

CCID 202 CG – spring 2016

Instructor: Naomi Gal

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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

Wednesday January 20	Introduction and expectations
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Week II

Wednesday January 27	abundance of blessings
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Week III

Wednesday February 3	gratitude as way of living
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Week IV

Wednesday February 10	love and happiness
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Week V

Wednesday February 17	the bliss of forgetting
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Week VI

Wednesday February 24	happiness in literature
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Week VII

Wednesday March 2	eastern nirvana
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Week VIII

Wednesday March 9	spring recess
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Week IX

Wednesday March 16	the grace of forgiving
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Week X	
Wednesday March 23	setting goals
Week XI	
Wednesday March 30	body and mind
Week XII	
Wednesday April 6	are we happy now?
Week XIII	
Wednesday April 13	final essay due
Week XIV	
Wednesday April 20	miracles galore
Week XV	
Wednesday April 28	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 should contact the Academic Support Center, located in the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling [610-861-1401](tel: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.