

# BI199L HAPPINESS: A NEUROSCIENCE AND PSYCHOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

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BI199L | CRN 36851 | Spring, 2021

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## Welcome to the Neuroscience/Psychology of Happiness (positive life engagement)!

**Brief Course Description:** Examination of studies in neuroscience and positive psychology that explore the mental and behavioral actions leading to the self-reporting of a well-lived and fulfilling life. Exploration of the interaction of multiple variables in behavior and mental state, and the underlying neural circuits and mechanisms, that lead to increases in positive affect, and decreases in negative affect, respectively.

**Expanded Course Description:** Welcome to happiness: a neuroscience and psychology perspective! This course examines research in positive psychology and neuroscience that reveal the behavioral activities and mindsets that promote positive life engagement and the neural circuits that influence this. The course will examine the evidence that happiness is significantly influenced by genetics and mindset, with only a small component arising from life circumstances. Studies in positive psychology that reveal important factors in mental mindset, such as quality of interpersonal relationships, resilience, growth vs. fixed mindset, self-esteem formation, etc. will be critically evaluated and discussed. The neural pathways underlying the fight/flight/freeze response, stress/anxiety, attention, reward/pleasure/addiction, conditioned fear, learning and memory, parent/child and romantic relationship bonding, compassion/empathy, and habit formation will be reviewed and critically evaluated. Methods for altering these neural pathways and their associated cognitive states, such as pharmacological, behavioral, meditative, cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness-based stress reduction, will be demonstrated and discussed. The course will encourage students to critically evaluate and assess their assumptions about positive life engagement in their own situations and to explore, through critical discussion and final projects/papers, mechanisms that may facilitate their own understanding of the psychological/neuroscience factors involved in their unique situation and how to put practices into place that provide positive growth potential.

The goals for this course are:

- Learn what scientific studies in positive psychology tell us about happiness, fulfillment, gratitude, relationships, connectedness, internal narrative and biases, and stress/anxiety and depression.

- Learn the neural pathways involved in bonding with others, empathy, compassion, stress/anxiety, learning and memory, and personal world view construction.
- Learn both the theory and practice of methods that enhance positive life engagement and fulfillment.

## Instructor

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David A. McCormick  
(541) 362-1621 (text and voice)  
[davidmc@uoregon.edu](mailto:davidmc@uoregon.edu)

## McCormick Office Hours

Monday and Wednesday, Noon – 1 pm

Zoom Link: <https://zoom.us/j/94550090818?pwd=eHMrZnhEdmVoeEMxbnlzM3dqTmZZZz09>

## Teaching Assistants

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Michael Sidikpramana  
[msidikpr@uoregon.edu](mailto:msidikpr@uoregon.edu)



## Office Hours

Fridays 10-11 am

<https://uoregon.zoom.us/j/93053134468> )



Kayla Ladd

[kaylal@uoregon.edu](mailto:kaylal@uoregon.edu)

## Office Hours

Thursdays 2-3 pm

<https://uoregon.zoom.us/j/98585659590?pwd=TkU5OUZOU0pZWTRpMW1jc1Rjb3hHUT09>

# Course Description

## Course Objectives

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By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Describe the factors that scientific studies in positive psychology have determined to influence a person's sense of well-being.
- Describe the influence and interactions of relationships, community, career, income, health, exercise, and conditioning on long term mental and physical well-being.
- Describe the neural pathways and mechanisms involved in the stress response, pair-mate and parent-child bonding, empathy and compassion, learning and memory, conditioned fear/anxiety, and belief systems concerning the nature of the sensory and cognitive world.
- Describe the practice and potential mechanisms by which various therapies (cognitive behavioral therapy, mindfulness-based stress reduction, meditation) may reduce anxiety/stress in the nervous system and how it they may promote a more fulfilling life.
- Explain the usefulness of various behavioral practices on the development of a sense of personal well-being and the neural mechanisms that may underly this.
- Explain how to critically evaluate and discuss experiments that claim to examine the relationship between life-style, behavior, psychological factors and sense of well-being.
- Be able to discuss and describe the various influences/factors discussed in class influence the student's own sense of well-being and learn how to effectively communicate this both orally and in writing.

# Course Policies

## Course Communication

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The best way to communicate with us is by email (see email addresses above and on Canvas). Please feel free to contact anyone in the teaching team with your questions and/or concerns. When emailing, please send messages from your UO email. We will do our best to respond within 24 hours Monday - Friday. We may or may not have the opportunity to respond to emails received on weekends. We will also hold synchronous office hours through Zoom each week so that you can drop-in to ask questions.

All communications concerning the course will be done through the course Canvas site. Announcements and emails are archived there and automatically forwarded to your UO email and can even reach you by text. Be sure to adjust your settings to enable these things by going to Canvas > Account > Notifications. The site will feature a Q&A discussion so you can post questions to the teaching team or other students. You can also use the course Chat feature. In case of technical difficulties, including internet outages, you can reach us by phone at the numbers above.

## Technical Requirements

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Log into [canvas.uoregon.edu](https://canvas.uoregon.edu) using your DuckID to access our class. If you have questions about accessing and using Canvas, visit the [Canvas support page](#). Canvas and Technology Support also is available by phone or live chat:

541-346-4357 or [livehelp.uoregon.edu](https://livehelp.uoregon.edu)

If you face Internet access challenges: companies are offering free access during this challenging time. To learn more about options visit Information Services “[web page on going remote.](#)”

## Access and Accommodations

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The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please speak with us if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability related barriers to your participation. This includes barriers that are related to the online format of this class. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or [uoaec@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoaec@uoregon.edu). The AEC offers a wide range of support services including note-taking, testing services, sign language interpretation and adaptive technology.

The AEC will provide us with a notification letter regarding the accommodations that are appropriate in your particular situation. In addition to requesting this letter be sent, it is important that you communicate with us directly so we can work together to eliminate any barriers to your success in CH 221.

If you have disability related testing accommodations, please notify us as early in the term as possible to allow us time to determine the testing option that will work best for you.

## Respect for Diversity

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This course is a place where you will be treated with respect and we welcome individuals of all ages, backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, national origins, religious affiliations, sexual orientations, ability and other visible and non-visible differences. All students are expected to contribute to a respectful, welcoming and inclusive environment for every other member of the class.

Class rosters are provided to instructors with students' legal names. We will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise us of this preference early in the quarter (or before) so we may address you properly.

## Academic Integrity

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Since this course is online, all quizzes and tests are open book. While we fully support discussion and collaboration between students on the course materials, you are expected to take the quizzes and online tests without help from others. While vigorous discussion of your final research paper/project with others is encouraged, the final/paper project should be performed by you alone and in your own voice. Any material that is quoted from another source needs to be clearly identified as a quote. If you choose a research project, as opposed to research paper, for your final, you may do the research project with up to 3 other classmates. Everyone, however, will be required to write their own report of the research project.

