TRAINING SYLLABUS

CAMPUS STRESS AND WELLNESS SERIES
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER
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OVERVIEW
College is an important time of opportunity and transition: students are increasingly independent, with new academic and personal responsibilities that help prepare young adults for their career and life after college. These transitional experiences are exciting opportunities for growth, but can also be acutely stressful and students often navigate these transitions living far from family and support networks. College stress may be especially severe in recent years given increasing pressure on students from the global economic and social environment. This course will be a hybrid practicum and seminar where students will learn about the factors that contribute to college stress and that shape the impact of college stress on student health; stress coping skills and strategies; assets and gaps for stress coping in the campus community; and create a plan for academic achievement and thriving.

MODULES

1. College Stress: An Introduction

Why is college so stressful? Shouldn’t I be fine? What can I do about stress?

This module provides background on neurocognitive development and the transition to college in young adulthood.

- Part I centered on achieving a high-level understanding of how the convergence of brain development, changes in what and how we think, and college-related stress can make this a time of both unique opportunity and vulnerability to problems in health or academic achievement.
  - Didactics followed by small-group activity: how do you know you are stressed? what makes you stressed?
- Part II centered on stress-coping strategies and student-level skills.
  - Didactics followed by small-group activity: what do you do to cope with stress? Is it good for you? Not so good? What works for other people?
2. Stress and Community

*Why don’t other people care or understand? Do they? Are they judging me? Am I the most stressed person on campus?*

This module focuses on the broader campus community, aiming to identify assets and gaps in network support for stress coping.

- What do community members *know* about campus stress – and where are the gaps in that knowledge?
  - Small-group activity: what do you wish your
    - professor
    - parents or other family
    - friends or other peers
  understood better about campus stress? what are they doing right or wrong in how they support students’ ability to work and achieve in the presence of stress?

- What *resources* are present on the CU campus? what is missing at CU?

3. Planning to Thrive

*What do you want your college experience to be about? How will you get there?*

This module is strongly activity-based and focuses on the student developing and discussing a plan for thriving on campus.

- Individual activity: plan for thriving. Identify college and personal goals for the near and distant future. Identify some of the main sources of campus stress for you, some of your best coping skills, your network and what you want from them.
- Partner or small-group activity: Share your plan for thriving with at least one peer. Discuss barriers to effective coping, solutions to barriers.
- Group discussion: how do we commit to healthy coping? support one another’s thriving?