

FYS 35: Happiness 101 **Fall, 2020**

Instructor: Dr. Molly R. Shepard
Molly.Shepard@drake.edu (preferred means of communication)
(515) 271-2361 (office)

Course Times: T/Th 12:30 – 1:45
Course Location: Aliber 103

Office: Collier-Scripps Hall 227
Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:00 – 10:30 (This is a dedicated slot but always available by appointment)

Note: Items within the syllabus are subject to change

Course Description

This FYS will explore the science behind happiness and the link between happiness and physical and mental health. Based on the book, “*U-Thrive*,” we will research and discover tools for creating positive lifelong habits and develop a model for thriving in college and beyond. We will delve into the field of positive psychology and the study of mental health to cultivate happiness, learn important life skills, and decrease stress. We will investigate scholarly work in this field to strengthen our understanding and learn more about ourselves and how we navigate the world around us.

Intended Outcomes

Critical Thinking. The First Year Seminar focuses on the development of your critical thinking skills. The curriculum is designed to assist you in acquiring the skills for rational analysis and argumentation that is purposeful, rigorous, self-reflective, and based on a careful consideration of evidence.

Students will learn to:

- clearly define a question or problem
- gather information that is relevant to that problem
- rigorously identify assumptions and preconceptions, including their own, that influence analysis of that problem.
- organize and prioritize the information to develop a rational argument that states a clear claim or thesis, provides reasons for holding that claim, provides relevant evidence to support each reason, and considers alternative explanations in reaching a conclusion.
- communicate that reasoned argument effectively in writing, presentations, and discussions.
- Demonstrate your understanding that results are tentative and open to revision based on new information.

Written Communication. You will learn to read with discrimination and understanding and to write persuasively. Drake students will learn to shape their writing according to subject, purpose, medium, context and intended audience.

Information Literacy. You will learn to acquire, analyze, interpret, and integrate information, employing appropriate technology to assist with these processes, and to understand the social and ethical implications of information use and misuse. You will use appropriate sources, including library and internet resources, to process and evaluate information. Students will gain

an understanding of the social and ethical issues encountered in a networked world, an ability to assess the quality of information, and learn appropriate ways to reference information sources.

Students will be able to:

- Navigate and integrate scholarly resources into their research and reflection.
- Articulate the social and ethical implications of information use and misuse.
- Evaluate information resources and identify quality resources relevant to the problem or issue investigated.
- Select and employ the appropriate method and data for disciplinary research, problem-based learning, experiential-based research, and/or reflective/integrative coursework.
- Articulate the basic implications of information use and misuse related to issues of academic honesty and plagiarism and pursue their educational goals with a high level of academic integrity.

Learning Philosophy

Collectively, we will work together to expand our ability to think critically, improve our writing skills, and understand the material through self-reflection and active engagement in class activities and discussion. My role is to facilitate your learning by providing you with a framework to seek answers, by encouraging openness to and respect for alternate perspectives, and enabling you to think deeply.

Expectations

Covid-19 safety and procedures.

- Masks and social distancing. When we do meet in person, we will all wear masks and maintain social distance to minimize the likelihood of the spread of the novel coronavirus. This is not unique to my course but a campus-wide policy. You will not be allowed in class without a mask. Wearing a mask protects your classmates as well as yourself. Being dismissed from class for not having a mask will be considered an unexcused absence.
- Students who test positive. If you test positive for Covid-19, or have been exposed and need to isolate yourself, please send an email to the Dean of Students Office, dos@drake.edu from your Drake email account. Include your full name and student ID along with information about your situation. The Dean of Students Office will contact all of your professors. I will work with you to fulfill the requirements of this course in a virtual mode. Failure to follow these procedures will result in an unexcused absence.
- Transition to virtual. If at any time during the semester, you wish to transition to a virtual learning experience, please let me know. You do not need to explain your rationale behind this decision.
- Self-monitoring and COVID symptoms. Carefully monitor your own health and well-being throughout the semester, including frequently taking your own temperature. If you experience [Covid-19 symptoms](#) or develop a fever, even if you do not test positive, *do not come to an in-person class meeting*. You must notify me prior to class for it to be an excused absence.

Bring something to write with and write on. Dedicate a journal, or a notebook to this course. It will be a resource to you when the course is complete and I strongly believe that we process knowledge more effectively by writing it down.

Be prepared for class. Class discussion and activities assume that you've done the reading. I will limitedly review content in the reading. Class lectures and activities will build on that material and provide additional information but all material will be on exams.

