

**University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point**  
**Course Syllabus for PSYC 270 – Positive Psychology**  
**Section 1**  
**12:35 – 1:50 M/W**  
**CCC 233**  
**Fall 2016**

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**Office Hours** 11-12:30 Wed & By Appointment

**Course Description:** About 15 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.**

Snyder, C. R., Lopez, S. J., & Pedrotti, J. T. (2015). *Positive Psychology: The Science of Human Strengths and the Practice of Living Well*. New York, 3<sup>rd</sup> 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, while others will be available on reserve in the UWSP library or handed out in class. 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. Your **active participation** in class (which includes attendance, keeping up with the readings and self-report measures, and your contribution to discussions and activities) will comprise a major percentage of your grade. It will be essential that you come to class prepared and willing to actively participate, think critically, and support each other. **(25 pts total)**
2. **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 will be collected at the end of the class period in which the results are discussed. 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 returned at the following class period unless otherwise noted. Finally, several positive psychology self-report measures are required and others are recommended. Required measures will be collected at the end of the class period in which they are discussed. See course calendar for **anticipated** activity and assessment collection dates. **Late assignments will not be accepted. (75 pts total; 3-6 pts per activity/write-up; 3 pts per self-report measure)**
3. **Positive Psychology In Action Group Project.** You will be required to come up with a group project to be conducted over the course of the semester in order to spread positive psychology to others outside the classroom. 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 assign groups based on topics of interest and allow some in-class time to develop project ideas. All projects will need to be approved by the professor before being implemented. A 6 – 15 page group report and a 15- 20 minute group presentation about the 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 your assessment of your teammates’ contributions. Separate handouts on details of this project will be provided later in the semester. **(100 pts total; 50 pts for the report;**

**40 pts for the presentation; 10 pts for your self-assessment/team-assessment)**

4. **Exams.** There will be three exams over the course of the semester consisting of multiple choice and short answer/essay questions. You will take one of the three exams with a partner, using a “team testing” format and will have the option of taking one other exam with a partner if you so choose. More information regarding team-testing will be discussed in class. **NO MAKE-UP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN, UNLESS THERE IS A DOCUMENTED DIRE EMERGENCY. HUNTING SEASON, FAMILY VACATIONS, WEDDINGS, AND JOB CONFLICTS DO NOT CONSTITUTE DIRE EMERGENCIES. (150 pts total; 50 pts per exam).**

**Total points possible = 350**

**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**

**Personal Responsibility**

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get the information you missed from a classmate. All assignments are to be turned in on their due date and exams taken on their scheduled date. **Late assignments will not be accepted unless a dire emergency exists.** Under such circumstances, please notify me as soon as possible and be prepared to show documentation as appropriate.

**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. Papers more than one page long **must be stapled**. 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 located in Room 018 of the Library. Appointments can be made by calling x3568.

### **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.*

### ***Emergency Procedures***

In the event of a medical emergency call 911 or use Red Emergency Phone located outside the door of D230. Offer assistance if trained and willing to do so. Guide Emergency Responders to victim.

In the event of a tornado warning, proceed to the lowest level interior room without window exposure. Avoid wide-span rooms and buildings.

In the event of a fire alarm, evacuate the building in a calm manner. Notify instructor or emergency command personnel of any missing individuals.

Active Shooter – Run/Escape, Hide, Fight. If trapped hide, lock doors, turn off lights, spread out and remain quiet. Follow instructions of Emergency Responders.

See UW-Stevens Point Emergency Management Plan at [www.uwsp.edu/rmgt](http://www.uwsp.edu/rmgt) for details on all emergency response at UW-Stevens Point.”

## 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 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. Directions for Most activities are available on D2L, however, some will be described and completed in class only, hence, attendance is important.**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings Due</b>	<b>Self-Report Measures Due</b>	<b>Activities Due</b>	<b>In-Class Activities</b>
9/7	<b>Syllabus Review; D2L Page Review; Website Review; Begin Positive Introductions</b>				
9/12	<b>Positive Introductions</b>				
9/14	<b>What is Positive Psychology and Why Study It?</b>	<b>AH Ch 1&amp;2 PP Ch 1</b>	Fordyce Emotions Questionnaire and the PANAS available on-line at <a href="http://www.authentichappiness.org">www.authentichappiness.org</a> (optional)		<b>PP Intro DVD; PP at Harvard Video</b>  <b>Assign Fun vs Phil</b>
9/19	<b>What is Positive Psychology and Why Study It?</b>			<i>Fun Vs. Philanthropy Due</i>	
9/21	<b>Positive Emotions and Happiness</b>	<b>AH Ch 3&amp;4</b> Fredrickson (2003). On D2L  Myers, D. (1991). On D2L Read the <i>Happiness</i> excerpt and the <i>Feeling good about Fredrickson's positive emotions</i> article.	<i>General Happiness Scale, Approaches to Happiness Questionnaire, and the Steen Happiness Index</i> available on-line at <a href="http://www.authentichappiness.org">http://www.authentichappiness.org</a> (optional)		<i>Video Experiment</i>
9/26	<b>Positive Emotions and Happiness</b>	<b>PP Ch 6</b>			
9/28	<b>Positive Emotions about the Past</b>	<b>AH Ch 5 PP Ch 11</b>	<i>Satisfaction with Life Scale and Gratitude Questionnaire</i> available		<b>Gratitude Videos</b>

