

# Psychology 294: Positive Psychology

## *Special Topics in Psychology Series*

Bellevue College

Spring 2016 | MW 9:30-11:20 & online | Room A206

<b>Professor:</b>	Tabitha Kirkland, Ph.D.
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:tabitha.kirkland@bellevuecollege.edu">tabitha.kirkland@bellevuecollege.edu</a>
<b>Office phone:</b>	(425) 564-2329
<b>Office location:</b>	D100A
<b>Office hours:</b>	M-Th 11:30-12:20 and by appointment
<b>Course website:</b>	Canvas: <a href="http://bc.instructure.com">http://bc.instructure.com</a>

**Required textbook:** Lopez, S. J., Pedrotti, J. T., & Snyder, C. R. (2015). *Positive psychology: The scientific and practical explorations of human strengths* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications Ltd.

This syllabus is your guide to the class. If you have questions, **read the syllabus first** before asking me.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Positive psychology is the study of optimal human functioning: what makes us happy, healthy, and content in our lives, and the thoughts and behaviors that encourage happiness and well-being. In this course, you will learn what positive psychologists have discovered about the good life and acquire skills and tools to unlock the secrets of happiness in your own life. Topics include happiness, self-esteem, empathy, friendship, goal setting, love, achievement, creativity, optimism, resilience, courage, mindfulness, spirituality, and humor.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this class, students should be able to:

- Describe the purpose, scope, and areas of application in the discipline of positive psychology.
- Recognize, compare and contrast various positive psychology concepts.
- Identify one's own strengths and how best to capitalize on them.
- Apply positive psychology practices and interventions to one's own life.
- Communicate in both written and verbal forms in a clear, confident, and creative way.

### EXPECTATIONS

#### **My Role as Instructor**

I am here to guide you in exploring this fascinating material. I will do my best to make class time interesting, engaging, and enjoyable for everyone. I will use on a variety of methods to promote learning, including videos, discussions, and activities in and out of class. I will create and enforce a learning atmosphere that is safe, comfortable, and respectful for everyone. I will communicate my expectations clearly and hold all learners to equitable standards. I will welcome questions, comments, and suggestions, and I will adapt to individual needs whenever possible.

#### **Your Role as Learner**

Students learn best when they are actively engaged and involved in the learning process. This is an active and interactive course in which you will often learn by discussing and/or doing. You are expected to observe the world, read, write, discuss, and participate. I think of our classroom as a *collaborative learning community* wherein we all teach and learn from each other. Every time you make a comment or ask a question, you teach something to the rest of us. I challenge you to abandon the traditional passive student role and to get involved with teaching & learning – I think you'll enjoy it.

If this is one of your first college classes, please know that college works quite differently from high school. There is less structure, time, and guidance, and more independent learning is required. **You are responsible for keeping yourself on schedule, knowing due dates, and planning ahead.** Please contact me right away if any circumstances arise that interfere with your ability to participate fully in class.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Reading

Class lectures and activities highlight, supplement, reinforce, and clarify knowledge you have acquired from a thorough and careful reading of the textbook. Attending lectures is not a substitute for reading and studying the course material on your own. As a general guideline, you should plan to spend about 15 hours per week reading and studying the material (3 hours per class credit). To get the most out of your reading, start by reading the chapter summary at the end, then skim the major chapter headings and note these on a separate paper. Finally, read for key information supporting each major heading/topic and add these to your notes in outline form (and preferably in your own words). You will then have your own personal guide to each chapter; if done effectively, you can study your notes rather than re-reading the book. When studying for quizzes/exams, please focus especially on the material that overlaps with lecture/discussions.

### Quizzes [150]

Quizzes (25 points each) are a combination of multiple-choice and short-answer, and are given in class (see schedule). Please bring both a pencil and a colored pen to each quiz. You will take each quiz collaboratively with a randomly assigned partner. You must make advance arrangements to take a quiz early.

### Midterm Exam [150]

A midterm exam will be given online. It will be available starting the afternoon of Wednesday, May 11 and due by the end of the day on Friday, May 13. Question format will be similar to quizzes. If you are unable to take the exam during this scheduled time, notify me in advance when possible and otherwise no later than the next class meeting. A make-up exam can only be scheduled for valid and documented reasons, such as health issues or personal emergencies, and are given at my discretion.

### Final Project/Exam [200]

You will select your final adventure by choosing from one of three options: (1) create a final presentation to be given on Wednesday, June 8, (2) submit a final paper by the end of the day on Monday, June 13, or (3) take a cumulative final exam in class on Monday, June 13. You will choose your preferred option on or before Friday, June 20. Details to come.

