

**DRAFT: Assignment Days/Times will be Edited Before Semester Opens**  
**POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY: THE SCIENCE OF HAPPINESS**  
**PCO4113 - 28993**

Meeting Days, Times, & Location  
Tuesday 1:55-2:45pm & Thursday 1:55-3:50pm  
MAEA 310

“Authentic happiness derives from raising the bar for yourself,  
not rating yourself against others.” Seligman

**Dr. Chandler's Office Hours**

TBA

Important: I do not always meet students in my office. Weather permitting, I might meet students at Reitz, Plaza of the Americas, or elsewhere outside, as well as Library West or Marston Library. It is always useful to check with me in advance so that I can do my best to meet with you.

**Teaching Team**

Helena Sroka  
Jared Devine  
Kinga Orban  
Maria Mastrorosa  
Esha Nair  
Emma Hammes  
Laura Salas  
Cathleen Yulee  
Shannon Meloy  
Daniel Singh  
Jiaran Wang  
Ireland Marshall  
Delaney Johnson  
Shuyu "Massey" Chen  
Laura Quintero  
Emmely Talulkar  
Carlos Chirino

**Groups and Group Leaders**

TBA

**Course Description**

The purpose of this course is to examine the fundamentals of positive psychology. The course begins with an exploration of the history of positive psychology and its basic tenants. We then explore a wide range of topics that relate to happiness and well-being, including positive relationships, positive thinking, life meaning, religion/spirituality, gratitude, altruism, career development, and character strengths. Class meets three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

## **Course Objectives**

Understand the basic principles of positive psychology.

Understand the major areas within positive psychology that have received a considerable amount of attention in the literature.

- Understand the role of relationships in achieving a happy life.
- Understand how to use positive psychology techniques in your own life.
- Understand the strengths and positive life experiences of other class members.

## **Required Text**

Lopez, Pedrotti, & Snyder (2015). *Positive Psychology: The Scientific and Practical Explorations of Human Strengths*.

## **Instructional Method**

Class will be conducted in a coteacher/colearner group structure that facilitates development of knowledge as well as practice with Positive Psychology. This structure places considerably more in-class responsibility on students but greatly reduces students' out-of-class responsibilities. Research indicates that this structure is less stressful and facilitates greater understanding of material, improves overall outcomes, and improves students' capability to apply theories and concepts to every day life.

The class will be divided into groups of approximately equal size and on average with 6-8 students in each group. Each group will be responsible for planning and presenting one group lecture throughout the semester. Two teaching assistants will provide one introductory lecture. Your group leader (TA) will be your first point of contact regarding questions about assignments, course material, course policy, and about grades for individual and group work, the Group Lecture, Strength Assignment, and Gratitude Assignment.

Make up assignments must be approved by Dr. Chandler and arranged with your TA. Dr. Chandler will be happy to talk with you about questions or concerns that cannot be resolved by your TA or that pertain to personal issues (e.g., requests for accommodation through UF Disabilities Resource Center), your program(s) of study, and career ideas and possible career opportunities.

If you wish to contact any of the teaching team members you must do so via CANVAS messaging. Meetings with teaching team members must be scheduled in advance and are by appointment only.

## **Assignments**

### ***Character Strengths Assignment: 15 Total Points***

Complete the VIA Survey of Character Strengths at

<http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/> by 11:59pm due date posted in CANVAS.

Students will print out their results and bring them to class: see CANVAS course schedule for this date. During class you will interview another class member for 15 minutes and then also be interviewed by them for 15 minutes.

During these interviews, the goal will be to understand what is “best” about the other student, which in positive psychology language is labeled signature strengths. The specific questions to ask during this interview will be developed during the class before the interview occurs and with the help of your group leader (TA). Students will give a print out of their signature strength questionnaire results to the student that interviewed them.

Based on their interview of another class member, as well as that student’s signature strength questionnaire, students will complete a paper of NO MORE THAN 1 PAGE, written in Times New Roman, 12-point font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins, in black ink. This paper will describe what is best about this student. See course assignment schedule for due date.

During the class meeting that follows these interviews, a *select* number of students, probably 2 from each group, will briefly present to the entire class what is best about the student that they interviewed. Your grade (total of 15 points) will be assessed 1) on proper completion of the paper, 2) proper formatting and grammar, and 3) attendance in class for presentations.

