

THE GOOD LIFE

HNRS 332 (4 units)

University of San Diego

Spring 2008

Tuesday/Thursday 9:15-10:35 a.m. (Room C115)

<p>Psychology Professor Jennifer Zwolinski, Ph.D. Serra Hall 154C 619-260-4218 jzwolinski@sandiego.edu Office Hours: MWF 11:15 am-12:55 pm</p>	<p>Philosophy Professor Matt Zwolinski, Ph.D. Founders Hall 167A 619-260-4094 mzwolinski@sandiego.edu Office Hours: MWF: 4:30-5:30; WF: 2:30-3:30</p>
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REQUIRED READING

- Cahn, S. & Vitrano, C. (2008). *Happiness: Classic and contemporary readings in philosophy*. Oxford University Press.
- Frankl, V. (1992) *Man's search for meaning* (4th ed.). Beacon Press: Boston, MA.
- Articles on Electronic Reserve
- Complete the online Plagiarism Tutorial (<http://www.indiana.edu/~istd>) prior to the end of the first week of class on your own.

GOALS OF THE COURSE

The goal of this honors course is to provide undergraduate students with a broad understanding of the theories, empirical research, and practical interventions that contribute to a "good life". This will be accomplished in a psychology-philosophy team-taught format. In the first part of the course, psychological and philosophical methodological approaches to the study of well-being will be presented. The psychological component of this section will examine the assessment and design methodology of subjective well-being using a positive psychology framework. The philosophical component will utilize the tools of conceptual analysis to attain greater clarity regarding different ideas pertaining to happiness and well-being. Next, individual (e.g., psychobiological tendencies, character traits, personality) and social-environmental (e.g., work, religion, relationships) factors associated with and commonly thought to be associated with well-being will also be examined. Finally, students will learn how to integrate the findings and theories presented in this class to lead a better life, both on an individual level and a social level.

By the end of the course, students should be able to do the following using both psychological and philosophical approaches:

- Understand the difference between happiness and well-being, and to explain the various objective and subjective approaches to defining these concepts.
- Know why it's important to lead a good life and why some people choose not to lead a good life
- Explain and critically evaluate the methodology (assessment, theories, study designs) used to examine subjective well-being
- Identify the specific individual factors empirically and theoretically (as well as falsely) identified to be associated with well-being
- Identify the specific social/environmental factors empirically and theoretically (as well as falsely) identified to be associated with well-being

- Know the types of empirical and theoretical interventions that contribute to well-being on both an individual and societal level
- Have the basic cognitive and behavioral tools to know how to make one's life more meaningful

GRADING

Grades will be determined by three exams and the Great Day project. Letter grade assignments are as follows:

A	100-93%	B	86.9-83%	C	76.9-73%	D	66.9-63%
A-	92.9-90%	B-	82.9-80%	C-	72.9-70%	D-	62.9-60%
B+	89.9-87%	C+	79.9-77%	D+	69.9-67%	F	59.9-0%

1 st Two Exams	2@20 points each	= 40 points
3 rd (Final) Exam	30 points	= 30 points
"Great Day" Project	1@30 points	= 30 points
TOTAL		=100 points

EXAMS

There will be a total of three exams. You will have 60 minutes to complete the first two exams. The second exam will cover only material discussed since the prior exam. The final exam will cover the material presented on intervention, but you will be expected to know and asked to draw on material covered throughout the entire course. You will have two hours to complete the final exam which is scheduled for Thursday 5/15 from 8-10am. Exam questions will come from the text(s) and articles as well as any information discussed in class. Given time restraints, material required for reading, but not discussed in class, may still be covered on an exam. All exams may consist of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and/or essay questions. All exams will cover material from both disciplines.

* **There are no make-up exams if you miss an exam on the scheduled exam day**; this would not be fair to other students. If you will be out of town on the day of the exam for a university-sponsored event (e.g., athletics), you must make arrangements with one of us **in person** at least **one week before the exam** date so you can take the exam before you leave. No request to change the final exam schedule will be granted. Again, this is to be fair to all students and to follow the university-assigned final exam date and time.

