



PSYCH 208: Happiness

University of Washington | Winter 2019

Lecture: Tue & Thu 9:30-11:20am | Johnson Hall 102

Discussion Sections: Fridays

How can our lives be fulfilling, joyful, and meaningful? Through reading, discussion, and hands-on activities, we will explore the theme that happiness stems from social connections and contribution to something larger than oneself. We will also try practical strategies for nurturing our own happiness by improving social and emotional health.

TEACHING TEAM

Professor: Tabitha Kirkland (tabithak@uw.edu)

Office hours: TTh 1:30-2:15pm | Guthrie 133

Teaching Assistant: Terrènçe Pope (tjpopo@uw.edu)

Office hour: M 9-10 | Guthrie 232

Peer Tutors: Austin Kim, Regan Gong

REQUIRED READINGS

- *The How of Happiness* by Sonja Lyubomirsky
- *Happy* by The Lonely Planet
- Other readings linked in the syllabus and posted on Canvas

LEARNING GOALS

1. Understand several of the major ways that happiness has been studied scientifically
2. Develop daily happiness habits in order to regulate emotion, increase happiness and emotional flexibility, and limit the negative effects of stress
3. Apply material to life to benefit oneself, close others, and the community
4. Improve comfort with and ability to communicate in writing
5. Improve comfort with and ability to communicate verbally, both in informal paired and small-group discussions and by presenting in front of a small class
6. Develop community and friendship with peers in the class that will contribute to a greater sense of belonging at UW

EXPECTATIONS

My Role as Instructor

I am here to guide you in exploring this fascinating material. I will do my best to make class time interesting, engaging, and enjoyable for everyone. I will use on a variety of methods to promote learning, including videos, discussions, and activities. I will create and enforce a learning atmosphere that is safe, comfortable, and respectful for everyone. I will communicate my expectations clearly and hold all learners to equitable standards. I will welcome questions, comments, and suggestions, and I will adapt to individual needs whenever possible. I may modify this syllabus as needed to accommodate your learning. I am here to guide you in exploring this fascinating material – please see me as a resource!

Your Role as Learner

Students learn best when they are actively engaged and involved in the learning process. This is an active and interactive course in which you will often learn by discussing and/or doing. You are expected to observe the world, read, discuss, and participate. This means that you read the book before class, think about what you read, and come prepared to discuss the ideas in class. I think of our classroom as a *collaborative learning community* wherein we all teach and learn from each other. Every time you make a comment or ask a question, you teach something to the rest of us. Challenge assumptions: ask “why?” or “how do we know?” Come to office hours and debate ideas with me. Consider the implications and applications of course material. Share the ideas you learn, or the thoughts they inspire, with other people. Get to know your classmates, and discuss the ideas in this class with them over coffee. Write down your thoughts privately, and reflect on them later. Thinking deeply about the course material will be worth your time (really!).

I challenge you to abandon the traditional passive student role and to get involved with teaching and learning – I think you’ll enjoy it.

This is a fast-paced class in which you will be given a good deal of independence. Consequently, you will need to be responsible for managing your time appropriately, and to contact me in a timely manner if any circumstances arise that interfere with your ability to participate fully in class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Assignment	Points	%
Activity Papers (4)	40	12.5
Exams (2)	200	62.5
Lecture Participation (9)	45	14
Community Project	30	9
Happiness Mission Statement	5	1
Total Points	320	

Activity Papers (4 papers x 10 pts = 40 pts)

You will be assigned hands-on activities related to course content to be completed outside of class. Each week, you will do one activity from *The How of Happiness*, one activity from *Happy*, and some additional happiness activities. Every two or three weeks you will submit a paper reporting on your activities from the previous weeks and how they have impacted your happiness. Papers should be approximately 3-4 pages, double-spaced. Instructions and rubric for these papers is on Canvas.

Late policy: Late papers will be accepted with a 2 point penalty per day.

Exams (2 exams x 100 pts = 200 pts)

Two exams, a midterm and a cumulative final, are given over the course of the quarter. Both examinations are multiple-choice and integrate all the material we read and study (films, lectures, readings, videos, etc.). You will need a scantron and a pencil. If you are unable to take an exam at the scheduled time, notify your TA at least one week before the exam to schedule a time to take it early.

