

University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
Course Syllabus for PSYC 270 – Positive Psychology
Section 1
7:35am – 8:50am M W
SCI D230
Fall 2023

Instructor: Jeana L. Council, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: Mondays 10:30-11, Wednesdays 11:30-12:30, & By Appt.

Course Description: About 25 years ago, a group of psychologists, educators, and professionals from different disciplines joined together out of a desire to know more about positive human functioning. What has come to be known as positive psychology emphasizes using science in the pursuit of knowledge about optimal human functioning and what makes life worth living. Positive psychologists call for as much focus on strength as on weakness, as much interest in building the best things in life as in repairing the worst, and as much attention to promoting the fulfillment of lives of healthy people as to healing the wounds of the distressed. This course will first present an introduction to the core assumptions and research findings of this growing effort, then move on to explore interventions and applications informed by this perspective in counseling and psychotherapy, as well as in domains personally relevant to the lives of students such as school, work, family and other close relationships. Research to date indicates the promotion of positive psychology has a positive effect on psychological and physical health, academic persistence, relationship success, and athletic and work performance.

Course Objectives:

1. To understand the history, aims, and scope of positive psychology.
2. To introduce and critically examine a growing body of research and writing on happiness, subjective well-being, and character strengths.
3. To investigate, guided by this literature, what kinds of experiences fulfill people, what human characteristics lead to personal effectiveness, and what social conditions appear to elicit these qualities and experiences.
4. To assess and evaluate one's own well-being, strengths, and limitations based on the information covered in class.
5. To be able to apply positive psychology to important domains in one's life and in the lives of others with whom you interact.

Required Texts: Seligman, Martin E. P., (2002). *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Free Press. **This Text is Referred to as “AH” on the Course Calendar.**

Lopez, S. J., Pedrotti, J. T., & Snyder, C.R. (2018). *Positive Psychology: The Science of Human Strengths*. New York, 4th Edition: Sage. **This Text is Referred to as “PP” on the Course Calendar.**

Additional Readings: Additional readings are required. Some of the readings are available on-line or will be uploaded into CANVAS. See course calendar for locations of additional readings.

Course Requirements: Following are the general requirements of the course, although some modifications may occur. Your grade in this course will be determined by your performance in the following areas:

1. **Activities and Assessments.** You are required to complete a number of activities conducted both during class time as well as outside class time. Out-of-class activities should be typed and double-spaced and should be submitted on CANVAS. Some in-class activities may require additional work outside of the class time allotted -- in such cases, the remainder of the activity is to be typed and submitted on CANVAS. Finally, several positive psychology self-report measures are required, and others are recommended. Required measures should be submitted on CANVAS prior to the class period in which it is due. See course calendar for **anticipated** activity and assessment collection dates. **(approximately 125 pts total; 5-15 pts per activity/write-up; 3 pts per self-report measure)**
2. **Positive Psychology In Action Project.** You will be required to develop either an individual or group project to be conducted over the course of the semester in order to spread positive psychology to others. The goal of this assignment is to have fun applying positive psychology while working to generate positive emotions and happiness in the lives of others. The professor will help you to find classmates with similar interests for those who prefer to work with others and will allow some in-class time for both individuals and groups to develop project ideas. You are expected, however, to spend additional time outside of the class time allotted to complete this project. All projects will need to be approved by the professor before being implemented. An approximately 10-minute presentation about the goals, design, and results of the project will be required. Finally, you will each also submit a one – two page typed summary of your contributions to the project and for those who worked with a group, your assessment of your teammates' contributions. Separate handouts on details of this project will be provided on CANVAS. **(100 pts total; 50 pts for the presentation; 40 pts for the overall quality of the project; 10 pts for the quality of your contribution to the project [and of your assessment of your group members' contributions for those who opted for group work])**
3. **Exams.** There will be three exams over the course of the semester consisting of multiple choice and short answer/essay questions. Exam 2 will be taken with a partner in a team testing format and you will have the option to take Exam 3 alone or with a partner. More details will be provided in class. **(150 pts total; 50 pts per exam).**

Total points possible = 350

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Grading Scale:

93-100	A	80-82	B-	67-69	D+
90-92	A-	77-79	C+	60-66	D
87-89	B+	73-76	C	59 & Below	F
83-86	B	70-72	C-		

****Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him/her from fully demonstrating his/her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate this educational opportunity.

