THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
LONDON, CANADA

School of Health Studies
Health Sciences 4091A - Understanding Stress

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will undertake a critical examination of the notion of stress, broadly speaking. The topics covered will include, but will not be limited to: stress as fear, stress as anxiety, dis-order vs. disorder, responses to accumulated adversity, traumatic stress, existential despair, the concept of "flow" according to the scholarship of M. Csikszentmihalyi, stress as opportunity, stress as motivator, stress as a facilitator of meaning making.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Students will broaden perspectives and advance understanding regarding stress, fear, anxiety, and related subject matter, and responses to same.
- Students will examine the interrelatedness of relevant constructs, including stress, fear, anxiety, depression, despair, motivation, meaning making.
- Students will complete an applied research project to examine perceptions of stress.
- Students will put privileged assumptions up to question.
- Students will exercise and strengthen various skills related to research, e.g. review & critical analysis of literature, writing, presentation of findings.
- Students will co-create a learning environment that welcomes and encourages group dialogues that are dynamic, passionate, and open-minded, i.e. co-create a learning experience that is vital and engaging.

Prerequisites: Enrolment in the third or fourth year of any program within the School of Health Studies, or permission of the School of Health Studies.

Antirequisites: None

COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor:	Dr. Marnie Wedlake, PhD Email: mwedlak@uwo.ca
Office Hours:	Immediately following classes & by appointment
Course Website:	https://owl.uwo.ca

Times and Location of Lectures:

Mondays - 9:30am to 11:30am - TC-309 ******class attendance is required***

Wednesday - 9:30am to 10:30am - TC-309 ******class attendance is required***

TEXTBOOKS

Horwitz, A. V., & Wakefield, J. C., (2012). *All we have to fear: Psychiatry's transformation of natural anxieties into mental disorders.* New York, NY: Oxford.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2008). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience.* New York, NY: Harper Perennial Modern Classics.

Frankl, V. E. (2006). *Man's search for meaning.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

******All 3 textbooks are required.***

******Some additional readings will be assigned. Links to these will be posted on OWL.***

LEARNING ENVIROMENT

This course experience will function according to the assumption that successful learning happens in environments where learning is co-created by the instructor and the students.

As the instructor, I will endeavour to provide students with classes that are optimally engaging, motivating, and interesting. In return, I will expect students to attend all classes, and to contribute to the collaborative nature of the learning experience through their active participation in discussions, by completing the assigned readings, and by offering constructive feedback as will be deemed useful to the overall learning experience.

Reading during a lecture, using cell phones/texting, not turning off cell phone ringers, the disturbing consumption of food or drink, littering the classroom, the use of iPods, Facebook, Twitter, and other activities which may impede the ability of you or other students to learn are unacceptable behaviours.

As a collective, we will create a learning environment that is supported by civility and mutual respect. In doing so, we will set the stage for a healthy and stimulating intellectual forum. Finally, if you are having problems with any aspect of the course, please contact me. I am committed to your learning experience, I am approachable, and I welcome your comments, your constructive criticisms and, of course, your questions.

NOTE TAKING:

Good note-taking skills are important, if not essential, in both the academic environment and in other professions. For these reasons, the responsibility for note-taking in class is that of the students. I will provide skeletal outlines of class slides. It will be your responsibility to create the full complement of notes from each class. Any additional content such as from films, additional readings, etc, are examinable. Should you miss any classes, you are responsible for retrieving the relevant notes from classmates. Please do not ask me for lecture notes and/or PowerPoint slides - they will not be given to you. If you find that the lectures are moving too quickly or too slowly, please let me know. If others feel the same way then I will do my best to accommodate the majority of the class. If you are having difficulties taking notes for any reason, let me know, and I will try to help you find a student who may be willing to share notes with you.

NOTE: 90% attendance is required to pass this course and medical documentation will be required for absences. Any such documentation must be submitted, by the student, directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office. It will be the Dean's office that will make the determination whether accommodation is warranted.