### ***Gratitude Assignment: 25 Points***

Think of someone who has done something important and wonderful for you, yet who has not been properly thanked. Reflect on the benefits you received from this person and write him or her a letter expressing your gratitude for all he or she did for you. This letter can be over 1 page, if needed.

Arrange to deliver the letter to him or her personally. You will arrange this visit in advance, not telling the person exactly why you are coming, but making sure it is just a one-on-one visit. You will read your letter aloud to them and spend some time with him or her talking about what you wrote. You will write a one page paper about this experience. This is to be NO MORE THAN 1 PAGE, written in Times New Roman, 12-point font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins, in black ink. Anything differing from this will result in a significant reduction in your grade for this assignment.

You will briefly (2 minutes) present to the class your experiences with the assignment depending on your group number. You will turn in your gratitude letter and your one-page description of the experience to your group’s TA in advance of your gratitude presentation. See course schedule for due date. You will be graded out of 25 points on proper completion of the assignment and on proper formatting and grammar, not on the content of the letter or experience.

### ***Group Lecture: 40 Total Points***

Typically on a Thursday you will work with your group to develop a lecture on a topic that has been introduced to you in advance. Before your lecture preparation time, one member of the Teaching Team will give a short (approximately 15 minutes) introductory lecture on the basics of the topic about which you will develop your lecture. You will work on your presentation for the remainder of the class period.

***Important:*** If you work diligently and efficiently during class you will not likely need more than one more group meeting outside of class to complete your presentation. Each group member will need to present a fair share of the slides. It is strongly recommended that even though you will have only some of the slides to present personally, you should rehearse the entire presentation

with your entire group so that should an illness or emergency prevent a group member from being present, one or more of your group can step in effectively and prevent the group from losing points for the presentation. You will present your lecture on the *following class meeting*. Your group's TA will determine your final grade.

### ***Group Statement of Understanding: 100 Points***

If you are in a group that is not preparing a presentation for the following class meeting you will be responsible *as a group* to collectively write a Statement of Understanding (SOU). This paper must be NO LESS THAN 1 and ½ PAGES and NO MORE THAN 2 PAGES, written in Times New Roman, 12-point font, single-spaced, 1-inch margins, in black ink. No other formatting will be accepted.

Your group's SOU is a synthesis of your understanding of the topic introduced each Thursday and how *—this is important!*— it relates to the topic of human dignity. For the purposes of this paper human dignity can be defined simply as the composite experience of efficacy, esteem, agency, a sense of safety, freedom to be, and social capital. Each SOU will take the following 5 criteria into account.

### ***Grading the Written SOU***

- Does the SOU adequately relate the assigned topic to the topic of human dignity?
- Does the SOU reflect an adequate understanding of the material (lecture and assigned readings)?
- Does the SOU represent a collective understanding of the group's viewpoints? Your group is encouraged to disagree and conflict, but the SOU should then represent that divergence.
- Grading the Group's Process:
- Does your group equally disperse the work and include all group members?
- Does your group appear engaged in the discussion prior to the writing of the SOU?

The member of the teaching team who presents the introductory lecture on Thursday will also present critical thinking questions to help structure and guide your group's discussion. Before the group discusses and writes their weekly SOU, each group member will be asked to personally reflect and write a brief paragraph of their understanding of the week's material after the introductory lecture given earlier that day. You will submit this paragraph as a "text-entry" into the CANVAS assignment. Failure to submit this individual paragraph will result in a loss of 3 points (i.e. if your group scores a "9" on the SOU, then you would receive a "6" if you were in class but failed to submit the paragraph on CANVAS). One member of the group is responsible for submitting the group's SOU on CANVAS. For more information, please find the "SOU Rubric" under the Files tab on CANVAS.

### ***Attendance: 280 Total Points***

Given the structure of this class, attendance is mandatory and as you will see when reviewing the grades table below that it is a significant part of your grade. Your attendance is not only important to your individual success but also essential to the success of your group.

For days where you either a) present a group lecture or b) submit a “Grading Group Lecture” or c) submit a paragraph and group SOU, attendance will be folded into those grades. However, for all other classes, you will receive attendance points.

### **Extra Point Opportunities**

There are two extra credit opportunities.

