

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

Application for Interdisciplinary Course Designation

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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 and epidemiological 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. Social support, referral and interventions for optimal physical and mental health are introduced. 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 bringing 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 propose to focus on developing student's understanding of the role that race plays in physical health from a psychological perspective and among both patients and providers. The theme of the course is understanding health behaviors of Americans while taking into consideration the role played by race in decision making, treatment, conceptualization of risk by both patients and health care professionals. The problem being addressed is the binary conceptualization of race as either genetic or social. The two definitions are problematic in the achievement of health behaviors and risk management, particularly in instances in which race is communicated as a risk from large health organizations and physicians. The application of a philosophical evaluation of race via literature and film as well as intra-psychic reflections on one's own meaning of race will allow students to address the complex problems presented in the course.

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 race, health, and behavior.

☒ **Comprehend factors inherent in complex problems**
Discuss openly the problematic nature of multiple conceptualizations of race in health psychology. Genetic attributions of race as well as social attributions of race will be examined and students will be exposed to applications in which each conceptualization is problematic.

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

☒ **Recognize varied perspectives**
Students will identify their own understanding of race and meanings of health

☒ **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 dual perspective on the usefulness of race in the health disciplines.

☐ Think critically, communicate effectively, and work collaboratively

☐ Become flexible thinkers

☒ Other

Identify the work of experts in neighboring fields (registered dietitian, human services, doctor of dental medicine, and school psychologist) via guest lectures Michelle Shapiro, RD, Davon Livingston ISCA/Personal Trainer Kerri Levine MA School Psychologist, Farid Cumpliado DMD.

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 the development of race and its role in the U.S. health. The will hone skills for effective health behaviors management on their own via the ProChange website that will be used throughout the semester.

9. Which department would house this course¹? Social Science

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

a) Would the course be cross-listed in two or more departments? ☒ No ☐ Yes
Explain.

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

- b) How will the course be team-taught?² ☐ 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

Behavior Modification Program (Individual Project):

Students will interact three times with the state-of-the-art College Health program during the course at specific times (see below) and are expected to complete and turn in online evaluation forms. This online program will address *Exercising Regularly, Stress Management, & Healthy Eating* via ProChange's LiveWell Application for College Students. In addition to the website, students will be asked to write a reflection as to how race and culture can interact with these behavior modification programs

Health Website Evaluations (Group Project)

In groups of no more than 6, students will be asked to identify a particular illness prevalent among ethnic minorities. Using 3 different search engines, they will identify 6 health website on the topic. You will be asked to assess and critique the website in terms of its usefulness, message, effectiveness, and appearance. Student groups will then present this information using an electronic poster using (see http://www.makesigns.com/SciPosters_Templates.aspx). They will share your finding with the class. Students will be provided with a detailed project description and grading rubric.

General Discussion: Periodically and prior to guest lecturer talks, students will be asked to generate several questions about the week's topic. The question will be addressed using the Discussion Board on Blackboard. Questions will also be submitted in advance to guest lecturers.

- 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 dietary (applied), school psychology (applied), health and wellness (applied/conceptual) and dentistry (applied)—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.

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.