LECTURES AND READINGS

The following is a list of the topics that will be covered in this course:

- Fear & Anxiety - Dis-order vs. Disorder
- A Brief Historical Overview of Anxiety & Anxiety As Disorder
- Fear & Anxiety as Pathology
- Stress, Anxiety & Depression
- Existential Despair
- Traumatic Stress
- The Biomedical Paradigm's Shaping/Fashioning of Anxiety
- Stress, Anxiety & the Pharmaceutical Industry
- Moving Out of Fear and Into Flow
- The Interrelatedness of Consciousness, The Self, Enjoyment, and Quality of Life
- An Examination of Flow
- The Mind and Flow
- Responding to Chaos & Anxiety
- Making Meaning & Making Sense

***** A schedule of lecture topics and readings will be made available at the beginning of the term.**

EVALUATION

Group Project (consists of 2 separate but related parts):

PART 1 - Conceptualization & Annotated Bibliography **(due Mon Oct 26/15)**		15%
PART 2 - Two-part Presentation		20%
(Part 2 - due on date of presentation - either Mon, Dec 7/15 or Wed, Dec 9/15)		
Mid-term Examination	**Monday, October 19, 2015**	25%
Final Examination	**During final exam period**	40%

Group Project: By the 3rd class (Mon, Sept 28/15) you will be randomly assigned to a group. There will likely be five or six students in each group. Throughout the remainder of the course, you will (as a group) undertake a critical review, and create a representation of experience, using one of three choices for the presentation of your work. **The overall theme for this project is Experiences of Stress.** Also during the 3rd/Sept 28th class, each group will choose a sub-theme within this broader theme. You will choose your sub-theme from a list of options, which will be posted on OWL prior to this class. This project will be graded in two parts. Part 1 will be comprised of an in-depth statement that will detail how your group has conceptualized your topic (i.e. your interpretation), and a 15-reference annotated bibliography. Part 2 will take the form of a presentation delivered to the class at the end of the term.
*****Additional details will be made available at the beginning of the term.**

Part 1 - Will be due on **Monday, October 26th**. **It must be submitted for grading through OWL.** This document will be subjected to electronic plagiarism scanning, through Turnitin.com. **You must also submit a hard copy of your research proposal in class on Monday, October 26th.**

Part 2 – Two-part Presentation: Your presentation will be comprised of two parts. For part one you will choose one of the following three presentation formats: a short video (10 to 12 minutes in length); an interactive poster presentation; a traditional PowerPoint supported presentation.
*****Additional details regarding expectations, etc, for each of these three choices will be provided at the beginning of the term.**

For part 2, as a group you will present your work, in its entirety, to the class. You will have a total of 15 minutes to present your work and answer any questions. Your actual presentation should be a minimum of 10 minutes, and a maximum of 12 minutes, in length. You will have 3 to 5 minutes for Q&A.

All presentations will take place during class on Monday, December 7th and Wednesday, December 9th. Presentation dates will be randomly assigned to each group. ***Attendance at both classes is required.

Note regarding group work: Students will, as a group, monitor the distribution and completion of all aspects of the work required to complete group assignments. Included in this is the requirement of all groups to ensure assignments are completed and submitted by the deadlines as stated in this outline. Deadlines missed as a result of any experiences of conflict (perceived or otherwise) within the group will not be accepted.

EXAMINATIONS

Both examinations will be comprised entirely of short answer questions, and will be closed book. The final exam will be cumulative.

Important Note Regarding the Use of Electronic Devices During Examinations: Unless you have medical accommodations (supported by required documentation) that require you to do so, you may not use any of the following electronic devices during the examinations: cellphones, smart phones, audio players or recorders of any sort, video cameras, video games, DVD players, televisions, laptop/notebook/netbook computers, desktop computers, flashlights, laser pointers, or power tools of any sort.

MISSED DUE DATES & MAKEUP EXAMINATIONS

You must have a valid medical or compassionate reason for missing the scheduled due dates for all parts of the group assignment, the mid-term examination, or the final examination, and documentation for your absence must be filed with the main office of the School of Health Studies. See relevant section of this outline for information concerning acceptable documentation of illness. Retroactive assignment and/or exam accommodations (i.e., for assignments and/or exams that have been written) will not generally be granted.

