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Introduction

- Training the next generation of learners in evidence-based integrative health (IH) is critical
- To expand education of evidence-based and experiential IH practices and principles, an undergraduate Integrative Health and Wellness Certificate was developed at a large, public university

Purpose

- To describe the development and evaluation of an undergraduate Integrative Health and Wellness Certificate program

Methods

Background:

- Research on national IH educational programs and current university-wide IH-related courses already available began in 2016
- Two foundational courses (*Fundamentals of Integrative Health and Medicine* and *Science and Practice of Mind-Body Medicine*) were piloted in 2018 and 2019
- Three existing foundational courses already in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Allied Health were identified as partner courses for the certificate

Design: Mixed-method post-class survey

Participants:

- 74 students completed at least one of the piloted foundational courses in Fall 2018 and Spring 2019

Data Collection:

- Mixed-methods survey was administered to students following the piloted foundational courses assessing student experience and impact of courses

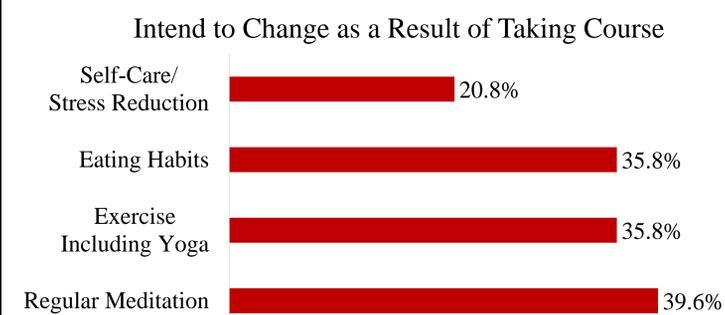
Data Analysis:

- Descriptive analyses and thematic analysis were used to examine student responses

Results

- Two foundational courses received high interest among students, with wait-lists for both
- 53 students completed the survey assessing their experience in at least one of the courses (response rate = 71.6%)
- Students reported the courses as “experiential,” “eye-opening,” “directly applicable to their life,” “interactive,” and “evidence-based and informative”
- Following the success of these piloted courses, the IH certificate program was formalized in 2019, with additional classes required in personal nutrition, exercise physiology, and positive psychology from the College of Arts and Sciences and College of Allied Health

Student Course Feedback (n=53)

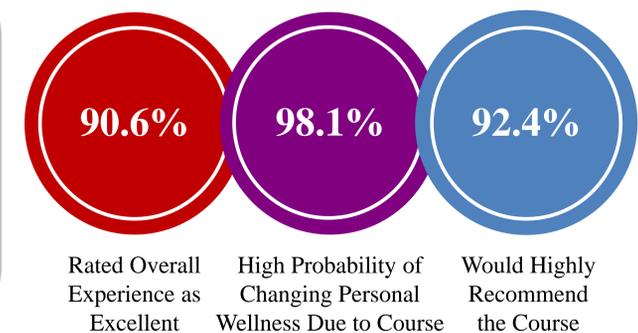


“I really love the experientials since it’s one thing to learn, but a whole new thing when experiencing what we are speaking of.”

“...easily one of the best classes I have taken in college. The information taught in class will be extremely applicable to my own life, as well as the lives of those that I continue to interact with on my path towards becoming a physician.”

“So many of my classes had an atmosphere of stress and overwhelming work, but this class was the exact opposite; instead it taught me how to manage stress in a way I can teach others. It was the most applicable and helpful class I’ve taken yet.”

“I came in very skeptical about the course and the practices. Wow. My views on mind-body medicine practices have completely changed and I’ve gained a valuable tool in managing my own mental health amidst a difficult year.”



Courses Required for Certificate

Course (all 3 credit hours)	Description
Fundamentals of Integrative Health and Medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides an overview of basic principles and history of integrative medicine and health • Emphasis on critical review of evidence-based IH practices as they relate to prevention, treatment of illness, and overall wellness
Science and Practice of Mind-Body Medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a specific evidence-base and indication for use of mind-body techniques in a personal and professional/clinical setting • Experiential exposure to commonly used mind-body modalities including mindfulness, biofeedback, and guided imagery
Personal Nutrition (College of Allied Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews the importance of appropriate diet and nutritional practices • Introduction to macronutrients and micronutrients, and effect of diet to promote optimal health and lessen the risk of chronic disease
General Exercise Physiology (College of Allied Health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study of physiological systems of the human body and how they relate to exercise and stress • Topics include energy systems, metabolism, muscle, cardiovascular, respiratory, neural, endocrine, environmental and work physiology
Positive Psychology (College of Arts & Sciences)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the field of positive psychology which scientifically studies human strengths, virtues, and positive emotions • Learn conditions and processes that contribute to optimal functioning of people, groups, and communities

Conclusions

- The introduction of two foundational IH undergraduate courses as part of a new certificate program at a large, public university proved successful and further strengthened the value proposition of this new educational offering
- This IH certificate will allow students from various disciplines to have foundational principles of IH to advance both personal and community health
- Next steps include further development of an IH minor and eventual MA program

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