

**New York City College of Technology
Interdisciplinary Committee**

Application for Interdisciplinary Course Designation

Date 05/01/17

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Department(s) Social Science

I. Proposal to Offer an Interdisciplinary Course

1. Identify the course type and title:

An existing course PSY 3405 Health Psychology

A new course _____

A course under development _____

2. Provide a course description

An overview of existing psychological findings on the relationship between behavior and disease. The course explores how behavior, emotion and cognition can influence disease processes and examines the impact of stress and personal control on specific coronary, immune and infectious disease symptoms. Research on behavior and its impact on neuroplasticity show that in many ways how we behave and how we think changes how our brain functions as well as downstream effects on human body systems. Social support, referral and interventions for optimal physical and mental health are introduced, as well as some of the newer findings in neural and behavioral science as well as neurocounseling. The interdisciplinary theme of this course will provide an overview of extant literature on theories of health psychology and behavior change within the context of critical race theory for a gained understanding of varied philosophies of science.

3. How many credits will the course comprise? 3 How many hours? 3

4. What prerequisite(s) would students need to complete before registering for the course?
Co-requisite(s)?

PSY1101, ENG1101

5. Explain briefly why this is an interdisciplinary course. The field of health psychology is concerned with understanding how psychological, behavioral, and cultural factors contribute to physical health

and illness. In this section, I propose to specifically focus on tying together various aspects of health care including psychology, research methods, philosophy of science as well as intersecting topics of race, gender, and class by bring in disciplinary perspectives from philosophy, health care fields, social work, and epidemiology.

6. What is the proposed theme of the course? What complex central problem or question will it address? What disciplinary methods will be evoked and applied?

I will focus on multiple issues impacting health psychology today, such as stress, access to healthcare, health related behaviors (smoking, sexual risk, substance use), and the effects of mental health on physical health. One of the central things that I would like to focus on is the scientific evidence of individual behavioral impacts on health by way of nutrition, health behaviors (smoking etc.), and stress. A second is the larger societal issues impacting health in the united states such as race, class, access to care, minority status and education related to healthy choices and behaviors.

7. Which general learning outcomes of an interdisciplinary course does this course address? Please explain how the course will fulfill the bolded mandatory learning outcome below. In addition, select and explain at least three additional outcomes.

Purposefully connect and integrate across-discipline knowledge and skills to solve problems

Drawing upon literature and theory of multiple disciplines including human services, nursing, clinical psychology, philosophy, history of race in the U.S., and cultural psychology.

Synthesize and transfer knowledge across disciplinary boundaries

Strategizing applications of health psychology knowledge pertaining to minority status, health, and behavior.

Comprehend factors inherent in complex problems

Discuss openly the problematic nature of societal and individual influences on health in the United States. Examine issues such as disproportionate access to healthcare and health education, regional issues in healthcare and the impact of politics on these issues. Open a discussion about how these influence minorities related to healthcare.

Apply integrative thinking to problem solving in ethically and socially responsible ways

Recognize varied perspectives

Students will identify their own understanding and meanings of health in relation to the different theories and perspectives presented in the course. After exposure to journal articles, guest speakers and films, students should have a broader understanding of health psychology in the united states and the differing perspectives from multiple fields.

Gain comfort with complexity and uncertainty

Generate purposeful research topics and strategies that address race within the field of health psychology. They will gain comfort with the complexity of the topic through film and guest lecturers, and by learning about multiple areas in the health disciplines.

Think critically, communicate effectively, and work collaboratively

Become flexible thinkers

Other

Identify the work of experts in neighboring fields (exercise science, human services, nutrition and clinical/counseling psychology) via guest lectures Ivan Soto CPT, Dr Jon Rendina, Patricia Pinto (nutritionist) and Stephen Nolde LCSW.

General Education Learning Goals for City Tech Students

- **Knowledge:** Develop knowledge from a range of disciplinary perspectives, and hone the ability to deepen and continue learning.
 - **Skills:** Acquire and use the tools needed for communication, inquiry, creativity, analysis, and productive work.
 - **Integration:** Work productively within and across disciplines.
 - **Values, Ethics, and Relationships:** Understand and apply values, ethics, and diverse perspectives in personal, professional, civic, and cultural/global domains.
8. How does this course address the general education learning goals for City Tech students?
The course will include content as well as application-based learning which will demand critical self-reflection. A general knowledge pertaining to health psychology will be achieved including general terms, theories and models of behavior. Integration of material across fields (human services, psychology, and philosophy) will allow for an investigation of societal issues and its role in the U.S. health.
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9. Which department would house this course¹? Social Science

10. Would all sections of the course be interdisciplinary? No Yes

¹ An interdisciplinary course for the College Option requirement may be housed in a department that is not liberal arts.

- a) Would the course be cross-listed in two or more departments? No Yes
Explain.
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- b) How will the course be team-taught²? Co-taught Guest lecturers Learning community

If co-taught, what is the proposed workload hour distribution? _____

Shared credits Trading credits

If guest lecturers, for what approximate percentage of the course? Minimum 20%³ other:
___%

Please attach the evaluation framework used to assess the interdisciplinarity of the course.⁴

Group Project: In small groups students will pick a health topic to study throughout the semester. Students will be encouraged to use multiple disciplines to flesh out the topic and will have the option of doing survey research during the semester to support their understanding. This will culminate with a end of semester presentation by the group to the class, fleshing out the topic and presenting any findings.

Individual Project: Students will journal about their own behaviors throughout the semester, and learn at least one new health related skill they can apply to their own lives (e.g. mindfulness, yoga, physical exercise programs, meditation, thought journaling, nutrition), and write a 5 page paper on this experience along with citations from academic resources that they read while doing this project.

General Discussion: Weekly lectures will have a discussion format, as will a Q&A portion following guest lecturers. Additional readings from academic journals will supplement class and text information.

- c) What strategies/resources would be implemented to facilitate students' ability to make connections across the respective academic disciplines?

Strongly emphasizing how applications of health psychology knowledge and behavior change are inherently interdisciplinary—in human services (applied), philosophy (conceptual) and clinical psychology (applied/policy)—and require competence in reading and synthesizing material of varied sources.

11. Would the course be designated as:

- a College Option requirement⁵? an elective? a Capstone course⁶? other? Explain.
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² Attach evidence of consultation with all affected departments.

³ While an interdisciplinary course must be team-taught, there is no formal percentage requirement, but this minimum is a guideline.

⁴ In the case that a course is equally taught, include proposed plans for faculty classroom observation and student evaluation of teaching.

⁵ To qualify for the College Option, such a course must also meet the New York State definition of a liberal arts and sciences

course. <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/ocue/lrp/liberalarts.htm>

⁶ A course proposed as a Capstone course must be separately approved by the Capstone Experience Committee.