**UNIVERSITY OF MARY WASHINGTON -- NEW COURSE PROPOSAL**

Electronically submit this completed form with attachments in one file to the Chair of the College Curriculum Committee.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COLLEGE (check one):</th>
<th>Arts and Sciences</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Education</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposal Submitted By:</td>
<td>David Ambuel</td>
<td>Date Prepared:</td>
<td>11/8/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Title:</td>
<td>Contemplative Practice II</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department/discipline and course number*:</td>
<td>CPRD 304</td>
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*This course number must be approved by the Office of the Registrar before the proposal is submitted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of credits proposed:</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Prerequisites:</th>
<th>CPRD 104</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will this be a new, repeatable “special topics” course? (Do you want students to be able to take this new course more than once if the topic changes?)</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>YES</td>
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| Date of first offering of this new course: | FALL SEMESTER, 2016 |
| Proposed frequency of offering of the course: | |
| List the faculty who will likely teach the course: | |
| Are ANY new resources required? | NO | X | YES | Document in attached impact statement |

**This new course will be (check all that apply):**

- Required in the minor
- Elective in the major
- General Elective
- General Education**

**AFTER the new course is approved, a separate proposal must be sent to the General Education Committee.**

**Catalog Description** (suggested length – less than 50 words)

Contemplative Practice II is a continuation of its prerequisite, CPRD 104 Contemplative Practice. In this class students will further develop and refine their experience with meditation practice by exploring additional techniques and specific topics beyond those covered in the introductory class. The class also covers an overview of trends in contemporary psychological and neuroscientific research on meditation, and engages in an in-depth investigation of related philosophical concepts and debates.

**COURSE HISTORY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Was this course taught previously as a topics or experimental course?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Number and Title of Previous Course</td>
<td>Semester Offered</td>
<td>Enrollment</td>
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</table>

CHECK HERE if the proposed course is to be equated with the earlier topics or experimental offerings. This means that students who took the earlier “topics” course will only be able to take the new course if they made a C- grade or lower in the earlier course.

**NOTE:** If the proposed course has not been previously offered as a topics or experimental course, explain in the attached rationale statement why the course should be adopted even though it has not been tried out.

**REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Rationale Statement (Why is this course needed? What purposes will it serve?)
2. Impact Statement (Provide details about the Library, space, budget, and technology impacts created by adding this new course. Include supporting statements from the Library, IT Department, etc. as needed.)
3. Sample Syllabus

Department Chair Approval: Craig Vasey
Date: 11/11/15

CCC Chair Approval: [Signature]
Date: 11/18/15

UCC Chair Approval: Patricia Reynolds
Date: 12/7/2015

New Course Proposal Cover Sheet (October 2015)
Rationale
Contemplative Practice II is the continuation of the successful introductory course CPRD 104, Contemplative Practice, and is intended to be one of the three required courses in the Contemplative Studies interdisciplinary minor that is being proposed concurrently. A full rationale and background are also contained in the minor proposal, and, for convenience, the relevant portion is copied here.

Contemplative Studies and the integration of contemplative practices into the higher education curriculum has become one of the fastest growing innovations in academia. The Contemplative Studies minor will give students a basic and interdisciplinary grounding in four broad areas: 1) study of contemplation across traditions and history, 2) study of the role of contemplation within various human endeavors, including philosophy, religion, art, performance, and science, 3) acquaintance with modern scientific studies in psychology and neuroscience of the effects of contemplation on the brain and well-being, and 4) practical experience and training in techniques of meditation and contemplative practice.

This approach to the discipline comprises both the traditional "third person" academic study of the subject, as well as what Hal Roth has termed "critical first person" inquiry, directed at cultivating first hand awareness of one's own mind, feelings, mental states, and reactions. Recent studies have repeatedly confirmed the benefits of this type of mental training for concentration, self-awareness and control, attention, and reduction of anxieties and distractedness. At the same time, contemplative practice complements and enhances "third person" approaches. An adequate understanding of a text or a tradition can require us to "practice a kind of spiritual exercise or intellectual ascetics, in order to free ourselves from certain prejudices and rediscover what is, for us, almost another way of thinking" (as P. Hadot writes on interpreting the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius).

The impetus for the initiative that has led now to the minor proposal is rooted in our introductory course, CPRD 104, Contemplative Practice (http://meditation.umwblogs.org). This course was co-designed and initially co-taught by David Ambuel and Angela Pitts as a topics course fall semester 2013. At the time, we could hazard no guess about how the course might be received, but since the first offering, the course has filled two sections each semester, always filling within the first or second day of registration. For the current semester, fall 2015, a third section was opened the week before classes started, and quickly filled to capacity.

