

## **2018 Research Week Proposal Presentation**

**Title** - Stress is Enhancing Mindset and Potential Links to Cardiovascular and Neuroendocrine Responses

**Program of Study** – Psychology

**Presentation Type** – **Choose one of the following:** PowerPoint

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**Category** – **Choose one of the following:** Basic

**Abstract:** While individuals may encounter stress on a daily basis, prior studies suggested that the way people think about the nature of stress influences their physiological responses. Specifically, if a person believes that stress is positive and has an enhancing nature, they will exhibit healthier cardiac responses and a moderation of the stress hormone cortisol level. In the present study, we hypothesized that students who receive training videos in which stress is described as enhancing will exhibit improved cardiac responses and cortisol levels, higher performances on the math test and the positive word list in the emotional Stroop task compared to a control group. Math anxiety is a prevalence issue for students of different levels; they have the tendency to become anxious and stressed when completing tests in general, and math tests in particular. The findings obtained from the study will have implication for developing training procedure which teach students to adopt a stress-is-enhancing mindset to improve class performances and cardiac and neuroendocrine responses to stress. Additionally, the training can be applied to programs for the Math Department in particular, and for all students beginning college in general for them to have higher achievements despite facing stressful coursework.