******UWSP supports an inclusive learning environment where diversity and individual differences are understood, respected, appreciated, and recognized as a source of strength. We expect that students, faculty, administrators and staff will respect differences and demonstrate diligence in understanding how other peoples' perspectives, behaviors, and worldviews may be different from their own.*

Additional Policies & Procedures

Lecture Materials and Recordings Security

Lecture materials and recordings for this course are protected intellectual property at UW-Stevens Point. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or share lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

Paper Format

All assignments must be turned in *typed, double-spaced, using no larger than 12-point font ("Times" or "Times New Roman")*. Assignments not typed will *automatically be reduced by one letter grade*. Margins should be standard size (one inch on all sides). The heading should contain only your name and the assignment title. Grammar, spelling, and punctuation will count towards your paper grades, so be sure to edit carefully. If you need extra assistance with writing, you can receive free help from the Tutoring-Learning Center.

Academic Misconduct

In the case of academic misconduct, which includes but is not limited to cheating, fabrication and falsification, plagiarism, or facilitating academic misconduct, it is my policy to give a failing grade for the assignment/activity in question. Additionally, the student's overall course grade will be lowered by *at least* one letter grade based on the particular assignment and infraction.

Rights and Responsibilities

UWSP values a safe, honest, respectful, and inviting learning environment. In order to ensure that each student has the opportunity to succeed, a set of expectations has been developed for both students and professors

(see <https://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/rightsCommBillRights.pdf>).

All students are expected to be familiar with and to abide by these expectations.

Title IX

Under several federal and state laws, and according to several university guidelines, I am required to report acts of a criminal or offensive nature. This includes acts of sexual harassment and assault, bias and hate crimes, illicit drug use, and acts of violence. Any disclosure or description of these incidents – both current and in the past – may be reported to the Dean of Students office (<http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/>) or the local authorities.

Course Schedule

The following is offered as a **tentative** schedule for students. I reserve the right to make changes as needed and will inform students of any changes, additions, or omissions, and provide updated schedules when necessary. **NOTE: The timing of activities will vary based on class discussions....assignments should be complete and submitted on CANVAS with a copy (either paper or access through an electronic device) brought to class on the due dates on the calendar, however, if we have not yet gotten to that material, you will be asked to hold onto those assignments until the next class period when we actually get to the relevant material.**

Date	Topic	Readings Due	Self-Report Measures Due	Activities Due	In-Class Activities
9/6	Syllabus Review; CANVAS Page Review; Website Review				Assign Positive Intros Assign Fun vs Philanthropy
9/11	Positive Introductions			Positive Intro Story	
9/13	What is PP and Why Study it?/Positive Emotions and Happiness	AH Ch 1-4 PP Ch 1	Fordyce Emotions Questionnaire and the PANAS available on-line at www.authentichappiness.org (optional) <i>General Happiness Scale, Approaches to Happiness Questionnaire, and the Steen Happiness Index</i> available on-line at http://www.authentichappiness.org (optional)	<i>Fun Vs. Philanthropy Due</i>	<i>PP Intro DVD; PP at Harvard Video</i>
9/18	What is PP and Why Study it?/Positive Emotions and Happiness	AH Ch 1-4 PP Ch 1	Fordyce Emotions Questionnaire and the PANAS available on-line at www.authentichappiness.org (optional) <i>General Happiness Scale, Approaches to Happiness Questionnaire, and the Steen Happiness Index</i> available on-line at http://www.authentichappiness.org (optional)	<i>Fun Vs. Philanthropy Due</i>	
9/20	Positive Emotions and Happiness				
9/25	Positive Emotions About the Past		<i>Transgression Motivations Questionnaire</i> available on-line at http://www.authentichappiness.org (optional)		Forgiveness Videos and One Door Exercise
9/27	Positive Emotions				Assign