The Contemplative Studies initiative is evidently responding to a need. During the 2014-15 academic year, we collaborated with Miriam Liss and Mindy Erchull (both PSYC) to administer to the classes evaluations at the beginning and end of the semester to gather data using a number of standard mindfulness measures. The data, compiled and analyzed by Liss and Erchull, show marked positive effects: the students showed significantly higher scores on the five factors of mindfulness scale (observing, describing, non-judgment, acting with awareness, and non-reactivity) and the Southampton mindfulness questionnaire, and showed higher levels of self-compassion and lower levels of dissociation and anxiety. Miriam Liss is currently taking the lead in writing a paper for publication based on the data, and we will continue to collaborate and collect data from the class and control groups in future semesters.

The three core courses for the minor are CPRD 104, Contemplative Practice, PSYC 100, and CPRD 304, Contemplative Practice II, which is being offered for the first time as a topics course in spring 2016, and for which a concurrent course proposal is being submitted. While the advanced course does not have the track record of multiple previous offerings that is usually expected in a new course proposal, there are good grounds to consider the new course now: it is an integral part of the minor, and the student response to CPRD 104 over the past five semesters is an impressive indicator of the
overwhelming student interest. The advanced course is being offered for the first time Spring semester 2016, and has already enrolled 8, despite a limited pool of students who have taken the prerequisite. (Since CPRD 104 regularly fills on the first or second day of registration, the majority of students who have taken it in past semesters have been seniors, who have gone on to graduate.) In future semesters, we will be reserving more seats in CPRD 104 for freshmen.

Impact
The Contemplative Studies minor requires no additional library or infrastructure resources. It is foreseen that it will be taught once per year, by one of three available faculty, David Ambuel, Dan Hirshberg, and Angela Pitts, as part of their regular course rotation.

A sample syllabus follows below.
Syllabus
CPRD 304 Contemplative Practice II

Course Description

Contemplative Practice II is a continuation of its prerequisite, CPRD 104 Contemplative Practice. In this class students will further develop and refine their experience with meditation practice by exploring additional techniques and specific topics beyond those covered in the introductory class. The class also covers an overview of trends in contemporary psychological and neuroscientific research on meditation, and engages in an in-depth investigation of related philosophical concepts and debates.

Learning Objectives

Broaden and deepen experience and skill in meditation practices

Become acquainted with trends and findings in contemporary psychological and neuroscientific research into meditation

Develop a critical understanding of the variety of practices and meanings, across traditions and history, associated with such concepts as "meditation," "contemplation," "mindfulness," "wisdom," "awareness," and "concentration."

Develop a critical understanding of and ability to discuss the arguments pertaining to a variety of philosophical positions on the nature of the self, self-knowledge and -awareness, consciousness, and human happiness.

Required Readings

Aristotle. Selections from *Nicomachean Ethics*.


Bhikkhu Ñanamoli, trans., *Visuddhimagga: The Path of Purification*.


Hadot, Pierre, "Philosophy and Philosophical Discourse." (Chapter 9 of *What is Ancient Philosophy?*

Hadot, Pierre, "Eclipses and Recurrences of the Ancient Concept of Philosophy." (Chapter 11 of *What is Ancient Philosophy?"


Marcus Aurelius. *Meditations*.

Plato. Selections from *Republic, Symposium, Phaedrus*


**Course Requirements**

1. Come to class regularly and participate regularly. Presence is required for meaningful participation. More than 2 unexcused absences will result in a significant reduction in your grade, and each additional absence will result in half a grade loss on your final grade. An absence can be excused only for a justifiable and good reason (not: I have a test in another class), and no absence will be excused after the fact, except in an instance of genuine and unforeseeable emergency.

2. Complete all readings and assignments and participate in class discussions. There is quite a bit of reading for this class, which is intended to be read at different times. Rather than try to skim through all of it at the last minute, establish a routine where you find a quiet moment to pick up the reading at different times between class meetings. Be mindful of your interest and intention. Put the book down when it gets too heavy; pick it up when mind is motivated again.

3. During class periods, we will learn a variety of meditation techniques, including postures and practices for sitting meditation, walking meditation and standing meditation, with a variety of internal and external focal points (breathing, sound, physical sensation, metta meditation, etc.) to develop focus, mindful experiential awareness and concentration. It is essential to your success to devote yourself seriously to each practice.

4. Meditate daily on your own outside of class. The minimum practice requirement is 40 minutes per day outside of class, which may be split into two sessions. You are also required to keep a log of your experiences, using the insight timer, which is freely available for both Android and Ios platforms. (See [http://insighttimer.org](http://insighttimer.org)) We recommend meditating AT THE SAME TIME each day whenever possible.

5. Keep a practice journal, including a meditation log (#3 above) and reflections on your developing practice. We will periodically review your journal and provide feedback and suggestions for working through common and idiosyncratic challenges. While the Insight Timer app automatically times and records your sessions, and includes an option to journal within the app, you may NOT use the app for journaling. As an analog backup for your Insight Timer statistics, you must use a paper journal noting the date, start and end times of your meditation session, and write a brief reflection at its conclusion. This journal will be periodically submitted on designated dates.

