

EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY, SECTION 16

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS

SPRING 2011

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Office Hours: Mon, Wed, Frid, 3-4pm (please sign up on my online calendar)

Course Overview

The US Declaration of Independence declares our unalienable rights to be "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." But what is happiness? Can it be pursued, intensified, or made a more permanent part of our lives? Can a community, a city, or a nation increase its average level of happiness? Is it even important to be happy, or is that a dangerous, self-indulgent quest? In this course, students will delve into these and related questions. We will draw on the disciplines of psychology, sociology, history, philosophy, and others to shed light on the complex roots of happiness.

Course Requirements

- 1) Class Participation (15% of final grade). Students are expected to actively engage in regular classroom discussions. Attendance will also be reflected in this grade.
- 2) Reading quizzes (15% of final grade). Frequent online quizzes will test student comprehension of the assigned readings.
- 3) Short Paper, First Draft (5% of final grade). Your short paper must be at least 5 pages in length, and must conform to my guidelines (see paper instructions and end of syllabus).
- 4) Peer Review Work on Short Paper (5% of final grade). Each student is required to provide a detailed review of a draft of another student's short paper.
- 5) Short Paper, Second Draft (5% of final grade). This second draft must reflect substantial improvement, based on comments from a student peer and the professor.
- 6) Midterm Exam (10% of final grade). Students must take this exam on its assigned day, with exceptions requiring prior notification and approval.
- 7) Research Paper, First Draft (15% of final grade). Your research paper must be at least 10 pages in length, and again must conform to my guidelines for written work.
- 8) Peer Review Work on Research Paper (5%). Each student is required to provide a detailed review of a draft of another student's research paper.
- 9) Research Paper, Second Draft (15% of final grade). This second draft must reflect substantial improvement, based on comments from a student peer and the professor.
- 10) Oral Presentation (10% of final grade). You will be required to give an oral presentation on the highlights of your research paper.

*Additional instructions on all these requirements will be provided in class.

Required Course Texts

- 1) *Buddha's Brain*, by Rick Hanson and Richard Mendius.
- 2) *Happiness: Unlocking the Mysteries of Psychological Wealth*, by Ed Diener and Robert Biswas-Diener
- 3) *Dancing in the Streets*, by Barbara Ehrenreich
- 4) *Back from the Land*, by Eleanor Agnew
- 5) *In Utopia*, by J.C. Hallman
- 6) *Happiness: A History*, by Darrin McMahon
- 7) *Don't Sleep, There are Snakes*, by Daniel Everett

Wed, Jan. 19 **Course Introduction**
Seligman, “Your Signature Strengths,” reading provided by professor.

Frid, Jan. 21 **The Individual Mind and Happiness I**
Hanson and Mendius, *Buddha’s Brain*, pp. 1-63.

Mon, Jan. 24 **The Individual Mind and Happiness II**
Hanson and Mendius, *Buddha’s Brain*, pp. 67-155.

Wed, Jan. 26 **The Individual Mind and Happiness III**
Hanson and Mendius, *Buddha’s Brain*, pp. 157-234.

Frid, Jan. 28 **The Individual Mind and Happiness IV**
Ruark, “The Art of Living Mindfully,” reading on course moodle site.
Csikszentmihalyi, “The Conditions of Flow,” reading on course moodle site.

Mon, Jan. 31 **Psychological Dimensions of Happiness I**
Diener and Biswas-Diener, *Happiness*, pp. 3-46.
Shenk, “What Makes Us Happy?” reading on course moodle site.
First draft of short paper due.

Wed, Feb. 2 **Psychological Dimensions of Happiness II**
Diener and Biswas-Diener, *Happiness*, pp. 145-181.
Lehrer, “The Reinvention of the Self,” reading on course moodle site.

Frid, Feb. 4 **Psychological Dimensions of Happiness III**
Diener and Biswas-Diener, *Happiness*, pp. 182-253.

Mon, Feb. 7 **Social Dimensions of Happiness I**
Diener and Biswas-Diener, *Happiness*, pp. 47-87.
Thompson, “Is Happiness Catching?” reading on course moodle site.
Bond, “How your friends’ friends can affect your mood,” reading on course moodle site.
Peer review of short paper due.

Wed, Feb. 9 **Social Dimensions of Happiness II**
Diener and Biswas-Diener, *Happiness*, pp. 91-111.
Brooks, “Public Policy and Happiness,” reading on course moodle site.

Frid, Feb. 11 **Cross-Cultural Dimensions of Happiness I**

Diener and Biswas-Diener, *Happiness*, pp. 127-144.

Veenhoven, "Inequality of Happiness in Nations," reading on course moodle site.

Inglehart, et. al, "Development, Freedom, and Rising Happiness," reading on course moodle site.

Mon, Feb. 14 **Cross-Cultural Dimensions of Happiness II**

Mathews, "Happiness and the Pursuit of a Life Worth Living," reading on course moodle site.

