

# The Pursuit of Happiness: The Psychology & Politics of Living Well

An Interdisciplinary Studies Course at Bellevue College  
Fall 2015 | Mon-Fri 10:30am - 12:20pm | Room R110 (A&B)

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## COURSE INTRODUCTION

What is happiness? What are the elements of a fulfilling and meaningful life? This class explores what social scientists have discovered about happiness at both the individual and societal levels. Topics include friendship, love, justice, citizenship, time, sustainability, self-esteem, empathy, work, creativity, music, politics, money, achievement, spirituality, and humor.

## COURSE CREDIT

You will receive credit for two of the following five-credit courses for a total of 10 credits. You must select one psychology course and one political science course.

1. Psychology: **PSYC 100** (General Psychology) *or* **PSYC 240** (Social Psychology)  
*and*

2. Political Science: **POLS 101** (Intro to Political Science) *or* **POLS 204** (Intro to Comparative Politics)

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

## LEARNING ATMOSPHERE

This class is intended to be a *collaborative learning community* where we all teach and learn from each other. 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 produce your own knowledge, rather than simply passively consume ours. As instructors, you can expect us to be prepared, responsive, accessible, and fair. As learners, we expect you 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.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate the tension between citizenship and consumerism and foster a stronger commitment to the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
2. Articulate psychological and social/political influences related to happiness and wellbeing.
3. Communicate in both written and verbal forms in a clear, confident, and creative way.
4. Appreciate the benefits of learning in an interdisciplinary community.

## COURSE SCHEDULE: Weekly Structure (Overview)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
10:30	Lecture: Political Science	Seminar	Activities, Films, Guest Speakers	Lecture: Psychology	Seminar + Wrap-Up
11:30	Lecture: Psychology			Lecture: Political Science	

### Lectures

Lectures will give you a foundation in disciplinary material through the lens of happiness and wellbeing. Political science lectures will address both introductory political science and comparative politics. Psychology lectures will cover key elements of both general and social psychology. No outside reading is required for lecture material.

### Seminars

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 (1-2 pages single-spaced) to each seminar. During seminars, 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.

### Activities

Most Wednesdays will be structured in a workshop format, applying the concepts in the course to our personal lives. More details about this part of the class will be covered in class.

### 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 engagement at these sessions.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:  
Topics, Reading, & Assignment Due Dates**

**FULL TEXTS (buy these)**

DeGraaf & Batker: *What's the Economy For, Anyway?*  
 Dunn & Norton: *Happy Money*  
 Frankl: *Man's Search for Meaning*  
 Hesse, *Siddhartha*  
 Liu & Hanauer: *The Gardens of Democracy*  
 Lloyd/Moore: *V is for Vendetta* (movie/graphic novel)  
 Lonely Planet: *Happy*  
 Lyubomirsky: *The How of Happiness*  
 Weiner: *The Geography of Bliss*

**EXCERPTED TEXTS (selections will be provided)**

Fredrickson: *Love 2.0: How Our Supreme Emotion Affects Everything We Feel, Think, Do, and Become*  
 Haidt, *The Happiness Hypothesis*  
 Kahneman: *Thinking, Fast and Slow*  
 Wilkinson & Pickett: *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*  
 Yes! Magazine: *Sustainable Happiness (Winter 2009)*

**September**

Monday: Lecture	Tuesday: Seminar	Wednesday: Activity	Thursday: Lecture	Friday: Seminar
21  Welcome & Community Building	22  Community Building  Introduction to Psychology & Political Science	23  <i>Happy</i> movie	24  Lecture  <i>Thinking, Fast and Slow</i> : Ch. 1 (pp. 19-30) (11 pgs)	25  <i>The How of Happiness</i> : Foreword + Part One (pp. 1-79) (79 pgs)
28  Lecture	29  <i>What's the Economy for, Anyway?:</i> introduction + Ch. 1-3 (pp. 1-62) (62 pgs)	30  Activity	1  Lecture	2  <i>What's the Economy for, Anyway?:</i> Ch. 4-6 (pp. 63-116) (50 pgs)

