

# POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

Psychology and Neuroscience 062, Section 001

Fall 2018

Tu & Th, 3:30 PM to 4:45 PM

Davie 101

## **INSTRUCTOR**

Dr. Barbara Fredrickson  
Kenan Distinguished Professor  
Social Psychology Doctoral Program  
Davie 309  
919-843-0091  
blf@unc.edu  
[www.PositiveEmotions.org](http://www.PositiveEmotions.org)  
Office Hours: after class & Mon 2-4 pm

## **GRADUATE RESEARCH CONSULTANT**

Khoa Le Nguyen  
4<sup>th</sup> Year Doctoral Student  
Social Psychology Doctoral Program  
Davie 308  
khoaln@live.unc.edu  
Office Hours: Fridays 11 am-1 pm

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course invites you to explore the opportunities presented by the vibrant, intellectually rich, and enormously popular field of Positive Psychology.

Positive Psychology began in 2000 by challenging the field of psychology to deeply explore the positive aspects of life. Instead of drawing exclusively from a “disease model,” Dr. Martin Seligman, founder of positive psychology and past-president of the American Psychological Association, encouraged psychological scientists to focus on strengths as well as weaknesses, on building the best things in life as well as on repairing the worst, and on making the lives of normal people fulfilling as well as on healing pathology. Topics of study include happiness, character strengths, positive emotions, creativity, resilience, positive connections, kindness, meaning, empathy, compassion, positive interventions, lifestyle change, and positive organizations. One basic premise of positive psychology is that human flourishing – a life rich in purpose, positive relationships, and enjoyment – will not result simply by curing pathology and eliminating behavioral and emotional problems. Rather, flourishing requires us to build and capitalize on human strengths and capacities. Another basic premise is that human flourishing involves unlocking or building potential resources and capacities at multiple levels – in people, and also within teams, groups, communities, and institutions.

This course will challenge you to engage with the core topics and foundational research and theories of positive psychology. Coursework will involve reading, viewing video resources, individual and group experiential exercises, as well as personal reflections. This is also a research-exposure course, in which you will help design and carry out a course-based research project to test the effects of various positive interventions. Together with your classmates, you will provide data over a period of 4 weeks. Individually, you will draw on and analyze a portion of these data to write your Final Research Paper. Throughout the semester, you will receive assistance with this research project from both me and our Graduate Research Consultant (GRC), Khoa Le Nguyen, who is a fourth-year doctoral student specializing in positive psychology. The GRC Program is sponsored by the Office for Undergraduate Research ([www.unc.edu/depts/our](http://www.unc.edu/depts/our)). I encourage you to visit this website to see other ways that you might engage in research, scholarship and creative performance while you are at Carolina. I have designed the course in this manner with the hope that, as you

learn about positive psychology and the research process, you will also learn about how to enhance your own health and happiness as well as that of the communities and organizations in which you reside and work.

## **TARGET AUDIENCE**

This seminar is designed for First Year undergraduate students.

## **COURSE PREREQUISITES**

This course has no prerequisites. It is open solely to First Year undergraduate students.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

On completing this course, you will be able to identify and explain key scientific theories within the discipline of positive psychology (i.e., the Find-Remind-and-Bind Theory of Gratitude, the Positive Activity Model, the Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions, the Upward Spiral Theory of Lifestyle Change, Positivity Resonance Theory) and apply these theories, formally and informally, in your own life, relationships and teams. Upon completing formal empirical tests of a hypothesis you draw from these theories or positive psychology more generally, you will be able to analyze evidence and interpret whether, for whom, and how a positive intervention is effective, and compare and contrast empirical evidence gathered in this course with published scientific evidence. By engaging with the science of positive psychology at both research and personal levels, and sharing your learnings from it with multiple audiences, you will come away from this course able to appraise and justify the value of the science of positive psychology and its evidence-based practices.

## **COURSE PHILOSOPHY AND FORMAT**

I see learning and teaching as fundamentally collaborative processes, in which we must all participate actively. My hope is that you will learn at least as much from discussions with your peers as you will from the readings, videos, and from me.

In-class discussions are the centerpiece of a first-year seminar. Although I will at times give mini-lectures, or introduce experiential learning activities, most often we will be learning through in-depth discussions of the course material and, more importantly, the issues this material raises. We will use four strategies to stimulate this level of engagement:

1. Read and/or view the assigned course material for each class session before class.
2. Keep an electronic *Learning Journal* (LJ) to record your experiences in this course. Describe your reactions to the course material, assignments, or our classroom discussions. Two questions that you may use to jumpstart your journal writing are: (1) *What do you see as the single most inspiring or useful idea covered in this week's material?* And (2) *In what ways is this idea inspiring or useful for you personally?* On many weeks I will also assign an "experiential exercise" to be completed before the next class session (e.g., Use your Signature Strengths for 8/30/18; Use your Positivity Portfolio to Enact Resilience for 9/27/18). Your *Learning Journal* is the place to record your experiences in and reactions to these exercises. Your assignment is to submit one *Learning Journal* entry before class each Tuesday (~150-200 words). Each week, you will cut-and-paste your newest entry to your *Learning Journal* to Sakai (under Assignments) for my evaluation and comments (See Schedule of Assignments).

