

Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

MEMO

To: The UVM Faculty Senate
From: Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, Laura Almstead, Chair
Date: December 8, 2017
Re: Approval of a proposal for a new Major and new Minor in Health and Society the College of Arts and Sciences

At its meeting on December 8, 2017, the Curricular Affairs Committee approved the actions recommended in the following memo.

The Curricular Affairs Committee approved a proposal for a new major and a new minor in Health and Society submitted by the College of Arts and Sciences. These two programs were described in a single proposal because the overarching goals and learning objectives are the same for the major and minor, with the major offering a more in-depth educational experience than the minor. Both programs will be directed by an individual selected from faculty participating in the programs, but a specific person has not yet been identified. If approved by the Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees, the programs will be offered beginning fall 2018.

Program Description and Rationale

The newly proposed major and minor in Health and Society (HSOC) are cross-college interdisciplinary programs that explore human health, focusing on the social sciences and employing a public health approach. In line with the interdisciplinary model set by Global Studies and Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, the new HSOC major and minor will not be affiliated with a specific department, but will be free-standing academic programs housed in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). Students enrolled in the newly proposed programs will explore how health is influenced by global, national, regional, and local forces, including biocultural variation, sociocultural conceptions and practices, societal institutions and social inequalities, political and economic processes, geospatial diversity, the changing environment, and planetary health. Using scholarship from the social sciences and public health, the programs allow students to learn how experts from different disciplines approach questions of health, healing, and health care.

The main objectives of the proposed HSOC major and minor defined in the proposal are:

- to bring together a rich array of interdisciplinary perspectives, methods, and findings from the social sciences in order to address critical questions concerning health, healing, and health care in human populations, including social determinants of health.
- to use social science in order to examine the variety of ways in which human health, healing, and health care are defined, perceived, and enacted, and in which access to health and health care are distributed, within and across populations.
- to foster an understanding of the types of questions that social scientists ask about health, healing, and health care and the various ways in which they seek information and evaluate, communicate about, and act upon evidence related to these issues.

- to elucidate the strengths and weaknesses involved in various social science and natural science approaches to issues surrounding health, healing, and health care, and to consider the benefits and the challenges involved in different kinds of interdisciplinary health-related collaborative projects.
- to provide guidance to help students to identify how aspects of their HSOC education can be ethically and effectively applied in ways that contribute to needs and priorities identified by the members of specific communities in relation to health.
- to help students develop skills relevant to related employment or further education opportunities and the knowledge as to how to locate and apply for such opportunities.

The specific learning objectives included in the proposal are included below. Students completing the major in HSOC will have a higher degree of mastery than students that complete the minor in HSOC.

- 1) Demonstrate the ability to recognize and generate the types of questions that various kinds of social scientists ask about health, healing and health care, including social determinants of health.
- 2) Develop critical thinking skills to effectively identify and analyze important issues related to social, cultural, geospatial, political, and economic dimensions of health, healing, and health care.
- 3) Develop the skills to effectively acquire, comprehend, and evaluate information relevant to questions about the variety of ways in which human health, healing, and health care are defined, perceived, and enacted, and in which access to health and health care are distributed, within and across populations.
- 4) Demonstrate an ability to communicate clearly and effectively in genre-appropriate ways about issues related to health, healing, and health care in interdisciplinary perspective.
- 5) Demonstrate an ability to conceive of and communicate about multiple ways in which their HSOC education could be ethically and effectively applied to contribute to needs and priorities identified by the members of specific communities.
- 6) Acquire skills that are relevant to obtaining employment or pursuing further education in fields related to social science approaches to health, such as public health, global health, health care management, research, policy, education, advocacy or industry.

Justification and Evidence for Demand

The HSOC major and minor bring together faculty from across campus in different areas of expertise, which will enable students to examine the array of ways in which human health, healing, and health care are defined, perceived, and enacted, and in which access to health and health care are distributed, within and across populations. The programs will be particularly attractive for students considering careers related to medicine or public health, areas which are increasingly recognizing the need for nuanced comprehension of sociocultural diversity, social determinants of health, and complex and varied social systems.

Over 80% of 163 current UVM students that responded to a survey regarding the proposed HSOC programs indicated an interest in taking courses this area. Faculty enthusiasm for the proposal is reflected in the number of faculty who have interest in participating and are part of the teaching cohort for the program.

