

**Positive Psychology**  
**PSY 3015-1(3)**  
**Fall Semester 2023**  
Tu Th: 830 - 945  
Final Exam- Th: 730 (take home)  
Location: T312

**Instructor: Kim W. Schaeffer, Ph.D.**

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Office Hours: M: 2:30–3:00; TU: 3:00–3:30; W: 7-10:30; TH: 9:30-10:30  
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**Course Description**

A study of the expanding field of Positive Psychology. Emphasis is placed on ways to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives. Small group activities are included.

**Course Learning Outcomes in PSY 3015:** Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

- Identify your personal character strengths and flow activities in areas of vocation, avocation, and service to others.
- Identify your top 5 maladaptive thoughts (which lead to negative affect).
- After identifying your top 5 maladaptive thoughts, create more realistically positive thoughts (which will lead to positive affect).
- Identify strategies that can be directly applied to a flourishing life (based on Rubin’s *Happiness Project*)
- Practice the privilege of daily gratitude.
- Expresses gratitude to an important person in your life (according to Seligman’s method).
- Plan a “beautiful day” within a school (or "work") day and carry it out. You will also be able to identify character strengths and flow activities within the beautiful day.
- Espouse a philosophy of life based on positivity psychology principles.

**Required Textbooks**

Rubin, G. (2015). *The happiness project*. New York: Harper.

Rubin, G. (2011). *The happiness project one-sentence journal: A five-year record*. New York: Harper.

Seligman, M. E. P. (2011). *Flourish: A visionary new understanding of happiness and well-being*. New York: Free Press.

**Assessment and Grading**

The following grades will be given based on the proportions below.

A = 93-100; A- = 90-92.99; B+ = 88-89.99; B = 84-87.99; B- = 80-83.99; C+ = 77-79.99; C = 70-76.99; C- = 65-69.99;  
D+ = 62-64.99; D = 55-61.99; D- = 50-54.99; F ≤ 49.99%

- |                               |     |
|-------------------------------|-----|
| ● Proceduralizations          | 20% |
| ● Application Exercises       | 20% |
| ● Team Presentations          | 20% |
| ● Gratitude Letter/Reaction   | 10% |
| ● Peer Helpfulness Survey     | 10% |
| ● Quizzes                     | 10% |
| ● Positive Philosophy of Life | 10% |

**Oral Presentations**

Students will be assigned to a team at the start of the semester. Each team will make 8 presentations; each team will make 4 Happiness Project Application presentations and 4 Flourishing presentations based on the requirements in the table below. For each presentation, disagreement is required on at least one of the application exercises to receive full credit for that rubric.

**Incompletes and Late Assignments**

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due—including assignments posted in Canvas. Same day lateness 10% deduction. Additional 10% for each day late.

	<i>Happiness Project</i>	<i>Flourishing</i>
<i>Class Presentation Day</i>	Tuesday (start of class)	Tuesday (after <i>Happiness Project</i> )
<i>Multiple Choice Quiz? (constructed by team)</i>	No	Yes
<i>Number of Quiz items</i>	na	5 (plus one bonus question)
<i>Presentation</i>	No	Yes
<i>Length of Presentation (after quiz)</i>	na	< 5 minutes
<i>4S Application Exercises?</i>	Yes	Yes
<i>Number of 4S Application Exercises</i>	2	2
<i>Content of 4S Application Exercises</i>	1- Reading; 1 – A student’s life	1- Reading; 1- A student’s life

#### **4S Application Exercises**

4S application exercises are significant problems that teams solve. Each team is given specific choices (4 total) for the purpose of advancing to higher levels of analysis. All teams work on the same problem. Finally, teams report their choice to the problem simultaneously. Please note: teams are not allowed to give more than one specific choice. Also, “none of the above” and “all of the above” are not allowable choices.

Each group will present one 4S Application Exercise from the reading and one 4S Application Exercise from the life of a student. The second 4S Application Exercise is unrelated to the reading, but related to an issue that a college student or one of your friends might be dealing with. The inter-team discussion will lead to an optimal solution for the purpose of a Flourishing life.

#### **4S Discussion Leaders**

Let us make maximum use of our class time by observing the following

- Do not ask each team that gave the same answer for their explanation. “Is there anything that your team would like to add?” (“No” is a better answer than “We basically agree with what the other teams said.” This is especially true if then the Team Presenter goes on to repeat what the other teams said.
- Other helpful hints:
  - “Why didn’t your team choose option B?” or “Why didn’t your team choose the other options?”
  - “What do you have to say about Team Positivity People’s remarks?”
- If multiple hands are up, go with it and be thankful that your team created a helpful Application Exercise.

## **POSITIVITY OATH**

**“I PLEDGE TO TRY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE TO BE REALISTICALLY POSITIVE AND GRATEFUL THIS SEMESTER. FURTHER, I WILL BE GRATEFUL NOT ONLY FOR THE BIG THINGS BUT FOR THE SIMPLE THINGS AS WELL. WHEN CRITICIZING OR TEMPTING TO CRITICIZE SOMEONE ELSE OR A SITUATION, I WILL TRY MY BEST TO LOOK AT THE SITUATION OR PERSON IN A REALISTICALLY POSITIVE WAY. IF I FAIL TO DO THIS AND ONE OF MY CLASSMATES OR PROFESSOR POINTS IT OUT, I WILL BE GRATEFUL AS THIS FEEDBACK WILL HELP ME GROW AND BECOME A MORE POSITIVE AND EFFECTIVE WORLD CITIZEN.”**

#### **Second Half of Syllabus Posted on Canvas**

I am required to include additional material to the syllabus. This is posted in Canvas under Syllabus (Part II).

**Quote**

“The pessimist looks down and hits his head. The optimist looks up and loses his footing. The realist looks forward and adjusts his path accordingly.”

— Robert Kirkman