3. A portion of Tuesday's class session each week will be devoted to group discussion. Four times across the semester you will be assigned to post one discussion question to the Forum on Sakai linked to that day's assigned readings. For this I will divide the class into three groups (i.e., G1, G2, and G3 on the Schedule of Assignments). You post a Q ***before noon*** on the day assigned when it's your Group's week. Your discussion questions should be thoughtful, open-ended and provide enough context so that other students can understand the thought that led you to the question and/or the assumptions behind it. I will select a few of these Qs to initiate class discussions each Tuesday. When your Q is selected, it will count toward your Class Participation grade.
4. More generally, come prepared each class meeting to describe and discuss the course material and the current assignments.

It should go without saying that this is the kind of class that requires regular attendance from all of us. Please come to each class meeting. If you are unavoidably absent, you should still complete the assignments and write in and submit your *Learning Journal*.

### **TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

Our classroom is a relational space. To support this, I ask that you turn off your phone and put it away so that you are not tempted to read or respond to any text messages for the 75 minutes that we are in the classroom together. Come talk to me before class if this poses a hardship to you on any given day and we'll work out an alternative arrangement. Evidence shows that you can learn and build relationships better when you devote your full attention to the here-and-now and smartphones and computer screens are not within view. Please bring your laptop to class, especially on Thursdays when we will work on our class research project. During class discussions, however, I ask that you close your laptop to avoid distraction.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Requirements for this course include: (a) regular participation in class and in online Forums, (b) regular *Learning Journal* entries, (c) four Short Papers (~2 pages), (d) six weeks of quizzes on Coursera, (e) one Final Research Paper (~12 pages), and (f), an integrative Take-Home Final Exam. You will receive additional information about each paper assignment in the weeks to come.

### **GRADING**

Class participation:	5%
Learning Journal:	10%
Short Paper #1:	10%
Short Paper #2:	10%
Short Paper #3:	10%
Short Paper #4:	10%
Coursera Quizzes	10%
Final Research Paper:	25%
Take-home Final Exam:	10%

### **GRADING POLICIES**

You should submit your *Learning Journal* excerpts, all papers, and the *Final Exam* via the Sakai website for this course. Deadlines are firm. Late papers and exams will receive lower grades.

### **HONOR CODE**

Students are expected to work independently on all paper assignments, as well as on the *Take-Home Final Exam*.

### **RESOURCES**

The four books listed below are required reading for this course. The first and fourth books are available in the Campus Bookstore. The second and third books are gifts to you from Professor Fredrickson to be distributed in class. Other short readings are posted on the Sakai website.

1. Lyubomirsky, S. (2013). *The Myths of Happiness*. ISBN-13: 978-0143124511
2. Fredrickson, B. L. (2009). *Positivity*. ISBN-13: 978-0-307-39374-6
3. Fredrickson, B. L. (2013). *Love 2.0*. ISBN-13: 978-0-14-218047-1
4. Worline, M. & Dutton, J. (2017). *Awakening Compassion at Work*. ISBN-13: 978-1626564459

You will also be assigned to view short lecture videos from a recent Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) created by Professor Fredrickson on the Coursera platform, available at the URL below.

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/positive-psychology>

### **SYLLABUS CHANGE DISCLAIMER**

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, including due dates. If such changes are necessary, I will announce them as early as possible.

## SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Schedule	Topic	Assignment
Tuesday, 8/21/2018	Introductions & Expectations Introduce Short Paper #1	Show up on time
Thursday, 8/23/2018	Davis Library Scavenger Hunt	Meet <i>Joanneke Leonie</i> at the bottom of the stairs in the lobby of <b>Davis Library</b> <i>Bring Your Laptop!</i>
Tuesday, 8/28/2018	Capitalization & Character Strengths	<b>Short Paper #1 Due @ 5:00 pm</b> <b>via Sakai on <i>Monday, 8/27</i></b> <i>Myths</i> : Introduction, Ch. 1 G1: Post Discussion Q (Sakai)
Thursday, 8/30/2018	Introduce Final Research Paper Research Project Design Hypothesis Testing	Complete free VIA Survey on Character Strengths LJ: Use your Signature Strengths
Tuesday, 9/4/2018	Find-Remind-and-Bind Theory of Gratitude  Guest: Prof. Sara Algoe	<i>Myths</i> : Ch. 2-4 View Prof. Algoe's 15-min video @ Greater Good Science Center G2: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) Qs are for Dr. Algoe Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 9/6/2018	Positive Interventions Positive-Activity Model Refine Hypotheses Select Measures	Read Lyubomirsky & Layous
Tuesday, 9/11/2018	Money & Happiness	<i>Myths</i> : Ch. 5-7 G3: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 9/13/2018	Introduction to Qualtrics Reflected Best Selves Introduce Short Paper #2	View Qualtrics Webinar Read: Qualtrics Tips & Tricks Read Roberts et al.
Tuesday, 9/18/2018	Lifespan Approaches to Happiness	<i>Myths</i> : Ch. 8-10, Conclusion G1: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) Reflected Best Self Exercise: Steps 1 & 2 (request feedback by <b>9/27</b> ) Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 9/20/2018	Finalize Qualtrics Surveys	MOOC Videos: 1.1-1.4 LJ: Create a <i>Positivity Portfolio</i>
Tuesday, 9/25/2018	Broaden-and-Build Theory of Positive Emotions	<i>Positivity</i> : Ch. 1-3 G2: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) <b>On <i>Sunday, 9/23/18</i>:</b> <b>Complete Baseline Surveys</b> <b>Begin Daily Data Collection &amp;</b> <b>1<sup>st</sup> Positive Intervention</b> Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 9/27/2018	GUEST: Librarian Angela Bardeen, <b>Davis Library, Room 247</b> Introduce Short Paper #3	MOOC Videos: 2.1-2.4 LJ: Use your <i>Positivity Portfolio</i> to Enact Resilience