Relationship to Existing Programs

The newly proposed HSOC major and minor will bring an interdisciplinary approach to the study of health, offering a social science-based perspective on health. The social science framework of HSOC allows the examination of how and why access to health and health care is often unevenly distributed along the lines of race, ethnicity, nationality, region, class, gender, age, and sexual orientation within and across populations. Overall, the curriculum emphasizes social determinants of health as an overarching framework to analyzing

and understanding human health. Thus, the new programs will complement and supplement the more credit-intensive and science-oriented Health Sciences (HSCI) major offered as a BS degree in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. At the same time, both the major and the minor offer a more in-depth, focused study of health as compared to smaller collections of courses available through health concentrations within Environmental Studies and Anthropology.

The proposed HSOC major and minor will draw on existing courses across campus offered by CAS and six other units: the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, the College of Education and Social Services, the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources, and the Larner College of Medicine. In the development process, the Grossman School of Business expressed interest in developing courses for the major and minor. The proposers indicate that they welcome suggestions for additional courses. Specific requirements for the major in HSOC and minor in HSOC are detailed in the Major Curriculum and Minor Curriculum sections, respectively.

Curriculum Overview

Introductory courses for the newly proposed HSOC programs (HSCI 021, ANTH 089, SOC 054) were chosen to provide a grounding in interdisciplinary approaches to public health, the relationship between health systems and social structures, and the diverse influences of culture and development on global human health and related aid efforts. At this level, students will work on foundational skills involving reading comprehension, critical analysis, group discussion and debate, basic library research, assessing evidence, synthesizing and comparing across sources, developing and supporting an argument, and giving and receiving peer feedback.

At the intermediate level, students will take a social science research methods course or a statistics course to help them to become more critical consumers of research results and to understand the processes that feed into the production of the knowledge that we read and hear about. Students will also take two topical courses from a list of defined 100-level courses that reflect common and vital approaches in terms of sociocultural, environmental, and personal perspectives on health. These courses will provide students with the tools to increase their level of critical analysis through more concerted attention to the influences of disciplinary predilections, theoretical constructs, the selection of research questions, how social problems are framed and prioritized, research methods for data collection and analysis, and styles of community engagement.

Two hundred-level courses will be selected out of a list that includes both topical and methods courses. These courses will increase students' knowledge and library research and analytical and oral and written presentation skills through an in-depth exploration of a topic. While some of the 200-level methods courses do not focus on health, they are designed such that they will provide opportunities for students to pursue research and/or service learning focused on some aspect of health.

Courses offerings for the HSOC major and minor will be expanded following slated hires in social science of health in CAS and public health hires in CALS and CNHS, which will provide a broader choice of core courses and electives. The proposers state a goal of including 100-level courses that explore social structural, cultural, biocultural, behavioral, geospatial, environmental, economic, and policy aspects of health. Courses are anticipated to come from both current and new faculty.

Major Curriculum

Completion of the proposed Health and Society major will require 33 credits total, with at least 12 credits at 100-level and at least six credits at 200-level. For interdisciplinary exposure, no more than 21 credits will be allowed from any one discipline.