Active and attentive engagement. A substantial part of your learning in this course will depend on your active and attentive engagement in class discussions and other collaborative learning

opportunities. I strongly encourage you to turn on your camera during collaborative exchanges to help sustain a sense of community and co-presence as we learn together. However, doing so is not required; if you have reservations about doing so, please let me know in advance so I can plan accordingly.

Mandatory attendance. Attendance and promptness are mandatory. If you are more than 10 minutes tardy, you are considered late. Being late three times will be marked as absent. I allow two absences without penalty; if you are absent more than twice, whatever the reason, I reserve the right to lower your course grade by half a letter grade per absence. **A total of six unexcused absences** over the semester automatically result in your failure of the course. You are expected to work with your classmates to cover any material that you missed. Do not contact me to see what we covered – I will refer you to your classmates.

Be respectful with electronic device use. There will be specified times during class where electronic devices will be called upon to facilitate learning. Outside of those specified times, there will be no cell phones or laptops utilized during class period. Texting, checking Snapchat, or any non-class related purpose is rude and disruptive. Unauthorized use will negatively affect your course grade, and you may be asked to leave and will be marked absent. For virtual learning, do your best to avoid distractions that prevent you from paying attention and contributing to class discussion.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a disability and will require academic accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. Accommodations are coordinated through Student Disability Services. Please contact that office, at 271-1835 sds@drake.edu to make arrangements for accommodations prior to the start of the course.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is an encompassing term that includes not only plagiarism and cheating, but also involves any activity that seeks to gain credit for work one has not done or deliberately damages or destroys the work of others. If you must use another person's work to further your own understanding of a subject on any course assignment or project, you must give that person credit. The methods most frequently used to communicate information taken from an outside source are direct quotation, paraphrase, and summary. Some students believe that only the first of these – quoting – must be acknowledged in a citation; in fact, since all of these methods involve transmitting ideas found in the source, each requires proper documentation. Any failure to document sources properly constitutes plagiarism, even if you have put the "borrowed" idea(s) into your own words.

Many instances of plagiarism arise from uncertainty about exactly what plagiarism is and how it may be avoided. **Ignorance, lack of time, and/or good intentions do not constitute acceptable excuses.** If you are uncertain about what constitutes proper documentation in a given situation, consult an appropriate resource (*The APA Publication Manual*, a reference librarian at Cowles Library, Purdue Owl website <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>) before turning in your work.

You are responsible for understanding and abiding by Drake University's policies regarding academic integrity and student conduct. Academic dishonesty, including obtaining unauthorized information, tendering of information, misrepresentation, bribery, and plagiarism, is strictly prohibited. You should be familiar with the definitions and policies related to academic dishonesty found in the Drake University student handbook and online at <http://www.drake.edu/studentlife/handbook-resources/handbook/>.

The penalty for engaging in any form of academic dishonesty in relation to this class will result in, at a minimum, a zero for the assignment and could result in failure of the course, recommendation of suspension, or possible expulsion.

Course Content

This course will require you to consider the following questions:

- Who are you?
- Who do you want to be?
- How do you want to interact with the world around you?

Required Course Materials

- U Thrive: How to Succeed in College (and Life) – Daniel Lerner and Alan Schlechter

There is only one required text. Additional reading assignments will be provided through BlackBoard. You should bring the text to class each day.

Course Requirements

Discussion Questions and Quizzes. Being prepared for class are essential for success in this course. A thorough knowledge of the material allows for engaging conversations in class. Discussion Questions and Quizzes will help you prepare for class and encourage you to think reflectively about the material.

Discussions are a way of looking at the material from an alternate perspective. Different points of views should be respected, accepted, and encouraged. A key to fully understanding anything is a respect for others to hold different points of view, and a willingness to consider alternate perspectives.

As you do the readings, consider the following. These tools will help you with insights in discussions and prepare for class participations.

- Describe (What?) – What is the topic? What is being addressed? What do we know about the author? Summarize the reading.
- Evaluate (So, What?) – What stood out to you about the reading? What feelings did this reading create for you? What thoughts did it inspire? What discouraged you? What questions did you develop?
- Articulate Learning (Now, What?) – What connections can you make to your life experiences? How can you apply this learning? How did this topic impact your values, beliefs, and opinions?
- A-Ha Moment – How did the material that you reviewed change your perspective? What in the material was eye-opening or life changing?

