

## **NOVA COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY PSY 240 - HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY (3 CR.)**

### **Course Description**

Studies the psychology of healthy behavior. Applies psychological principles to preventative health care. Covers topics such as exercise, nutrition, stress, life- styles, and habits. Lecture 3 hours per week.

### **General Course Purpose**

This course is a one semester course in the practical application of psychological principles to health and health related problems.

### **Course Prerequisites/Corequisites**

Prerequisite: PSY 200 or division approval.

### **Course Objectives**

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Define health psychology and recognize the elements of its historical background
- Differentiate between scientific research and non-scientific works in the study of health psychology
- Describe the effects of stress, and in this context, explain the role of cognition, emotion, and behavior in prevention, causation, maintenance, and treatment of physical illnesses
- Broadly compare and contrast the new approaches in the study and practice of health psychology with the traditional ones practiced in different cultures
- Point out the interactions between mental and physical health based on different models and approaches.
- List multiple biological, psychological, social, and spiritual factors that affect mental and physical health
- Criticize popular American myths on health psychology topics by drawing on scientific findings

### **Major Topics to be Included**

- Stress and coping
- Mind-body relationship
- Psychological sequelae of illness (heart disease, hypertension, cancer, diabetes)
- Pain and pain management techniques
- Patients behavior (diet, adherence, compliance, learned helplessness)
- Chemical dependence and eating disorders
- Social and cultural differences in approaches to health; complementary and alternative medicine

### **Optional Topics**

- Resilience and the hardy personality
- Positive psychology
- B. Psychological benefits of exercise
- C. Medical settings and the interaction of patients with physicians and nurses
- D. Research on Type A and Type B syndromes