

POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY: THE SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF WELL-BEING

GSSR Doctoral School 2023/24

Institute of Psychology, Polish Academy of Sciences

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Summer semester

Thursdays, 15:00-16:30

Pre-course requirements: none. In this course, I will refer to psychological terms (such as character, temperament, personality, mental health, etc.) and to methodology used mainly in psychological studies (types of research methods and analyses) but even if you don't have previous training in Psychology, you should be able to follow this course and fulfill the assignments. Please let me know if you are a non-Psychology student, and I will refer you to some additional materials, if needed.

Course objectives: The aim of the course is to give you the possibility to explore the field of positive psychology, which includes topics related to wellbeing, emotions, relationships, character, mindfulness and flow, etc. After finishing the course, you should be able to:

- Understand the major concepts related to positive psychology
- Know and understand the methods used in studying positive psychology
- Be able to tell the difference between common intuitions and scientific knowledge about positive psychology
- Be able to apply positive psychology concepts in your research and in private life

Course format: The course will be held face-to-face (with possible exceptions). Each meeting will include a theoretical introduction to a specific topic as well as individual and group work (e.g., exercises, discussions, presentations, group projects). The course will be interactive and requires active participation.

Course materials will be available on Classroom platform, and the link will be shared on the first meeting.

Assessment criteria:

Final written multiple-choice test: 60% of the grade

Individual work* (Short written assignment or presentation): 40% of the grade

Participation in the classes is mandatory. Two absences are allowed.

** the final form of the assignment will be given in class*

Topics (subject to change):

1. Introduction to positive psychology – history, background, key concepts
2. Emotions, happiness, and their determinants
3. Health and well-being
4. What influences our happiness and wellbeing (and what doesn't!) – money, love, relationships, and others
5. Savoring, gratitude, flow, and mindfulness
6. Sense of meaning and purpose; engagement and achievement
7. Character strengths and virtues
8. Resilience and post-traumatic growth
9. Nature and wellbeing
10. How to measure and study wellbeing?
11. Cultural contexts of happiness and wellbeing
12. Biology and genetics of wellbeing
13. Practical applications of positive psychology

Readings

There will be obligatory and optional readings for each meeting. The specific list will be provided in the beginning of the course.