Brockmann, et. al, "The China Puzzle," reading on course moodle site.

Wed, Feb. 16 **Discussion and Review**

Research paper proposal due.

Frid, Feb. 18 **In-Class Movie (TBA)**

Mon, Feb. 21 **In-Class Midterm Exam**

Wed, Feb. 23 **The History of Happiness I**

Ehrenreich, *Dancing in the Streets*, pp. 1-76.

Frid, Feb. 25 **The History of Happiness II**

Ehrenreich, *Dancing in the Streets*, pp. 77-180.

Second draft of short paper due.

Mon, Feb. 28 **The History of Happiness III**

Ehrenreich, *Dancing in the Streets*, pp. 181-261.

Research paper information/library update due.

Wed, Mar. 2 **Discussion of Research Paper Topics**

Frid, Mar. 4 **Counter-Cultural Movements and Happiness I**

Agnew, *Back from the Land*, pp. 3-82.

Mon, Mar. 7 **Counter-Cultural Movements and Happiness II**

Agnew, *Back from the Land*, pp. 83-173.

Research paper outline due.

Wed, Mar. 9 **Counter-Cultural Movements and Happiness III**

Agnew, *Back from the Land*, pp. 174-250.

Frid, Mar. 11 **A Local Counter-Cultural Experiment**
Group field trip to the Tryon Life Community.

Mon, Mar. 14 **Discussion**
First draft of research paper due.

Wed, Mar. 16 **In-Class Movie (TBA)**

Frid, Mar. 18 **No Class**

Spring Break (March 19-27)

Mon, Mar. 28 **Utopic Explorations I**
Hallman, *In Utopia*, pp. 3-99.

Wed, Mar. 30 **Utopic Explorations II**
Hallman, *In Utopia*, pp. 103-185.

Frid, Apr. 1 **Utopic Explorations III**
Hallman, *In Utopia*, pp. 189-271.

Mon, Apr. 4 **Philosophical Explorations I**
McMahon, *Happiness*, pp. 1-65.
Peer review of research paper due.

Wed, Apr. 6 **Philosophical Explorations II**
McMahon, *Happiness*, pp. 175-252.

Frid, Apr. 8 **Philosophical Explorations III**
McMahon, *Happiness*, pp. 312-362, 373-405.

Mon, Apr. 11 **Philosophical Explorations IV**
McMahon, *Happiness*, pp. 406-480.

Wed, Apr. 13 **Discussion**

Frid, Apr. 15 **Indigenous Explorations I**
Everett, *Don't Sleep There Are Snakes*, pp. xv-114.

Mon, Apr. 18 **Indigenous Explorations II**
Everett, *Don't Sleep There Are Snakes*, pp. 115-174.

Wed, Apr. 20 **Indigenous Explorations III**
Everett, *Don't Sleep There Are Snakes*, pp. 177-279.

Frid, Apr. 22 **Concluding Discussion**

Mon, Apr. 25 **Class Presentations**
Second draft of research paper due.

Wed, Apr. 27 **Class Presentations**

Final Class Presentations: Monday, May 2, 1:00-4:00pm, in our regular classroom.

College as a Professional Occupation

I expect all of your class-related behavior to be professional in nature. Work must be turned in on time, appointments must be kept, discussions must be respectful of everyone, etc. Each time you fail to act in a professional manner, your grade will be reduced.

On the Use of Email

In-person communication is almost always better than email communication. I therefore ask that you do the following: 1) Before sending an email, consider if you can instead ask a question in class or in my office. 2) Before sending an email, proof read carefully to fix grammar and tone issues. Emails should reflect well on your professionalism; 3) Do not expect a rapid response. A number of days may go by before I get a chance to answer your email.

On Class Attendance

I take attendance right at the beginning of class. If you are late, you may miss important announcements. It is okay to miss two classes during the semester, but every additional absence reduces your participation grade. *Please do not email me about why you miss class or are late, either before or after the fact.* If you wish to minimize the number of points taken off, you can give me documentation (from a health center, sports coach, etc) in class.

Turning Work in on Time

It is unfair to grant extensions to individual students, when others have turned their work in on time. Therefore, I take points off on any assignment that is turned in late, for whatever reason. *Please do not email me about why assignments are late, either before or after the fact.* If you wish to minimize the number of points taken off, you can attach relevant documentation to the back of your paper.

Getting Assistance and/or Special Accommodation During the Course

I encourage you to contact me if you are having difficulties with the course material or assignments. Please do not hesitate to let me know if there is anything I can do to make your experience in this course more positive for you. I am also very happy to work with students who are in need of special accommodations. If you anticipate needing special accommodations, contact the Student Support Services Office to discuss your situation. That office will then contact me, and we can take appropriate action to make sure all your needs are accommodated.

