Course Syllabus

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Instructor: Dr. Rose Gibson Mueller

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Office Location/Hours: Culbertson Hall Room 210
Click here to schedule a Zoom in-person meeting with me (Office Hours) ▾

Class Meeting: Tuesday & Thursday
10:00-11:15am Room: Rohr Science Hall 210
Fred Gram: Tuesday, December 12th @ 10:30am

Profile Mueller

To Text: To Phone: To Email

Department of Psychology
PSY4020 | Pursuing Greatness: The Science of Human Flourishing
4 units
Prerequisites: PSY2020 or PSY3010 and PSY3030
Senior Standing or consent of instructor

Fall 2023

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where students are challenged to think critically, live morally, and serve locally and globally as whole people who love God with their hearts, minds, and strengths. Our students are prepared to make a difference in their spheres and to live as agents of God's redemptive purpose in a fragmented world. It is personal, and holiness is a way of life.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys some of the latest findings in positive and moral psychology that concern how we live a life of meaning and how we can cultivate the character and relationships that underwrite human flourishing. Topics include what makes a "good life" and "how do I pursue it," "what is grit and how can I develop it," "what are the emotional benefits" of keeping promises and how is it that we can rapidly expanding psychological literature, the Christian tradition, and the Wesleyan tradition all converge on the importance of gratitude. Students will participate in experiential exercises that are designed to help them cultivate a juicier life and develop a deeper understanding of what it means to live a life of meaning and purpose. Students will have the opportunity to actually practice some of the habits that can reduce character growth.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students who successfully complete this program in Psychology will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a broad knowledge of psychology.
2. Summarize and apply basics of "The Good Life" from contemporary scientific perspectives and psychology.
3. Show an increase in personal growth and development (for the purpose of serving others).
4. Demonstrate such the ethics.
5. Understand research in psychology.
6. Understand and apply research in psychology.

Students will be able to:

1. Summarize various models of well-being that can be attention to popular and religious culture.
2. Describe the hypothesis of a meaningful life as discussed in contemporary research and in the Christian tradition.
3. Describe some of the principles and practices of character or character development.
4. Describe the "dark side" of character.
5. Describe the meaning of moral maturity in light of the Judeo-Christian concept of virtue, especially as envisioned in the Wesleyan tradition.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND RECOMMENDED STUDY RESOURCES

Primary Texts

- Heath, J. (2014). The Happiness Hypothesis. New York: Basic Books.
- Lopez, Snyder, & Rasmussen. (2011). The Art of Living. New York: Oxford Press.

Supplemental Texts

- Oates, Mueller, Rea. (2020). PSY4020: Pursuing Greatness: The Science of Moral Change. Cognella: Custom Edition. ▾

COURSE CREDIT HOUR INFORMATION

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the equivalent of 1 hour of classroom time for each week for 15 weeks. Beyond 45 (75 hours) of student engagement are required.

Distribution of Student Engagement Hours

Category	Focus Expectation in Hours
Class Meetings (in person)	45
Reading Assignments	12
Exam Prep Hours	20
Other Assignments & Learning Activities	20
Exercise	3
Total Hours	100

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

Grades will be based on the following:

A	B	C	D	F
93-100	83-87.99	73-76.99	63-67.99	F: Less than 59
90-92	80-82.99	70-72.99	60-62.99	
	88-89.99	77-79.99	68-69.99	

All student grades will be posted in the Canvas grade book. It is important to read the community guide in the grade book as these comments are intended to help students improve their work. Final grades will be posted in the Canvas grade book and in the PLNU Student Portal at the end of the term.

Pre-Class Assignments: Most class sessions will begin with pre-class assignments, which give students a chance to share their thoughts and experiences. These pre-assignments are due 24 hours or more, 12 or 6 hours prior to class. Students will be expected to bring their completed pre-class assignments to class. Students will be expected to participate in the last hour of the class session in Canvas "Discussions Before Class" assignments. Some "Pre-Class" assignments are scheduled to take place in class (anyway) within your small team (groups). **Pre-Class Questions will be posted in Canvas Discussions.**

Reading Assignments: All reading assignments are due on the date they are scheduled to be discussed in class. Students are expected to read, reflect, and prepare to discuss the reading assignments. Students are expected to bring their copy of the assigned reading to class.

Vocation Assignment: This is the last pre-assignment that includes a Vocation Paper and a final presentation. Students will be asked to "Pursue Greatness" in their lives by making a difference in their spheres.

Exam Prep Hours: Prior to each exam, students will be asked to review their notes and other resources, and to take a group of weeks, and then to relate to the weekly pre-class completed for the exercise. **Remember will be 50% of your grade.**

Vocation Assignment: This is the last pre-assignment that includes a Vocation Paper and a final presentation. Students will be asked to "Pursue Greatness" in their lives by making a difference in their spheres.

- **Vocational Paper (15%):** A critical paper investigating the vocation you will pursue upon graduation or another area of your choice. Students will be asked to "Pursue Greatness" in their lives by making a difference in their spheres.
- **Final Engagement in a Vocation Video (5%):** Using the assigned readings (Happiness Hypothesis, Oates, Mueller, Rea, Lopez, Snyder, & Rasmussen), students will be asked to create a video that relates the Developmental Study Abroad Trip (Paris Napoleon) to "pursuing greatness." The focus of this assignment is your Canvas Portfolio. Students will be asked to create a video that relates the following question: **What is a life of meaningful work? How do I pursue a life of meaningful work? Remember this is a video.**

The "Good Life" Paper (15%) and Final Exam (15%): Students will be asked to "pursue greatness" in their lives by making a difference in their spheres. Students will be asked to write a paper that relates the Happiness Hypothesis, Oates, Mueller, Rea, Lopez, Snyder, & Rasmussen to the "Good Life." The Final Exam will be a cumulative exam that will discuss during the last half of the class. **Remember will be 50% of your grade.**

Exam Prep Hours: 20% (or Part 2).

Exam Prep Hours: Prior to each exam, students will be asked to review their notes and other resources, and to take a group of weeks, and then to relate to the weekly pre-class completed for the exercise. **Remember will be 50% of your grade.**

Final Exam: The Final Exam is based on the material covered during the second half of the class. Although the exam is not cumulative in the Point Loma Nazarene University sense, the exam itself will involve the application and application of at least one "capacity of mind" and an "attitude of capacity of heart," as they relate to the "pursuing greatness." **Remember will be 50% of your grade.**

Good Life Journal, an alternative assignment: Students may substitute the completion of a journal for several exam questions about their thoughts, experiences, and reflections. The purpose of the journal is to allow students to "pursue greatness." Students will be asked to write a journal that relates the "good life." Students will be asked to write a journal that relates the "good life." Students will be asked to write a journal that relates the "good life