## October

Monday: Lecture	Tuesday: Seminar	Wednesday: Activity	Thursday: Lecture	Friday: Seminar
<p>5</p> <p>10:30-12:20 John de Graaf lecture</p>	<p>6</p> <p><i>What's the Economy for, Anyway?:</i> Ch. 7-9 (pp. 117-177) (60 pgs)</p>	<p>7</p> <p>10:30-12:20 John de Graaf activity</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Psych: Biology of Behavior</p>	<p>9</p> <p><i>What's the Economy for, Anyway?:</i> Ch. 10-13 (pp. 178-240) (62 pgs) + de Graaf <i>World Happiness</i> summary chapter</p> <p>11:30-12:20 John de Graaf Q&amp;A</p>
<p>12</p> <p>Lecture</p>	<p>13</p> <p><i>The Geography of Bliss:</i> Intro + Ch. 1-3 (pp. 1-95) (95 pgs)</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Activity</p>	<p>15</p> <p>Lecture</p>	<p>16</p> <p><i>The Geography of Bliss:</i> Ch. 4-6 (pp. 97-218) (122 pgs)</p>
<p>19</p> <p>Lecture</p>	<p>20</p> <p>Non-contract day for faculty: No class</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p> <p>11:30-12:20 John de Graaf lecture on time poverty @ "Coffee, Tea, &amp; Politics"</p>	<p>23</p> <p><i>The Geography of Bliss:</i> Ch. 7-10 + Epilogue (pp. 219-325) (107 pgs)</p>
<p>26</p> <p>Midterm preparation (create questions)</p>	<p>27</p> <p><i>Sustainable Happiness</i></p>	<p>28</p> <p>Midterm preparation (discuss questions)</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Midterm Exam</p>	<p>30</p> <p>Post-Midterm Adventure</p>

## November

Monday: Lecture	Tuesday: Seminar	Wednesday: Activity	Thursday: Lecture	Friday: Seminar
2  Lecture	3  Excerpts from <i>The Spirit Level</i>	4  Activity	5  Lecture	6  <i>V is for Vendetta</i>
9  Lecture	10  Students' choice	11  Veteran's Day: No Class	12  Lecture	13  <i>Love 2.0</i> Ch. 1, 2, 5, 6 (pp. 3-38, 91-138) (84 pgs)
16  Lecture	17  <i>Siddhartha</i>	18  Activity	19  Lecture	20  <i>The Happiness Hypothesis</i> : Intro, Ch. 5, 10 (pp. ix-xiii, 81-106, 213-239) (60 pgs)
23  11:30-12:20 Guest lecture by David Spataro, Political Science	24  <i>Happy Money</i> : Prologue + Epilogue + two of Ch. 1-5 ( <b>your choice</b> ) (~70 pgs)	25  Activity	26  Thanksgiving Break (No Class)	27  Thanksgiving Break / Black Friday / Buy Nothing Day (No Class)
30  <i>Man's Search for Meaning</i> : Pt. I (pp. 3-93) (90 pgs)	1  Final Lectures	2  Final Project #1 due Read happiness mission statement Preparations for final	3  <i>The Gardens of Democracy</i>	4  Final Project #2 due Read citizen pledge Preparations for final

## December

Monday: Lecture	Tuesday: Seminar	Wednesday: Activity	Thursday: Lecture	Friday: Seminar
7  Faculty Professional Development Day: No Class	8  Finals Week: No Class	9  Finals Week: No Class	10  9:30-11:20 Final Exam	11

## GRADING

Grading Category	Points	Category %
<b>Attendance &amp; Participation</b>		25%
• Attendance (1 pt per day)	50	
• Participation	200	
<b>Reflection/Activity Journals</b> (11 x 20 pts each)	200	20%
<b>Seminar Papers</b> (18 x 10 pts each)	180	18%
<b>Exams</b>		15%
• Midterm exam	100	
• Final exam	50	
<b>Final Projects</b>		20%
• #1: Happiness paper	100	
• #2: Citizenship paper	100	
<b>Online Course Evaluation</b>	20	2%
<b>Total Points Possible</b>	1000	

### Attendance & 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 seminars, workshops, class discussions, guest speaker presentations, film sessions, in-class activities, Internet assignments, and other miscellaneous assignments. A few times throughout the quarter, you will have the opportunity to self-reflect and check in with us individually to assess your level of participation. You will also receive daily points for attendance; late arrivals will not receive full credit.

### Activities

You will be assigned weekly hands-on activities related to course content. Write-ups of the activities will be due on [Canvas](#) every Wednesday at 8:00am and will be discussed in class on Wednesdays. Your lowest score on the weekly reflection/activity journals will be dropped.

### 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 are expected to be an active participant, bring up questions to be discussed, speak to the point under discussion, and be a good listener.

- Papers: You must complete the readings ahead of time and complete a **response paper** (1 page, singled spaced, minimum) for each seminar. This paper is due on [Canvas](#) by class time and must also be submitted in hard copy in class. (Papers submitted online but not brought to class will lose 1 point of credit.) Papers should reflect on, rather than just summarize, the material. Reflection should also include topics for discussion, including specific discussion questions, connections to other concepts or other classes, or real-world examples. These papers will be read and responded to by peers and faculty.