GENERAL COURSE NOTES

Course Website
Other than the textbooks that you purchase, this course is a totally "paperless" course, and as such the course website will be your sole source for lecture overheads and course information (including this course outline). Due to privacy regulations, grades will only be provided to you through the course website. I cannot, under any circumstance, convey grades via email, or over the phone.

Email
I am happy to answer your questions via email, and will do my best to answer your emails promptly. You must, however, use your UWO email address for all correspondence regarding this course. Because the University 'anti-spam' programs often reject email from Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, and other public email addresses, there is no guarantee that I will receive your emails if you send them from a public email program – or from any off-campus server, when sending email using any method other than the university's webmail system.

Lecture Attendance
You are expected to attend every class, as some material that is covered during lectures will not be featured in the readings.

Eating and Drinking in Class
Out of consideration for your fellow students, please refrain from eating during class (lidded beverages are acceptable).

Grade Adjustments
Final grades in this course will be taken to the closest integer (i.e., I will "round off" decimals). Reading logs and exam grades will be calculated out of 100% to one decimal place. I will not, under any circumstances, "bump up" your grade (i.e., to facilitate professional school applications etc.). This includes grades that end in a "9". Along similar lines, I will not reweight papers or examinations for reasons other than those outlined above.

Use of Cellphones During Class
Please ensure that any cellphones, pagers, or other communication devices on your person are turned off, or have their ringers silenced (or turned to vibrate) during lectures and labs. Please refrain from texting during lectures.

Use of Laptops During Class
If you plan to bring your laptop to class, please restrict your computer use to course-related activities, and refrain from using instant messaging clients, video games, or other software packages that might be distracting to students sitting near you.

Recording Lectures
You are not permitted to create audio or video recordings of my lectures.

PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

In the first instance, all appeals of a grade must be made to the course instructor (informal consultation). If you are not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal must be sent to the Program Director. If you consider this response to be unsatisfactory, you may then appeal to the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences. If this response is unsatisfactory, you may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office.

SPECIAL NOTES

Your Mental Health and Wellbeing:
This course deals with very serious issues in the area of mental health, some of which may be distressing for some students. Please speak with me, or your academic counselor, if you have any concerns about your own mental health and wellbeing in relation to course content. Western University has excellent Mental Health and Wellbeing services available for students in need of

additional guidance and support in this area. See Western's Health and Wellness information webpage at http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/index.html if you desire more information on this topic. Immediate help in the event of a crisis is available by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.

SDC'S Learning Skills Services:
Learning Skills counselors are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall and Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counseling. They may be found in WSS Rm 4100, or at http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

Student Code of Conduct

The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at The University of Western Ontario, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For more information, visit http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/board/code.pdf.

English Proficency for the Assignment of Grades

Visit the website http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/exam/english.pdf.

Accommodation for Medical Illness or Non-Medical Absences

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf
The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Illness may be acute (short term), or it may be chronic (long term), or chronic with acute episodes. The University further recognizes that medical situations are deeply personal and respects the need for privacy and confidentiality in these matters. However, in order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is required where a student is seeking academic accommodation. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician or walk-in clinic. An SMC can be downloaded under the Medical Documentation heading of the following website: https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm.

Documentation is required for non-medical absences where the course work missed is more than 10% of the overall grade. Students may contact their Faculty Academic Counselling Office for what documentation is needed.

Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, examinations, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and their Academic Counselling office in a timely manner. Documentation for any request for accommodation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the appropriate Academic Counselling Office of the student's Faculty of registration. For BHSc students, you may go to the School of Health Studies Office in HSB room 222.

Scholastic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf .

Additionally,

1. All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).
2. Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Support Services

There are various support services around campus and these include, but are not limited to:

1. Student Development Centre -- http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/
2. Student Health -- http://www.shs.uwo.ca/student/studenthealthservices.html
3. Registrar's Office -- http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/
4. Ombuds Office -- http://www.uwo.ca/ombuds/