- Complete the student course evaluation. If  $\geq 75\%$  of class completes the survey, everyone will receive 5 extra points.
- 1-page (no less, no more) reflection paper written as a Word document in Times New Roman, 12-point font (no other style or format will be accepted) and submitted in CANVAS before 11:59pm of the due date.

### **Grading and Evaluation Criteria**

The course is graded A to E. A late assignment will be *lowered 10%* for every day they are late, including weekends. Computer problems under any circumstances will not excuse a late paper or assignment. The course grade is comprised of the following components.

- Your grade in this course will be made up of the following assignments
- Character Strengths Assignment (15 points)
- Gratitude Assignment (25 points)
- Group Lecture (40 points)
- Statements of Understanding (100 points)
- Attendance (280 points)
- Completion of student evaluation survey (5 extra points if 75% or more of students in the class participate).
- Completion of 1-page reflection paper.

Total Estimated: 460 points (does not include extra credit points if any)

Important: *Use total points presented in the CANVAS Grades page* to calculate your letter grade based on percentages above. Total point values as presented in the syllabus are estimates that must be made at the first of each semester but do not account for addition and deletion of assignments, or extra credit points.

### **Grading**

Percent	Grade
94-100	A
90-93.9	A-
87-89.9	B+
84-86.9	B
80-83.9	B-
77-79.9	C+
74-76.9	C

70-73.9 C-  
 67-69.9 D+  
 64-66.9 D  
 60-63.9 D-  
 0-59.9 E

### ***Calculating Your Grade***

Important: *Use total points presented in the CANVAS Grades page* to calculate your letter grade based on percentages above. Total point values as presented in the syllabus are estimates that must be made at the first of each semester but do not account for addition and deletion of assignments, or extra credit points.

A grade of “I” (incomplete) is assigned only for work which has been of a passing quality through the academic term but which, for good reason and with approval of the instructor, cannot be completed within the time frame of the semester. Students for whom special circumstances may warrant an “I” must discuss this matter with the instructor before the last day of class.

### ***Make Up Policy***

There are no make-up assignments and no set times for making up gratitude presentations. Missed group presentations without approved/verifiable excuse will result in the loss of those points. With advanced notice, however, for example if you know that you have a career or graduate school interview on the date you group is scheduled to present, we *might* be able to schedule exchange your group’s presentation with another group. Please consult the university guidelines for more information on the makeup policies:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

### ***Academic Integrity***

You are expected to be familiar with the University policy on academic dishonesty, as this policy applies to our class as well as to others. Failure to comply with academic integrity policies may result in failing the course and progression through standard university procedures.

#### **Academic Accommodations for Students with Unique Needs**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), I will work with accommodations that are needed. If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.”

### **Class Schedule and Assignment Outline**

<b>Days/Dates</b>	<b>Topic &amp; Assignments</b>	<b>Readings: Read these before date given in "Days/Dates".</b>
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Wednesday Aug 23rd	Overview of coteacher/colearner teaching team (CCTT) approach. Form groups and select topics for your group presentations.	Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi (2000) and Park et al. (2004)
Friday Aug 25 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction to Positive Psychology, and Happiness & Character Strengths. Dr Chandler presenting.	
Monday Aug 28th	Group 1 will work on their Happiness & Character Strengths lecture. Groups 2-X will write their group SOUs.	
Wed August 30th	Group 1 Presents Lecture on Happiness & Character Strengths.	Chapter 4 and Lyubormirsky & Layous (2013)
Friday Sept 1st	Introduction to Being Positive and Mindfulness. Teaching Team members presenting	Begin Chapt. 8; Diener et al., (2017)
Monday Sept. 4th	Holiday	
Wednesday Sept 6th	Group 2 development of Being Positive and Mindfulness Lecture. Groups 1, 3-10 will write SOU re. Being Positive.	Ruch & Proyer (2015)
Friday Sept 8th	Group 2 Lecture on Being Positive.	Complete Survey of Character Strengths before midnight tonight.

