

GENERAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

REPORT TO

THE ACADEMIC SENATE

GE-026-256

New GE course proposal:

Kinesiology 3700 – Stress Management: The Science of Living Well

New GE Area 5D

Upper Division Scientific Inquiry or Quantitative Reasoning

General Education Committee

Date: 3/11/2026

Executive Committee
Received and Forwarded

Date: 3/11/2026

Academic Senate

Date: 3/18/2026

Background

Explores the impact of science, technology, and culture on human well-being, values, and quality of life. Focuses on the science of stress and its effects on mental health, disease, and illness on an individual and global scale. Examines the application and generalization of basic human biological sciences with an emphasis on psychophysiological responses to stress and evidence-based theories for its reduction. Considers the dichotomy of technological advances, including positive uses of biotechnology and AI programs to manage stress, alongside the detrimental effects of technology saturation and social media on mental health. Investigates the impact and paradox of the science and technology of stress in civilizations over time, including how they have affected human living due to rapid and dramatic development (e.g., global hegemony, human displacement). Explores cultural acceptance and the resultant implications of mental health concerns. Themes are explored mainly through lecture, reading, discussion, and personal exploration of the course content.

Resources Consulted

KIN provided both an ECO and example syllabus for the course, uploaded to Curriculog.

On November 26, 2025, General Education Committee sent out a solicitation email to the following constituencies:

- Department chairs
- Deans and associate deans

We asked to provide input via online survey to ensure that new GE course proposals aligned with the existing GE policy, including learning outcomes and concerns surrounding expertise. Responses were collected through mid-December. GE Committee received **2 responses** about this course, both about overlap with three Psychology courses, one of which is an existing GE course, PSY 3326 (Health Psychology):

“Content overlaps with PSY 3305 Developmental Psychology, PSY 3325 Multicultural Psychology (GE 4C), PSY 3326 Health Psychology (GE 4C/5D), and PSY 3388 Positive Psychology”

“The content of KIN3700 (Stress Management: The Science of Living Well) and KIN3800 (Healthy Lives, Scientific Minds: Science, Technology, and Human Well-Being) significantly overlaps with the central focus of existing psychology courses, especially PSY3326 (Health Psychology) and PSY3388 (Positive Psychology).

For context, health psychology is the scientific study of how psychological, behavioral, and social factors influence physical health, mental well-being, and illness. This course focuses on promoting healthy behaviors, preventing disease, and improving healthcare systems by understanding the mind-body connection, with a particular focus on stress management. Positive psychology is the scientific study of well-being/positive functioning. Main topics include defining well-being (using biopsychosocial and multicultural perspectives), measuring well-being, understanding factors that help or hinder well-being, and testing different strategies for promoting well-being.

Here are a few examples of SLOs that are directly covered in one (or both) of those psychology courses:

- (1) Describe the impact of stress on the human body using neuroscientific, physiological, and psychological principles. [KIN3700]
- (2) Analyze the connection between the science of stress and its effects on disease and illness on an individual and global scale. [KIN3700]
- (3) Apply scientific strategies to enhance resilience and wellbeing. [KIN3700]
- (4) Define the dimensions of well-being [KIN3800]
- (5) Identify quantitative measures used to evaluate dimensions of well-being [KIN3800]

There are additional areas of those courses that overlap with other existing psychology courses. For example, the SLO "Explain how clinical thresholds are applied in the diagnosis of health conditions" overlaps with the diagnosis and treatment of mental health disorders that is the focus of PSY4150 (abnormal psychology) and the SLO "Differentiate between misinformation, disinformation, and credible scientific evidence" is a significant focus within our research methods courses (e.g., PSY2204, PSY4433)."

Following receipt of these comments, the GE Committee sought clarification from both the Psychology and Kinesiology departments regarding the scope and core content of the respective courses. Both departments were given the opportunity to elaborate on areas of perceived overlap and distinction and their responses were reviewed as part of the Committee's deliberative process.

Discussion

GE Committee received this referral on November 20, 2025. This course is being evaluated to ensure compliance with CPP's General Education Policy (GE-001-245), passed by the Senate in 2024.

This course is applying for **GE Area 5D Upper-Division Scientific Inquiry or Quantitative Reasoning**. In addition to meeting the core subject matter requirements for this area, new courses must include the learning outcomes **Critical Thinking** and **Information Literacy**, along with meaningful assessment of those outcomes in both the ECO and the syllabus. For this upper-division GE, departments must also include either **Intercultural Engagement** or **Civic Literacy**, and one of the following: **Written Communication, Oral Communication, or Quantitative Literacy**.

This course examines the biological, psychological, and cultural dimensions of stress. The course examines the neuroscientific and physiological mechanisms behind stress, the impact of technology on mental health, and evidence-based strategies for resilience and well-being. Students are assessed through weekly written reflections, five mini-reports evaluating culturally situated stress-management approaches, a substantial research project on the influence of science and technology on mental health, and a group oral presentation.

This course centers on the scientific theories of stress, by highlighting the neuroscientific and physiological science. It engages students in understanding scientific principles and methods by requiring analysis of evidence-based research, but also directly examines how technology, culture, and society shape mental health, as a real-world problem that engages the lives of many college students. As such, this course meets the area requirements of GE Area 5D. The course has consistent elements where students are encouraged to self-reflect, which can risk shifting the emphasis away from scientific analysis toward personal experience.

The course does well to meet the GE learning outcomes for GE Area 5D. It claims Critical Thinking, Information Literacy, Civic Literacy, Intercultural Engagement, Written Communication, Oral

Communication, and Quantitative Literacy. Departments are encouraged to narrow to the minimum learning requirements as they will later be asked to produce artifacts for university-level assessment. For one course to include and assess all these learning outcomes is a heavy lift. For this GE SLO, the course can choose between Intercultural Engagement or Civic Literacy. Similarly, the course can choose amongst Written Communication, Oral Communication, or Quantitative Literacy. The outcomes also seem to be appeared laid onto the same assignments (weekly reflections, mini-reports, research project, group oral presentation), which can dilute the clarity and assessment of each individual GE SLO.

While consultation raised concerns about overlap with several psychology courses, the only relevant comparisons for GE review are PSY 3325 and PSY 3326, the existing GE courses. Upon review, the committee acknowledged some thematic overlap but determined that KIN 3700 is organized around the intersection of science, technology, culture, and stress physiology, whereas PSY 3326 is more specifically focused on health behavior, chronic illness management, and psychoneuroimmunology within a health psychology framework. PSY 3325 also has intersection but multicultural psychology has a different foundation. With the additional consultation we did with both departments, the responses reflect legitimate disciplinary concerns about thematic overlap, but they also indicate that the courses differ in organizing framework and core content focus rather than constituting direct duplication.

The syllabus should also include the copy of the text of the GE Meaning and Purpose Statement.

Recommendation

The GE Committee has completed discussion of this proposal and identified substantive concerns regarding alignment with current GE policy in both the ECO and syllabus. The committee will vote open on March 9, 2026 and results will be available on March 11, 2026. This timeline is intended to allow sufficient time, if appropriate, for a first reading before the end of the academic year. The final recommendation will be transmitted to the Executive Committee upon conclusion of the vote.