

## **CPSY 380 Positive Psychology and Health**

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Santa Clara University

**Office Hours:** Monday 3:00-5:00pm, Tuesday walk in: 11:30-12:30. I am also available by appointment if needed outside office hours; cell phone (650) 387-2892.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Psychology in the last half-century has developed a rich body of knowledge about mental illness such as depression, anxiety, and other maladaptive mental states. Although humanistic and transpersonal psychologists (among others) have addressed human strengths, such as self-actualization and spirituality, “positive” aspects of human psychology have not, until recently, been studied using empirical methods. This course will provide an introduction to “Positive Psychology” the empirical study of what leads humans to develop and flourish. This course introduces theory, research and applications, exploring the implications of positive psychology for our understanding of health and illness. The seminar is designed to foster creative thinking about concepts and methods of positive psychology. The intention of this course is to help evolve a deeper and more systemic understanding of positive psychological health. We will explore how a variety of components including biology, emotions, personality, environmental, lifestyle, family, culture and diversity issues continually interact in a dynamic process creating health. The course is designed to encourage you to think critically about what it means to be healthy, and to reflect on your own personal experiences related to health.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Students can explain key elements, concepts, and techniques associated with major theories of positive psychology.
2. Expand and re-define definitions of psychology and health.
3. Develop skills and learn interventions from the field of positive psychology.
4. Experience and reflect on positive psychological interventions.
5. Understand how to critically read and integrate the extant research in positive psychology into knowledge base and future clinical practice.
6. Formulate a personal theory of positive health within a culturally competent framework.

## **READINGS**

### **Course Textbooks:**

Lomas, T., Hefferon, K., Ivtzan, I., (2014) *Applied positive psychology: Integrated positive practice*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Shapiro, S. (2020) *Good Morning, I Love You: Mindfulness & Self-Compassion Practices to Rewire Your Brain for Calm, Clarity & Joy*. Sounds True, CO.

Salzberg, S. (1995). *Lovingkindness: The Revolutionary Art of Happiness*. New York: Shambala Publications.

### **Recommended Readings:**

Neff, K, Long, P, Knox, M et al (2018). The forest and the trees: Examining the association of self-compassion and its positive and negative components with psychological functioning. *Self and Identity*, 17, 627-645.

Denizet--Lewis, B. (2017) Why Are More American Teenagers Than Ever Suffering From Severe Anxiety? New York Times. October 11, 2017.

Piff, P. K., Dietze, P., Feinberg, M., Stancato, D. M., & Keltner, D. (2015). Awe, the small self, and prosocial behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 108, 883-899.

Hamblin, J. (2014). Buy experiences, not things. *The Atlantic*, Oct 7, 2014.

Wade, N. G., Hoyt, W. T., Kidwell, J. E. M., & Worthington, E. L., Jr. (2014). Efficacy of psychotherapeutic interventions to promote forgiveness: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 82, 154-170.

Brackett, M. A., Rivers, S. E., Reyes, M. R., & Salovey, P. (2012). Enhancing academic performance and social and emotional competence with the RULER Feeling Words Curriculum. *Learning and Individual Differences*, 22, 218-224.

Wierzbicka, A. (2004) Happiness in cross linguistic and cross-cultural perspective. *Daedalus*.

Kahneman, D., Diener, E., & Schwartz, N. (Eds). (1999). *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Abbe, A., Tkach, C., & Lyubormirsky, S. (2003). The art of living by dispositionally happy people. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 4, 385-404.

C.R. Snyder & S.J. Lopez (Eds.). (2001). *Handbook of positive psychology*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Schwartz, B. (2004). Chapter One. Let's go shopping. In *The paradox of choice: Why more is less* (pp. 9-22). New York, NY: Harper Collins.

Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: An experimental investigation of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*, 377-389.

## **EVALUATION**

### ***Class Participation and Attendance (10)***

Attendance and participation are fundamental to the course. Attendance first day of class is mandatory. If you do not attend you will need to drop from the class. If you miss more two classes your grade will be dropped a half grade.

