

CCID 202 CG – fall 2015

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Office hours: Wednesday 2:30-3:30 or by appointment

Why Are We Not Happy? Happiness: the Holy Grail of Western Society

In *The conquest of Happiness* Bertrand Russell makes us look at the many ways we choose to be miserable despite our circumstances. This course will explore the different meanings and definitions of happiness, the way western culture tries to measure it, as opposed to the way eastern culture approaches it. Individual happiness versus social happiness, who says happiness is a promised part of the human condition? Was paradise The Happy Place, and if so, how and why did we lose it? Is guilt part of our self-inflicted misery/punishment? Is happiness moral? Is happiness humanly possible?

How does wellbeing, welfare, contentment, fulfillment, satisfaction or absence of pain relate to happiness? Does happiness derive from comparing ourselves to the less fortunate? Or is un-happiness a result of comparing ourselves to those who seem more fortunate? Is counting our blessings a key to happiness? Is happiness a mean or a goal? Can one buy a positive outlook on life? How does one pursue happiness? What did Aristotle, Spinoza, Nietzsche, Mill, Rousseau, Heidegger, Kierkegaard, and Camus write about happiness? How do art, psychology, sociology, economy and religion view happiness?

You will be asked to read books and articles about happiness, write and discuss different aspects of happiness and relate them to your culture, to other cultures and to your own set of beliefs and personal experiences.

Purposes

As required by moral life guidelines: by exploring happiness you will learn that moral issues are typically more complex than they appear to be and that informed decision-making about them requires interdisciplinary understanding; you will have an opportunity to grapple with your own values and moral position-taking; your capacity for moral discernment, criticism,

and argument will be enhanced, as well as your self-knowledge and capacity for enhancing the quality of your emotional intelligence.

Expectations

You are expected to show up to every class, and on time. Missing lessons and lateness will interfere with learning and hence affect your grade. Since there is a large emphasis on teamwork you will be required not to disrupt your fellow student's creativity and to be considerate.

No ringing phones, no text messaging and no eating during class.

All assignment will be presented in print; please refrain from hand-written submissions.

Students who are found in violation of the College's Academic Honesty Policy (found in the student handbook and on the college website) will receive a zero for the assignment.

Your own ideas and individual input will be valued more than borrowing and quoting.

Grading

1. Active contribution to class	20%
2. Attendance.....	15%
3. Journals.....	10%
3. Presentations in class.....	15%
4. Written assignments	20%
5. A research paper on a chosen topic (final).....	20%

Required texts

The How of Happiness Sonja Lyubomirsky

Man's Search for Meaning Viktor Frankel

Recommended Readings

The Conquest of Happiness Bertrand Russell

On Liberty John Stuart Mill

Learned Optimism Martin E.P. Seligman PhD

Toward a Psychology of Being Abraham Maslow

The Science of Happiness Time Magazine January 17, 2005

Journal of Happiness studies Editor Ruut Veenhoven, 2000

The Art of Happiness Dalai Lama

The City of God St. Augustine

Studies in Pessimism Arthur Schopenhauer

Emotional Intelligence Daniel Golman

The psychology of Happiness Michael Argyle

Happiness: Facts and Myths Michael Eysenck

Authentic Happiness Martin E.P. Seligman

Nicomachean Ethics Aristotle

How Proust Can Change Your Life Alain de Botton

Stumbling on Happiness Daniel Gilbert

Schedule - with possible modifications according to students' researches

Week I

Monday August 31 Introduction and expectations

Week II

Monday September 7 abundance of blessings

Week III

Monday September 14 love and happiness

Week IV

Monday September 21 gratitude as way of living

Week V

Monday September 28 the bliss of forgetting

Week VI

Monday October 5 happiness in literature

Week VII

Monday October 12 fall recess

Week VIII

Monday October 19 eastern nirvana

Week IX

Monday October 26 the grace of forgiving

Week X	
Monday November 2	setting goals
Week XI	
Monday November 9	body and mind
Week XII	
Monday November 16	are we happy now?
Week XIII	
Monday November 23	final essay due
Week XIV	
Monday November 30	Thanksgiving galore
Week XV	
Monday December 7	affirmations

Notes

- 1) You can expect to dedicate 5-7 hours per week outside of class, reading and preparing assignments.
- 2) Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability must contact Ms. Elaine Mara, assistant director of academic support Services for academic and disability support at the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling 610-861-1401. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.
- 3) The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.
- 4) Do not hesitate to address me with any kind of problem you have during class or after.
- 5) This syllabus is subject to change.