Required Courses

Introductory Courses (9 credits)	
HSOC 021	Intro to Public Health
SOC 054	Health Care in America
ANTH 089: D2	Global Health, Development, Diversity
Methods Course – One from List Below (3 credits)	
SOC 100	Fundamentals of Social Research
STAT 111	Elements of Statistics
STAT 141	Basic Statistical Methods
Two Courses from List Below (3 credits)	
ANTH 174/SOC 155	Culture, Health, Healing
EDHE 146	Personal Health*
ENVS/HLTH/NR 107	Human Health & Environment
ENVS 181	Environmental Justice
HLTH 103/ANTH 173	Foundations of Global Health
HLTH 105	Cultural Health Care
HLTH 150/HSCI 102	Epidemics – Dynamics of Infectious Diseases
HLTH 155	Racism & Health Disparities
NFS 114	Human Health in Food Systems
Two Courses from List Below (3 credits); one methods course encouraged	
<i>Topics Courses</i>	
ENVS 237	Human Evolution and Diversity
ANTH 288	Anthropology of Global Health
CSD 274	Culture of Disability
ENVS 236	Women, Health & Environment
ENVS 237	Human Ecology & Health in Arctic
NFS 244	Nutrition, Health & Disease Prev.
NFS 262	Community Nutrition
PSYS/CRES 276	Cross-Cultural Psychology
PSYS 279	Health Psychology
SOC 223	Sociology of Reproduction
SOC 224	Health Care and Aging
SOC 254	Sociology of Health & Medicine
<i>Methods Courses</i>	
ANTH/BIOL 242	Research Methods in Human Diversity
ANTH 290	Ethnographic Methods
CDAE 250	Applied Research Methods
EDFS 209	Introduction to Research Methods
ENVS 200/HLTH 250/CDAE 295	Community Participatory Research
GEOG 202	Research Methods
GEOG 287	Spatial Analysis
POLS 230	VT Legislative Research Service (with health focus)
SOC 274	Qualitative Research Methods
SOC 275	Methods of Data Analysis in Social Research
STAT 200	Medical Biostatistics/Epidemiology
Elective Courses (9 credits); at least 3 credits at 100-level or above	
<i>List of accepted elective courses (15 total) submitted with proposal; courses listed above not counted towards major also accepted</i>	

* New course (formerly EDHE 046)

Courses not listed as approved electives will be allowed if appropriate. A process for petitioning for elective substitution was described in the proposal. HSOC majors will be allowed up to two elective course substitutions. Students interested in pursuing a related independent study, TA or RA practicum for credit, credit-bearing internship, honors theses and/or travel-study program may count those credits towards the electives for the major.

Students in the HSOC major will not be able to enroll in the HSOC minor. Additionally, double majoring in HSOC and HSCI will not be permitted. No more than one course may overlap between a student's major and minor or between a student's two majors in the case of double major. Students pursuing the Global Health Concentration in the Anthropology major and the Health and Healing track in the Environmental Studies major will need to pay close attention to this rule. If pursuing a double major in Anthropology, ANTH courses used for the HSOC major are included in the 45-credit major rule. If pursuing a double major in Environmental Studies, ENVS courses used for the HSOC major are included in the 45-credit major rule.

Minor Curriculum

Completion of the proposed HSOC minor requires a total of 18 credits, with at least nine credits at the 100-level or above. For interdisciplinary exposure, no more than 12 credits shall be taken from any one discipline. Courses listed for the HSOC major will also be potential offerings for the HSOC minor, with the caveat that those with many prerequisites such as some of the electives will most likely not be feasible for a minor.

Required Courses

Introductory Courses (2 courses, 6 credits)	
HSOC 021	Intro to Public Health
SOC 054 OR ANTH 089: D2	Health Care in America Global Health, Development, Diversity
Methods Course – One from List Below (3 credits)	
SOC 100	Fundamentals of Social Research
STAT 111	Elements of Statistics
STAT 141	Basic Statistical Methods
Elective Courses (9 credits); at least 6 credits at 100-level or above	
<i>List of accepted elective courses at the zero-, 100-, and 200-levels submitted with proposal; courses listed above not counted towards minor also accepted</i>	

The restrictions noted above for the HSOC major also apply to the proposed minor.

Admission Requirements and Process

Students will declare the HSOC major or minor through the registrar's declaration page. As is typical of most majors and minors in CAS, there will be no selection process beyond checking for the major/minor restrictions and course overlap restrictions noted in the Curriculum sections. The director of the program with the help of his/her administrative assistant will screen for those issues. We will monitor enrollments and communicate regularly with department chairs and deans to adjust staffing for related courses if need be.

Anticipated Enrollment and Impact on Current Programs

Enrollment of 20 majors is projected for the first year, and will be deliberately limited. Growth in the future will be based on student demand and faculty resources, although there is no current method to contain maximum

enrollment in CAS majors at this time. Students will likely come from other majors within the University but students with interests in health and society, public health, global health and health and equity who might leave UVM to seek this education elsewhere may be motivated to remain at UVM for this program.