### ***Experiential Student presentation (22)***

My pedagogy is one of student-centered active learning and I use a universal learning design. To facilitate this I include small group student presentations as part of the course. The class will be divided into small groups of 3-4. Each group will delve deeper into a specialized topic in Positive Psychology, and report back to the larger class as well as lead fellow students in an experiential exercise. The purpose is to creatively involve the class, helping a specific topic become alive for the class. Each group will be guided by the professor toward readings and ways of presenting. **Each individual will receive the same grade for the Group Presentation. Please closely read the attached presentation instructions. You will receive a written evaluation and grade post-presentation.**

### ***Weekly Reflection Papers (18)***

Students will write six weekly reflection pieces, reflecting on the reading material as well as on personal issues brought to light by the material. The weekly reflection piece will be 1 page double spaced. As journals will include personal material, they will not be graded, but simply recorded as complete or incomplete. Both the TA and the Professor will be reviewing the reflection pieces so please only share what you are comfortable with. **Please note** I will NOT follow up on any of the reflections in attempt to give you privacy to share without feeling that you will have to discuss further. If you want to talk to me about something personal, please make an appointment to meet with me in person.

***\*At the end of each reflection piece please include three thoughtful questions for discussion about the readings from the two required texts and workbook. I will be collecting these questions at the beginning of class and using them to facilitate discussion of the text.***

### ***Final paper (50)***

Select an area or concept of Positive Psychology and research the topic. This paper needs to be between 8-10 pages and is to utilize at least five (5) references other than the textbooks used in class. The references may be books, professional journal articles or

book chapters. **APA style is to be used.** References may be obtained from the internet as long as they are professional sources and are cited appropriately according to APA Style. It is SCU policy that all papers and exams are returned only in student supplied self-addressed stamped envelopes, so please include this with your final paper. (See <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/> for APA format instructions)

**(Total points = 100)**

Student Participation: 10

Student Presentation: 22

Reflection Papers: 18

Final Paper: 50

A = 95-100

A- = 90-94

B+ = 87-89

B = 84-86

B- = 80-83

C+ = 77-79

C = 73-76

C- = 70-72

D+ = 67-69

D = 60-66

F = less than 60

***Class Participation and Attendance.*** More than one absence will result in lowering by half a grade. If the first class is missed, except for extenuating circumstances as determined by the Professor, students will not be admitted to the course and will have to withdraw if they are already enrolled.

***Class Schedule:*** Class will meet on Monday Holidays unless otherwise noted. Class will meet during FINALS week unless otherwise noted.

**Course Requirements + “Course Rewirements”**

My hope is that most students will take this course not just because they want to learn about theories of how to live a happier life— instead, **I want students to take this course because they personally want to live a happier life and to become the best therapists possible to help others lives the happiest lives possible.**

As you’ll see in the first week of class, science shows that merely learning about the empirical findings and theories is not enough to achieve real behavior change. The path to becoming happier and more successful requires more than just learning the material— it involves actually putting in work to set up the right habits and mindset. As you’ll learn more in the next few weeks, putting in this sort of work is the only way to rewire your brain and behaviors. **What you practice grows stronger.**

And that's why **this course includes both academic learning and experiential learning**. The only way this course will make you happier is if you use the course as an impetus to put better habits into place— habits that will allow you to live a happier and more fulfilling life. **The Course Requirements can be thought of as “Course Rewirements”).** The goal of the rewirements is “rewire” your automatic habits and strategies. The rewirements are a series of activities and exercises aimed at making you happier, healthier, and more resilient. These include the weekly meditation practices and experiential exercises. These practices are essential to the course and sometimes involve *even more time and hard work* than the academic papers and presentations even though they won't be factored into your final course grade. But if you're taking this course to improve your life and your capacity as a therapist, then please take the rewirement practices just as seriously as the other course requirements.