The University Student Conduct Code defines academic misconduct, which includes unauthorized help on assignments and examinations and the use of sources without acknowledgment. Academic misconduct is prohibited at UO. I will report misconduct to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards—consequences can include failure of this course. I will ask you to certify that your exams/papers are your own work. Exams are administered in Canvas and untimed. I have designed them with the expectation that you will have access to course materials and the Internet when you take them—and that's just fine. I will be looking to see evidence of critical thinking and your ability to put the concepts we're working on into action in response to the exam prompts.

## Late and Make-up Policy

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It is very important that you keep pace with the weekly assignments, since we will be discussing these in detail during discussion sections. The weekly quizzes are meant to provide impetus for you to complete the materials in a timely manner. You may read and work ahead of schedule if you desire, but late quizzes will not be given. At the end of each week, the online quizzes for that week will no longer be available. There is a quiz for each of the 17 lectures. Only your top 14 scores will be counted towards your quiz grade.

The midterm exam will be available on one day only during the course. Written requests for alternate testing arrangements for this midterm due to conflicts with authorized and unavoidable university events must be made during the first two weeks of the term. Documentation must be included with all requests. The final paper/project at the end of the

term will be accepted for up to 5 days after the due date, with a 5% deduction to the score per day. **Because these policies are firm, it is important you mark due dates on your calendar and plan your schedule accordingly.**

## Expectations

### Time Management

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In a typical week, the student should expect to spend an average of about 10-15 hours working on this course. This includes interacting with the read and viewing materials, watching lectures, completing assignments and activities, posting in discussions online, participating in discussion sections on zoom, and working on the final project (work on this will begin early in the course). The student should try to make a practice of breaking big tasks into smaller chunks by doing a little every day. The lectures are recorded in 15-30 minute segments to make it easier for the student to view. PDFs of the lectures, with some basic notes, are provided so the student can follow along and take their own notes while viewing the lecture. The student should read the material associated with each lecture and watch the associated TED talks or other videos. The student should take notes on the lectures, readings, and videos so that we can discuss them during discussion section. The student should note any questions they may have and attend drop-in office hours for help. To help inspire the student to keep pace with the course, there is a short quiz associated with each lecture and readings/videos. The student should make sure to take the two quizzes per week before the end of the week. Quizzes will be closed to access at the end of each week. Learning in this manner, rather than cramming during the week of exams, will make studying much more efficient and enhance the enjoyment of the course!



### Net-etiquette Guidelines

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When participating in online course activities, please use good “netiquette.” Identify yourself with your real name and use a subject line that clearly relates to your contribution. Write or speak in the first person when sharing your opinions and ideas but when addressing other students or discussing their ideas, use their names. Respect the privacy of your classmates and what they share in class. Understand that we may disagree and that exposure to other people’s opinions is part of the learning experience. Good netiquette also means using humor or sarcasm carefully, remembering that non-verbal cues (such as facial expressions) are not always possible or clear in a remote context.

In addition, your language should be free of profanity, appropriate for an academic context, and exhibit interest in and courtesy for others’ contributions. Be aware that typing in all capital letters indicates shouting. Certain breaches of netiquette can be considered disruptive behavior.

## Email Guidelines

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The University of Oregon has adopted university email addresses as an official means of communication. It is your responsibility to regularly check your UO email account in order to stay current with course communications.

Do not send emails from within Canvas. These messages are frequently delayed or never received. Always use your UO email account for sending messages.



Email is a very handy method for communicating with people, whether around the world or across campus. In some situations, email protocol is not as formal as paper communications. In others, (academics, jobs, etc.) there are some expectations of protocol. When communicating with me (or any faculty member) by email, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- The subject line should indicate the course number and the nature and topic of the email.
- Spell correctly and use appropriate punctuation.
- Always sign your messages with first and last name. Unsigned messages may not receive a response.

## Course Structure

Introductory and course navigation videos are available on the canvas website for this course. Make sure to watch these short videos so that you can become oriented with the course. If you have any questions, email the instructor or TAs.

## Course Materials

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All course materials, including lectures, readings, and videos, are available free of charge on the canvas website.

## Course Activities

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- Each week there are two lectures to view. Each lecture is divided into 2 or 3 videos of approximately 15-30 minutes.
- There are book chapters, articles, or scientific papers to read for each lecture.
- There are videos to watch for each lecture – these are typically TED talks.
- The student is required to post to the discussion sections online for each lecture.
- There is a quiz for each lecture, that is due by the start of the discussion section each week. The quizzes are open book.
- There are suggested activities, such as meditation, exercise, gratitude, to perform each week to help with building a healthy mindset. These are not graded – do them for your own benefit and to learn more from the class! 😊

- Each Friday we will meet in discussion section on zoom and discuss the weeks materials.

## Grading

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- 20% Lecture Preparation Quizzes (best 14 out of 17)
- 30% Midterm Exam
- 10% Final Research Paper proposal (1-2 pages double spaced)
- 30% Final Research Project or Research paper (Project, plus 2-3-page description of project and relevance to the science and practice of happiness and 1-page time journal; **OR** Final Research Paper, 5-8 pages, written on a topic of the student's choice about the Neuroscience/Psychology of Happiness)
- 10% Classroom Participation. This will be mainly quantified by participation in discussion sections and online discussions.
- 5% Extra credit – The student may earn 5% extra credit through taking notes on the readings, videos, and/or activities that are assigned for each lecture. An example note-taking form is provided below. (0.5% extra-credit available per week.)

Weekly activities (such as meditation, exercise, etc.) are suggested for the student's benefit and are not graded. The student may earn extra credit by taking notes on their activities and associated thoughts/experiences.

**Course grades and percentiles:** A+: 97-100%; A: 93-96; A-: 90-92; B+: 87-89; B: 83-86; B-: 80-82; C+: 77-79; C: 73-76; C-: 70-72; D+: 67-69; D: 63-66; D-: 60-62 F: <60%.

A range: Superior mastery of the material, as evidenced by midterm and quiz test scores. Active participation in lecture and discussion section. Thoughtful and effective analysis of the topic of the course as evidenced through the final research project or paper and proposal.

B range: Good mastery of the material, as evidenced by midterm and quiz test scores. Active participation in lecture and discussion section. Mostly clear analysis of the topic of the course as evidenced through the final research project or paper and proposal.

C range: Adequate mastery of the material, as evidenced by midterm and quiz test scores. Adequate participation in lecture and discussion section. Good, but with some gaps, analysis of the topic of the course as evidenced through the final research project or paper and proposal.