The three introductory courses for the HSOC major and minor are shared with other programs, but are designed to be large lecture courses and are offered every year. The proposers indicate that as the HSOC major and minor become established, enrollment in these courses may increase by as many as 50 students. The proposers confirm that the 100-level methods courses have capacity for expected HSOC majors/minors, and note that they contacted the faculty teaching 100-level and 200-level topical courses, all of whom indicated that there is room to accommodate more students. Given the number of choices in this category and anticipated addition of new courses, the proposers do not expect significant burden on these courses.

Advising

When students declare an HSOC major or minor, they will be assigned an HSOC faculty advisor by the program director with the help of an administrative assistant. Students will be connected to in-person and online advising resources. HSOC faculty advisors will include the program director and other program-affiliated faculty who agree to serve as advisors. Advising resources will be developed in consultation with program faculty, and will be shared with all faculty and declared HSOC majors and minors. Some members of each of UVM's undergraduate colleges have confirmed their willingness to help with advising. The faculty teaching the three core introductory courses have agreed to serve as the initial faculty advisors. As anticipated additional faculty are added, they will also assume advising responsibilities.

Assessment Plan

Baseline faculty assessments and student ratings will be established during the first year of the program and then compared with subsequent years to the extent that is possible. Data will be shared with program faculty and students in advance of a yearly Town Meeting at which students and faculty troubleshoot together as to priorities, strategies, resources, and constraints. After the first year, a program-wide retreat will occur to get a sense of how things are going and to define desired future directions.

Student experience in relation to their perceptions of academic coverage of knowledge and skills, the sufficiency of academic rigor, the usefulness of the knowledge and skills they learned, the quality of the instruction and advising they received, and the relationship of the program to their efforts to secure post-graduation employment and further education will be recorded. In addition, graduation rates and time to graduation will be tracked. Program director and program faculty assessments of all of the above, plus student learning outcomes, and match of program with available opportunities for post-graduation employment and further education will be tracked.

To keep track of the evolving needs and opportunities of faculty and students, the HSOC curriculum committee, which will meet each semester, will do curriculum mapping, enrollment planning, and advising planning at least once a year to account for new developments. The curriculum committee will encourage program faculty to share syllabi in order to calibrate offerings for level and synergy and to share helpful advising resources they find. The HSOC Curriculum Committee includes faculty from all seven units offering courses included in the course offerings for the proposed HSOC major and minor and a faculty member in the Grossman School of Business.

Staffing Plan, Resource Requirements, and Budget

Library, equipment and physical space were noted as adequate to support the program in the proposal. The operating expense, \$5,000 year 1, \$7500 year 2 and 10,000 year 3, as well as a 25% administrative assistant referred to in the narrative will be supplied by CAS. A commitment to supplying these needed funds was confirmed by the Dean of CAS.

Four new hires are referenced in the proposal. According to the proposers, the programs would be able to run without these new faculty and state that all courses listed for the major and minor can be offered next year by current faculty. At the same time, the new hires are noted to be replacement faculty that have been planned into the faculty projections.

Evidence of Support

Letters of support for the proposed HSOC programs were submitted by:

- CALS Dean, Tom Vogelman
- CAS Dean, William Falls
- CESS Dean, Scott Thomas
- CNHS Dean, Patricia Prelock
- Anthropology, Associate Professor and Chair, Emily Manetta
- Environmental Studies, Professor and Chair, Nathan Sanders
- Global Studies, Associate Professor and Director, Jonah Steinberg
- Public Health, Professor and Director of the Masters in Public Health Program, Jan Carney
- Sociology, Professor and Chair, Dale Jaffe
- Statistics, Professor and Chair, Jeff Buzas

Summary

The proposed HSOC major and minor draw from existing courses across the University to offer thoughtfully designed curricula in an area of student interest. A thorough plan for assessing and tracking the effectiveness of the newly proposed programs has been developed. Faculty support for the proposal is evident, and the Dean of CAS has committed resources for the initial three years and potentially beyond. There is a clear illustration of the differences between the newly approved HSCI (Health Sciences Major) and the HSOC (Health and Society Major). The first program having roots in the basic sciences and the second having roots in the social sciences. Therefore, the newly proposed Health and Society major and minor are unique, high quality offerings, drawing on the skills of current and projected faculty and preparing graduates to undertake current careers and careers envisioned in the upcoming decades.