GREAT DAY PROJECT

The purpose of the Great Day project is to synthesize the course material and integrate it into your own life. Grading for the Great Day project will occur in three parts. The first part will be administered on the first day of class before reading the syllabus. Students will write a short paper in which you describe what you think would be an ideal (but within the realm of possibility) 24 hour period. We will discuss the results of this paper in class as a way of motivating philosophical and psychological theories regarding the good life.

The second part of the project will occur later in the semester after you have been presented with the findings associated with well-being. You will write another version of the paper you wrote the first day of class. This time, however, you will show how your selection of elements for your Great Day relates to the theoretical and empirical material covered in the course, as well as with your own research on the subject outside of the course. You will be expected to justify your choices by reference to that material. Part of this justification will involve weighing the respective merits of various theoretical and empirical approaches in cases where those approaches yield conflicting results. This second part of your paper will be due on May 1st at 9:15 am.

For the third part of this project, you will be given the challenge to actually live your Great Day before submitting your paper. You will be asked to record in your paper what you did and what you felt over the course of the day, and to report the results in a final paper. This paper will require you to reflect on your attempt to make your Great Day a reality. In what way did this attempt confirm the theoretical and empirical ideas studied in class? In what way did it conflict with them? Reflection on the way in which your own experience contributes to your theoretical and empirical understanding will be an important part of this final paper. This final part of your paper will be due at the beginning of our final exam period, May 15th at 8:00 am.

More specific information about the paper requirements will be provided in class.

RESPECT

This is a course about values, broadly construed, and one of the fundamental values we will study is *respect*. We will treat you with respect in this course, and expect you to do the same for us and your fellow students. What this means in practice is (at a minimum):

For us:

- We will arrive on time and prepared for each class meeting scheduled on the syllabus.
- We will take student questions seriously and attempt to address them as helpfully as we can within the constraints of class time.
- We will keep our scheduled office hours, or provide advance notice if this is not possible.
- We will return written assignments within a reasonable time and provide you with ample constructive criticism and an adequate explanation of your grade.
- We will treat you as an adult. Part of what this means is taking your opinions seriously. But taking your views seriously does not mean treating you with kid gloves. It means that we will assume that you have put some thought into your position and that we will hold you accountable for it, and challenge you when appropriate. We expect the same from you.
- We will respect your time and not give you “busy work.”
- We will treat this class as an honors class. We will respect your level of intellectual curiosity and skill. As such, we will provide you with a challenging class that will encourage you to demonstrate these abilities.

For you:

- You will respect the opinions of your classmates, and respond to them with seriousness, courtesy, and charity.
- You will show up to class on time.
- You will read the material assigned for class prior to the meeting at which we are scheduled to discuss it.
- You will take responsibility for turning in your well-written assignments on time.
- You will respect our time and the time of your fellow students by helping to make our time together as productive and conducive to learning as possible.

CHEATING and PLAGIARISM

Although this will not apply to the vast majority of you, cheating on any exam or assignment and/or plagiarism will result in *class failure* (i.e., an “F” in the class). You will also be reported to the Dean’s Office for disciplinary action, which may result in probation, suspension or expulsion, as well as a possible disciplinary hearing composed of faculty members and your peers.

Plagiarism refers to formal work (e.g., research papers, oral reports) publicly misrepresented as original and may comprise oral, written and crafted pieces. If you wish to use original references or pieces, word

for word or by paraphrase, those ideas should be noted by the appropriate author. It is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism before you submit any work; if you are unsure, one of us will happily discuss it further with you before any written assignment is due.

To do your part to understand plagiarism, visit the following website and complete the tutorial:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/> by the end of the first week of class.