D range: Poor mastery of the material, as evidenced by midterm and quiz test scores. Relatively little participation in lecture and discussion section. Important gaps or errors in analysis of the topic of the course as evidenced through the final research project or paper and proposal.

F: Inadequate mastery of the material, as evidenced by midterm and quiz test scores. Little to no participation in lecture and discussion section. No evidence of significant effort in the analysis of the topic of the course as indicated by the final research project or paper and proposal.

### ***P/NP OPTION***

The student must receive a grade of C- or better (70/100) to receive a P.



# Course Schedule

## Modules – Lectures, Reading, Viewing, Activities

Each module contains 5 components:

- 1) Lecture videos (3-4)
- 2) Readings
- 3) Videos (typically TED talks)
- 4) Activities
- 5) Quizzes

To advance to the next module, it is required to have completed the previous module including the quiz. Make sure to stay up to date on the material. Procrastinating is one of the problems that we will talk about in class.

## Course Dates and Topics of Discussion

### Week 1: March 29-April 4

**Module/Lecture 1:** Introduction: Overview of Course; What is Happiness and Why Study It?

**Module/Lecture 2:** What increases long term happiness

**Discussion Sections: Friday, April 2** Discussion/Experiential Section: The meaning of happiness and impediments to being happy – a deeper look

### Week 2: April 5 – April 11

**Module/Lecture 3:** Impediments to happiness

**Module/Lecture 4:** The Brain – an organ for creating the mind

**Discussion Sections: Friday, April 9** Discussion/Experiential Section: How the brain forms our inner and outer worldview

### Week 3: April 12 – April 18

**Module/Lecture 5:** What causes stress and anxiety and how to overcome it.

**Module/Lecture 6:** Neural pathways of stress and anxiety

**Discussion Sections: Friday, April 16** Discussion/Experiential Section: How stress arises and affects our lives

### Week 4: April 19 – April 25

**Module/Lecture 7:** How to change your internal narrative

**Module/Lecture 8:** Neural pathways of reward, habit, addiction and how they affect our happiness

**Discussion Sections: Friday, April 23** Discussion/Experiential Section: Practices to reduce your stress, anxiety, and unskillful habits

### Week 5: April 26 – May 2

**Module/Lecture 9:** Building better habits and reducing addictive behaviors

**Wednesday, April 28: Midterm Exam on Canvas. 50 questions, multiple choice, on Modules 1-9.**

**Discussion Sections: Friday, April 30** Discussion/Experiential Section: Midterm Review

**Week 6: May 3 – May 9**

**Module/Lecture 10:** Neural pathways for empathy, compassion, connection

**Module/Lecture 11:** What does lead to happiness I: gratitude and generosity

**Discussion Sections: Friday, May 7** Discussion/Experiential Section: Putting Healthy Behaviors into Practice through Gratitude, Community, and Developing a Healthy Lifestyle and Mindset

**Week 7: May 10 – May 16**

**Module/Lecture 12:** What does lead to happiness II: the importance of healthy social connections and relationships

**Module/Lecture 13:** Neural pathways for bonding and relationships

**Discussion Sections: Friday, May 14** Discussion/Experiential Section: Developing healthy relationships

**Week 8: May 17 – May 23**

**Module/Lecture 14:** Achieving better goals I: the right mindset

**Module/Lecture 15:** Achieving Better Goals II: harnessing our biases

**Discussion Sections: Friday, May 21** Discussion/Experiential Section: Ways to Change Your Mindset II

**Week 9: May 24 – May 30**

**Module/Lecture 16:** Achieving Better Goals III: implementing intention and ending procrastination

**Module/Lecture 17:** Strategies in practice: helping others and helping the planet.

**Discussion Sections: Friday, May 28** We vs. Me – an action plan

**Week 10: June 1 – June 4**

Arrange Individual Sessions with your GTF and/or Dr. McCormick to work on your final projects.

**Week 11: June 5 – June 11**

Final Paper or Final Project. Submission Due 10:00 pm PST, June 7, posted to Canvas

# Detailed Course Schedule – Readings, Videos, and Activities

## Week 1

**Module/Lecture 1: March 29-April 4. Welcome, Course Introduction, and “What is Happiness and Why Study It?”:**

At the beginning of the course, we will take a measure of your levels of happiness. Go to <https://www.authentic-happiness.com/questionnaires/authentic-happiness-inventory> and take the “Authentic Happiness Inventory.” You will need to register to take the questionnaire. Keep track of your score – we will refer back to it at the end of the course, and see if we were successful in changing your levels of happiness! Be honest in your answers on the inventory. There is no grade and only you will know your score.

**Read:** Ben-Shahar (2007) *Happier: Chapters 1-3*. pp. 3-49. What is happiness?

**Watch** these videos and write down your thoughts. Do you agree or disagree with their main points? Do you resonate with the speaker’s statements?

Emily Esfahani Smith - There's more to life than being happy

[https://www.ted.com/talks/emily\\_esfahani\\_smith\\_there\\_s\\_more\\_to\\_life\\_than\\_being\\_happy](https://www.ted.com/talks/emily_esfahani_smith_there_s_more_to_life_than_being_happy)

Dan Gilbert - The surprising science of happiness

[https://www.ted.com/talks/dan\\_gilbert\\_the\\_surprising\\_science\\_of\\_happiness](https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_the_surprising_science_of_happiness)

**Activity (week 1):** *Connect with other people.* We will see that, for many of us, as goes the quality of our social connections, so goes the feelings of the quality of our life. So, for your first week in class, I want you to make new social connections. First, meet someone from this class that you don’t know. Find out something interesting about that person, and share something interesting about yourself. Since everyone in class has this assignment, it should be easy to strike up a conversation with a new person! Following this example of social connection, now make some new connections this week outside class. Perhaps the person that serves you coffee at Starbucks, or the person that serves you lunch in the dining facilities. Or someone at the grocery store, or a professor! Make at least one new social connection each day this week. Sometime during the week, spend an hour or more connecting with someone meaningful in your life. A friend, family member, loved one. The important point is that it needs to be quality time. Quality over quantity. Go for coffee, or a walk, or just skype. Keep track of your new social connections in your journal and how they made you feel (from positive to negative

aspects). At the end of the quarter we will see if you are more or less at ease with social connections following all of our practices.

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Module/Lecture 2: March 29 – April 4**      What increases long term happiness

**Read:**

Finish Reading: Ben-Shahar (2007) Happier: Chapters 1-3. Pp.3-49. What is happiness?

