



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2008/2009

GRA 2231 Stress and Productivity in Organizations

Program

Advanced Specialization Course (MSc), Master of Science in Business and Economics, Master of Science in Business and Economics (Organizational Psychology), Master of Science in Leadership and Organizational Psychology

Responsible for the course

Astrid Richardsen

Department

Department of Leadership and Organizational Behaviour

Term

According to study plan

ECTS Credits

6

Language of instruction

English

Learning outcome

Work stress imposes a high cost on individual health and well-being as well as on organizational productivity. As organizations and businesses today are facing challenges in their efforts to perform effectively, the high price of a poor fit between people and their work environments is increasingly recognized. In the area of human resource management, there is increasing agreement that in order to be successful, organizations need to focus on their human capital for unique competitive advantage. Not only is it important to understand how to reduce work-related stress and increase individuals' ability to cope with work demands, but organizations need to identify, obtain, preserve and manage valued work resources in order to unleash the talents of their people. The shift toward positive psychology represents a framework to understand how to enhance work engagement, motivation and job performance, thus increasing employee health and well-being and ultimately building more effective organizations. This course will provide an overview of sources and consequences of job-related stress, methods used to assess levels of stress and strain, strategies to prevent or minimize work-related stress and health problems, and enhancing job resources to build work engagement and commitment so that workers continue to be productive and effective in their jobs. The course will prepare students to assess or advise on work organization and health-promotion programs that will protect the individual from stress and enhance organizational performance.

Prerequisites

GRA 2205 Organizational Behaviour or equivalent

Compulsory literature

Books:

Burke, R.J., & C. L. Cooper, eds. 2007. Building more effective organization: HR management and performance in practice. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press. (Paperback)
Cooper, Cary L., Philip J. Dewe, Michael P. O'Driscoll. 2001. Organizational stress : A review and critique of theory, research, and applications. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage. (Paperback)

Collection of articles:

A collection of research articles will be made available by semester start

Recommended literature

Course outline

The changing nature of work
Sources and consequences of job-related stress
Stress and productivity
Psychological burnout
Methodological issues in job stress research
Issues and interventions

Positive psychology
Work engagement, flow and optimal functioning
Organizational health and well-being
Case studies of organizational restructuring

Computer-based tools

Power-Point Presentations, Blackboard/homepage

Course structure

36 hours. The course is structured as a combination of lectures, discussions, in-class activities, and compulsory student presentations. It requires a substantial amount of preparation by the students and active involvement during class.

Evaluation

20% - Class contribution (graded individually)
30% - Student presentations (one or two students) of cases or research articles
50% - Term paper written by up to 2 students

Evaluation code(s)

GRA 22316 (100%)

Aids at the examination

All aids are allowed. Exam aids at written examinations are explained under exam information in our web-based Student handbook. Please note use of calculator and dictionary.
<http://www.bi.edu/studenthandbook/examaids>

Makeup exam

Re-takes are only possible at the next time a course will be held. When the course evaluation has a separate exam code for each part of the evaluation it is possible to retake parts of the evaluation. Otherwise, the whole course must be re-evaluated when a student wants to retake an exam. Retake examinations entail an extra examination fee

Honor Code

Academic honesty and trust are important to all of us as individuals, and represent values that are encouraged and promoted by the honor code system. This is a most significant university tradition. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the ideals of the honor code system, to which the faculty are also deeply committed.

Any violation of the honor code will be dealt with in accordance with BI's procedures for cheating. These issues are a serious matter to everyone associated with the programs at BI and are at the heart of the honor code and academy integrity. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honor code, please ask.