

FOURTH YEAR ELECTIVE TITLE Horses for Healers: Improving Bedside Manners		COURSE NUMBER PSYC 9050	LOCATION Spring Reins of Hope @ Hunt Cap Farms, 401 Main Street, Three Bridges, NJ 08887 Various outpatient locations
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BLOCKS AVAILABLE 4, 10	DURATION/WEEKS 2	HOURS PER WEEK 8 hours on horse farm 32 hours Outpatient	STUDENTS MIN 5 MAX 14
LECTURES/SEMINARS YES	OUTPATIENT YES	INPATIENT No	HOUSESTAFF OPTIONAL
NIGHT CALL No	WEEKENDS No	LAB No	EXAM REQUIRED YES

***NOTE:** Please be aware that this course requires a minimum of five (5) students in order for the course to be held. If five (5) students have NOT registered for the course within 4 weeks of the start of the course, those students previously registered will be notified of their removed from it. The Registrar's Office will do it's best to place these students in other Electives of their choice, dependent upon availability and the approval of that course's Director.

OVERALL EDUCATIONAL GOAL OF ELECTIVE:

Humans spend approximately 90-94% of their lives communicating nonverbally and in turn spend a great deal of time interpreting the nonverbals of others. Much of the subtleties of communication can be discovered when studying the nonverbal communication of human beings. While research in nonverbal communication dissipated in the 80's and 90's, in recent years, communication researchers have begun to once again focus on studying nonverbal messages. In addition, healthcare researchers have begun to recognize the importance of studying the encoding and decoding of nonverbal messages. Since most communication centers on nonverbal communication, medical students will benefit from exploring the theories that surround nonverbal communication. In a society where we struggle with listening skills and continue to develop the Internet, it is important to teach medical students to pay attention to the subtleties of nonverbal communication, increase self-awareness of nonverbal communication behavior so they can then better interpret the communication of which they are immersed. As in most communicative acts, awareness of one's own nonverbal strategies is the first step in improvement. A class focusing on nonverbal communication is essential to improving interpersonal communication skills of medical students.

OBJECTIVES:

A thorough investigation of nonverbal communication theories with the primary goal of teaching students to pay attention to the entire message including body language, eye contact, space, time, paralanguage and culture. Students will focus on both encoding and decoding nonverbal messages. A portion of this class will demonstrate the theories of nonverbal communication using horses so that students can better their communication with patients.

By the completion of this course students will be able to:

I **Patient Care**

- Apply the nonverbal theories to specific outpatients in an ambulatory care setting
- Translate the subtleties of nonverbal horse communication to patient communication
- Understand that the nonverbal communication that works for one patient may not work for another patient

II **Medical Knowledge**

- Identify the major theories of nonverbal communication including communication competence, transactional model, and culture communication

- Define key nonverbal terms including kinesics (body language), proxemics (space), paralanguage (tone of voice), haptics (touch), chronemics (time), etc.
- Identify the major theorists associated with nonverbal communication including Edward Hall and Harold Garfinkel
- Be efficient in encoding and decoding nonverbal communication
- Discuss the unique situation that physicians are faced with in terms of touch and other nonverbal communication that is often one-sided and non-mutual

III Practice-based Learning and Improvement

- Engage in self-evaluation regarding awareness of their own nonverbal communication behavior

IV Interpersonal and Communication Skills

- Be aware that communication is an ongoing process and can never be recreated

V Professionalism

- Be aware of the professional and ethical implications of nonverbal communication and its interpretation

VI Systems-based Care

- Understand and be able to apply the most pivotal research in nonverbal communication to a multitude of healthcare situations

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES (INCLUDE SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS):

Students will be required to participate in five 8-hour days, Monday-Friday. They will have 32 hours allotted in seeing outpatients (80% of their time). The rest of the time will be spent in didactic sessions and at Spring Reins of Hope (SROH).

- 1) 80% of the students time will be in an outpatient setting. Outpatient experience may include any combination of the following experiences: common psychiatric illness presenting in a diversity of outpatient settings including University Medical Group (New Brunswick and Piscataway), geriatric psychiatry, addictive disorders, Spanish-speaking only patients (Clinica Latina), acute presentations of psychiatric illness, electroconvulsive therapy, severe and persistent mental illness, and specialized psychotherapy clinics.
- 2) 20% of the students time will be in didactic sessions and at Spring Reins of Hope (SROH).

Christianna E. Capra, from Spring Reigns of Hope, will supply horses and facilities to permit students to see and apply nonverbal horsemanship techniques in a laboratory-style set of exercises aimed at skills acquisition.

No riding or horse experience would be necessary to participate in this exercise. This is a course that is meant to use horsemanship groundwork exercises as a method of teaching the importance of nonverbal language and body language techniques to help medical students in their interpersonal relationships as healthcare practitioners. Students will sign a liability form prior to beginning the elective. Each student would need to dress appropriately in blue jeans and sturdy boots. A hat, sunglasses, sunscreen and appropriate clothing for the weather are all that would be required. The course will handle a set of behavioral objectives and each session will include a didactic session, a 90-120 minute session in which the horsemanship exercises will be briefly demonstrated and then students will undertake these maneuvers with the horses on the ground. Each session will end with a quick wrap-up session.

METHOD OF STUDENT EVALUATION:

1. *Semester Essay* (1 essay) – using participant/observer observations students will document examples of nonverbal communication in the “real-world.” This will serve as an objective review of the major vocabulary and theories of nonverbal communication.
 - “Horsin’ Around: What did the horses tell you?” – Working with horses means that you are completely dependant on your nonverbal communication skills. Evaluate your experience, in working with the horses, using the vocabulary and nonverbal communication theory presented in this course.
2. Outpatient preceptors will complete elective evaluation form.

ARE THERE ANY PREREQUISITES FOR THIS ELECTIVE? No

IS THIS ELECTIVE AVAILABLE TO THIRD YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS AS WELL? Yes