### Activities [200]

Each week, you will participate in an activity outside of class related to the lecture material. These activities will help you apply content from this class to understand principles of positive psychology and/or to improve yourself. Each activity is worth 25 points. A one-page paper (roughly 600 words) is due on Canvas by class time each Monday for an activity completed the previous week. We will discuss the outcome of these activities together in class. Materials may be submitted late with a penalty of 5 points per day.

### Participation [250]

- *Attendance [50]*. I will take attendance on five random days during the quarter. Each day is worth 10 points.
- *Class Engagement [100]*. Credit will be awarded based on weekly contribution to discussion and activities in class. Quality will be rewarded over quantity, including demonstrated attentive listening. Points will be deducted if your behavior is inattentive or distracting/disruptive during class. I will give you feedback on your projected participation score midway through the quarter.
- *Discussion Board [100]*. Each week, you will read and thoughtfully respond to one discussion board prompt, as well as responding to two of your classmates' posts. These three posts will be worth a total of 10 points each week.

**Personal Mission Statement [50]**

You will submit a one-page personal mission statement at the end of the course describing how you will apply your knowledge of positive psychology to improve yourself as an individual and as a member of society. You will recite a portion of this mission statement to your classmates.

**GRADES**

<i>Grading Category</i>	<i>Points</i>	<i>% of Grade</i>	<i>Due Dates</i>
<b>Quizzes (6 x 25 pts)</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>15</b>	See course schedule
<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>15</b>	May 13 online
<b>Final Project/Exam</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>20</b>	June 8 or 13 (depends on option selected)
<b>Activities (8 x 25 points)</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>20</b>	Mondays online
<b>Participation</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>25</b>	
• Attendance	(50)		Five (5) random days during the quarter
• Class Engagement	(100)		Actively participate each class day
• Discussion Board	(100)		Weekly posts online
<b>Personal Mission Statement</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>5</b>	June 8
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>		

I will use Canvas throughout the quarter to post grades so that you can keep track of your progress. Incompletes are only given under extreme circumstances, and at my discretion. It is your responsibility to earn the grade you want, starting on the first day of the quarter. I do not give individual extra credit to make up for earlier lack of effort.

**COURSE POLICIES****Canvas: The Course Website (<http://bc.instructure.com>)**

Canvas will be used for communication, downloading materials, submitting assignments, and so forth. Plan to check it regularly. Our course home page can be accessed from the *Courses* menu on the left sidebar. To correspond with me privately about the course, please use the Conversations feature of Canvas (the *Inbox* link on the left sidebar). You can also email me at my BC email; please set the subject heading as **PSYC 294**. I will respond to all messages within 24 hours on weekdays. Weekend responses may take longer; please plan accordingly. If you don't have a home computer with Internet access, an [open computer lab](#) is available in N250.

**Email Communication**

Please use standard professional guidelines for all written communication, including using a formal greeting, writing in complete sentences, and signing your name. Your email should do one of the following:

1. Ask a short, clarifying (e.g., yes/no) question whose answer cannot be found in the syllabus
2. Request to meet at a time other than during my scheduled and posted office hours, and include at least two days and times you are available for this meeting

Anything else that does not fall into one of these two categories (e.g., asking me to explain a concept or assignment) should be discussed with me in person during my office hours. No appointment is required to meet during office hours.

**Guidelines for Discussion**

- When the class is engaged in lecture and whole-class discussion, please raise your hand to contribute your opinion. Side comments are distracting. If you feel tempted to whisper comments to a classmate, either contribute to the whole-class discussion instead or write your comments to share privately later.
- If you contribute frequently, I may call on other people instead to get a variety of perspectives.

- In an academic setting, everyone has the right to express different views in a respectful atmosphere. Please be considerate of your classmates.

### Technology in the Classroom

- Mobile phones should be *silenced* and put away before class. Unless otherwise instructed, **do not use your phone during class**. Students whose phones ring, who send or receive texts, check emails, or wear headphones or ear buds during class time will not receive participation credit for that day. If the problem persists, the student will be asked to leave class and/or referred to the Dean of Student Success for disciplinary action.
- For your own sake, please *do not* use your laptop during class. Scientific research has shown that typing notes in class results in worse learning of the material compared to writing them.
- If you want to use another form of technology to help with note-taking, such as a voice recorder, or if you need to use an electronic dictionary during class, please see me for permission.