Monday Sept 11th	Collective development of Interview Questions for Character Strengths interviews.	See instructions in syllabus.
Wednesday Sept 13th	Conduct Strength Interviews and Write "What's Best About Her/Him/Them" Paper.	See instructions in syllabus.
Friday Sept 15th	Strength Presentations	See instructions in syllabus.
Monday Sept 18th	Introduction to Open Mindedness. Teaching Team members presenting	Spiegel (2012)
Wednesday Sept 20th	Group 3 development of Open Mindedness Lecture. Groups 1, 2, 4-10 will write SOU re. Open Mindedness.	
Friday Sept 22nd	Group 3 Lecture on Open Mindedness.	O'Connell et al. (2017), and begin reading Chapter 12.
Monday Sept 25th	Introduction to Attachment, Love, and Formation of Relationships. Teaching Team members presenting	Complete Chapt. 12. Read Morelli, et al. (2017), and Shaver & Mikulincer (2010)
Wednesday Sept 27th	Group 4 development of Attachment, Love, & Formation of Relationships Lecture. Groups 1-3, 5-10 will write SOU re. Attachment, Love, & Formation of Relationships.	



Friday Sept 29th	Group 4 Lecture on Attachment, Love, and Formation of Relationships.	
Monday Oct 2nd	Introduction to Good Relationship Cognitions and Personalities. Teaching Team members presenting	Smith "Masters of Love" (The Atlantic, 2014), and Finkel (2017)
Wednesday Oct 4th	Group 5 development of Good Relationship Cognitions and Personalities Lecture. Groups 1-4, 6-10 write SOU re. Good Relationship Cognitions and Personalities.	
Friday Oct 6th	Holiday	
Monday Oct 9th	Group 5 Lecture Good Relationship Cognitions & Personalities.	
Wednesday Oct 11th	Introduction to Maintaining Satisfactory Relationships. Teaching Team members presenting.	Rothers & Cohrs (2022), LaGuardia & Patrick (2008)
Friday Oct 13th	Group 6 development of Maintaining Satisfactory Relationships Lecture. Groups 1-5, 7-10 will write SOU re. Maintaining Satisfactory Relationships.	
Monday Oct 16th	Group 6 Lecture on Maintaining Satisfactory Relationships.	

Wednesday Oct 18th	Introduction to Meaning of Life and Setting Goals. Teaching Team members presenting.	Martela & Steger (2016), Lawlor & Hornyak (2012)
Friday Oct 20th	Group 7 development of Meaning of Life and Setting Goals. Groups 1-6, 8-10 will write SOUs on Meaning of Life and Setting Goals.	
Monday Oct 23rd	Group 7 Lecture on Meaning of Life and Setting Goals.	
Wednesday Oct 25th	Introduction to Gratitude & Forgiveness. Teaching Team members will give lecture.	Begin Chapter 10. Read Dickens & DeSteno (2016), and Adams & Inesi (2016).
Friday Oct 27th	Groups 8 development of Lecture on Gratitude & Forgiveness. Groups 1-7, 8-10 will write SOUs on Gratitude & Forgiveness.	Complete reading Chapter 10. Read Solom et al. (2017).
Monday Oct 30th	Groups 8 Lecture on Gratitude & Forgiveness.	
Wednesday Nov 1st	Introduction to Sustainability and Human Dignity. Either Dr. Chandler or Teaching Team members will give lecture.	Read Verdugo (2017) and Ramond (2019), watch TEDxUF (Chandler, 2023)

Friday Nov 3rd	Group 9 Develop Lecture on Sustainability. Groups 1-8 & 10 will write SOU's on Sustainability.	
Monday Nov 6th	Groups 9 Lecture on Sustainability and Human Dignity.	
Wednesday Nov 8th	Introduction to Career development & Work. Dr. Chandler presenting	Begin chapters 11 & 15. Read Arnett (2007) and Deci & Ryan (2008).
Friday Nov 10th	Holiday	
Monday Nov 13th	Group 10 development of Lecture on Career development & Work. Groups 1-9 will write SOU on Career development & Work.	Shogren (2011)
Wednesday Nov 15th	Group 10 Lecture on Career development & Work.	Complete Chapters 11 and 15
Friday Nov 17th	No Class	
November 20th -24th	No Classes	

Monday Nov 27th	Gratitude Presentations: Day 1	See syllabus for Gratitude Presentations instructions.	
Wednesday Nov 29th	Gratitude Presentations: Day 1		
Friday Dec 1st	Gratitude Presentations: Day 2		
Monday Dec 4th [Proably] Last Class Meeting	Gratitude Presentations: Day 3		
Wednesday Dec 3rd	Back up class meeting for Gratitude Presentations if needed.		
Thursday- Friday, Dec 7th & 8th	Reading Days: No Classes		