Attendance and Participation. First Year Seminars are designed to help facilitate your successful transition to college level study, and each student is an important component of the learning experience. Participation includes doing all of the assigned reading and writing, but reading the material is just the first step. Your voice is important. Please use your voice to ask questions, make points, and discuss your perceptions and ideas. Active engagement includes being prepared for class, considering your personal and scholarly perspective on the topics, listening to the viewpoints of your classmates, and contributing to the dialogue. Sharing your reactions to articles, lectures, and exercises ensures an engaging and meaningful class.

Practicing Happiness. Over the course of the semester, you will be introduced to a total of 7 practices developed through research studies thought to increase happiness. You will be given the opportunity to try each of these practices and submit an assignment showing your consideration and use of this practice. At the end of the course, you should be able to identify which practice(s) were the best fit for you.

These practices will work together to inform the final project.

Writing Reflections. Prompts will be given periodically throughout the course providing you with the opportunity to solidify the course content - Who are you? Who do you want to be? How do you want to interact with the world around you? This is an opportunity for you to reflect critically about the content and how to apply it to your life.

It is understood and expected that some of your thoughts and responses will be very personal in nature. I will not share your comments without your permission.

Each reflection should be no less than a paragraph and no more than a page, double-spaced. Often, reflection prompts will contain multiple questions. Make sure you respond to all of the questions.

Meeting with the Instructor. You will be required to participate in a one-on-one meeting with me before the midterm. We will discuss writing reflections, class participation, and any questions or concerns that you have. These meetings will be scheduled prior to the midterm as a check-in and scheduled through Starfish.

Writing Workshop. The Drake Writing Workshop is available as a free service to students. You will be required to attend the Writing Workshop for the first response paper. The Writing Workshop is located in Cowles Library, Room 47. For specific hours and to make an appointment, go to the website, <https://library.drake.edu/writing-workshop/>.

Midterm Exam. This exam will be your opportunity to demonstrate your engagement with the course materials up to this point. The exam will be heavily based on class and included readings. A list of possible questions will be given to you in advance. This is an open-book, open-note format. Failure to show up for the midterm exam will result in a zero for the exam.

Response Papers. Three essays will be assigned during the semester. These writings are designed to challenge you in your analytical and critical writing. In these papers you will be asked to engage with the texts in this course in a variety of ways, including doing research. This is a scholarly work that is thoughtful, well researched, and cited.

Papers should be 4-6 pages in length with one-inch margins, 12-point font, Times New Roman, double spaced. There will be some degree of personal examination using the material from class. There should be an introduction, thesis statement, support (with references), a conclusion, and a reference list.

Final Project and Presentation. Happiness Project Presentations

You will work in small groups for the final project. The goal of the final project is for students to disseminate information about positive psychology and create an infomercial to improve student wellness on campus. Projects will focus on ways to improve self-esteem, happiness, physical health, and other wellness domains covered throughout the course. Be creative.

Students will present their recorded infomercial in projects (6 minutes per group) via video.

You will prepare a brief, written proposal for the final project once the project is introduced in class.

Final Exam. This exam will be your opportunity to demonstrate your engagement with the course materials and with your experience of this FYS. The exam will be heavily based on class and included readings. A list of possible questions will be given to you in advance. The exam is to highlight the well-being items covered in the course to ensure that in the future, you have the knowledge needed to overcome challenges and thrive. This is an open book, open note format. Failure to show up for the final exam will result in a zero for the exam.

All course requirements must be completed in order to pass the course. Also, late assignments will be penalized one full letter grade for each calendar day of lateness. Any exceptions to this policy will require you to meet with me to discuss the situation.

Grading

Activity	Points	Percentage
Discussion Questions/Quizzes/Class Assignments	35	14%
Attendance and Participation	25	10%
Practicing Happiness (6)	24	10%
Written Reflection (Journal - 11)	21	8%
Response Paper 1 (Happiness Practice 2)	20	8%
Response Paper 2	20	8%
Response Paper 3	20	8%
Meeting with Instructor	10	4%
Writing Workshop	10	4%
Midterm Exam	15	6%
Final Exam	15	6%
Final Project and Presentation	35	14%
Total	250	

Scale

Points	Percentage	Grade
245 - 250	98.00 – 100%	A+
225 – 244	97.99 – 90.00%	A
220 – 224	89.99 – 88.00%	B+
200 – 219	87.99 – 80.00%	B
195 – 199	79.99 – 78.00%	C+
175 – 194	77.99 – 70.00%	C
150 – 174	69.99 – 60.00%	D
149 or below	Less than 60%	F