Late policy: If you are unable to take an exam at the scheduled time, notify your TA at least one week before the exam to schedule a time to take it early. You may take any exam up to two days early. If you miss an exam without notice, and have a documented reason for doing so, you may contact the instructor to obtain permission to make up the exam in a short-answer format. Exams may be made up only at instructor's discretion *and* with documentation of serious illness or other extenuating circumstance.

Lecture Participation (9 weeks x 5 pts = 45 pts)

On lecture days, discussion and activities will be facilitated through Poll Everywhere (PollEv), an online teaching tool. Beginning in the second week of class, you will be graded on your rate of participation: the number of items you responded to divided by the total number of items presented that week. Quiz questions do not count toward participation. The full list of participation polls will be posted in each week's Participation assignment at the conclusion of the week.

Points for participation will be assigned according to the following scale: 80-100% = 5, 70-79% = 4, 60-69% = 3, 50-59% = 2, 40-49% = 1, <40% = 0.

Late policy: Students must complete the polls when they are presented in class.

Excused absences: Student-athletes traveling for competition and others with documented excused absences are eligible to make up missed participation polls and should follow these steps to do so:

1. Email your TA with the date(s) you plan to miss ahead of time and documentation for your absence.
2. At the end of the week, consult the summary PDF posted in the PollEv assignment for the week.
3. For every poll you missed, write what your response would have been *and explain why* you would have responded that way. For multiple-choice responses, this means including evidence for your choice. For open-ended/short-answer responses, this means writing a substantive amount (a few sentences) rather than a word or phrase.
4. Email your TA with (a) the number of polls you missed that week, (b) the question text and your responses to those polls, and (c) what your participation score should be, according to the number of polls listed in the PDF and the table below.

Community Project (30 pts)

Throughout the class, you will develop and implement an intervention designed to increase happiness in your local community. You may do this in pairs or individually. You will present the results of your project at the end of the quarter to your peers during section. You will submit the following assignments as part of this project.

- Plan: 5 pts
- Presentation outline: 5 pts
- Presentation materials: 10 pts
- In-class presentation: 10 pts

Late policy: Late project work will be accepted with a 20% penalty per day with the exception of the in-class presentation.

Happiness Mission Statement (5 pts)

At the end of the quarter, you will write a happiness mission statement and recite it in front of your classmates in discussion section. The purpose of this statement is to reflect on what you have learned throughout the quarter and to describe how you will use this knowledge to improve yourself as an individual and as a member of society.

3 points are given for a completed statement, 2 points for reading a summary of your statement in class.

Late policy: Mission statements can be submitted with a 1 point deduction per day late. You will automatically lose the 2 points for reading your summary in class if you are absent from class or if you are present but do not have a statement prepared to read. Students who must miss class on the day the mission statements are due must still submit the statement on time and can arrange a time to make up the speaking portion with a member of the teaching team.

Extra Credit (up to 5 pts)

Assignments that can be completed for extra credit are posted in the course schedule below and are due on the dates indicated. Extra credit will be given based on the percentage of assignments completed over the entire quarter: 100% = 5 pts, 90% = 4 pts, 80% = 3 pts, 70% = 2 pts, 60% = 1 pt.

GRADES

The UW uses a numerical grading system from 0.0-4.0 GPA. Final course grades will be assigned according to the following grading scale: 94%+ = 4.0. Each percentage below this drops 0.1 GPA point. For example, 85% = 3.1, 75% = 2.1, etc. Note: 0.7 is the lowest passing grade used at the UW. Any grade below that is a 0.0. You can check Canvas for your current course grade. Any extra credit earned will be added on to your final GPA at the end of the quarter.

Incompletes: Only students with special circumstances beyond their control who have obtained permission are eligible for a grade of Incomplete. I will not give incompletes at the end of the quarter to escape a poor grade.

Personal responsibility: It is your responsibility to *earn* the grade you want, starting on the first day of class. Please do not ask for a higher grade at the end of the quarter. You are being graded on the requirements listed in this syllabus, rather than my subjective judgment of how much you "need" a certain grade, how hard you have worked, or how close you are to a more desirable grade. Additionally, students sometimes ask to complete additional extra credit assignments to improve their grade. While I appreciate your efforts, the answer is no. It would be unfair for me to give one student an extra credit opportunity that I do not offer the rest of the class.