### **IMPORTANT NOTE**

The aim of this course is to get each student to think critically about the exciting and extraordinary issues of positive psychology and health. However, there is a lot of basic material to ingest to prepare you for discussing the issues. A large part of this class will reside in class discussion and group learning and thus it is crucial to do all of the reading assignments so that you can actively participate. Completion and comprehension of the reading as well as class participation are weighted heavily in the grading of this course. Lastly, please feel free to approach me with suggestions, comments, and questions at any time. I want this class to be an enjoyable learning experience for all of us.

### **POLICY ON SELF-DISCLOSURE**

*As per 2004 APA ethics standards, a policy statement on Student self-disclosure is necessary. The following statement is the SCU statement on self-disclosure in our program.*

The professional training philosophy of the Counseling Psychology Department is predicated on the notion that an effective counselor must be a whole person. Indeed, in the practice of counseling, it is the person of the counselor that is a major component of healing. As a counselor-in-training, then, self-reflection is a necessary and required part of the training that helps one better understand and empathize with his/her future clients' experience.

Such reflection is a significant component of one's personal and professional development as an effective and sensitive instrument of change. Thus, it is customary that in the CPSY Masters Program's classes at SCU, students are regularly assigned work that involves self-disclosure and personal study of the content of that self-disclosure. Students are expected to reflect on their past and present personal experiences in courses and program related activities, in oral and/ or in written assignments.

We respect students' rights to confidentiality, and do not require that any particular or specific information be disclosed. Moreover, we do not evaluate students' progress in the program based on the disclosure of any specific information (except as mandated by ethical codes or law). It is our experience that this philosophy and related formats in our classes provides a rich and superlative educational experience, involving more aspects of student experience than do standard lectures or written material which does not include the person of the therapist in training.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Santa Clara University insists on honesty and integrity from all members of its community. The standards of the University preclude any form of cheating, plagiarism, forgery of signatures, and falsification of data. A student who commits any offense against academic honesty and integrity may receive a failing grade without a possibility of withdrawal. An offense may also dictate suspension or dismissal from the University.

In particular, it is each student's responsibility to understand the serious nature of plagiarism and the consequences of such activity. Plagiarism is the practice of claiming, or implying, original authorship of (or incorporating material from) someone else's written or creative work, in whole or in part, into one's own without adequate acknowledgement. Unlike cases of forgery, in which the authenticity of the writing, document, or some other kind of object itself is in question, plagiarism is concerned with the issue of false attribution.

see: <http://www.scu.edu/studentlife/resources/academicintegrity/>

### **Academic Integrity Pledge**

*The Academic Integrity pledge is an expression of the University's commitment to fostering an understanding of -- and commitment to -- a culture of integrity at Santa Clara University. The Academic Integrity pledge, which applies to all students, states:*

*I am committed to being a person of integrity. I pledge, as a member of the Santa Clara University community, to abide by and uphold the standards of academic integrity contained in the Student Conduct Code*

*Students are expected to uphold the principles of this pledge for all work in this class.*

### **Disabilities Resources**

*If you have a disability for which accommodations may be required in this class, please contact Disabilities Resources, Benson 216, <http://www.scu.edu/disabilities> as soon as possible to discuss your needs and register for accommodations with the University. If you have already arranged accommodations through Disabilities Resources, please discuss them with me during my office hours. Students who have medical needs related to pregnancy may also be eligible for accommodations.*

*While I am happy to assist you, I am unable to provide accommodations until I have received verification from Disabilities Resources. The Disabilities Resources office will work with students and faculty to arrange proctored exams for students whose accommodations include double time for exams and/or assisted technology. (Students with approved accommodations of time-and-a-half should talk with me as soon as possible). Disabilities Resources must be contacted in advance to schedule proctored examinations or to arrange other accommodations. The Disabilities Resources office would be grateful for advance notice of at least two weeks. For more information you may contact Disabilities Resources at 408-554-4109.*