Tuesday, 10/2/2018	Resilience & Stress-Buffering	<i>Positivity</i> : Ch. 4-6 G3: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) Reflected Best Self Exercise: Steps 3 & 4 <b>Short Paper #2 due @ 3:30 pm via Sakai</b> Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 10/4/2018	Data Integrity Begin Analysis Plan Plan Figure	MOOC Videos: 3.1-3.3 SP#3 Article Check deadline
Tuesday, 10/9/2018	Upward Spiral Theory of Lifestyle Change	<i>Positivity</i> : Ch. 8-12 G1: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) <b>On Sunday, 10/7/18:</b> <b>Begin 2<sup>nd</sup> Positive Intervention</b> Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 10/11/2018	Complete Analysis Plan  Introduction to SPSS	MOOC Videos: 4.1-4.2 + 4.5 Get approval on SP#3 articles LJ: Identify a Habit to Change & How You'll Change it Using Positive Emotions
Tuesday, 10/16/2018	Positivity Resonance Theory  Introduce Short Paper #4	<i>Love 2.0</i> : Ch. 1-2 G2: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) <b>Short Paper #3 Due @ 2pm via Sakai</b> Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 10/18/2018	FALL BREAK	NO CLASS
Tuesday, 10/23/2018	Biological Approaches to Positive Psychology	MOOC Videos: 5.1-5.4 <i>Love 2.0</i> : Ch. 3-4 G3: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 10/25/2018	Data Analysis Creating Figures	MOOC Videos: 6.1-6.3
Tuesday, 10/30/2018	Meaning and Purpose	<i>Love 2.0</i> : Ch. 5-9 G1: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) <b>Short Paper #4 Due @ 2pm via Sakai</b> Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 11/1/2018	Meditation GUEST: Mary Brantley	MOOC Videos: 4.3-4.4 LJ: Follow a Guided Meditation & Reflect
Tuesday, 11/6/2018	Empathy  Positive Introductions	<i>Compassion</i> : Forward, Ch. 1-2 Read Dutton & Lee LJ: Describe How you can Use Positive Narration in your Life G2: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 11/8/2018	Finalize Data Analysis & Figure Preparation	Create Figure of your Result Deadline for Khoa to check your Result & Figure is <b>Fri, 11/9 @ 4:30 pm</b>
Tuesday, 11/13/2018	CLASS FIELD TRIP: Laughing Meditation (arrive early, front of Davie)	<b>Full DRAFT of</b> <b>Final Research Paper Due</b> <b>@ 3:30 pm via Sakai</b> Submit Learning Journal entry

Thursday, 11/15/2018	Writing for Broader Audiences Guest: Kathryn Britton, MAPP Associate Editor of PositivePsychologyNews.com	<i>Compassion</i> : Ch. 3-6
Tuesday, 11/20/2018	Co-Author Meetings	<i>Compassion</i> : Ch. 7-9
Thursday, 11/22/2018	THANKSGIVING BREAK	NO CLASS
Tuesday, 11/27/2018	Positive Organizations: Roles & Routines  Guest: Prof Jane Dutton  <b>Food provided courtesy of the First Year Seminars Program</b>	<i>Compassion</i> : Ch. 10-13 + Epilogue <b>Attend Public Lecture by Dr. Dutton @ Mon, 11/26, from 3:30-5 pm, Room TBD</b> G3: Post Discussion Q (Sakai) Qs are for Prof. Dutton Submit Learning Journal entry
Thursday, 11/29/2018	Redesign UNC for <i>Compassion</i> Polish Articles for PositivePsychologyNews.com	<b>Final Research Paper Due @ 3:30 pm via Sakai</b>
Tuesday, 12/4/2018	In-Class Symposium on Student Projects Distribute Take-Home Final <b>Due 4 p.m. on 12/13/18</b>	Prepare a 3-min Presentation on your Research Findings Upload *.ppt slides to Sakai Filename: LastName_Pres.ppt