**Directed Individual Study (DIS)   
Translational Science in Aging Research**

**Integrative Science for Healthy Aging Laboratory  
Course Syllabus**

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| ***Instructor:*** | Dr. Julia L. Sheffler, Center for Translational Behavioral Science  Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine |
| ***Contact Me:*** | Office: Suite 0266, Office 0267F Phone: (850) 644-4199  Cell: (618) 203-3119 Email: [julia.sheffler@med.fsu.edu](mailto:julia.sheffler@med.fsu.edu)  Webpage: <https://ctbs.fsu.edu/programs/integrative-science-healthy-aging> |
| ***Office Hours:*** | By Appointment |
| ***Class Times:*** | All DIS students and research assistants are expected to attend weekly lab meetings. Meetings between individual students and the instructor should be scheduled at least once monthly and can be in person or via FSU Zoom. It is recommended that some form of weekly meeting or communication occurs outside of the lab meetings. Students are also expected to schedule specific times during the week to complete their hours at the Center for Translational Behavioral Science. |
| ***Course Objectives:*** | The primary goal of this course is to provide students with an opportunity to develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for research as a means to make positive societal progress and become well-informed clinicians. Students are given opportunities to gain hands-on experience in the design, implementation, and reporting of a scientific research study. Topics of research include examination of neurobiological, psychosocial, and behavioral correlates relevant to lifespan health and cognitive functioning. Students will work with the instructor to develop their own research projects and identify appropriate course goals based on their prior experience and long-term academic and professional plans. |
| ***Eligibility:*** | This course is designed for motivated undergraduate students in Psychology, Neuroscience, or Pre-Med tracks; however, students with interest in aging and research from any discipline are welcome. A research methods course is recommended as a pre-requisite, but not required. |
| ***Text Book:*** | There is no specific text for the course. Students will review one scientific article per week, which will be selected by students on a rotating basis. Articles should relate to aging and lifespan health and cognition from a psychological, medical, or neuroscience perspective.  Recommended individual reading/audio books:   1. *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* by Atul Gawande |
| ***Grading:*** | Students are required to carry out behavioral research related to psychology and translational science. Prior to beginning research, all students will complete a certificate in basic Human Subject Research (HSR) and Good Clinical Practice (GCP) through the CITI program in order to engage with research participants and their data. Students will assist the instructor as research assistants on multiple ongoing projects, in order to develop a foundation in research practices and procedures. Through hands-on research training, discussion in group lab meetings, and individual meetings with the instructor, students will begin to develop their own project. Their research topic is determined by the instructor and the student. Students are encouraged to apply for undergraduate research funding opportunities to pursue their own projects; however, students may also use pre-existing data, or develop ideas as they work on ongoing lab projects. Students will receive a letter grade or S/U grade based on the following: Attendance and participation at weekly meetings, attending scheduled work times, completion of assigned tasks, and completion of progress toward their stated goals.   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **Detailed Grading Evaluation & Policies** | | | | Article Presentation | 20% | Develop a clear and detailed presentation (.ppt) of a scientific article or topic relevant to the lab. The article must be approved by Dr. Sheffler at least 4 working days in advance of the presentation. | | Set up first & Individual meetings | 8% | E-mail Dr. Sheffler to set up your first individual meeting (4%), and set up at least one individual meeting monthly (4%). | | Attendance | 10% | Attend all laboratory meetings. If you are unable to attend due to an excused absence, you must contact Dr. Sheffler prior to lab meeting to receive an excused absence. | | Participation | 12% | Participate in laboratory meetings, including discussion of articles and being prepared to discuss weekly progress and assignments (6%). Come prepared to all individual meetings with an agenda (6%). | | Assigned Lab Tasks | 50% | You are expected to maintain a list of tasks when they are assigned, provide regular progress updates, and complete assignments in a timely manner. All tasks should have a set due date for completion agreed on with Dr. Sheffler. Deadlines can be flexible, but must be approved in advance with Dr. Sheffler. You will be graded based on the quality of your work, communication about your progress, and meeting your deadlines. |   SCALING   |  |  | | --- | --- | | Letter Grade | Percentage | | A | 94-100 | | A- | 90-93 | | B+ | 87-89 | | B | 83-86 | | B- | 80-82 | | C+ | 77-79 | | C | 73-76 | | C- | 70-72 | | D+ | 67-69 | | D | 63-66 | | D- | 60-62 | |
|  | **\*For individuals taking the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory DIS course. A “Satisfactory” grade is considered equivalent to an 80% or greater.** |
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| ***Courtesy and Attendance:*** | Students are expected to set their own schedule based on their credit hours, and track their weekly hours to be submitted to the instructor each week. One credit hour is equivalent to 3-4 actual hours worked weekly. Students are expected to attend weekly lab meetings and come prepared to discuss the assigned article, their progress toward their goals, and progress on ongoing tasks. In addition to the required individual meetings, meetings between the student and instructor are also scheduled as needed. For all meetings, the student is expected to arrive on time, prepared, and to be able to discuss relevant materials. If you must cancel or arrive late to a meeting, please give sufficient advance notice (24 hours). |
| ***University Attendance Policy:*** | Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness. Given the individualized design of this course, students may also choose to work from home some days for other valid reasons, as long as appropriate progress toward goals is demonstrated and students discuss this need with the instructor. |
| ***Academic Honor Policy:*** | The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy>.) |
| ***Americans with Disabilities Act:*** | Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.  Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided.  This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. |
| ***Syllabus Change Policy*** | Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice. |