### **Accommodations for Pregnancy and Parenting**

*In alignment with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and with the California Education Code, Section 66281.7, Santa Clara University provides reasonable accommodations to students who are pregnant, have recently experienced childbirth, and/or have medically related needs. Pregnant and parenting students can often arrange accommodations by working directly with their instructors, supervisors,*

*or departments. Alternatively, a pregnant or parenting student experiencing related medical conditions may request accommodations through Disability Resources.*

**Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX)**

*Santa Clara University upholds a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment and sexual misconduct. If you (or someone you know) have experienced discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, I encourage you to tell someone promptly. For more information, please consult the University's Gender-Based Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Policy at <http://bit.ly/2ce1hBb> or contact the University's EEO and Title IX Coordinator, Belinda Guthrie, at 408-554-3043, [bguthrie@scu.edu](mailto:bguthrie@scu.edu). Reports may be submitted online through <https://www.scu.edu/osl/report/> or anonymously through Ethicspoint <https://www.scu.edu/hr/quick-links/ethicspoint/>*



## SYLLABUS

<b>Class Assignments and Readings</b>	<b>Course Content</b>
<p><b>Class One</b> No Written Assignments Due</p> <p>Reading: 1. <i>Applied Positive Psychology: Preparing for the Journey</i> Chapter 1-3</p>	<p><b>Welcome. Review Syllabus. What Is Positive Psychology?</b></p>
<p><b>Class Two</b> Reflection 1</p> <p>Reading: 1. <i>Applied Positive Psychology: Chapters 4-6</i> 2. <i>Lovingkindness: Section 1</i></p>	<p><b>Neuroplasticity &amp; Happiness</b></p> <p><i>Student Presentation</i></p>
<p><b>Classes Three</b> Reflection 2</p> <p>Reading: 1. <i>Applied Positive Psychology: The Body and the Brain</i> 2. <i>Lovingkindness: Section 2</i></p>	<p><b>Social Support, Connection, and Health</b></p> <p><i>Student Presentation</i></p>
<p><b>Class Four &amp; Five (January 25)</b> <b>All Day Intensive (12:00pm-6:00pm)</b> Guest Lecture – Qi Gong and Eastern Practice</p>	<p><b>Comprehensive Experiential Practice of Positive Psychology Interventions.</b></p>
<p><b>Class Six</b> Reflection 3</p> <p>Reading: 1. <i>Applied Positive Psychology: Culture and Society</i> 2. <i>Applied Positive Psychology: Childhood and Development</i> 3. <i>Lovingkindness: Section 3</i></p>	<p><b><i>Empathy and Compassion</i></b></p> <p><i>Student Presentation</i></p>
<p><b>Class Seven</b> Reflection 4</p> <p>Reading: <i>Good Morning, I Love you: Chapters 1-4</i></p>	<p><b>Control and Positive Psychology</b></p> <p><i>Student Presentation</i></p>

<p><b>Class Eight</b> Reflection 5</p> <p>Reading: 1. <i>Applied Positive Psychology: Occupations and Organizations</i> 2. <i>Good Morning, I Love you: Chapters 5-7</i></p>	<p><b><i>Forgiveness</i></b> <i>Student Presentation:</i></p>
<p><b>Class Nine</b> Reflection 6 and Meditation Record Due</p> <p>Reading: <i>Good Morning, I Love you: Chapters 8-11</i></p>	<p><b>Awe</b> <i>Student Presentation: Positive Relationships</i></p>
<p><b>Class Ten</b> Hard Copy of <b>Final Exam</b> is Due in Class.</p> <p>Reading: <i>Applied Positive Psychology: Ethical and Reflective Practice</i></p>	<p><b>Gratitude</b> <b>Reflections and Future Directions.</b></p>

**\*Last Class 2/24**

My pedagogy is one of student-centered active learning and I use a universal learning design. To facilitate this I include small group student presentations as part of the course. The class will be divided into small groups of 3-4. Each group will delve deeper into a specialized topic in Positive Psychology, and report back to the larger class as well as lead fellow students in an experiential exercise. Each group will be guided by the professor toward readings and ways of presenting. Additionally, the professor may help to draw out key points, or connect topics back to relevant issues if needed.