Read this online report: <https://ourworldindata.org/happiness-and-life-satisfaction>

**Watch:**

Robert Waldinger - What makes a good life? Lessons from the longest study on happiness

[https://www.ted.com/talks/robert\\_waldinger\\_what\\_makes\\_a\\_good\\_life\\_lessons\\_from\\_the\\_longest\\_study\\_on\\_happiness?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_waldinger_what_makes_a_good_life_lessons_from_the_longest_study_on_happiness?language=en)

Matt Killingsworth Want to be happier? Stay in the moment

[https://www.ted.com/talks/matt\\_killingsworth\\_want\\_to\\_be\\_happier\\_stay\\_in\\_the\\_moment](https://www.ted.com/talks/matt_killingsworth_want_to_be_happier_stay_in_the_moment)

**Friday, April 2** Discussion/Experiential Section: The meaning of happiness and impediments to being happy – a deeper look

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

## Week 2

**Module/Lecture 3: April 5 – April 11** The Structure of the Brain – An Organ for Creating a Model of the World Including Biases and Best Guesses

**Read:**

[Anthony de Mello \(1992\) "The way to love" Chapters 1, 3, 4. Pp. 1-4; 13-25.](#)

[Don Miguel Ruiz \(1997\) The Four Agreements - Chapter 1](#)

Read these online:

Steven Pinker: The world is an amazing place so why aren't we happier

<https://ideas.ted.com/the-world-is-an-amazing-place-so-why-arent-we-happier/> ([Links to an external site.](#))

Lisa Varvogli: 7 Obstacles to Happiness and How to Overcome them

[https://medium.com/@liza\\_98826/7-obstacles-to-happiness-and-how-to-overcome-them-6ecc04a366ae](https://medium.com/@liza_98826/7-obstacles-to-happiness-and-how-to-overcome-them-6ecc04a366ae)

**Watch:**

Brene Brown – The power of vulnerability

[https://www.ted.com/talks/brene\\_brown\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_vulnerability?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_the_power_of_vulnerability?language=en)

***Take the online quiz on the above material.***

**Activity (week 2): *Spreading Kindness.*** Every day this week do something kind for someone else, above and beyond what you normally do. Pay it forward by buying someone a cup of coffee at Starbucks (maybe the person behind you in line?). Pay for your friend’s lunch. Tell someone how much you appreciate a characteristic that you have always admired about them. Also do some larger activities over the quarter. Volunteer to plant trees in Eugene <https://friendsoftrees.org/eugene/>. Participate in a UO sustainability project <https://emu.uoregon.edu/sustainability>. Volunteer to take leftover food to a homeless shelter <https://foodforlanecounty.org/>. Give blood. Whatever you do, make sure it is about being kind, and not about rewarding yourself. Put in your journal what you did, how you felt, and how it relates to happiness.

**Module/Lecture 4: April 5 – April 11** Neural Pathways for Anxiety, Fight/Flight, Reward (pleasure), Habit, Adaptation and How they Affect our Happiness

**Read:**

[Purves “Neuroscience” Chapter 1: Studying the Nervous Systems of Humans and Other Animals. pp. 1-28.](#)

[Burnett, D. \(2018\) Happy Brain: Chapter 1 “Happiness in the Brain”](#)

**Watch:**

The Brain

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kMKc8nfPATI>

Anil Seth - Your brain hallucinates your conscious reality

[https://www.ted.com/talks/anil\\_seth\\_your\\_brain\\_hallucinates\\_your\\_conscious\\_reality?referrer=playlist-how\\_your\\_brain\\_constructs\\_real](https://www.ted.com/talks/anil_seth_your_brain_hallucinates_your_conscious_reality?referrer=playlist-how_your_brain_constructs_real)

Isaac Lidsky - What reality are you creating for yourself?

[https://www.ted.com/talks/isaac\\_lidsky\\_what\\_reality\\_are\\_you\\_creating\\_for\\_yourself?referrer=playlist-how\\_your\\_brain\\_constructs\\_real](https://www.ted.com/talks/isaac_lidsky_what_reality_are_you_creating_for_yourself?referrer=playlist-how_your_brain_constructs_real)

Jill Bolte Taylor - My stroke of insight

[https://www.ted.com/talks/jill bolte taylor my stroke of insight](https://www.ted.com/talks/jill_bolte_taylor_my_stroke_of_insight)

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Friday, April 9** Discussion/Experiential Section: How the brain forms our inner and outer world view

### Week 3

**Module/Lecture 5: Monday, April 12 – April 18** What causes stress and anxiety and how to overcome it.

#### **Watch:**

Olivia Remes: How to cope with anxiety

[https://www.ted.com/talks/olivia\\_remes\\_how\\_to\\_cope\\_with\\_anxiety?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/olivia_remes_how_to_cope_with_anxiety?language=en) (Links to an external site.)

Johann Hari: This could be why you are depressed or anxious

[https://www.ted.com/talks/johann\\_hari\\_this\\_could\\_be\\_why\\_you\\_re\\_depressed\\_or\\_anxious?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/johann_hari_this_could_be_why_you_re_depressed_or_anxious?language=en)

#### **Read:**

Students' Guide to Dealing with College Stress

<https://www.affordablecollegesonline.org/balancing-student-stress/>

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Activity (week 3): Discover Your Inner Strengths.** Making the best of your talents and inner strengths facilitates peoples life satisfaction and feelings of useful engagement in work/school.

Go to <http://www.viasurvey.org/> and take the inner strength survey. Answer the 240 questions (about 30 minutes) honestly and accurately. It is important in order to get an accurate assessment of your strengths. Write down in your journal your top strengths and use at least one of them each day over the next week. Write in your journal how you used your inner strengths and how you may help them grow.

Also consider what strengths that you would like to grow. Try to push yourself each week to strengthen an area in which you are not strong by doing something each day that isn't a great strength. Rapid development occurs often at the boundary of what you are comfortable with/capable of. Push the boundaries a bit! Note in your journal your experiences.

#### **Read:**

[Seligman, M. \(2002\) Authentic Happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment. Chapter 9: Your Signature Strengths.](#)

**Watch:**

Dan Ariely What makes us feel good about our work?