USD subscribes to a service called Turnitin.com. Turnitin.com is a web-based application that compares the content of submitted papers to the Turnitin.com database and checks for textual similarities. All required papers for this course may be subject to submission to Turnitin.com for textual similarity review and to verify originality. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting textual similarities and verifying originality. Each student is responsible for submitting his or her papers in such a way that no identifying information about the student is included. A student may not have anyone else submit papers on the student's behalf to Turnitin.com. A student may request in writing that his or her papers not be submitted to Turnitin.com. However, if a student chooses this option, the student may be required to provide documentation in a form required by both faculty members to substantiate that the papers are the student's original work.

**** IMPORTANT NOTE ****

Due to the sensitive nature of some of the material in this course and in order to encourage everyone to participate freely, audiotape recordings of class lectures are not allowed for this course. In addition, video and still cameras of any kind are not allowed in this class.

KEY DATES AT A GLANCE

Feb 28	-	Exam 1
Mar 17-24	-	No class: Easter Break
Apr 15	-	Exam 2
May 1	-	Part 2 of Great Day Paper Due (Part 1 Completed on Day 1 of class)
May 15	-	Part 3 of Great Day Paper Due, 8:00 AM & Final Exam, 8:00 AM

CLASS SCHEDULE for "THE GOOD LIFE"

Any changes to this schedule will be announced in-class as needed to allow for flexibility in coverage of information.

***Unless otherwise noted, all readings are due on the first day of their presentation. Read each article or chapter in the order noted below. ***

Class # Date Class Topic and Assignments Due

INTRODUCTION: PHILOSOPHICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

- 1 Jan 29 Introduction to the Course and Syllabus Review
- Part 1 of Great Day Project completed in class
- 2 Jan 31 Introduction to Positive Psychology
Psych Reading: - Seligman, M., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000) "Positive psychology: An introduction" (ER)
- Begin Victor Frankl (1946) *Man's search for meaning* (**Note to students to continue reading this on your own until the final due date on 4/17)

METHODOLOGY

- 3-4 Feb 5, 7 Psychological Assessment and Study Design
Psych Readings: - Fordyce, M. (1988). "A review of research on happiness measures: A sixty second index of Happiness and mental health" (ER)
- Deiner, E. (1994). "Assessing subjective well-being: Progress and opportunities" (ER)
- 5 Feb 12 Philosophical Issues in the Empirical Study of Well-Being
Phil Reading: - Daniel Haybron. (2000) "Two Philosophical Problems in the Study of Happiness" (ER)
- Mark Kelman. (2005) "Hedonic Psychology and the Ambiguities of 'Welfare'" (ER)
- 6 Feb 14 Introduction to Philosophical Theories of Happiness and Well-Being
Phil Reading: - Derek Parfit. (1986) "What Makes Someone's Life Go Best?" (ER)
- Bengt Brulde. (2007) "Happiness and the Good Life. Introduction and Conceptual Framework" (ER)
- 7 Feb 19 Philosophical Theories: Happiness and Pleasure
Phil Readings: - Epicurus. (341-271BC) "Letter to Menoeceus," and "Leading Doctrines" (*Happiness*)
- Jeremy Bentham. (1781) "An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation," (*Happiness*)
- Wayne Davis. (1981) "Pleasure and Happiness" (*Happiness*)
- Daniel Haybron. (2001) "Why Hedonism is False" (*Happiness*)
- 8 Feb 21 Philosophical Theories: Happiness and Satisfaction
Phil Readings: - Aristotle. (350BC) "The Nicomachean Ethics" (*Happiness*)
- John Stuart Mill. (1864) "Utilitarianism" (*Happiness*)
- John Kekes. (1982) "Attitudinal and Episodic Happiness" (*Happiness*)

- 9 Feb 26 Philosophical Theories: Happiness and Human Flourishing
Phil Readings: - Robert Nozick. (1974) "The Experience Machine" (*Happiness*)
 - Richard Kraut. (1979) "Two Conceptions of Happiness" (*Happiness*)

- 10 Feb 28 EXAM 1

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL QUALITIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE GOOD LIFE