The goal of your presentation is to help make your topic come alive for yourself and the class. You will have 45 minutes to make your presentation, and then 15 minutes for questions and class dialogue. The presentation will be in groups of 3-4 students. Each group will meet with the Professor to discuss preparation of the presentation. This will give us a chance to touch base about your ideas and how to divide up the work. In addition, I required that you email me the three Research Articles you plan to present, so that I can review them and make sure they are appropriate. The presentation should make use of reading material other than the assigned readings, and must include at least five additional sources, two of which are included in an Annotate Bibliography for the class (the SCU Library has a wonderful handout on Annotated Bibliography). Please make sure references are not self-help books or articles from the popular press; they should be *professional* books or articles.

Each presentation should contain the following:

I. Power point is a helpful way to organize your presentation. Please use PPT unless you receive explicit permission from the professor to use an alternative means of presentation.

II. Content: In developing the presentation, consider the major points you want to make and how they can be applied clinically. Content should include the following as appropriate:

- What you see as key elements, concepts, and techniques associated with the topic
- Highlight THREE Interesting Research articles about the topic
- Questions you have and Directions for future research and clinical applications
- Discussion of Cultural and Diversity, Privilege and Power

III. Experiential Exercise: ***It is very important to get the class involved and to give an experiential taste of the theory you are presenting.*** Means of presenting that you may want to use include:

- role play
- experiential exercise
- small group exercises
- guest expert (to be pre-approved by Professor)

IV. Video: Please include a video as part of your presentation to give a taste of what the positive psychology topic looks like in vivo. If no video is available please email me to come up with another creative visual aid.

V. Clinical Application: Presentation should incorporate a thoughtful in class discussion of how to put the topic into practice. Because Positive Psychology is a relatively young field, many of the topics have not yet been integrated into clinical practice. If this is the case for your topic, please discuss potential applications. The Professor will be actively involved in this process.

VI. Class Discussion: It is important to leave some time for class discussion and questions. Be prepared to answer questions that the class may have. Also, you might consider coming up with some discussion questions, just in case the class doesn't have questions of their own. You should expect me to participate actively in this discussion, attempting to maximize effective learning by class members. However, you are primarily responsible for leading this discussion and answering questions.

VII. Handouts (double-sided!!!) to be distributed at the time of presentation should include:

- 1-page "cheat sheet" summarizing the major learning points and experiential exercise.
- Presentation outline
- Bibliography plus Annotated Bibliography of two important sources
- Any other creative handouts

**Suggestions:**

- Involve the class as much as possible, creating interest and inspiration around this topic of special interest to you.
- Make sure you do a run-through of your presentation so that you can make necessary adjustments in order to fill the time slot.
- Contact Media Services to order any equipment you will need (TV, VCR, etc.): phone number is (408) 554-4520.
- I suggest you begin to prepare your presentation early. Please feel free to meet with or email me while preparing for your presentation.

## **TERM PAPER**

This course focuses on Positive Psychology, exploring theory, research and clinical applications. The intention of this paper is for you to delve more deeply into the research, theory and applications of a specific topic in Positive Psychology.

Your paper will include five sections: (1) Introduction and Background, (2) Definition, Theory, Key Concepts of Topic, (3) Review of Seminal Research, (4) Clinical Applications, (5) Future Directions.

For example, your topic may be Compassion. Your paper would involve (1) Introduction and Background, (2) Definition, Key Concepts and Theory regarding Compassion and Health, (3) Review of key research on Compassion, (4) Clinical Applications regarding the incorporation of compassion practices for both therapist and clients, and (5) Directions for future research, e.g. Where are the gaps in the literature? What are exciting directions for further research and clinical exploration? Multicultural and diversity issues should be integrated throughout the paper, with specific focus on how your personal values, cultural identity and beliefs inform your perspective and how you will address issues of bias, assumptions, power and privilege in your future work with clients.