	About the Past/Brief Test Review/ Individual/Group Project Discussion				Forgiveness Letter or Finding Happy Endings
10/2	Exam 1				
10/4	Positive Emotions About the Future	AH Ch 6 PP Ch 8	<i>Optimism Test</i> available on-line at www.authentic happiness.org (required) Adult Dispositional Hope Scale (on Canvas) (required)		Assign ABDCE Disputation And Hope Letters
10/9	Positive Emotions about the Future/Positive Emotions in the Present	AH Ch 7, PP CH 10 Csikszentmihalyi Ch 1&2 on Being in Flow. Available on e-reserve at UWSP library.		Gratitude Letters and Journals Due	Mindfulness Exercise
10/11	Positive Emotions in the Present/Discuss Individual or Group Projects	Csikszentmihalyi Ch 1&2 on Being in Flow. Available on e-reserve at UWSP library.			Assign Savoring a Beautiful Day
10/16	Positive Emotions in the Present			ABCDE Disputation Due	Top Ten Evaluation
10/18	Individual or Group Project work time			Forgiveness Letters or Happy Endings Due	Submit individual or group project idea and names of all group members
10/23	Strengths and Virtues	AH Ch 8&9 PP Ch 3 & 4	Take the <i>VIA Strengths Survey</i> at www.authentic happiness.org Submit Top Five Strengths Results. (required)		
10/25	Strengths and Virtues	AH Ch 8&9 PP Ch 3 & 4		Savor a Beautiful Day Due	Begin Use a Signature Strength More or in a New Way

10/30	Positive Psychology in Counseling and Psychotherapy	PP Ch 13 Ch 2 from Magyar-Moe (2009) on CANVAS Positive Psych Empirical Validations Progress Article on CANVAS			
11/1	Positive Psychology in Counseling and Psychotherapy/Brief Test Review	PP Ch 13 Ch 2 from Magyar-Moe (2009) on CANVAS			
11/6	Individual or group project work time				
11/8	Exam #2			Use a Strength More or in a New Way Due	
11/13	Positive Psychology at Work/College	AH Ch 10 PP Ch 15 Csikzentmihaly chapter on the Paradox of Work available on e-reserve at the library	Work-Life Survey available at www.authentic happiness.org (required) Positive Impact Test (on Canvas) Clifton StrengthsFinder (optional – fee applies)	One Page Summary of Individual or Group Project Progress to date (group paper - should be the same paper submitted by each group member with all group member names included on it)	Gainful Employment Measure
11/15	Positive Psychology at Work/College	AH Ch 10 PP Ch 15 Csikzentmihaly chapter on the Paradox of			Assign Recrafting work/ college

		Work on CANVAS			experiences/ gainful employment activity
11/20	Positive Psychology in Relationships, Parenting, and Love	AH Ch 11&12 PP Ch 12	<i>Close Relationships Questionnaire</i> available at www.authentic happiness.org (required) <i>Relationship quiz</i> available at www.gottman.com/marriage/relationship_quiz/quiz1/ (also take any of the other relationship quizzes you are interested in available on this site) (optional)		
11/22	Individual or Group Project Work Time				
11/27	Positive Psychology in Relationships, Parenting, and Love/Positive Psychology and the Meaningful Life (if time)	AH Ch 14 King (2006) article on CANVAS	<i>Meaning in Life Questionnaire</i> available at www.authentic happiness.org (optional)	Recrafting work/ college experiences/ gainful employment activity due	Introduce Strengths Date (optional)
11/29	Individual or Group Project Work Time				
12/4	Individual and Group Presentations				
12/6	Individual and Group Presentations				
12/11	Individual and Group Presentations				
12/13	Individual and Group Presentations/Brief Test Review			Individual or Group Project Reports Due (self-assessment and team assessment for those in	

				group formats) Hope Letters Due Gratitude Letter Delivery Reaction Questions Due	
12/18 Monday 8-10am	Exam 3 during Final Exam Time				