

Minor In Contemplative Studies

Why Contemplative Studies?

Every day now, contemplative practices, such as mindfulness meditation, Yoga, and T'ai Chi Ch'uan, are gathering more support, in the form of scientific evidence that it improves physical health and wellness, mental health, intellectual functioning, and interpersonal relationships. The noise in the media is loud for these quiet approaches. What would it be like to make them part of your worldview?

The new Minor in Contemplative Studies at WCU is your chance to learn, practice, and apply this worldview to your academic, professional and personal life. It is designed for undergraduate students from any discipline. This worldview has been helpful for thousands of years all across the arts and sciences—from the visual and performing arts, to literature, philosophy, and history, to psychology, to health sciences, and social services. And now we have the scientific evidence that tells us how and why.

In this 18-credit minor, you'll learn and apply contemplative practices. You'll explore the unfolding scientific understanding in neuroscience, medicine, and psychology. You'll delve into the philosophies of India and China that underlie many of the practices and contribute to the worldview. Best of all, you'll have the opportunity to watch yourself change and grow in positive, healthy ways.

Courses For Contemplative Studies

HEA 315: Mind-Body Health

Theories and practice of health and healing through the mind/ body connection. Emphasis on learning/practicing techniques for health promotion; in fact, the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program is delivered as part of the course. *Writing emphasis course.*

HEA 325: Stress Management

Comprehensive survey of stress concepts, theories, and management techniques. Emphasis is placed on personal application.

HEA 333: Alternative and Complementary Medicine

Exploration of alternative, complementary, and integrative medical systems and healing practices, such as homeopathy, Chinese medicine, herbal medicine, therapeutic touch, from a consumer and personal viewpoint.

PEA 142: Yoga I

Provides students with the skills and experiences to develop self-awareness and an appreciation for healthy living through the understanding and practice of yoga.

PEA 144: T'ai Chi Ch'uan I

The study of a martial art that combines movement with chi; uses the principles of yin-yang and the five-element theories and is compatible with Chinese medicine, acupuncture, and Chinese herb treatment. Includes study of movement, skeletal structure, and t'ai chi as a meditative art.

PHI 204: Philosophies and Religions of India

The religious and philosophical heritage of India, from Vedic times to the present. Examination of major classics, such as Rig Veda, Upanishads, Bhagavad-Gita, and Yoga-sutras; recent writers such as Tagore, Gandhi, and Radhakrishnan.

PHI 205: Philosophies and Religions of the Far East

A survey of Far Eastern philosophy, religion, and scientific thought. Confucianism, Taoism, and the various schools of Mahayana Buddhism, including Zen, are given primary emphasis.

PSY 200: Positive Psychology

Introduction to psychological perspectives that emphasize positive emotional states including happiness, joy, resilience, compassion, and forgiveness. Examines a variety of topics and their relationship to subjective well-being, including positive coping, optimism, interpersonal relationships, spirituality, creativity, and achievement.



How to Declare the Minor in Contemplative Studies

1. Read these steps carefully.
2. Obtain an “**Application for Minor**” form at the Registrar’s Office.
3. Consult with your advisor and department chairperson in your Major department to obtain approval to minor in Contemplative Studies; a signature is required.
4. Review the requirements for the Minor in Contemplative Studies.
5. Take the Application for Minor form to the minor advisor in the Department of Health, Dr. Donald McCown, in HSC 211 (610.436.2267). Dr. McCown’s initials are required on your Application for Minor form.
6. Once you have met with the minor advisor, take the Application for Minor form to the Health Department Chairperson in HSC 207 (610.436.2931) for final signature. Leave the form for the Chairperson’s signature and return in 2-3 days to pick up the completed form.
7. Make a copy of the Application for Minor form and list of courses for your personal records.
8. Deliver the original, signed Application for Minor form to the Registrar’s Office in the Kershner Student Service Center.
9. As you complete the Contemplative Studies courses, be sure to update your individual records and ensure that you are meeting the necessary requirements.

Note: to earn the minor, you must complete 12 credits of core courses and 6 credits of elective courses.

10. When you initiate the process for graduation clearance, the Registrar’s Office also contacts the Department of Health for clearance in your minor. Your minor advisor will contact you at this time if necessary.

The Minor Consists Of The Following 18 Credits:

CORE COURSES (12 credits)

Two Key Courses, required (6 credits):

HEA 315: Mind, Body and Health (3 credits)

HEA 325: Stress Management (3 credits)

TWO CONTEMPLATIVE TRADITION COURSES REQUIRED (6 credits):

Choose India:

PHI 204: Philosophies and Religions of India (3 credits)

PEA 142: Yoga I (3 credits)

Or choose the Far East:

PHI 205: Philosophies and Religions of the Far East (3 credits)

PEA 144: T’ai Chi Ch’uan I (3 credits)

ELECTIVE COURSES (6 credits):

Select two elective courses, offered as two-course modules:

Choose India (if not taken as the required option):

PHI 204: Philosophies and Religions of India (3 credits)

PEA 142: Yoga I (3 credits)

Or choose the Far East (if not taken as the required option):

PHI 205: Philosophies and Religions of the Far East (3 credits)

PEA 144: T’ai Chi Ch’uan I (3 credits)

Or choose an overview of Therapeutic Interventions:

HEA 333: Alternative and Complementary Medicine (3 credits)

PSY 200: Positive Psychology (3 credits)

Note: A grade of “C” or better is required for each course in the minor.

What is Contemplation?

“No method nor discipline can supersede the necessity of being forever on the alert. What is a course of history or philosophy, or poetry, no matter how well selected, or the best society, or the most admirable routine of life, compared with the discipline of looking always at what is to be seen? Will you be a reader, a student merely, or a seer? Read your fate, see what is before you, and walk on into futurity.”

– Henry David Thoreau, [Walden, Chapter 4, paragraph 1]