<https://ed.ted.com/lessons/what-makes-us-feel-good-about-our-work-dan-ariely#:~:text=It%20seems%20that%20most%20of,toward%20meaning%20in%20our%20work.>

Angela Lee Duckworth Grit: The power of passion and perseverance

[https://www.ted.com/talks/angela\\_lee\\_duckworth\\_grit\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_passion\\_and\\_perseverance?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance?language=en)

**Module/Lecture 6: April 12 – April 18** Neural pathways of stress and anxiety

**Read:**

[Pittman, C.M., Karle, E.M. \(2015\) Rewire Your Anxious Brain: How to Use the Neuroscience of Fear to End Anxiety, Panic, and Worry Introduction and Chapters 1-3. pp. 1-63](#)

Read online: Brainfacts.org - The neuroscience of stress

[https://www.brainfacts.org/thinking-sensing-and-behaving/emotions-stress-and-anxiety/2018/the-neuroscience-of-stress-061918?gclid=CjwKCAiArJvBRACEiwA-Wiqq2mdX7CEQbStco0t\\_jp0-Ymryi2mHW-H1HI0iT8baJTBLxUbe9pWBoCPgEQAvD\\_BwE&gclid=CjwKCAiArJvBRACEiwA-Wiqq2mdX7CEQbStco0t\\_jp0-Ymryi2mHW-H1HI0iT8baJTBLxUbe9pWBoCPgEQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.brainfacts.org/thinking-sensing-and-behaving/emotions-stress-and-anxiety/2018/the-neuroscience-of-stress-061918?gclid=CjwKCAiArJvBRACEiwA-Wiqq2mdX7CEQbStco0t_jp0-Ymryi2mHW-H1HI0iT8baJTBLxUbe9pWBoCPgEQAvD_BwE&gclid=CjwKCAiArJvBRACEiwA-Wiqq2mdX7CEQbStco0t_jp0-Ymryi2mHW-H1HI0iT8baJTBLxUbe9pWBoCPgEQAvD_BwE)

**Watch:**

Neuroscience of Anxiety

<https://youtu.be/2wCbwpnIJsA>

Stress, Portrait of a Killer - Robert Sapolsky

<https://youtu.be/a58RrLU4YE>

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Friday, April 16** Discussion/Experiential Section: How stress arises and affects our lives

**Week 4**

## Module/Lecture 7: April 19 – April 25 How to change your internal narrative

**Activity (week 4):** *Meditate!* Every day this week, meditate for 15 minutes or more. Download the Headspace or Calm apps (no need to sign up for the service).

**Read:** [Mindfulness in Plain English. Chapter 5 “The Practice”: pp. 29-38 and “Universal Loving Kindness”, pages 54-58.](#)

**Watch:** Shauna Shapiro - The Power of Mindfulness: What you Practice Grows Stronger

<https://youtu.be/leblJdB2-Vo>

Find a quiet place and meditate each day for 15 minutes or more. Keep notes in your journal about your experiences. There are groups available on campus for meditation as well. Each Wednesday night at 8 pm, I teach meditation through Zoom. The link is in the [Zoom link page](#).

There are also meditation groups that meet in the Duck’s Nest <https://health.uoregon.edu/ducknest>.

**Read:**

[James Carmody and Ruth A. Baer \(2008\) Relationships between mindfulness practice and levels of mindfulness, medical and psychological symptoms and well-being in a mindfulness-based stress reduction program J Behav Med \(2008\) 31:23–33](#)

**Watch:**

Kati Morton - What is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

<https://youtu.be/g7B3n9jobus>

Zindel Segal - The Mindful Way Through Depression

<https://youtu.be/1A4w3W94ygA>

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi’s TED talk:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly\\_csikszentmihalyi\\_flow\\_the\\_secret\\_to\\_happiness?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly_csikszentmihalyi_flow_the_secret_to_happiness?language=en)

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Module/Lecture 8: Wednesday, April 19 – April 25** Neural Pathways – Reward, Habit, Addiction, and how they affect our happiness

**Watch:**



## Reward pathway in the brain

<https://youtu.be/YzCYuKX6zp8>

Judson Brewer - A Simple Way To Break a Bad Habit

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-moW9jvvMr4>

### Read:

[Linden, D.J. \(2011\) The Compass of Pleasure. How our brains make fatty foods, orgasm, exercise, marijuana, generosity, vodka, learning, and gambling feel so good. Chapter 1.](#)

[Linden, D.J. \(2011\) The Compass of Pleasure. How our brains make fatty foods, orgasm, exercise, marijuana, generosity, vodka, learning, and gambling feel so good. Chapter 2.](#)

[Neal, D. T., Wood, W., & Quinn, J. M. \(2006\). Habits—A repeat performance. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 15\(4\), 198-202.](#)

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Friday, April 23** Discussion/Experiential Section: Practices to reduce your stress, anxiety, and unskillful habits

## Week 5

**Module/Lecture 9: April 26 – May 2** Building better habits and reducing addictive behaviors

### Read:

[Atomic Habits. James Clear Introduction.](#)

[Atomic Habits. James Clear Chapter 3.](#)

[The following is extra reading and not required:](#)

[Duckworth, A. L., Gendler, T. S., & Gross, J. J. \(2016\). Situational strategies for self-control. Perspectives on Psychological Science, 11\(1\), 35-55.](#)

### Watch:

James Clear - Atomic Habits: How to get 1% better every day.

[https://youtu.be/U\\_nzqnXWvSo](https://youtu.be/U_nzqnXWvSo)

The Social Dilemma – available on Netflix. We will have a watch party and discussion of this interesting movie about the power of social networks to shape your mind and behavior. Here is a trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uaaC57tcci0>

***Take the online quiz on the above material.***

**Activity (week 5):** *Gratitude – a daily exercise.* During this week, write in your journal (before bed is a good time) all of the things you were grateful for during the day. Think of at least 5 items. Write a little as to why you are grateful for these things that occurred in your daily life. Savor those things for which you are grateful. Look for them in your daily life, and see if you notice more each day. Gratitude has a way of growing, if you just give it a little water.

**April 28<sup>th</sup>** – Midterm Exam online.

### Week 6

**Module/Lecture 10: April 3 – May 9** Neural pathways for empathy, compassion, connection

**Read:**

[Pfaff D. W. The Altruistic Brain - Chapters 2.](#)

[Pfaff D.W. The Altruistic Brain - Chapter 3.](#)

**Watch:**

(Please Note: These talks contain discussion of sexual abuse, genocide, and other difficult topics; You may skip watching them if you choose. If you do watch, I recommend you watch with a friend and discuss the movies after)

Eve Ensler: Embrace your inner girl

<https://youtu.be/YhG1Bgbsj2w>

Clemantine Wamariya: War and what comes after.

Note: Clemantine Wamariya was a student and friend that I knew at Yale. She and I lived in the same residential college.

When Clemantine was six years old, the Rwandan Civil War forced her and her sister to flee their home in Kigali, leaving their parents and everything they knew behind. In this deeply personal talk, she tells the story of how she became a refugee, living in camps in seven countries over the next six years -- and how she's tried to make sense of what came after.

[https://youtu.be/U4gR\\_cd6xOc](https://youtu.be/U4gR_cd6xOc)

**Watch:** the documentary movie “*Buck*” (2011) about Buck Brannaman - the original horse whisperer, who has an amazing ability to connect emotionally with horses owing to his difficult childhood.