Policy on Academic Integrity

Cheating and plagiarism are very serious infractions, and are dealt with severely in this course! I expect you to abide by all aspects of this academic integrity policy: <http://legacy.lclark.edu/dept/pathfind/academicinteg.html>. This policy prohibits any form of cheating on exams or written assignments. It also prohibits plagiarism, so be certain to properly cite all information that you use in your papers. If you haven't already done so, take the tutorial on how to avoid plagiarism available here: <http://library.lclark.edu/reference/plagiarism/index.htm>

Inform Me if You Have Worked on Your Paper Topic in Another Course

It is occasionally acceptable for students to continue exploring a topic that they have written about in another course. However, I must be informed ahead of time if you intend to do this. You must come meet with me, and explain how your paper for me will differ substantially from work you have already gotten credit for. I have given failing grades to students who neglected to contact me about this.

Grading Scale

On all assignments turned in for my courses, student are given percentage grades that are at the very end of the semester combined to generate a final course percentage grade. The following percentage scores, along with some comments, describe my grading system.

Percent Range	Grade	Comments
100 - 95	A	Given for work that not only meets all expectations, but also contains an impressive level of unique insight and effort.
94 - 90	A-	Given for work that not only meets all expectations, but also contains some level of unique insight and effort. <i>You will have to work very hard, and go beyond the stated requirements of the assignment, to receive an A- or higher.</i>
89 - 87	B+	Given for very good work that meets all expectations.
86 - 84	B	Given for work that meets most expectations, but contains some problems.
83 - 80	B-	Given for work that meets some expectations, but contains numerous problems.
79 - 77	C+	Given for work that is passing, yet somewhat problematic.
76 - 74	C	Given for work that is passing, yet quite problematic.
73 - 70	C-	Given for work that is passing, yet very problematic.
69 - 0	D/F	Given for unsatisfactory work.

Keep Multiple Copies of all Your Work

No credit can be given for any course work that is lost (by you or me) or rendered un-retrievable because of computer problems. Always keep a duplicate copy of your paper or any other course work in a safe place (such as Webdisk). Keep extra copies of all your assignments until after the semester ends and you have received your official grades from the Registrar's Office.

Keep Track of Papers for Letters of Recommendation

I am often asked to write letters of recommendation for students. I am able to write a more useful, detailed letter, if you can provide me with titles and brief summaries of papers you wrote in my class. So, I encourage you to keep a permanent record of titles/summaries of papers you wrote in my classes. You will then be able to consult this record years later, when you want a letter of recommendation. This is a good thing to do for your other classes, too.

The "Three Error" Rule for Written Work

On papers, I will allow up to three errors of grammar or style to slide without penalizing you. However, I will deduct one percentage point from your paper grade for every subsequent error of grammar or style (this is especially severely implemented on second drafts). In other words, if I was going to give you a 90 percent on your paper, but I identified thirteen grammatical/style errors, you will receive an 80 percent (which is obviously a severe blow to your grade). Things I regularly take points off for (often on first drafts, and most definitely on second drafts) are listed below -- though I also take points off for other issues.

Grammar, Style, and Formatting Errors that will Lead to a Reduction in Your Grade

I often write an X in the margin of papers. This means that you made one or more of the following errors:

- You did not put your name, my name, and the course title on the first page of your paper.
- You did not use 1 inch margins, a normal font size, and double-spacing on each page.
- You did not give your paper an interesting and dynamic title.
- You did not begin your paper with an interesting and dynamic opening sentence/paragraph.
- You did not insert an overview of your paper in the second or third paragraph of your paper.
- You did not use normal language in a sentence. You used overly-complicated, odd-sounding phrases.
- You did not construct a straight-forward, well-organized sentence. It was confusing and/or a run-on.
- You did not carefully organize your sentences, and/or make them flow in a smooth way.
- You did not carefully organize your paragraphs, and/or insert paragraph breaks where needed.
- You relied on an over-generalization, instead of referring to specific examples/evidence.
- You did not use a correct citation format, citation punctuation, and/or a required citation page number.
- You did not end your paper with an interesting and dynamic conclusion.

Please refer to this list as you work on your paper, and try not to make these errors!

Getting a Friend to Peer-Review Your Paper

It is very important to find a friend who is willing to read a draft of your paper, and give you detailed critical feedback. Give your friend the following instructions: "I need you put a mark by everything, and I mean everything, that sounds confusing, odd, or unclear. You do not have to fix the problems, just show me where they are and I'll work on them. Please don't worry about my feelings -- just be as thorough as you can be!" Once you've gotten the feedback, try your best to fix the problems.

Additional Formatting, Citation, and Style Instructions

I prefer that students use the APA citation format. Before asking me about formatting, citation, or grammatical questions, please consult the following books: Harris, Muriel. *The Writer's FAQs*. Williams, Joseph. *Style: Basics of Clarity and Grace*.



**“The road to truth is a difficult one...
You must work hard to walk on it!”
–Bodhidharma**