The paper will be 8 pages, double spaced, 1” margins, and Times New Roman font. You will cite at least five additional resources besides those read in class. Please follow APA Style (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>). Also, it will be important to include academic references throughout the paper and to include a bibliography at the end of the paper. The paper will be due the last week of class. If you would like the paper returned most rapidly, include an envelope with enough postage for your paper. If you do not provide an envelope your paper will be shredded.

### **Videos**

Two short Sonja Lyubomirsky videos from the Greater Good Science Center:

“What Determines Happiness”: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_URP3-V1sY4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_URP3-V1sY4)

“Happiness Takes Work”: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6T7QGITKZGg>

Watch Dan Gilbert’s TED Talk “Surprising Science of Happiness”

[https://www.ted.com/talks/dan\\_gilbert\\_asks\\_why\\_are\\_we\\_happy?](https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_asks_why_are_we_happy?)

<http://www.wi-phi.com/video/cognitive-biases-peak-end-effect>

## **Grading Feedback Form for Presentation**

I. Power point presentation (5)

II. Content (10)

- Highlight THREE Interesting Research articles about the topic
- Questions you have and Directions for future research and clinical applications
- Discussion of Cultural and Diversity, Privilege and Power
- Clinical Application:

III. Experiential Exercise (4)

IV. Video (2)

VI. Class Discussion (2)

VII. Handouts (2)

**Grading Rubric for Presentation**

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>EXEMPLARY</b>	<b>GOOD</b>	<b>ACCEPTABLE</b>
Content and Theory (4 pts)	Balanced presentation of relevant and legitimate information that clearly supports a central purpose or argument and shows a thoughtful, in-depth analysis of a significant topic.	Information provides reasonable support for a central purpose or argument and displays evidence of a basic analysis of a significant topic.	Information supports central purpose or argument at times. Analysis is basic and general.
Clinical Application (4 pts)	Student provides a sophisticated, concise description of the Stress Management interventions and how they can be applied clinically.	Student provides a satisfactory description of the Stress Management interventions and how they can be applied clinically.	Student provides minimal description of the Stress Management interventions and how they can be applied clinically.
Future Directions (4 pts)	Student provides a reflective, creative and well-developed presentation of possible future directions for research and clinical applications of the Stress Management topic.	Student provides a satisfactory presentation of possible future directions for research and clinical applications of the Stress Management topic.	Student provides minimal presentation of possible future directions for research and clinical applications of the Stress Management topic.
Quality and Use of References (4 pts)	Compelling evidence from professionally legitimate sources is given to support claims. Attribution is clear and fairly represented. References are primarily peer-reviewed professional journals or other approved sources (e.g., government documents, etc.). The reader is confident that the information and ideas can be trusted.	Professionally legitimate sources that support claims are generally present and attribution is, for the most part, clear and fairly represented. Although most of the references are professionally legitimate, a few are questionable (e.g., trade books, internet sources, popular magazines). The reader is uncertain of the reliability of some of the sources.	Although attribution is occasionally given, statements seen unsubstantiated. Reader is confused about the source of information and ideas. Most of the references are from sources that are not peer-reviewed and reader doubts the accuracy of much of the material presented.

<p>Feel of Presentation &amp; Quality of PowerPoint (4 pts)</p>	<p>The PPT is compelling. The presentation is vibrant and the sustains audience interest throughout.</p>	<p>The PPT is generally engaging, but has some dry spots. In general, it is focused and keeps the audience's attention.</p>	<p>The PPT is unengaging. The presentation has interesting parts; audience finds it difficult to maintain interest.</p>
<p>Coherence and Organization (4 pts)</p>	<p>Thesis is clearly stated and developed; specific examples are appropriate and clearly develop thesis; conclusion is clear; shows control; flows together well; good transitions; succinct but not choppy; well organized</p>	<p>Most information presented in logical sequence; generally very well organized but better transitions from idea to idea and medium to medium needed</p>	<p>Concept and ideas loosely connected; clear transitions; organization and flow are poor</p>