### Punctuality

- Please be on time for class. Arriving late or leaving early breaks the flow of the class and causes a distraction. If you *must* occasionally arrive late, do not disrupt class by walking through the middle of the room to wherever you “usually” sit. Take a seat near the door. If you need to leave before class is over, you should also sit near the door.
- Please wait until class ends to pack your things. I will always end class on time. Packing early is distracting to everyone and may result in your missing important information.

### Attendance

- If you miss any class session, consult the schedule to see what topics were covered. You are responsible for obtaining notes and information on any in-class announcements from peers. Do not contact me to ask what you missed. If you have questions concerning the missed class that you are unable to answer yourself after reviewing a classmate’s notes, please see me during office hours for clarification.

### Study Tips

- 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, some research shows that the more often we “multitask,” the more distracted we are by irrelevant information, and the worse we are at concentrating. *Limit the temptation to multitask* in class and when studying by putting away any distracting materials.
- Study in frequent, short, focused sessions (e.g., 15 minutes), with periodic breaks. Research shows that we learn best by absorbing information over time. This will also give you more opportunities to review difficult concepts. “Cramming,” or attempting to study a lot of material in a single session, results in very weak learning and retention of the material. This strategy is a poor use of your valuable time.
- Test yourself when studying. Create multiple-choice questions for yourself, or use flashcards to quiz yourself on terms and their examples. Studying in groups can also be helpful, so you can test each other.
- Talk to people about what you learn in class, and think about examples of the class material from your own life. Research shows that we learn best when we connect new ideas to the things we already know.

## RESOURCES FOR SUCCESS

### Office Hours

Come to office hours with questions, comments, or topics for debate. I am also happy to talk about other [psychology](#)-related topics, such as getting involved in research or applying to graduate school. Office hours are a set time I have set aside specifically to talk with students. My door is open and I am *always* available during office hours – no appointment needed. Just stop by! 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**

Free drop-in [psychology tutoring](#) is available both in person and online through the Academic Success Center (D204). You may also seek support from 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](#).

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Reading (chapters in *Positive Psychology*) should be completed prior to class. Assignments submitted online are due Fridays by 11:59 PM or are marked with (O) and due Mondays by class time. This schedule is subject to change.

WEEK	MONDAY	TUES	WEDNESDAY	THURS	FRIDAY (ONLINE)
1	APRIL 4 Welcome & Introduction Syllabus Construction	5	6 Community Building Positive Psychology (1)	7	8 <b>Discussion Post #1</b>
2	11 <b>Activity Paper #1 (O)</b> Positive Psychology Principles	12	13 History & Perspectives (2)	14	15 <b>Discussion Post #2</b>
3	18 <b>Activity Paper #2 (O)</b> <b>QUIZ: Ch. 1, 2</b> Positive States (6, 7)	19	20 <b>Yoga (9:30) – meet in gym</b> Positive States (6, 7)	21	22 <b>Discussion Post #3</b>
4	25 <b>Activity Paper #3 (O)</b> Positive States (6, 7)	26	27 Positive States (6, 7, 8, 10)	28	29 <b>Discussion Post #4</b>
5	MAY 2 <b>Activity Paper #4 (O)</b> <b>QUIZ: Ch. 6, 7</b> Positive States (8, 10)	3	4 Positive States (8, 10)	5	6 <b>Discussion Post #5</b>
6	9 <b>Activity Paper #5 (O)</b> <b>QUIZ: Ch. 8, 10</b> Positive Traits (3)	10	11 Positive Traits (3)	12	13 <b>Discussion Post #6</b> <b>Midterm Exam</b>
7	16 <b>QUIZ: Ch. 3</b> Positive Relationships (11, 12)	17	18 Positive Relationships (11, 12)	19	20 <b>Discussion Post #7</b> Select Final Option
8	23 <b>Activity Paper #6 (O)</b> Positive Relationships (11, 12)	24	25 Positive Relationships (11, 12)	26	27 <b>Discussion Post #8</b>
9	30 <b>Activity Paper #7 (O)</b> NO CLASS (Memorial Day)	31	JUNE 1 <b>QUIZ: Ch. 11, 12</b> Positive institutions & Culture (4, 15)	2	3 <b>Discussion Post #9</b>
10	6 <b>Activity Paper #8 (O)</b> Positive institutions & Culture (4, 15)	7	8 <b>QUIZ: Ch. 4, 15</b> <b>Final Presentation (opt.)</b> <b>Personal Mission Statement</b>	9	10 <b>Discussion Post #10</b>
11	13 <b>Final Exam or Final Paper (O)</b>	14	15	16	17