We will have a watch party online (details to be announced)

Or - you can rent it for a small fee (e.g. \$3.99) from amazon:

[https://www.amazon.com/Buck-Brannaman/dp/B005S6VD70/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?keywords=buck+movie&qid=1583760718&sr=8-2](https://www.amazon.com/Buck-Brannaman/dp/B005S6VD70/ref=sr_1_2?keywords=buck+movie&qid=1583760718&sr=8-2) ([Links to an external site.](#))

or on Youtube:

[https://youtu.be/3eB263Go2\\_4](https://youtu.be/3eB263Go2_4)

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Friday, April 30** Discussion/Experiential Section: Midterm Review

**Module/Lecture 11: May 3 – May 9** What does lead to happiness I: gratitude and generosity

**Read:**

[Marina Keegan. The opposite of loneliness. Yale Daily News. May 27, 2012.](#)

[Dunn, E. W., Aknin, L. B., & Norton, M. I. \(2008\). Spending money on others promotes happiness. Science, 319, 1687-1688.](#)

[Piliavin \(2003\). Doing well by doing good. In L. C. M. Keyes & J. Haidt \(Eds.\) Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-Lived. Washington, DC, US: American Psychological Association. 227- 247.](#)

You can also read this - but it isn't required (you won't be quizzed or tested on it)!

[Myers, D. G. \(2000\). The funds, friends, and faith of happy people. American Psychologist, 55, 56-67.](#)

**Watch:**

Elizabeth Dunn Helping Others Makes Us Happier – But It Matters How We Do It.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth\\_dunn\\_helping\\_others\\_makes\\_us\\_happier\\_but\\_it\\_matters\\_how\\_we\\_do\\_it?utm\\_campaign=tedsread&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_source=tedcomshare](https://www.ted.com/talks/elizabeth_dunn_helping_others_makes_us_happier_but_it_matters_how_we_do_it?utm_campaign=tedsread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare)

Louie Schwartzberg Nature, Beauty, Gratitude

[https://www.ted.com/talks/louie\\_schwartzberg\\_nature\\_beauty\\_gratitude?utm\\_campaign=tedsread&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_source=tedcomshare](https://www.ted.com/talks/louie_schwartzberg_nature_beauty_gratitude?utm_campaign=tedsread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare)

David Steindl-Rast Want to be happy? Be grateful.

<https://youtu.be/UtBsl3j0YRQ>

*Take the online on the above material.*

**Activity (week 6):** *The Gratitude Letter/Visit.* Think of one person, still living, who made a big difference in your life but whom you never properly thanked. Find a quiet spot when you have a half-hour and write a 300-word, heartfelt testimony to that person, explaining how he or she touched your life and why he or she is meaningful to you. If you'd like to take it to the next level, schedule a time to visit this person and share your letter. Call the person and say you want to visit without explaining why. At the visit, read the letter aloud. Gratitude is a powerful tool for increasing happiness because it intensifies positive memories and forges social bonds. For this reason, this is likely to be one of the most intense exercises of the entire quarter.

**Friday, May 7** Discussion/Experiential Section: Putting Healthy Behaviors into Practice through Gratitude, Community, and Developing a Healthy Lifestyle and Mindset

### Week 7

**Module/Lecture 12: May 10– May 16** What does lead to happiness II: The importance of healthy social connections and relationships.

**Activity (week 7):** *Savor a Beautiful Day.* During this week, your assignment is to spend time outdoors. Hike up Spencer Butte. If you can't do that, go for a walk in the wooded areas of campus. Do it by yourself, or with friends, but however you do it, walk quietly, in silence, and savor the beauty around you. Our minds are always so busy, immersed in our human world, we don't recognize the beauty around us. Make sure you spend at least one hour this week savoring, in silence, that natural beauty. Try and use the meditative skills you learned in a previous exercise to quiet your mind and be present during your walk. Write about your experience in your journal.

**Read:**

[Lerner, D., and Schlechter, A. \(2017\) Uthrive - How to succeed in college Chapter 2 - Relationships: Getting Connected](#)

**Watch:** Katie Hood. The difference between healthy and unhealthy love.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/katie\\_hood\\_the\\_difference\\_between\\_healthy\\_and\\_unhealthy\\_love?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/katie_hood_the_difference_between_healthy_and_unhealthy_love?language=en)

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Module/Lecture 13: May 10 – May 16** Neural pathways of bonding and relationships

**Read:**

[Feldman, R. The Neurobiology of Human Attachments. Trends in Cognitive Science](#)

[Pfaff D.W. The Altruistic Brain - Neural and Hormonal Mechanisms that Promote Prosocial Behavior - Chapter 4 101-130](#)

**Watch:**

Helen Fisher – The brain in love

[https://www.ted.com/talks/helen\\_fisher\\_the\\_brain\\_in\\_love?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/helen_fisher_the_brain_in_love?language=en)

Helen Fisher – Technology hasn't changed love; here's why

[https://www.ted.com/talks/helen\\_fisher\\_technology\\_hasn\\_t\\_changed\\_love\\_here\\_s\\_why](https://www.ted.com/talks/helen_fisher_technology_hasn_t_changed_love_here_s_why)

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Friday, May 14** Discussion/Experiential Section: Developing healthy relationships

**Week 8**

**Module/Lecture 14: May 17 – May 23** Achieving Better Goals I: The right mindset

**Activity (week 8):** *Exercise!* The mind and body are intimately connected together. Exercise not only affects the state of your body, but also the state of your mind. It is a great stress reliever, and with time can increase your mood and even lessen depression. This week, exercise every day. Go to the rec, join a yoga class, dance alone or with friends, or simply go for a walk. Note in your journal how you feel after each round of exercise, and over the course of the week.

**Read:**

[Dweck, C. S. \(2007\). The secret to raising smart kids. Scientific American Mind, 18\(6\), 36-43.](#) 

I also recommend the book (not required reading):

Mindset: The New Psychology of Success by Carol Dweck

**Watch:**

Anindya Kundu The boost students need to overcome obstacles

[https://www.ted.com/talks/anindya\\_kundu\\_the\\_boost\\_students\\_need\\_to\\_overcome\\_obstacles?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/anindya_kundu_the_boost_students_need_to_overcome_obstacles?language=en)

Sarah Kay If I should have a daughter

[https://www.ted.com/talks/sarah\\_kay\\_if\\_i\\_should\\_have\\_a\\_daughter/transcript?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/sarah_kay_if_i_should_have_a_daughter/transcript?language=en)


Fixed mindset vs. growth mindset

<https://youtu.be/Xv2ar6AKvGc>

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Module/Lecture 15: May 17 – May 23** Achieving Better Goals II: Harnessing Our Biases

**Read:**

[Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. \(2009\) Chapter 1. Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness \(updated edition\). New York: Penguin. \(pp. 17-39\).](#) 

**Watch:**

12 Cognitive Biases Explained

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEwGBlr\\_Rlw&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEwGBlr_Rlw&feature=youtu.be)

Cognitive Bias Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3RsbmjNLQkc&feature=youtu.be>

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Friday, May 21**

Discussion/Experiential Section: Ways to Change Your Mindset II

### Week 9

**Module/Lecture 16: May 24 – May 30** Achieving Better Goals III: Implementing Intention and Ending Procrastination

**Activity (week 9):** *Sleep!* The average college student is about 14 hours sleep deprived. That means that if the student is put in a room with nothing to do, no cell phones, computers, or games, then they will sleep an extra 14 hours! Have you ever noticed how much you sleep when you have time off or go home for the weekend? Sleep is a critical function for the body, brain, and mind. Contrary to cultural bias, less sleep is NOT better. For this week's activity, go to bed early, sleep in, get an extra hour of sleep each day. Keep notes

in your journal as to how you feel each night and relate it to how much sleep you were able to get. It could take you many days to pay back your sleep debt, but it is worth it!

