

**The Pursuit of Happiness:
The Politics and Psychology of Well Being**
*An Interdisciplinary Studies Course at
Bellevue College*

Fall, 2013



*It is impossible to live the pleasant
life without also living sensibly,
nobly and justly, and it is
impossible to live sensibly, nobly
and justly without living
pleasantly.*

--Epicurus

Class Meets: Room L221

9:30-11:20

Monday-Friday

Instructors

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Office Hours

M-F 11:30-12:20

COURSE INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our class, "The Pursuit of Happiness." We look forward to studying with you this quarter. We think you will find this course to be intellectually and personally rewarding.

What does it mean to be happy, and what makes us happy? How much is our well-being influenced by money? Relationships? Work? Geography? Social conditions? Politics? Genetics? Attitude? Through readings and discussions, we will explore what psychologists, political scientists, and others have discovered about happiness and how to cultivate it -- both individually and collectively.

LEARNING ATMOSPHERE

We believe that students learn best when they are actively involved in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, this is an *active, interactive* course where you are expected to read, write, discuss, and participate. You will actively create your own knowledge, rather than simply passively listen to ours. We think of our class as a “collaborative learning community” where we all teach and learn from each other.

COURSE CREDIT

You will receive credit for two of the following courses (10 credits):

- I. PSYC 100 General Psychology
 Or
 PSYC 240/ SOC 240 Social Psychology

 and
- II. POLS 101 Introduction to Political Science
 Or
 POLS 204 Introduction to Comparative Politics

You will take one psychology course and one political science course. Each of these courses is worth 5 credits and all give Social Science credit.

We will help you choose your two classes during the first two weeks of the quarter. Although different students will earn credit for different courses, we will all study and explore the same course material.



*Our object in the construction of
the state is the greatest
happiness of the whole, and not
of any one class.*

--Plato

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing the course, the successful student should be able to:

- Analyze and critique the strengths and weaknesses of an author's argument;
- Work collaboratively in a team: investigate ideas together and respect others' insights and opinions;
- Take responsibility for one's own learning: take initiative, follow up ideas and intuitions, and evaluate one's own progress;
- Explain the scientific method as well as specific social scientific methodologies of psychology and political science (e.g., the comparative method);
- Analyze the interaction between individuals and the social and political processes they participate in;
- Evaluate the influence of psychological and social influences on a broad range of beliefs, perceptions, explanations, attitudes, emotions, and behaviors related to happiness.
- Demonstrate the application of psychological principles and findings to one's own life.
- Demonstrate an understanding of and appreciation for rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

REQUIRED TEXTS

DeGraaf and Batker, *What's the Economy For, Anyway?*

Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*

Layard, *Happiness: Lessons from a New Science*

Liu and Hanauer, *The Gardens of Democracy*

Lonely Planet, *Happy*

Lyubomirsky, *The How of Happiness*

McRaney, *You are Not So Smart*

Weiner, Eric, *The Geography of Bliss*

Copies of introductory psychology textbooks will be made available.



*Gross National Happiness is
more important than Gross
National Product.*

--King Jigme Sinye Wangchuck

WEEKLY COURSE STRUCTURE

The tentative weekly schedule of The Pursuit of Happiness:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<i>Lecture: Political Science</i>	<i>Seminar 1 ½ hours</i>	<i>Activities/ Films/ Guest Speakers</i>	<i>Lecture: Psychology</i>	<i>Seminar 1 ½ hrs</i>
<i>Lecture: Psychology</i>			<i>Lecture: Political Science</i>	<i>Wrap-up</i>

Introduction/Wrap-up Sessions

At the end of every week, we'll have a community check-in to talk about the week, evaluate the progress of the course, and address any issues that come up. We value your high participation at these sessions.

Lectures

Lectures will provide much of the content for the course. The Political Science lectures will address both introduction to political science and comparative politics. The Psychology lectures will cover key elements of both general and social psychology.

Happiness Activities Journal

On most Wednesdays, we will be engaging in more of a workshop format, applying the concepts in the course to our personal lives. We will participate in a number of activities, for example taking questionnaires on happiness or writing about our personal experiences. More details about this part of the class will be covered in class.