### Exams

Two exams, a midterm and a final, will be given over the course of the quarter. Both 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 will participate in the process of determining the questions and should organize themselves into study groups to prepare for the exams.

### **Final Project**

At the end of the quarter, you will be asked to write two papers analyzing (1) individual happiness and (2) societal wellbeing. The purpose of these analyses is to reflect on what you have learned throughout the quarter and to describe how you will use this knowledge to improve yourself as an individual and as a member of society.

1. The **happiness paper** will be a 3-4 page (single-spaced) synthesis of all the readings and activities you complete over the course as they relate to individual happiness, drawing together the major themes and quoting the relevant texts to evaluate what you learned from both reading and discussion. This final synthesis should speak to the broad topic of what it means to be happy. This analysis will conclude with your own personal *happiness mission statement*: how you will use what you learned in this class to further your own happiness.
2. The **citizenship paper** will be a 3-4 page (single-spaced) synthesis of all the readings and activities you completed over the course as they relate to societal wellbeing and what a good society needs, drawing together the major themes and quoting the relevant texts to evaluate what you learned from both reading and discussion. This final synthesis should speak to the broad topic of what it means to be a good and responsible citizen in flourishing society. This analysis will conclude with a *citizenship pledge* in which you discuss your responsibilities as a citizen to promote a good society.

You will recite both the happiness mission statement and citizen pledge in front of your classmates.

### **Online Course Evaluation**

You will receive credit for completing an online course evaluation toward the end of the quarter. This will include 5 points for each instructor you anonymously evaluate through Bellevue College's general course evaluation system (you will submit a screen shot showing completion of the evaluation) and 10 points for completing a write-up in which you reflect on how well the course addressed each of the learning outcomes.

## **RESOURCES FOR SUCCESS**

### **Office Hours**

Come to office hours with questions, comments, or topics for debate and discussion. We are also happy to talk about other [psychology](#)- or [political science](#)-related topics. See times and location listed at the top of this syllabus. We can correspond via email or on [Canvas](#) if those times don't fit your schedule.

### **Academic Success Center**

Check out the [Writing Lab](#) to improve the quality of your academic writing.

### **Counseling Center**

You can make an appointment for [academic counseling](#) in the Student Success and Counseling Center (2nd floor B building) for help with study skills or test anxiety: 425-564-2212. The Counseling Center also provides free short-term counseling for a wide range of other issues, ranging from stress and depression to relationship problems to sexual assault and other forms of abuse.

## **Multicultural Services**

MCS specializes in assisting students of color, LGBTQ students, and refugee and immigrant students, but all BC students are welcome to use MCS's services free of charge. MCS is really wonderful at helping all students feel comfortable and welcome at Bellevue College. MCS can help with a wide variety of personal and professional challenges, from figuring out how to pay for college and secure childcare for kids, to personal counseling and advising. Stop by their office in B233 or call them at (425) 564-2208.

## **TRiO Student Support Services**

This department provides excellent academic support for students who have limited incomes, documented disabilities, or who are the first in their families to attend college. Students who join TRiO are given close and intensive academic advising, lessons in study skills, tutoring, and overall support not only as students but also as human beings. Learn more by stopping by B233 or visiting the [website](#).

## **Students Who Require Disability Accommodations**

The Disability Resource Center serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment, and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact the DRC as soon as possible. The DRC office is located in B132 or you can call the reception desk at (425) 564-2498.

- Deaf students can reach the DRC by video phone at (425) 440-2025 or by TTY at (425) 564-4110.
- Please visit the [DRC website](#) for application information into the program and other helpful links.
- [Autism Spectrum Navigators](#) (ASN): if you are a student with a documented autism spectrum disorder, there is an additional access program available to you. Contact [asn@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:asn@bellevuecollege.edu) or (425) 564-2764. ASN is located in the Library Media Center in D125.
- If you are a person who requires assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc., please meet with me to develop a safety plan within the first week of the quarter.

## **Procedures and Guidelines of the Social Science Division**

Please see [Canvas](#) for a full list of the procedures and guidelines of the [Social Science Division](#).

## **A Note on Multitasking**

Research shows that when we do more than one thing at a time, we're not actually doing them simultaneously. Instead, we're shifting our attention from one thing to another. During that shift, we lose focus, and it takes effort to refocus on the new task. In fact, the more often we "multitask," the more distracted we are by irrelevant information, and the worse we are at concentrating. Avoid multitasking in class, and you'll learn more. Avoid multitasking when reading, and you'll read more efficiently.