

HNRS-302-004  
Positive Psychology  
Fall 2007

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Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30-12:30, 6:45-7:30  
Wednesday 4:45-6  
Friday 11:30-12:30, 3:30-5:30  
Or by appointment

Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:20-6:35, McKinley 202

Required Readings:

Text: *Stumbling on Happiness* by Daniel Gilbert  
The other readings will be available via Blackboard, online

Schedule for Readings and Class Meeting Topics

- 8/28 (Tu) Introduction  
Peterson, C. (2006). *A primer in positive psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.  
Chapter 1 ("What is positive psychology?")
- 8/30 (Th) What is the good life?  
King, L. A., Eels, J. E., & Burton, C. M. (2004). The good life, broadly and narrowly considered. In Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (Eds.) *Positive psychology in practice*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- 9/4 (Tu) What is happiness?  
Gilbert, Chapter 2
- 9/6 (Th) How do we measure happiness?  
Gilbert, Chapter 3
- 9/11 (Tu) Noticing what's not there  
Gilbert, Chapter 5
- 9/13 (Th) Using today to understand tomorrow  
Gilbert, Chapters 6 and 7
- 9/18 (Tu) Rationalization  
Gilbert, Chapters 8 and 9
- 9/20 (Th) Getting better at knowing what makes us happy  
Gilbert, Chapters 10 and 11
- 9/25 (Tu) Is happiness about having more choice?  
Schwartz, B., & Ward, A. (2004). Doing better but feeling worse: The paradox of choice. In Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (Eds.) *Positive psychology in practice*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- 9/27 (Th) Is happiness about being authentic?  
Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2004). Fostering healthy self-regulation from within and without: A self-determination theory perspective. In Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (Eds.) *Positive psychology in practice*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- 10/2 (Tu) Can we change our overall levels of happiness?  
Lyubomirsky, S., Sheldon, K. M., & Schkade, D. (2005). Pursuing happiness: The architecture of sustainable change. *Review of General Psychology*, 9, 111-131.
- 10/4 (Th) Midterm

- 10/9 (Tu) Why do we have positive emotions, anyway?  
Fredrickson, B. L. (2005). The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. In Huppert, F. A., Baylis, N., & Keverne, B. (Eds.) *The science of well-being*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 10/11 (Th) Gratitude  
Bono, G., Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2004). Gratitude in practice and the practice of gratitude. In Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (Eds.) *Positive psychology in practice*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- 10/16 (Tu) Hope  
Snyder, C. R., Rand, K. L., & Sigmon, D. R. (2005). Hope theory: A member of the positive psychology family. In Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.) *Handbook of positive psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 10/18 (Th) Elevation  
Haidt, J. (2003). Elevation and the positive psychology of morality. In Keyes, C. L. M., & Haidt, J. (Eds.) *Flourishing: Positive psychology and the life well-lived*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- 10/23 (Tu) Consciousness and Flow  
Nakamura, J., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2005). The concept of flow. In Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.) *Handbook of positive psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 10/25 (Th) Consciousness and Meditation  
Shapiro, S. L., Schwartz, G. E. R., & Santerre, C. (2005). Meditation and positive psychology. In Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.) *Handbook of positive psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 10/30 (Tu) Forgiveness  
Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook of classification*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Chapter 19, "Forgiveness and mercy.")
- 11/1 (Th) Compassion  
Cassell, E. J., (2005). Compassion. In Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.) *Handbook of positive psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 11/6 (Tu) Meaningfulness  
Baumeister, R. F., & Vohs, K. D. (2005). The pursuit of meaningfulness in life. In Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.) *Handbook of positive psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 11/8 (Th) Wisdom  
Reznitskaya, A., & Sternberg, R. J. (2004). Teaching students to make wise judgments: The "Teaching for Wisdom" program. In Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (Eds.) *Positive psychology in practice*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- 11/13 (Tu) Love  
Haidt, J. (2006). *The happiness hypothesis: Finding modern truth in ancient wisdom*. New York: Basic Books. (Chapter 6, "Love and attachments.")
- 11/15 (Th) Positive psychology of relationships  
Reis, H. T., & Gable, S. L. (2003). Toward a positive psychology of relationships. In Keyes, C. L. M., & Haidt, J. (Eds.) *Flourishing and the life well-lived*. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.
- 11/20 (Tu) NO CLASS TODAY....FRIDAY CLASSES MEET INSTEAD
- 11/22 (Th) THANKSGIVING BREAK, NO CLASS TODAY! (But consider putting into practice some of what we have learned!)
- 11/27 (Tu) Positive psychology and culture  
Tsai, J. L. (2007). Ideal affect: Cultural causes and behavioral consequences. *Perspectives on psychological science*, 2, 242-259.

- 11/29 (Th) Work, play, and food  
Wrzesniewski, A., Rozin, P., & Bennett, G. (2003). Working, playing, and eating: Making the most of most moments. In Keyes, C. L. M., & Haidt, J. (Eds.) *Flourishing and the life well-lived*. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.
- 12/4 (Tu) Positive psychology and public policy  
Marks, N., & Shah, H. (2005). A well-being manifesto for a flourishing society. In Huppert, F. A., Baylis, N., & Keverne, B. (Eds.) *The science of well-being*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- 12/6 (Th) So, what was this all about?  
Gilbert, Afterword
- 12/11 (Tu) Final exam: 5:30-8

### Examinations and Grades

There will be two exams. The first will be worth 25% of your grade. The second will be worth 40% of your grade. There will be a research paper worth 20% of your grade. Reaction papers will be worth 10% of your grade. Class participation will be worth 5% of your grade.

*Tests:* The tests will be essay exams. The questions will be taken from the readings and class sessions. They will emphasize the concepts considered in the course. The second test will emphasize material covered after the first test, but it will also raise general issues relevant to the entire course.

*Research Paper:* The paper should be a review of some positive psychology topic of interest to you. In the review, you should think critically about the topic, being certain to present and discuss published theoretical and empirical research on the topic. There is no upper or lower page limit. My guess would be that most of your papers will be between 15 and 20 pages. What's important is how strong your presentation is, not how long it is. The content of your paper might concern one or another of the classes, but should not simply reiterate what was said in class or written in the assigned readings. If you are looking for ideas, you might explore topics presented in other professors' positive psychology courses that we have not covered. Some syllabi are available at: <http://www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu/teachingpp.htm>.

*Class Participation:* Class participation will be based on "thoughtful attendance." It's important not just to show up, but from time to time to offer insight, or insightful questions, to the proceedings, while not hogging the limelight.

*Reaction papers:* Other than the first and last classes and the midterm, there will be 25 substantive classes. For each, I would like a one page, double-spaced reaction paper. You might react either to the reading or (as applicable) to exercises you will be assigned during the term. Among the questions you might ask in thinking about your reaction are: What struck you about the reading/exercise? What did you like? What did you disagree with? What made you think? Each paper will be graded pass/fail. Any two can be missed and you will still receive full credit. They are due to me (via email) by noon on the day of the class.

### Note

No "early" exams will be given. Note the final exam date.

Late papers will be marked down for each day that they are late.

### Academic Integrity

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the University's Academic Integrity Code, which can be found in the University Catalog. By registering for classes at AU, you are acknowledging your awareness of the Code and obligating yourself to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Code will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary actions will be taken should such violations occur. Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general, or as they relate to the requirements of this course in particular.