- 11-14 Mar 4,6,11,13 (Bio)psychological Factors
Psych Readings: - Davidson, R.J. (2005) "Well-being and affective style: neural substrates and biobehavioural correlates." (*ER*)
 - Richman, L. et al. (2005). "Positive emotion and health: Going beyond the negative." (*ER*)
 - Salovey, P., Rothman, A., Detweiler, J., & Steward, W. (2000). "Emotion states and physical health." (*ER*)
 - DeNeve, K.M., & Cooper, H. (1998) "The happy personality: a meta-analysis of 137 personality traits and subjective well-being" (*ER*)
 - Lyubomirsky, S., King, L. A., & Diener, E. (2005) "The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success?" (*ER*)
 - Post, S.G. (2005). "Altruism, happiness, and health: It's good to be good" (*ER*)
 - Diener, E., Suh, E. N., Lucas, R. E., & Smith, H. L. (1999). "Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress" (*ER*)
 - Dahlsgaard, K., Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. (2005) "Shared virtue: The convergence of valued human strengths across culture and history" (*ER*)

---EASTER BREAK---

- 15 Mar 25 Well-Being and Morality
Phil Readings: - Plato. (360BC) "The Ring of Gyges" (*ER*)
 - Steven Cahn. (2004) "The Happy Immoralist" (*Happiness*)
- 16 Mar 27 Well-Being and Morality, continued
Phil Readings: - Jeffrie Murphy. (2004) "The Unhappy Immoralist" (*Happiness*)
 - Julia Annas. (1998) "Virtue and Eudaimonism" (*Happiness*)
 - Steven Cahn. (2006) "A Challenge to Morality" and "A Further Challenge" (*Happiness*)
- 17-18 Apr 1, 3 Social and Environmental Factors
Psych Readings: - Putnam, R.D. & Helliwell, J. (2005) "The social context of well-being" (*ER*)
 - Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1999) "If we are so rich, why aren't we happy?" (*ER*)
 - Proulx, C. M., Helms, H. M., & Buehler, C. (2007) "Marital quality and personal well-being: A meta-analysis" (*ER*)
 - Sawatzky, R., Ratner, P. A., & Chiu, L. (2005) "A meta-analysis on the relationship between spirituality and quality of life" (*ER*)

- 19 Apr 8 Well-Being and Wealth
Phil Readings: - Will Wilkinson (2007) "In Pursuit of Happiness Research" (ER)
- 20 Apr 10 Well-Being and Wealth, continued
Phil Readings: - Greg Easterbrook (2003) "The Progress Paradox" (ER)
- 21 Apr 15 **EXAM 2**
- 22 Apr 17 Man's Search for Meaning
Psych Readings: - Finish Victor Frankl (1946) *Man's search for meaning*

INTERVENTIONS AND OTHER APPROACHES TO LEADING A GOOD LIFE

- 23 Apr 22 The Meaning(s) of Life
Phil Readings: - Nagel, T. (1987) "The Meaning of Life" (ER)
 - Schmitz, D. (2002) "The Meanings of Life" (ER)
- 24-26 Apr 24, 29, Psychosocial Interventions & Great Day Paper Due on 5/1
 May 1
Psych Readings: - Tkach, C., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2006) "How do people pursue happiness?: Relating personality, happiness-increasing strategies, and well-Being" (ER)
 - Seligman, M., Steen, T., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005) "Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions" (ER)
 - Huppert, F. (2005) "Positive mental health in individuals and populations" (ER)
 - Bono, G., & McCullough, M. (2006) "Positive responses to benefit and harm: Bringing forgiveness and gratitude into cognitive psychotherapy" (ER)
 - Marks, N. & Shah, H. (2005) "Well-being manifesto for a flourishing society" (ER)
- 26 May 6 Politics and the Good Life
Phil Readings: - Murray, C. (1994) "Little Platoons" (ER)
- 27 May 8 Some Philosophical Rules to Live By
Phil Readings: - Jesus. (7-2BC – 26-36AD) "The Sermon on the Mount" (ER)
 - Epictetus. (135AD) "*Enchiridion*" (ER)

****Cumulative Final Exam: Thursday, May 15, 8:00 AM** and PART 3 OF GREAT DAY PAPER DUE**