



University of International Business and Economics International Summer School

PSY 210 Positive Psychology

Term: May 29th - June 29th, 2017

Instructor: Dr. Mark Holder

Home Institution: University of British Columbia

Office Hours: TBA

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Class hours: Monday through Thursday 120 minutes each day (2400 minutes in total)

Credit: 4

Discussion session: 2 hours each week (480 minutes in total)

Course Description

Traditionally, much of psychology has been concerned with the question: “What is wrong with you and how do we fix it?” Positive psychology asks a very different question: “What is right with you and how do we promote it?”

This course will emphasize recent research findings and theoretical advances in positive psychology. This course is about human flourishing. The course is designed to introduce students to the current research designs, techniques, research findings, and theories in positive psychology. The course is also designed to allow students to experience some of the interventions and strategies used in positive psychology in a personal way. In other words, this course involves both a study of positive psychology as well as an experiential involvement in this field. Students will learn about their personal strengths and acquire the tools, based on empirically-validated methods, to enhance their own subjective well-being.

Required Text

A detailed overview of the different areas and techniques of positive psychology will be provided in lectures and the assigned textbook: *The How of Happiness*, by Sonja Lyubomirsky. Additionally, students will be responsible for presenting a poster in class that outlines a recent journal article that investigates an intervention.

You will be expected to complete each day's reading assignment *prior* to each lecture. Lectures will cover some (but not all) of the main points in the readings but lecture will primarily provide material in addition to the text. You are responsible for both the textbook material and the lecture material. In some cases, it may be difficult to follow the lecture if you have not completed the assigned reading prior to the lecture. Please keep up with the readings as this course will move very quickly, and you will fall behind if you leave the readings for the weekends.

Course Hours

The course has 20 class sessions in total. Each class session is 120 minutes in length. The course meets from Monday to Thursday, from May 29th to June 29th, 2017.

You are expected to attend each class. If you miss a class you will be at a serious disadvantage and you will still be responsible for the material from lecture that you missed. To learn the material, obtain the lecture notes from at least one classmate, and then see the professor during office hours. Should you suffer from an extended uncontrollable absence, we can arrange a medical withdrawal from the course.

Grading Policy

Your grade will be based on two midterm exams, a poster presentation, a final exam, an identity box, and a positive psychology “play” book you will create. The final exam consists of a single in-class essay in response to the following instruction:

Based on the empirical research in positive psychology, describe a series of interventions personalized for you, to produce an enduring increase in your subjective well-being. Use theory and research findings to support these interventions. Include in your answer strategies that you would not include in your personalized intervention and provide the rationale for not including them.

The poster presentation will be a 3-4 min presentation each student will do to present a recent article on positive psychology. Dr. Holder will grade your poster presentation for both content (i.e., depth, how you discuss, integrate and evaluate research from a recent peer-reviewed journal, original thought, and relating your topic to theories) and presentation (e.g., your overall framework, clarity, attractiveness, accessibility, creativity, and originality). Additionally, on your poster presentation you will outline an exercise, related to the paper you are presenting, designed to enhance well-being. Dr. Holder will give a presentation in class which you can use as a template to help develop your own presentation.

The identity box is a task where students create a virtual or real box that displays their strengths and present this to the class. It is designed to enhance your social relations, allow you to be creative, give you an opportunity to better understand yourself and your classmates. Examples will be given in class. The playbook is a series of tasks (e.g., completing a questionnaire and reflecting on it to increase your understanding of yourself and increase your happiness) that you complete on paper and hand in to the TAs. Many will be completed in class.

The breakdown of the marks is as follows: Midterm 1 (10%), Midterm 2 (15%), Poster Presentation (20%), “play” book (15%), identity box (5%), and final exam final (35%).

You will receive numerical grades for each of the exams. Your final grade will be the cumulative score of each quiz and exam multiplied by its percentage of weight. Letter grades will be awarded as follows:

- A 90-100
- A– 85-89
- B+ 82-84
- B 78-81
- B– 75-77
- C+ 72-74
- C 68-71
- C– 64-67
- D 60-63
- F below 60

Course Schedule

Date	Class	Topic	Assigned Readings
May 29	1	Character Strengths	Chapter 1
May 30	2	Science of Happiness	
May 31	3	Assessing Well-Being	Chapter 2
June 1	4	Science of Laughter	Chapter 3
June 5	5	Happiness and Choices	
June 6	6	Midterm #1	No readings
June 7	7	Identity Boxes Hope and Optimism	Chapter 4
June 8	8	Identity Boxes Friendships	
June 12	9	Commitment	Chapter 5
June 13	10	Wisdom	
June 14	11	Love	Chapter 6
June 15	12	Midterm #2	
June 19	13	Self-Control	Chapter 7
June 20	14	Self-Respect	
June 21	15	Student Presentations begin Spirituality	Chapter 8
June 22	16	Student Presentations Empathy	Chapter 9
June 26	17	Student Poster Presentations	
June 27	18	Student Poster Presentations	
June 28	19	Review	No readings
June 29	20	Final Exam	No readings

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty includes any effort to take credit for work you did not do. Academic dishonesty includes cheating on tests by trying to copy the work of a fellow student or by attempting to use unauthorized sources such as notes, cell phones, or other electronic devices during exams. Plagiarism is also a form of academic dishonesty. Although we do not have writing assignments for this course, please be aware that plagiarism (failing to cite sources appropriately) is considered a serious violation of standards. If our staff detects academic dishonesty of any sort you will receive a failing grade for the assignment in question.