COURSE POLICIES

Canvas

Canvas (<http://canvas.uw.edu>) is our official course website and will be used for communicating, downloading materials, submitting assignments, and tracking grades.

- Set your preferred name: *Account > Profile > Settings > Edit Settings*.
- Turn on your email notifications for announcements: *Account > Notifications*.
- Set up the calendar to sync assignments with your personal calendar: *Calendar > Calendar Feed*.

Poll Everywhere (PollEv)

How to use PollEv:

1. **Login and manage your account:** visit polleverywhere.com and type in your UW email. After entering your email, you will see a prompt to login via Single Sign-On. Enter your UW NetID and password.
 - You must use your UW email address to participate in polls. You cannot receive credit for participating with a personal email address.
2. **Participate in polls:** go to pollev.com/uwpsych on your mobile device. You can also text your responses using information provided in class; however, you will need to add your phone number to your account (on polleverywhere.com) for the system to track those responses and match them to your account.

If you ever have questions about your participation score for a given week, please follow these steps:

1. Count the number of polls in your response history for that week (available at pollev.com/uwpsych in the upper right corner).
2. Check this number against the polls listed in the pdf posted in the weekly PollEv assignment to calculate your response rate (e.g., if you completed 8 of 10 polls, your response rate would be 80%).
3. Compare your response rate to the grading table in the syllabus.
4. If there are any discrepancies between your calculation and the points received (e.g. if your calculated response rate is 80% (5/5) but you receive 3/5) please contact your TA. Include the number of polls in your response history, the total number of polls, your response rate, and the score you should have received according to the table.

Having trouble connecting to PollEv during class? Missing 1-2 lecture participation polls is not usually a big deal with how the grading scheme is set up. If you find yourself unable to participate in a quiz because of connection issues, please let us know during the quiz and we will allow you to complete the quiz on paper. [Please also report any connection issues here.](#)

Email Communication

Please use standard professional guidelines for all written communication, including using a formal greeting, writing in complete sentences, and signing your name. Please set the subject heading as the class name. I will respond to all messages within 24 hours on weekdays. Weekend responses may take longer; please plan accordingly.

Guidelines for Discussion

- When the class is engaged in lecture and whole-class discussion, please raise your hand to ask questions or otherwise contribute. Side comments and conversations are distracting. If you feel tempted to whisper comments to a classmate, either participate in the whole-class discussion instead or write your comments to share privately.
- If you contribute frequently, I may call on other people instead to get a variety of perspectives.
- In an academic setting, everyone has the right to express different views in a respectful atmosphere. Please be considerate of your classmates.

Technology in the Classroom

- Mobile phones should be *silenced* and put away before class. Unless we are actively engaged in a participation activity, **do not use your phone during class**. Limit the temptation to check your phone by keeping it in your bag.
- For your own sake, I strongly suggest that you *do not* use your laptop during class. Scientific research has shown that **typing notes in class causes worse learning of the material compared to writing** – and not just because of their potential for distraction.
- If you are learning English, you are welcome to use an electronic dictionary during class.
- Lectures will be recorded on Panopto Recordings and posted online.

Punctuality

- Please be on time for class. Arriving late or leaving early breaks the flow of the class and can be a cause for distraction. If you *must* occasionally arrive late or leave early, please take a seat near the door.
- Please wait until class ends to pack your things. I will always end class on time. Packing early invariably causes a “domino effect,” which is distracting to everyone and may result in your missing important information.

Attendance

- If you miss any class session, consult the schedule to see what topics were covered. You are responsible for obtaining notes and information on any in-class announcements from peers. Do not contact me to ask what you missed. If you have questions concerning the missed class that you are unable to answer yourself after reviewing a classmate’s notes, please see me during office hours for clarification.

RESOURCES FOR SUCCESS

Follow These Study Tips

- Research shows that when we do more than one thing at a time, we’re not actually doing them simultaneously. Instead, we’re shifting our attention from one thing to another. During that shift, we lose focus, and it takes effort to refocus on the new task. In fact, some research shows that the more often we “multitask,” the more distracted we are by irrelevant information, and the worse we are at concentrating. *Limit the temptation to multitask* in class and when studying by putting away any distracting materials.
- Study in frequent, short, focused sessions (e.g., 15 minutes), with periodic breaks. Research shows that we learn best by absorbing information over time. This will also give you more opportunities to review difficult concepts. “Cramming,” or attempting to study a lot of material in a single session, results in very weak learning and retention of the material. This strategy is a poor use of your valuable time.