			on-line at <a href="http://www.authentichappiness.org">www.authentichappiness.org</a> (optional)		<b>Assign Grat Letter and Journal</b>
<b>10/3</b>	<b>Positive Emotions about the Past</b>	<b>PP Ch 7</b>	<i>Transgression Motivations Questionnaire available on-line at <a href="http://www.authentichappiness.org">http://www.authentichappiness.org</a> (optional)</i>		Review of Forsyth (2000) Handout  Forgiveness Videos
<b>10/5</b>	<b>Positive Emotions about the Past</b>				Letting Go of Grudges/ Assign Forgiveness Letters or Happy Endings
<b>10/10</b>	<b>Positive emotions about the past/Brief Test Review/Group Project Discussions</b>	<b>AH Ch 6 PP Ch 8</b>	<i>Optimism Test available on-line at <a href="http://www.authentichappiness.org">www.authentichappiness.org</a> (required)</i>	Gratitude Letter (visit may be conducted later) Three Blessings/ Gratitude Journal Due	One Door Closes, One Door Opens
<b>10/12</b>	<b>Exam #1</b>				
<b>10/17</b>	<b>Positive Emotions About the Future</b>		Adult Dispositional Hope Scale (to be completed in class) (required)		Assign ABDCE Disputation
<b>10/19</b>	<b>Positive Emotions about the Future/Positive Emotions in the Present</b>	<b>AH Ch 7, PP CH 10</b> Csikszentmihalyi Ch 1&2 on Being in Flow. Available on e- reserve at UWSP library.		Forgiveness Letter or Happy Endings Write- Up Due	Mindfulness Exercise
<b>10/24</b>	<b>Positive Emotions in the Present</b>	Csikszentmihalyi Ch 1&2 on Being in Flow. Available on e-		ABCDE Disputation Due	<b>Assign Savoring a Beautiful</b>

		reserve at UWSP library.			<b>Day</b>
<b>10/26</b>	<b>Positive Emotions in the Present/ Group Project Discussions – Groups Assigned</b>				Top Ten Evaluation
<b>10/31</b>	<b>Group Project Work Day</b>				
<b>11/2</b>	<b>Strengths and Virtues</b>	<b>AH Ch 8&amp;9 PP Ch 3 &amp; 4</b>	Take the <i>VIA Strengths Survey</i> at <a href="http://www.authentichappiness.org">www.authentichappiness.org</a> Print Top Five Strengths Results as well as list your rank ordered list of all 24. (required)	<b>Savor a Beautiful Day Due</b>	Begin Use a Signature Strength More or in a New Way
<b>11/7</b>	<b>Strengths and Virtues</b>			<b>Group Project Plan Summaries Due</b>	
<b>11/9</b>	<b>Positive Psychology in Counseling and Psychotherapy</b>	<b>PP Ch 13  Ch 2 from Magyar-Moe (2009) on D2L  Positive Psych Empirical Validations Progress Article on D2L</b>			
<b>11/14</b>	<b>Positive Psychology in Counseling and Psychotherapy/Brief Test Review</b>	<b>PP Ch 13  Ch 2 from Magyar-Moe (2009) on D2L</b>			
<b>11/16</b>	<b>Exam #2</b>				
<b>11/21</b>	<b>Group Project Work</b>				

	Day				
11/23	Test Feedback/Positive Psychology at Work/College	AH Ch 10 PP Ch 16 Csikzentmihaly i chapter on the Paradox of Work available on e-reserve at the library	<i>Work-Life Survey</i> available at <a href="http://www.authentichappiness.org">www.authentichappiness.org</a> (required)  <i>Positive Impact Test</i> – to be completed in class  <i>Clifton StrengthsFinder</i> (optional – fee applies)	Use a Strength More or in a New Way Due	Gainful Employment Measure
11/28	Positive Psychology at Work/College	AH Ch 10 PP Ch 16 Csikzentmihaly i chapter on the Paradox of Work available on e-reserve at the library			Assign Recrafting work/ college experiences/ gainful employment activity
11/30	Positive Psychology in Relationships, Parenting, and Love	AH Ch 11&12 PP Ch 12	<i>Close Relationships Questionnaire</i> available at <a href="http://www.authentichappiness.org">www.authentichappiness.org</a> (required)  <i>Relationship quiz</i> available at <a href="http://www.gottman.com/marriage/relationship-quiz/quiz1/">www.gottman.com/marriage/relationship-quiz/quiz1/</a> (also take any of the other relationship quizzes you are interested in available on this site) (optional)		
12/5	Positive Psychology in Relationships, Parenting, and Love				Introduce Strengths Date (optional) and Family Tree of Strengths (optional)
12/7	Group Presentations /Positive Psychology and the Meaningful Life	AH Ch 14 King (2006) article on D2L	<i>Meaning in Life Questionnaire</i> available at <a href="http://www.authentichappiness.org">www.authentichappiness.org</a> (optional)	Recrafting work/ college experiences/ gainful employment activity due	



<b>12/12</b>	<b>Group Presentations</b>				
<b>12/14</b>	<b>Group Presentations/Brief Test Review/Course Evals.</b>			<b>Group Project Reports Due ( self-assessment and team assessment)</b>  <b>Hope Letters Due</b>  <b>Gratitude Letter Delivery Reaction Questions Due</b>	
<b>12/21 Wed 8:00-10:00</b>	<b>Last Exam during Final Exam Time</b>				