Here are some tips for good sleep: Don't drink caffeine after mid-day; Don't use your phone or ipad or other electronics in bed; Don't exercise just before sleep (it tends to jazz up your mind and makes sleep less deep); Don't drink alcohol before sleep; Don't get into intense discussions or arguments (yikes!) before going to bed. Treat yourself well and relax. It's an assignment from your happiness professor!

**Read:**

[Gollwitzer, P. M. \(1999\). Implementation intentions: Strong effects of simple plans. American Psychologist, 54, 493-503.](#)

[Marano, H. E. \(2003\). Ending Procrastination. Psychology Today. Basco, M. R. \(1999\). The perfect trap. Psychology Today, 32\(3\), 30-4.](#)

[Ariely, D., & Wertenbroch, K. \(2002\). Procrastination, deadlines, and performance: Self-control by precommitment. Psychological Science, 13, 219-224.](#)

**Watch:**

Tim Urban's TED Talk "Inside the Mind of a Master Procrastinator"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arj7oStGLkU>

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Module/Lecture 17: May 24 – May 30** Strategies in practice: Helping others and helping the planet

**Read:**

Why we need to be more emotional to save the world

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200228-how-our-emotions-could-help-save-the-world> (Links to an external site.)

[Thaler, R. H., & Sunstein, C. R. \(2009\) Chapter 12. Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness \(updated edition\). New York: Penguin.](#)

You might also want to read (but not required!)

[Magnan, S. \(2017\) Social determinants of health 101 for health care. National Academy of Medicine.](#)

[Walton, G. M. \(2014\). The new science of wise psychological interventions. Current Directions in Psychological Science, 23, 73-82.](#)

[Lehner, M., Mont, O., & Heiskanen, E. \(2016\). Nudging—A promising tool for sustainable consumption behaviour? Journal of Cleaner Production, 134, 166-177.](#)

### **Watch:**

Nick Marks - The Happy Planet Index

[https://www.ted.com/talks/nick\\_marks\\_the\\_happy\\_planet\\_index?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/nick_marks_the_happy_planet_index?language=en)

*Take the online quiz on the above material.*

**Friday, May 28** Discussion/Experiential Section: We vs. Me – an Action Plan

### **Week 10**

#### **Activity (week 10):**

*How Has Your Authentic Happiness Changed?* Re-take the “Authentic Happiness Inventory”. <https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/questionnaires/authentic-happiness-inventory> ). Did your score change? How did it change? Even if it didn’t change, do you feel you now have the skills to develop more happiness, less stress, and more fulfillment in your life?

Write your future self a letter. Send it to me [davidmc@uoregon.edu](mailto:davidmc@uoregon.edu) and I will make sure to forward it to you in exactly a year!

How is your experience during this period of social isolation? And with the current social upheaval and protests? How do you feel at this time and how do you feel about the future? What are your goals for the year, and what will you do that is different over the next 12 months. And finally, what you would you like to tell your future self?

Have fun and in a year, you can reread your letter and remember this unique time in your history.



# Final Paper or Project

**Final Project or Research Paper** (30% of grade. **Due on Monday June 7 at 10 pm, PST, emailed to [davidmc@uoregon.edu](mailto:davidmc@uoregon.edu)**). The student may select to do a final project of their choosing, or write a final paper. Either way, the project or paper should be about the course material. The project could be, for example, a video, an “experiment” on how the student’s actions affect their happiness, an interview with a grandparent about happiness, a blog or webpage that the student maintained throughout the quarter, etc. Either way, the project will need to be accompanied by a short journal of time spent (1/2 page; be realistic – remember confabulation leads to unhappiness!) spent on the project (e.g. planning, designing, implementing, finishing, etc.) and a 2-3 page explanation of how the project relates to what was learned in class. The student should provide at least 3 references for their description (e.g. either from course materials or outside materials)

Guidelines for Writing and Submitting the Final Project

Guidelines for a traditional or non-traditional project and how we will grade it!!

Final Project/Research Paper due on Monday, June 7th, at 10 pm PST sent via email to [davidmc@uoregon.edu](mailto:davidmc@uoregon.edu). Please send to me the final project as a word document or PDF with your last name as the first word in the title of the saved document: such as mccormick\_final\_project.pdf. It will help us organize the proposals and respond to them.

**Traditional path - Final paper:** 6-8 pages double spaced traditional research paper on either:

- 1) an area of interest relating to the topic of the course including an insightful synthesis of literature (books or primary research literature, or online talks/webpages that are scientific in content; meaning NOT pop culture) that interests the student, complete with references;
- 2) an analysis of a questionnaire performed by the student. This would be a paper in which the student introduces a hypothesis or theory (“I propose that eating Oreos increases long term happiness”), collects data (“Ask everyone how they would feel after eating 1, 2, 5, 10, or 100 Oreos”), analyzes the results (“How does feelings of happiness vary with Oreo consumption”) and makes a conclusion (“Eating one or two Oreos can make a person feel better for a short while, but eating 100 can make them miserable and feeling sick. There seems to be an optimal number of Oreos to consume for short term pleasure.”) and discusses the results (“Doing something that is pleasurable may be best done in moderation and at the right time.”). (Btw, the student’s real paper should be more meaningful than Oreos, but even with this silly example it is possible to discuss the theory of a meaningful life in a deep manner.)

A basic science-oriented paper has these parts:

- The student’s name and date
- Title

- Introduction (background);
- Hypothesis – somewhere in the introduction (what is being proposed?);
- Experimental design (how will the experiment be performed?);
- Results (what was found);
- Discussion (what do the results mean in light of the topic).