GRADING

Final course grades are based on performance in the following areas, weighted as follows:

	Points	% of grade
Attendance and Participation		20%
Attendance	50	
Participation	150	
Exams		30%
Quizzes (2 @ 50)	100	
Midterm Exam	100	
Final Exam	100	
Seminar (papers and participation)		20%
Seminar papers	100	
Seminar attendance/participation	100	
Happiness Activities Journal		20%
Weekly assignments/ workshop	200	
Final Project		10%
Happiness mission statement	50	
Citizen pledge	50	

(1) Attendance and Participation: Participation is essential to the format of this program. In short, you should plan to be an *active* participant. "Participation" includes attendance at all events as well as participation in workshops, class discussions, guest speaker presentations, film sessions, in-class activities, internet assignments, and other miscellaneous assignments.

(2) Performance on Exams: Two quizzes and two exams, a midterm and a final, are given over the course of the quarter. Quizzes will be short-answer questions on the key concepts in political science and psychology. The midterm and final examinations are in essay form and integrate all the material we read and study (films, lectures, guest speakers, etc.). You will have a list of all possible essay questions ahead of time. Students may participate in the process of determining the questions and should organize themselves into study groups to prepare for the exams.

(3) Performance in Seminars: We will have two seminar sessions per week (Tuesdays and Fridays). Seminars will include both small and large group discussions of the readings. These thought-provoking discussions are the heart of the interdisciplinary studies program, and being prepared for these meetings is crucial. You must complete the readings ahead of time and bring a seminar response paper (approximately 1-2 pages each) to each seminar. Papers must be typed or word-processed. These papers will not be individually graded but will be read and responded to by peers and faculty. You are expected to be an active participant, bring up questions to be discussed, speak to the point under discussion, and be a good listener. Your seminar grade is based on attendance, participation, and response papers.

(4) Happiness activity journal: Students will be assigned weekly hands-on activities related to course content. Write-ups of the activities will be due online every Tuesday night and will be discussed in class on Wednesdays.

(5) Citizen pledge and happiness mission statement: At the end of the quarter, you will be asked to write a citizen pledge and happiness mission statement and recite them in front of your classmates.

We believe these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

-Thomas Jefferson, The Declaration of Independence, 1776

"Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony." -- Gandhi



TENTATIVE COURSE READING SCHEDULE

Week 1 9/23-27	Seminar 1: The How of Happiness, Pt. 1
Week 2 9/30-10/4	Seminar 2: Happiness: Lessons from a New Science, Pt. 1 Seminar 3: Happiness: Lessons from a New Science, Pt. 2
Week 3 10/7-11	Seminar 4: Happiness: Lessons from a New Science, Pt. 3 (online) + supplemental reading(s) (online) Seminar 5: Geography of Bliss, Intro + Ch. 1-3
Week 4 10/14-18	Seminar 6: Geography of Bliss, Ch. 4-6 Seminar 7: Geography of Bliss, Ch. 7-10, Epilogue
Week 5 10/21-25	Seminar 8: What's the Economy For, Anyway? Intro + Ch. 1-5 Seminar 9: What's the Economy For, Anyway? Ch. 6-10
Week 6 10/28-11/1	Seminar 10: What's the Economy For, Anyway? Ch. 11-13 + deGraaf article (online) Seminar 11: Happy Money, one chapter to be assigned (online)
Week 7 11/4-8	Seminar 12: Man's Search for Meaning, Pt. 1
Week 8	Seminar 13: Man's Search for Meaning, Pt. 2

11/11-15	Seminar 14: You Are Not So Smart
Week 9 11/18-22	Seminar 15: You Are Not So Smart (selected chapters) Seminar 16: Supplemental policy readings (online)
Week 10 11/25-29	Seminar 17: The Gardens of Democracy, Ch. 1-3, + Readings (online)
Week 11 12/2-6	Seminar 18: The Gardens of Democracy, Ch. 4-6, + The How of Happiness, Ch. 10
Week 12 12/9-11	Last class

A more detailed calendar of activities can be found in the separate calendar hand-out and in each module in Canvas, our online class website.

Student Accommodations. If you need course modifications/adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please let us know as soon as possible. If you have not done so already, you can contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in B132 or by calling 425.564.2498 or TTY 425.564.4110. Information is also available on their website at <http://bellevuecollege.edu/drc/>

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

As instructors, we intend to be prepared, responsive, accessible, and fair. In turn, we expect you as students to be prepared, present, active, and honest. With your help, we hope to create a learning environment in which we can exchange ideas and different points of view with respect and courtesy. Showing respect includes arriving on time, turning off cell phones, resisting the urge to text, and minimizing distractions. Above all, we expect to have a really good time while we explore what we know about happiness!