6. Complete three 3 - 5 page papers analyzing and reflecting on some aspect of the readings.

7. Attend at some time during the semester a meditation retreat. This may be the weekend meditation retreat that we organize each semester at the Bhavana Society, and for which there
is no cost. If that is not possible, you may make your own arrangements to go on a retreat of equivalent duration and intensity.

8. Complete a substantial final project, including a initial proposal and a reflective essay about the project. The final project may be a research paper related to meditation and contemplative practice, or a creative project.

9. Serve as a "meditation mentor" for one or more students currently enrolled in CPRD 104, Contemplative Practice.

10. Schedule and meet with the instructor for two individual meetings during the semester, to discuss your practice and your progress.

Final Grade Breakdown

1. Preparation, Class Participation and Practice, and Journal: 30%
2. Analysis and Reflection Papers: 10% each, 30% total
3. Final Project (including proposal, bibliography, and completed project): 25%
4. Presentation of Final Project: 5%
5. Participation in extracurricular activities (retreat, mentoring): 10%

Course Schedule

Week 1
Practice:
Four Foundations of Mindfulness: Body, Form, and Feelings

Readings:
The Four Foundations of Mindfulness in Plain English
"Reconstructing and Deconstructing the Self: Cognitive Mechanisms in Meditation Practice"
"Buddha's Brain: Neuroplasticity and Meditation."
Hadot, "Philosophy and Philosophical Discourse"

Week 2
Practice:
Four Foundations of Mindfulness: Mental States

Readings:
The Four Foundations of Mindfulness in Plain English
"The Protective Effects of Brief Mindfulness Meditation Training."
"Mindfulness meditation improves cognition: Evidence of brief mental training."
Week 3
Practice:
Four Foundations of Mindfulness: Phenomena

Readings:
The Four Foundations of Mindfulness in Plain English
"Defining Mindfulness by How Poorly I Think I Pay Attention During Everyday Awareness and Other Intractable Problems for Psychology's (Re)Invention of Mindfulness: Comment on Brown, et. al. (2011)."
Thompson, Ch. 1: "Seeing: What Is Consciousness?"

Week 4
Practice:
Metta: Good Will and Loving-Friendliness

Readings:
The Four Foundations of Mindfulness in Plain English
"Loving-Kindness Meditation Increases Social Connectedness."
Visuddhimagga, "The Divine Abidings"
Thompson, Ch. 2: "Waking: How Do We Perceive?"

Week 5
Practice:
Metta: Compassion and Sympathetic Joy

Readings:
The Four Foundations of Mindfulness in Plain English
"The Prosocial Classroom: Teacher Social and Emotional Competence in Relation to Student and Classroom Outcomes."
"Nurturing Mindfulness in Children and Youth: Current State of Research."
Thompson, Ch. 3: "Being: What is Pure Awareness?"

Week 6
Practice:
Metta: Equanimity

Readings:
Beyond Mindfulness in Plain English: An Introductory guide to Deeper States of Meditation
Thompson, Ch. 4: "Dreaming: Who Am I?"

*Week 7*

*Practice:*
Jhana and Concentration

*Readings:*
*Beyond Mindfulness in Plain English: An Introductory guide to Deeper States of Meditation*
"Mechanisms of Mindfulness."
Thompson, Ch. 5: "Witnessing: Is This a Dream?"

*Week 8*

*Practice:*
Jhana and Concentration

*Readings:*
*Beyond Mindfulness in Plain English: An Introductory guide to Deeper States of Meditation*
Thompson, Ch. 6: "Imagining: Are We Real?"

*Week 9*

*Practice:*
Jhana and Concentration

*Readings:*
*Beyond Mindfulness in Plain English: An Introductory guide to Deeper States of Meditation*
"Self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-transcendence (S-ART): a framework for understanding the neurobiological mechanisms of mindfulness."
Thompson, Ch. 8: "Floating: Where Am I?"

*Week 10*

*Practice:*
Meditation on Death

*Readings:*
Thompson, Ch. 8: "Sleeping: Are We Conscious in Deep Sleep?"
*Visuddhimagga*, "Mindfulness of Death"
Plato, Selections.

**Week 11**

*Practice:*
Meditation on Death

*Readings:*
Thompson, Ch. 9: "Dying: What Happens When We Die?"
Plato, Selections

**Week 12**

*Practice:*
Meditation on Death

*Readings:*
Thompson, Ch. 10: "Knowing: Is the Self an Illusion?"
Aristotle, Selections

**Week 13**

*Practice:*
Mindfulness in Daily Life

*Readings:*
Aristotle, Selections
Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*
"Eclipses and Recurrences of the Ancient Concept of Philosophy"

**Week 14**

*Practice:*
Mindfulness in Daily Life

*Readings:*
Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*