- Test yourself when studying. Create multiple-choice questions for yourself or use flashcards to quiz yourself on terms and their examples. Focus on applying material to life and thinking of examples of concepts rather than simply memorizing definitions.
- Talk to people about what you learn in class, and think about examples of the class material from your own life. We learn best when we connect new ideas to the things we already know.

Study in a Group

I strongly encourage you to study with your classmates. Successful study groups meet about once per week to review the material together, quiz each other, and help each other stay accountable and avoid procrastination. Plus, studying with other people is way more fun than studying by yourself.

Attend Office Hours

These hours (listed at the top of the syllabus) are a specific time set aside specifically to talk with students. I am *always* available during office hours – no appointment needed. Just stop by! Come to office hours with questions, comments, or topics for debate. I am also happy to talk about other psychology-related topics, such as getting involved in research or applying to graduate school. Please email me to set an appointment if those times don't fit your schedule.

Get Extra Help Studying

There are many resources on campus to help you improve your study skills, time management, reading speed, and content knowledge. For example, check out the Instructional Center for drop-in tutoring and workshops for several courses in psychology. [More info.](#)

Stay Healthy

The UW offers a wide array of services for staying physically and mentally healthy, from rec sports to meditation to counseling, crisis intervention, and support groups.

Access and Accommodations

Your experience in this class is important to me. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course.

If you have not yet established services through DRS, but have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations (conditions include but are not limited to: mental health, attention-related, learning, vision, hearing, physical or health impacts), you are welcome to contact DRS at 206-543-8924, uwdrs@uw.edu, or disability.uw.edu. DRS offers resources and coordinates reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and/or temporary health conditions. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your instructor(s) and DRS. It is the policy and practice of the University of Washington to create inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Lectures are Tuesdays and Thursdays. Every lecture begins with a brief mindfulness meditation. Discussions and activities are Fridays. All readings, videos, and assignments should be completed before class. This schedule is subject to change.

Week	Day	Date	Topic	What to read or watch	Graded assignments	Extra credit assignments
1	Tue	Jan 8	Welcome and Introduction	Syllabus		
	Thu	Jan 10	Lecture: Theories of Happiness Video: Mattheu Ricard, <u>"The Habits of Happiness"</u>	<u>Sheldon & King (2001). Why positive psychology is necessary. <i>American Psychologist</i>, 56, 216-217.</u>		Take the PERMA Profiler
	Fri	Jan 11	Community Building Discussion: Kahneman video	<u>Video: Daniel Kahneman, The Riddle of Experience vs. Memory</u>		Take the Gross National Happiness Index Survey
2	Tue	Jan 15	Lecture: Time Perception and Flow	<u>Video: Phil Zimbardo / RSA Animate, The Secret Powers of Time</u> <u>Video: Dan Gilbert, The Psychology of Your Future Self</u>		
	Thu	Jan 17	Lecture: Character	<u>Park, Peterson, & Seligman (2004). Strengths of character and well-being. <i>Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology</i>, 23, 603-619.</u>		Take the VIA Signature Strengths survey

	Fri	Jan 18	Discussion: <i>The How of Happiness</i> Secret Admirer Match-Ups	<i>The How of Happiness, Part One</i> (p. 1-79)	Person-Activity Fit Diagnostic (part of Activity Paper 1)	
3	Tue	Jan 22	Lecture: Mindset and Grit <u>Video: Angela Duckworth, "Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance"</u>	<u>Brain Pickings: Fixed vs Growth: The Two Basic Mindsets that Shape Our Lives</u> <u>Mindset Works: The Science</u>		Take the Mindset Assessment and Grit Scale
	Thu	Jan 24	Lecture: Mindfulness <i>Guest lecturer: Danny Arguettey</i>	<u>UCLA: The Benefits of Mindfulness Meditation</u> <u>Greater Good Magazine: The State of Mindfulness Science</u>		
	Fri	Jan 25	Field Trip: Yoga Meet in IMA Studio 111, bring your own mat		Activity Paper 1: Defining Happiness (due Sun 1/27)	
4	Tue	Jan 29	Lecture: Synthesizing Happiness <u>Video: Lisa Feldman Barrett, You Aren't at the Mercy of Your Emotions - Your Brain Creates Them</u>	<u>Wilson & Gilbert (2005). Affective forecasting: Knowing what to want. <i>Current Directions in Psych Science</i>, 14, 131-134.</u> <u>Video: Dan Gilbert, The Surprising Science of Happiness</u>		

