

IDS2935

# Course Syllabus

## Course Information

**Course Motto:** “Life is not determined by what you want. Life is determined by the choices you make.” Mr. Seaver, Junior High School Teacher. [Citation](#)

**Course Instructor:** Michael Weigold

**Office Hours:** Live via zoom by appointment or by email with a 24-hour response time.

**Course Communications:** Email via Canvas or at [mweigold@jou.ufl.edu](mailto:mweigold@jou.ufl.edu). Expect a response within 24 business hours.

**Credit Hours:** 3

**Social and Behavioral Sciences (S):** Social and behavioral science courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures, or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes, or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

**Description:** Most people say they want to be happy and that they make choices designed to bring greater happiness. This pursuit of happiness is now a pressing question because while many Americans lead lives that are richer, healthier, and freer than at any time in history, surveys suggest they are less happy than ever (see [here](#) [Links to an external site.](#) for research detecting this trend well before the current pandemic). Why are Americans less happy, and what can they (and you) do to

live a happier, more fulfilling life? Social scientists from many disciplines study the behaviors and habits that can predict long-term happiness. This course uses a multidisciplinary social science perspective to share these practices and encourages you to adopt one to enhance your well-being.

This course uses a three-pronged approach to a social science approach to understanding happiness:

1. Understand what makes us happy (principles drawn from social science research).
2. Understand how we know (methods of social science used to understand human emotion, thought, and behavior).
3. Apply what we know (to make your life richer and more satisfying).

## Prerequisites, Requirements, Materials, and Methods

<b>Materials</b>
• <b>Feedback</b>
• <b>Technology</b>
• <b>Methods</b>

You will have two **required textbooks**:

1. Robert Waldinger and Marc Schulz (2023). [The Good Life](#) [Links to an external site.](#) Simon & Schuster.
2. Bhattacharjee, A. [Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices - Open Textbook Library](#) [Links to an external site.](#) (umn.edu) (free download pdf)

All other resources are in Canvas.

The sources of images used in the course lectures can be found in this [document with image sources](#)

Actions

## Grades

or information on current UF grading policies visit Grades and Grading Policies (<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>). [Links to an external site.](#)

Your grade in this class is calculated by summing the points from several activities listed below. There are 345 possible points. These activities are weekly quizzes, an exam, a research paper, posts about a chosen activity, and a group presentation.

The points needed for each grade are as follows:

A = 306 or higher

B = 271 - 305

C = 237 - 270

D = 202 - 236

E = 201 or below

**Module quizzes (140 points).** Most modules include a quiz covering all module activities, including lectures, readings, and supplementary videos. There are 13 module quizzes and an orientation quiz. Quizzes open at midnight and must be completed by 11:59 pm on the same day. They only take about 5 minutes and consist of 5 questions. The format is multiple choice. You may not take a missed quiz without advance notification and approval, with exceptions outlined in UF policy. All quizzes are in Canvas and use Honorlock. If you encounter an issue with Honorlock or Canvas you should contact Honorlock or the UF Help Desk, respectively.

- Honorlock: [Contact Honorlock Support | Honorlock Online Proctoring](#)[Links to an external site.](#)
- UF Help Desk: [Computing Help Desk » University of Florida \(ufl.edu\)](#)[Links to an external site.](#) or 392-HELP

You may not use any outside resource during quizzes. In all assessments look directly and exclusively at the questions. Do not allow your gaze to wander to different parts of your screen or away from the screen. Ignoring these instructions will result in a report of an Honor Code violation to the Dean of Students Office.

**Research Project (100 points).** You will conduct [original research](#) by completing Interviews and reporting what you have discovered about happiness as reflected among a diverse group of people. The paper is divided into portions that are due at various points during the semester.

**Exam (1 exam worth 100 points).** The exam is multiple choice and includes material from the readings and lectures. Unlike the quizzes you may not consult study aids or materials of any kind during the exam. To prepare for the exam you are strongly encouraged to take notes throughout the course from lectures and your texts to have study materials for the exam.

**Class Participation** Engaging with the course content by spending time watching lectures and learning videos is important. A commitment to doing well can contribute to your grade. Failure to watch the course content can hurt your grade.

## Course Schedule

Orientation: Course Overview

Module 1: What Is Happiness?

Module 2: How Happy Are You?

Module 3: Choosing Activities for Lifelong Happiness

Module 4: The Mind: Anxiety, Depression, Gratitude

Module 5: Resources for Happiness, Part 1: Others

Module 6: Resources for Happiness, Part 2: Love

Module 7: Resources for Happiness, Part 3: Wealth

Module 8: Resources for Happiness, Part 4: Fitness

Module 9: Resources for Happiness, Part 5: Purpose

Module 10: The Role of Time in Happiness

Module 11: The Role of the Self in Happiness

Module 12: Setting Goals, Managing Oneself, Grit

Module 13: Making Repairs: Apologizing and Forgiving

Module 14: Exam

## Policies

Course Policies

UF Policies

### Attendance Policy

This class is asynchronous. This is good and bad. The good part is the convenience. The bad part is the freedom to put other priorities ahead of regular progress. You are unlikely to do well and will definitely not benefit and grow if you do not reserve specific times each week to complete work in the class.

Aside from the circumstances mentioned in the Make-up Policy section, I ask that you **notify me IN ADVANCE for permission to miss assignments**. Excused extensions may be made for circumstances that are beyond your control and documented. **In general, if you contact me after a due date it is not accepted, except in those situations described in UF's attendance policies, which can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>** [Links to an external site.](#)

### Quiz/Exam Policies

Required: Most modules have a quiz that is available early and closes by 11:59 pm on the assigned date. The exception is modules for which the quiz day is a holiday, in which case the quiz opens the following weekday.

You may access paper notes during a quiz, but not online materials (you will be in a proctoring system). You should work on all quizzes without assistance from other students, study aids, websites, content sites such as Quizlet, etc. In other words, the quiz answers are yours and reflect what you've learned from the material. To do otherwise is a violation of the UF Honor Code. The exam covers all material in the class, including lectures and readings.

### Make-Up Policy

Students may make up work related to university-excused absences or with the permission of the instructor. In the latter case, you must notify me in advance of the due date and explain the issues you are facing submitting work on time. Approved excuses are generally ones that can be documented and are not under the student's control. For example, if you are ill, notify me in advance of the assignment due date and see a

doctor who can provide a note.

## Assignment Policy

Deadlines for assignments are listed in the syllabus. Students should submit work on the dates indicated except where university policy provides an exemption.

## Class Community

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. Students should feel free to express their opinions but do so in a way that respects the rights of others who disagree.

Behaviors that detract from an environment that promotes learning will be penalized. Help yourself to learn and help others to learn as well. Make your philosophy one of maturity, as defined by author Stephen Covey:

“Maturity is the balance between courage and consideration. If a person can express his feelings and convictions with courage balanced with consideration for the feelings and convictions of another person, he is mature, particularly if the issue is very important to both parties.”

## Getting Help

Technical Help

Student Support

For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas or any other course technologies, please contact the UF Help Desk at: <http://helpdesk.ufl.edu> or [Links to an external site.](#) (352) 392-HELP (4357).

A request for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem.

## Disclaimer

This syllabus represents the instructor’s current plans and objectives. As we go through the semester, those plans may need to change to enhance the class learning opportunity. Such changes, communicated clearly, are not unusual and should be expected.