



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2012/2013

## GRA 2231 Stress and Productivity in Organizations

### Programme

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

### 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

### Introduction

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. 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.

### Learning outcome

This course will provide students with an overview of sources and consequences of job-related stress, knowledge about various methods used to assess levels of stress and strain, and strategies to prevent or minimize work-related stress and health problems. Students will acquire knowledge and skills on how to reduce work-related stress and increase individuals' ability to cope with work demands, and at the same time enhancing job resources to build work engagement and commitment so that workers continue to be productive and effective in their jobs. In this way students will be able to help organizations to identify, obtain, preserve and manage valued work resources in order to unleash the talents of their people. The course will prepare students to critically 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 reading

#### Books:

Cooper, Cary L., Philip J. Dewe, Michael P. O'Driscoll. 2001. Organizational stress : a review and critique of theory, research, and applications. Sage

Linley, P. Alex, Susan Harrington, Nicola Garcea. 2010. Oxford handbook of positive psychology and work. Oxford University Press. Uvalgte kapitler

#### Collection of articles:

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

#### Other:

During the course there may be hand-outs and other material on additional topics relevant for the course and the examination.

### Recommended reading

#### 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, It's learning/homepage

### **Learning process and workload**

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. A course of 6 ECTS credits corresponds to a workload of 160-180 hours. Class attendance is mandatory and unexcused absence may result in a lower score.

Please note that it is the student's own responsibility to obtain any information provided in class that is not included on the course homepage/It's learning or text book.

### **Examination**

30% - Student presentations (one or two students) of cases or research articles

70% - Term paper written by up to 2 students

Specific information regarding student evaluation beyond the information given in the course description will be provided in class. This information may be relevant for requirements for term papers or other hand-ins, and/or where class participation can be one of several elements of the overall evaluation.

This is a course with continuous assessment (several exam elements) and one final exam code. Each exam element will be graded using points on a scale (e.g. 0-100). The elements will be weighted together according to the information in the course description in order to calculate the final letter grade for the course. You will find detailed information about the point system and the cut off points with reference to the letter grades on the course site in It's learning.

### **Examination code(s)**

GRA 22316 counts for 100% of the final grade in the course

### **Examination support materials**

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>

### **Re-sit examination**

It is only possible to retake an examination when the course is next taught.

The assessment in some courses is based on more than one exam code.

Where this is the case, you may retake only the assessed components of one of these exam codes.

Where this is not the case, all of the assessed components of the course must be retaken.

All retaken examinations will incur an additional fee.

### **Additional information**

#### **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 academic integrity. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honor code, please ask.