# PRE-ESTABLISHED PROGRAMME
# EMOTIONS, STRESS AND SELF-REGULATION

**Course contact hours**: 45
**Recommended credits:** 6 ECTS – 3 US
**Language:** English

## Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites.

## Objectives and Contextualisation

Emotions are automatic responses that regulate our behaviour. Emotional responses impact decision making, our learning, and our physical and mental health. One of the emotional responses that has received much interest in scientific research is the stress response. Chronic stress is a factor that can increase vulnerability to the development of cardiovascular, brain and immune diseases.

On the other hand, self-regulation capacity is a higher cognitive function, which is part of the executive processes, and which allows us to manage and modify our behaviour and our emotions to better adapt to the environment, improve our quality of life and prevent alterations in our mental health. In this sense, understanding the scientific bases and the main self-regulation strategies can increase the development of said ability to improve our health, our well-being, as well as our relationships with our environment. The course will be conducted respecting psychological diversity and aims to be inclusive.

The objectives of the course are:

- Understanding the main components of emotions.
- Acquiring an expert knowledge of stress and its relationship with health.
- Knowing how to identify contextual and individual triggers of the stress process.
- Gaining skills for assessing stress and its impact on wellbeing and health.
- Knowing how to classify different types of coping strategies and analyse their efficiency in different contexts.
- Developing skills for stress and emotions self-regulation.
- Having the ability to assess positive versus negative attitudes towards stress and health.

## Competences

- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties considering psychological and neurological diversity among people's emotional states.
- Communicate stress management strategies efficiently, using the appropriate media (oral, written or audio-visual) considering diversity and all elements that may ease communication or make it more difficult.

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- Identify and recognise the different methods for assessment and diagnosis in the different areas applied to psychology.
- Make changes to methods and processes in knowledge to provide innovative responses to society's needs and demands to prevent emotional stress.
- Recognise the determinants and risk factors for stress and health and the interaction between people and their physical and social environment.
- Take social, economic and environmental impacts into account when assessing people's emotional responses and stress levels.
- Take sex- or gender-based inequalities into consideration when assessing people's emotional responses and stress levels.
- Work as a team and collaboratively.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Evaluate stressful situations and identify its triggers and maintenance factors.
2. Analyse the differences for reasons of sex/gender in evaluating emotional stress, avoiding bias and discrimination.
3. Understand the physiology of the stress response and the main short- and long-term effects.
4. Create the capability to practise self-regulation skills and design activities to improve stress management in others.
5. Apply assessment techniques in health psychology.
6. Describe the models and contributions of biomedical and bio psychosocial perspectives to an understanding of health.
7. Evaluate different assessment instruments and strategies in health psychology.
8. Identify situations in which a change or improvement is needed.
9. Understand scientific articles in the field of health psychology and neuroscience.
10. Identify the main psychological determinants affecting the development of health problems and ways of tackling them.
11. Analyse the social, economic and/or environmental implications of stress levels in academic and professional activities.
12. Recognise the basics of emotional communication.
13. Understand the relationship between lifestyle and the stress response.
14. Create new methods and activities to work as a team and collaborate to achieve a common goal.

## Content

Unit 1. Fundamentals of emotions
      1.1 Nature of emotions and feelings
      1.2 Functions of emotions
      1.3 Brain control of emotions
      1.4 Emotions and health

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Unit 2. The science of stress
      2.1 Stress: the concept
      2.2 Physiology of the Stress Response
      2.3 Health Effects of Long-Term Stress
      2.4 Effects of Stress on the Brain
      2.5 Anxiety disorders and depression.

Unit 3. Emotional regulation
      3.1 Definition and characteristics
      3.2 Brain mechanisms of self-regulation
      3.3 Self-regulation and cognitive reappraisal
      3.4 Self-regulation and emotional management
      3.5 Lifestyle and self-regulation

## Methodology

The teaching methodology will combine lectures and exercises that will help the students to integrate the acquired knowledge. Activities in the classroom will also be done to improve skills in the analysis and application of knowledge. Before each session, students will be required to do a previous reading and/or assignment to be worked on in class.

During the seminar / workshop session Unit 3 will be developed, simulating a stress management workshop with the students as participants. Between sessions, students will deliver exercises, where the content developed in the corresponding session should be applied to everyday life.

There is also a supervised group project. In this work, students must conduct an interview of someone experiencing a potentially stressful situation, and they will write a report analysing the case and making specific recommendations. The preparation of the interview (profile of the subject interviewed, interview guidelines...) will be guided through classroom indications and follow-up tutorials. Finally, some of the cases will be presented and discussed in class.

## Activities

Directed:
Class sessions (practice)        33,3 hours
Class sessions (theory)        8,3 hours
Assessment        3,4 hours

Supervised:
Project development        15 hours

Autonomous:
Comprehensive study of materials    35 hours
Exercises and reading        30 hours
Team project        25 hours

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## Assessment

Ev1 and Ev2: There will be two written synthesis tests. The Ev1 assesses knowledge of the first part of the subject. The Ev2 assesses knowledge of the second part of the subject. Tests include open questions with short answers, both theoretical and of application to cases and examples.

Ev3: The competences acquired through the supervised work will be assessed based on the written group report, that must be submitted by a specific date that will be announced, the oral session of presentation and/or discussion carried out in the last directed teaching session, and the follow-up (supervision of preparation of the interview script).

Ev4: This evidence will be assessed based on the overall of individual exercises carried out and delivered between the specialized seminar sessions (workshops) as well as the follow-up of the sessions. This evidence will only be included in the final grade if student has attended the minimum attendance requisites.

## Assessment Activities

| Title | weighting | hours | learning outcomes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Learning Evidence 1 (Test 1) | 25% | 1,7 | 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 10 |
| Learning Evidence 2 (Test 2) | 30% | 1,7 | 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13 |
| Learning Evidence 3 (Project) | 25% | 15 | 1, 2, 9, 11, 12, 14 |
| Learning Evidence 4 (Participation) | 20% | - | 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 14 |

## Bibliography

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Jones, F; Bright, J. (2001). *Stress. Myth, theory and Research.* Harlow (UK): Pearson-Prentice Hall.

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Lehtinen, P., Martin, M., Seppa, M., & Toro, T. (2018). *Breathing as a Tool for Self-regulation and Self-reflection*. Routledge.

Sapolsky, R. M. (2004). *Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers: The Acclaimed Guide to Stress, Stress-related Diseases, and Coping*. Holt paperbacks.

Schunk, D. H., & Zimmerman, B. J. (Eds.). (2023). Self-regulation of learning and performance: Issues and educational applications. Taylor & Francis.

Seaward, B. L. (2017). Managing stress. Jones & Bartlett Learning.

## Software
Campus Virtual UAB
https://sso.uab.cat/cas/login?service=https%3A%2F%2Fcv.uab.cat%2Fprotected%2Findex.jsp

ClassMood App
https://classmood.upf.edu/