	Thu	Jan 31	Lecture: Stress, Coping, and Resilience	<u>NYT: How to be Better at Stress</u> <u>NYT: How to Combat Your Anxiety, One Step at a Time</u>		
	Fri	Feb 1	Activity: Social Connection	<u>NYT Modern Love: "To fall in love with anyone, do this."</u>	Community Project Plan	
5	Tue	Feb 5	Lecture: Social Connection and Emotional Contagion	<u>The Atlantic: How Loneliness Begets Loneliness</u> <u>Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson (1993). Emotional contagion. <i>Current Directions in Psych Science</i>, 2, 96-99.</u>		
	Thu	Feb 7	Movie: <i>Happy</i> (2011)			
	Fri	Feb 8	Midterm Exam Study Groups		Activity Paper 2: Being Present (due Sun 2/10)	
6	Tue	Feb 12	Midterm Exam			
	Thu	Feb 14	Lecture: Love and Relationships	<u>Reis & Aron (2008). Love: What is it, why does it matter, and how does it operate? <i>Perspectives on Psych Science</i>, 3, 80-86.</u>		Take the Self-Compassion Scale

	Fri	Feb 15	Discussion: Love and Language	<p>Choose one of the following:</p> <p>(1) Ireland et al. (2010). Language style matching predicts relationship initiation and stability. <i>Psych Science</i>.</p> <p>(2) Slatcher & Pennebaker (2006). How do I love thee? Let me count the words: The social effects of expressive writing. <i>Psych Science</i>.</p>		Post a reading discussion question
7	Tue	Feb 19	Lecture: Prosocial Emotions: Awe and Self-Compassion	<p><u>NYT: Why Do We Experience Awe?</u></p> <p><u>Harvard Business Review: To Recover from Failure, Try Some Self-Compassion</u></p>		Take the Compassionate Love Scale
	Thu	Feb 21	Lecture: Prosocial Emotions: Elevation, Gratitude, and Admiration	<p><u>Greater Good Magazine: Wired to be Inspired</u></p> <p><u>Video: Brene Brown, The Power of Vulnerability</u></p>		
	Fri	Feb 22	Community Project Preparation		<p>Community Project Presentation Outline</p> <p>Activity Paper 3: Social Connection (due Sun 2/24)</p>	
8	Tue	Feb 26	Movie: <i>Where to Invade Next</i> (2015)	<u>Gallup: The Happiest and Unhappiest Countries in the World</u>		

	Thu	Feb 28	Lecture: Cross-Cultural Happiness	<u>Washington Post: What people around the world mean when they say they're happy</u>		
	Fri	Mar 1	Discussion: Cross-Cultural Happiness	<i>The Geography of Bliss</i> : chapter 10 + two other chapters of your choice		Post a reading discussion question
9	Tue	Mar 5	Lecture: Money and Happiness Video: <u>Michael Norton, How to Buy Happiness</u>	<i>The Happiness Industry</i> : Preface (p. 1-11)		Take the Gross National Happiness Index Survey (again)
	Thu	Mar 7	Politics, Citizenship, and Happiness <i>Guest lecturer: Tim Jones</i>	Oishi & Kesebir (2015). Income inequality explains why economic growth does not always translate to an increase in happiness. <i>Psych Science</i> , 26, 1630-8.		
	Fri	Mar 8	Community Project Presentations		Community Project Presentation Materials	
10	Tue	Mar 12	Lecture: Finding Meaning in Life	<u>Scientific American: Everyday Routines Make Life Feel More Meaningful</u>		

	Thu	Mar 14	Final Exam Review			
	Fri	Mar 15	Happiness Mission Statements Secret Admirer Appreciation		Happiness Mission Statement Activity Paper 4: Culture & Citizenship (due Sun 3/17)	
11	Wed	Mar 20	Final Exam: 10:30-12:20			