## Grading Rubric: Final Paper

The traditional paper will be graded based upon the following (30 pts total):

Is the project relevant to the material in the class? 1 pt

How clear is the hypothesis? 2 pts

How well did the introduction set the stage for the project? 4 pts

Are the methods clear (if there are methods)? 2 pts

Are the results/findings clearly stated? 5 pts

How well are the results/findings discussed? Is there evidence of a clear synthesis of the results and what was read/learned in class and in the material referenced? 10 pts

Writing mechanics – are there spelling and grammatical errors and are the sentences complete?

Is the structure of the paper logical and do paragraphs follow each other appropriately? 5 pts

Are references (at least 5) provided that are clearly relevant to the project? 1 pt

## Non-traditional path –

**Project:** This project could be doing something that promotes deep thinking about long-term happiness and how to achieve it. Perhaps the student could write some poetry or song lyrics, put together a play, do some artwork, make a “Happiness” webpage or blog, try out meditation and keep notes on each session, interview a grandparent about happiness (like in “storycorps” on npr) – what the student experiences, how it affected them, and what they might do to improve the benefits of meditation. Be creative. The student should explore something meaningful to them, while also relevant to the class material.

**Written component:** Since this is an academic class about happiness, the project will need to include a 2-3 page report on how the alternative project relates to the subject material in the class, including references to studies, books, educational videos, etc. A traditional science oriented paper would have these sections:

- Name and Date
- Title of the Project
- Introduction (background);
- Hypothesis (Should be in the introduction - what is being examined? What is the idea of what it will mean? Etc.);
- Results (what are the findings in this non-traditional project);
- Discussion (what do the findings mean to the author and, potentially others, in light of the topic, material in class, and what was read/learned in class and in association with this project).

We will look for the same basic elements in the 2-3 page paper on the non-traditional project as we would for a traditional project, only more succinct and brief. There is no need to title each section with these titles, but we will look for these elements even if the project is a painting, poem, or dance performance, etc.

### Time sheet:

For a non-traditional project, the student should fill out the following time sheet, detailing how much time they spent on the project. An optimal number of hours on this project would be between 10 and 20 hours. This is the chance for the student to do something meaningful, that will help look deeper into their own feelings and understanding, and get class credit for doing it!

## TIME and METHODS SHEET for NON-TRADITIONAL PROJECTS (5 pts)

Name:

Name of Project:

*What was done for the project?*

For example – I compared and contrasted three different types of meditation and their effects on my level of stress/anxiety and internal state of mind.

*How much time was spent preparing the project?*

For example: I spent 4 hours reading about and learning different meditation techniques online at the following websites: headspace; calm; etc. and in reading the book “Mindfulness in Plain English” by Henapola Gunaratana (reference #).

*How much time and what methods were used for the project?*

For example: 7 hours meditating according to the following schedule:

I meditated 30 minutes a day for 14 days, using the Headspace app.

On days 1-4 I did mindfulness meditation listening to xxxxxxxxxx.

On days 5-10, I did loving-kindness meditation on my own using the following phrases:

(Phrases here)

Finally, on days 6-14 I did body scan meditation, progressively paying attention to each part of my body.

Each meditation was done in my own room, on a chair, with my eyes closed, just before I went to sleep. I chose this location because it is quiet, especially at that time of day, resulting in fewer distractions. With each meditation I took three deep breaths to begin, sat in an attentive but comfortable posture, and closed my eyes, with my arms relaxed and hands folded in my lap. With mindfulness meditation I focused on my breath as the rising and falling of my chest with each in-breath and out-breath. If my mind wandered, I gently brought my mind back to my breath. (and so on for other types of meditation.)

Both before and after meditation I noted my feelings and emotional state (see attached notes).

*How much time was spent researching material for the project and writing the 2-3 page description?*

*Was other time spent on the project and how?*

# Grading Rubric: Project

*The non-traditional project will be graded based upon the following (30 pts total):*

Is the project relevant to the material in the class? 1 pt

How clear is the hypothesis/goal? 2 pts

How well did the project reflect the goal/hypothesis? 3 pts

Was the time spent on the project and the methods appropriate and clearly stated? 8 pts

How well is the project discussed? Is there evidence of a clear synthesis of the project with what was read/learned? 10 pts

Writing mechanics – are their spelling and grammatical errors? 5 pts

Are their references (at least 3) that are clearly relevant to the project? 1 pt

**For a non-traditional project.** Please submit (email to davidmc@uoregon.edu) pictures or video or weblink or such of the product (e.g. poem, lyrics, painting, blogpage, questionnaire, etc.), along with the paper and timesheet, so that we can examine the product of the project.

Non-traditional project should include in the submission (as one file would be best!):

- 2-3 page paper exploring the project
- Time sheet

# Final Paper/Project Proposal Template

Cut and paste in a word document the appropriate outline below - fill out and email to me; [davidmc@uoregon.edu](mailto:davidmc@uoregon.edu))

Final Project - Traditional paper/research paper proposal:

Bi199 Happiness: a Neuroscience and Psychology Perspective – Research Paper Proposal

Name:

Date:

- Topic to be explored:
- Reason for exploring the topic?:
- How does it related to what was or will be discussed in class: neural and psychological mechanisms of happiness, life fulfillment, skillful engagement, etc.
- Reading/videos or other materials that will be used as a reference. List at least 3.

## Non-Traditional Project proposal

Bi199 Happiness: a Neuroscience and Psychology Perspective – non-traditional project proposal

Name:

Date:

Non-traditional (e.g. blog, webpage, interviews, questionnaire, art project, etc.).

- Topic to be explored
- What is the reason to explore it?:
- How does it related to what we have or will discuss in class: neural and psychological mechanisms of happiness, life fulfillment, skillful engagement, etc.
- How will the project be explored? Why would it be meaningful to the author and others?
- The student will be asked to write a 2-3 page report on their non-traditional project and how it relates to the class. The student should explain here what they will write about in this report on their project.
- Reading/videos or other materials that are planned to be used as a reference. List at least 3.

# Final Project Proposal Grading Rubric

Is the project on a topic that will increase the students understanding of well-being/happiness in themselves and/or others? 1 point

If the project is traditional, is the topic well thought out and appropriate for the course and explained clearly? 4 points

If the project is non-traditional, is the project well thought out and well planned? 4 points

Is it clearly communicated how the project will lead to greater insight into the psychology or neuroscience of happiness? 2 points

Is it clear how the project relates to material in the class? 2 points

Does the student give at least 3 good quality references to material that will help inform the project? 1 point



# Example Note Taking

My Notes – Bi199 – Happiness: a Neuroscience and Psychology Perspective

Date:

Video/Reading/Activity:

What were the main points of this video/reading/activity?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Do I agree or disagree with these main points?

Why or why not?

Do the main points resonate with my own experience?

What did I learn from this that may help me with my life if I implemented it?

How did the reading/video make me feel (beyond a factual/intellectual level)?

What questions/topics do I have after reading/watching this material?

