepts are present but may lack detail or depth.

Example: “Chronic stress can increase blood pressure and affect physical health. I notice that when I am under a lot of stress, I have more trouble sleeping, which can make me feel even more stressed the next day.”

75–90% — Strong understanding and application

Response clearly and accurately explains course concepts and thoughtfully applies them to examples, situations, or personal experiences. Connections are explained and supported when appropriate.

Example: “Chronic stress can affect several body systems, including the cardiovascular and immune systems. During particularly stressful weeks, I notice that I sleep less and feel physically run down. This helps me understand how stress can affect health both directly through the stress response and indirectly through behaviors such as disrupted sleep.”

90–100% — In-depth understanding, application, and insight

Response demonstrates accurate, in-depth understanding and makes thoughtful connections among course concepts, evidence, and personal or real-world examples. It explains why or how those connections matter and demonstrates independent thought.

Example: “I used to think of stress mostly as an emotional experience, but learning about the physiological stress response changed how I interpret what happens to me during stressful periods. For example, when work becomes overwhelming, I tend to sleep less and rely more on convenience foods. This shows how a stressor can affect health through both physiological responses and changes in health behaviors. Recognizing that

connection also helps explain why managing stress involves more than simply trying to 'relax.'"

Use of Sources and Citations: When an assignment requires outside information, course readings, or other sources, students must clearly identify where information came from and provide a citation or link that allows the source to be located. Ideas, facts, or language taken from another source should never be presented as the student's own. Missing or inadequate source attribution may lower the Quality of Response score.

Late Work Policy

Assignments and Discussion Posts:

- Up to 24 Hours Late: 10% grade reduction.
- 24 Hours to 3 Days Late: 20% grade reduction.
- Beyond 3 Days: No credit without prior approval.

Final Project:

- Up to 24 Hours Late: 10% grade reduction.
- Over 24 Hours Late: Accepted in exceptional circumstances with 20% reduction.

Course Schedule

Module	Dates	Topic	Assignment/Project	Discussion Post
1	9/21-9/27	Understanding Stress: What Stress Is and How It Affects Us	Course Orientation Extra Credit Quiz Due Thursday 9/24, 11:59 PM	Course Attendance/ Discussion Post 1 (6%) Due Thursday 9/24, 11:59 PM
2	9/28-10/4	Stress and the Body: Understanding the Physiological Stress Response	Assignment 1 (10%) Due Sunday 10/4, 11:59 PM	
3	10/5-10/11	Perception and Emotion: How We Interpret and React to Stress		Discussion Post 2 (6%) Due Sunday 10/11, 11:59 PM
4	10/12-10/18	Recognizing Stress: Signs, Symptoms, and Triggers		Discussion Post 3 (6%) Due Sunday 10/18, 11:59 PM
5	10/19-10/25	Understanding Stress Causes: Models, Systems, and Social Realities	Assignment 2 (10%) Due Sunday 10/25, 11:59 PM	
6	10/26-11/1	Stress and Health Research: Exploring Evidence and Evaluating Health Information	Assignment 3 (10%) Due Sunday 11/1, 11:59 PM	
7	11/2-11/8	Coping with Stress: Behaviors That Help or Harm	Assignment 4 (10%) Due Sunday 11/8, 11:59 PM	
8	11/9-11/15	Managing Stress: Strategies for Building Resilience and Well-Being	Assignment 5 (10%) Due Sunday 11/15, 11:59 PM	Discussion Post 4 (6%) Due Sunday 11/15, 11:59 PM

9	11/16-11/22	Relaxation Techniques: Using the Relaxation Response to Reduce Stress		Discussion Post 5 (6%) Due Sunday 11/22, 11:59 PM
10	11/23-12/1	Taking Action: Creating Your Personal Stress Management Plan	Stress Management Project (20%) Due Tuesday 12/1, 11:59 PM	

Student Resources:

Americans with Disabilities Act

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Oregon Coast Community College provides reasonable accommodation to students with disabilities. If you desire reasonable accommodation, please contact The Office of the Vice President Student Affairs (400 SE College Way, Newport, OR 97366) at 541-867- 8501, or you can email access@oregoncoast.edu. *Students are responsible for requesting accommodations in a timely manner and documenting the nature and extent of their disability.*

OCCC Email

OCCC email is the official form of communication of Oregon Coast Community College. If you have any difficulties accessing your OCCC email address please contact support at helpdesk@oregoncoast.edu

Emergency Funds

If you are experiencing challenges securing food, transportation, or housing, or have other financial issues that are affecting your ability to attend and succeed in class(es), we encourage you to apply for emergency funds. Please call, email, or visit Student Services for assistance (phone: 541-867-8544). If you are comfortable doing so, please let your instructor know about your situation. This will allow for a better understanding and could potentially lead to further support and/or resources.



Use this QR code to access the student resources webpage.

College Information

Land Acknowledgement

Oregon Coast Community College acknowledges that we reside within the ancestral homelands of the Yaquina (Yaqu'o'n) and Alsea (Wusi'n) Tribes. Today, those tribal descendants are represented by The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. We are honored for the opportunity to teach, learn, and work on their ancestral lands. We also

recognize the ongoing contributions they make to the community, Oregon Coast Community College, and the world.

Mission Statement

At Oregon Coast Community College, we equip students for success by providing educational pathways and supports in response to the diverse needs of our community. Through accessible and engaging programs, we enrich the economic and civic vitality of Lincoln County and beyond.

Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

Oregon Coast Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, or religion in its programs and activities. The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

- Vice President Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Kristina Holton, 541-867-8511 kristina.holton@oregoncoast.edu, or
- Director of Human Resources, Joy Gutknecht, 541-867-8515 joy.gutknecht@oregoncoast.edu.

Updated 06/2026