

Happiness and Wellbeing—PHH3610

Instructor: Lyndal Grant
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Time: M, W, F 11:45-12:35
Location: Anderson Hall 019
Office hours: M, W, 3-4
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

What makes our lives go better or worse? According to the hedonist, our lives go better when we experience pleasure and avoid pain. According to desire-based theories, our lives go better when we get what we want. Objective list theorists say that a variety of different goods – such as pleasure, friendship, and knowledge – are essential components of a life worth living.

In this course, we will consider these and other theories of the nature of wellbeing in the context of broader philosophical questions about life, death, and the afterlife. These questions will include:

- Is it always good to get what you want?
- Is achievement necessary in a life well-lived?
- Is death always bad? For whom?
- Can things that happen after we die make our lives go worse?
- Should we want to live forever?

The main aim of this course is to have you think about these and related questions in a philosophically rigorous way. This means formulating arguments, articulating opposing views, and above all, thinking critically.

REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

All assigned readings will be available through the class Canvas page.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify, describe, and explain major arguments and views on the relationship between the mental and the physical.
- Discern the structure of arguments, represent them fairly and clearly, and evaluate them.
- Formulate original arguments, anticipating objections and responding in a conscientious fashion.
- Read and discuss complex philosophical texts from contemporary works.
- Speak and write clearly about abstract and complex matters.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & ASSIGNMENTS

Participation: 20% of your final grade will be determined by the quantity and quality of your participation in the course. Your participation grade is based on how prepared you are for class on a regular basis, your willingness to participate by contributing questions and comments while responding to others in a respectful and attentive way, and the quality of your comments.

Activities that will contribute to your participation grade include:

- **ATTENDANCE:** regularly attending classes;
- **ANNOTATION:** annotating a weekly reading in Perusall (assignments will be announced on Canvas); and
- **DISCUSSION:** participating in small-group and full-class discussions during lecture and your assigned discussion section

Notes on attendance: You are allowed **two unexcused absences without penalty**. If you need to miss class for any reason, please contact me as soon as possible so that we can discuss whether the absence will be excused and what sort of documentation will be necessary (if applicable).

Each unexcused absence beyond the first two will result in a deduction from your participation grade.

Notes on annotations: To help you stay on top of the readings there will be weekly assignments on Perusall. Perusall is an online platform that allows you to annotate readings. Each week, you will be expected to annotate one of the readings for the week in Perusall. Your grade for these assignments will be determined by the overall level of quality of your annotations. You can access Perusall and the relevant readings through our Canvas site.

Notes on discussions: You are expected to participate in discussions during class, and the participation grade for the course will be determined by your contributions to class. To do well, you should demonstrate consistent, high-quality participation. *High-quality* contributions to discussion are *informed* (i.e., show evidence of having done assigned work), *thoughtful* (i.e., show evidence of having understood and considered issues raised in readings and other discussions), and *considerate* (e.g., take the perspectives of others into account). **You will be expected to have read and to be prepared to discuss the texts assigned for each of the class meetings.**

I expect students to conduct themselves well in class. Examples of poor conduct include disruptive behavior, falling asleep, sending text messages, etc.

Below is a summary of course standards for different letter grades for participation (borderline cases will receive “+” or “-” grades as appropriate):

- **A:** Outstanding participation in all categories. Highly engaged during lecture and discussion section, with active participation in small group discussions and frequent constructive contributions to full-class discussions. Perusall annotations, ad hoc assignments, and in-class contributions reflect excellent understanding of and critical engagement with the content of lectures and assigned readings.
- **B:** Good participation in all categories. Moderately engaged during lecture and discussion section, with active participation in small group discussions and occasional constructive contributions to full-class discussions. Perusall annotations, ad hoc assignments, and in-class contributions reflect significant understanding of and critical engagement with the content of lectures and assigned readings.

- C: Minimally adequate participation in all categories. Minimally engaged during lecture and discussion section. Perusal annotations, ad hoc assignments, and in-class contributions reflect limited understanding of and critical engagement with the content of lectures and assigned readings.
- D or F: Inadequate participation in one or more categories.

Participation is worth 20% of your final grade.

Essay Assignments Essays assignments will be worth 80% of your final grade. You will be required to write three essays for this course. Detailed essay instructions and prompts will be distributed at least two weeks prior to the due date of the essay assignment.

- (i) Essay #1: 1000 - 1200 words. Due: (subject to change, with notice). Submitted via an Assignment link on Canvas.
Worth 15% of your final grade.
- (ii) Essay #2: 1500 - 1700 words. Due: (subject to change, with notice). Submitted via an Assignment link on Canvas.
Worth 25% of your final grade.
- (iii) Essay #3: 2000 - 2200 words. Due (subject to change, with notice). Submitted via an Assignment link on Canvas.
Worth 30% of your final grade.

ESSAY SUBMISSION AND LATE SUBMISSION POLICY

In general, requirements for section attendance, assignments, and other work are consistent with university policies specified at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

More specifically, the following policies will be adhered to:

1. All assignments will be submitted online via an assignment link on the course’s Canvas page. Essays must be submitted as either .doc or .docx files. Failure to submit in these formats will result in penalties and will require resubmission in the proper format.
2. Late submission of papers will be penalized 3% for each day that the assignment is late. For instance, if a paper is due on Friday at 5:00pm, it will be counted as 1 day late if submitted between 5:01pm Friday and 5:00pm Saturday (submissions between 5:01pm Saturday and 5:00pm Sunday will count as 2 days late, and so on).

GRADE SCALE

This course will use the following grade scale:

<u>A</u>	94 – 100%		<u>C</u>	74 – 76%
<u>A-</u>	90 – 93%		<u>C-</u>	70 – 73%
<u>B+</u>	87 – 89%		<u>D+</u>	67 – 69%
<u>B</u>	84 – 86%		<u>D</u>	64 – 66%

<u>B-</u>	80 – 83%		<u>D-</u>	60 – 63%
<u>C±</u>	77 – 79%		<u>E</u>	<60

Further information on UF's grading policy can be found at catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Course website

This course is supplemented by online content in the e-Learning environment known as "Canvas." To login to the e-Learning site for this course, go to <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>, click the e-Learning in Canvas button, and on the next page enter your Gatorlink username and password. You can then access the course e-Learning environment by selecting PHH3610 from the Courses pull-down menu at the top of the page. If you encounter any difficulties logging in or accessing any of the course content, contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-4537.

Instructor Contact

Please email me if you have (i) administrative questions that your syllabus and other documents cannot answer, (ii) if you want to arrange a meeting, or (iii) if you need to inform me of relevant difficulties on your end. If you have substantive philosophical questions, email is not the best place for these; please come visit me in office hours so that we can have a better conversation.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices—including phones, computers, tablets, and recording devices—should be silenced, and you will need to suspend interaction with them during class. This means you will need to bring something to take notes with during class.

Randomized studies have shown that students using laptops do significantly worse on exams that test their comprehension of the material. This is true even when students are not multitasking. Typing shifts students into transcription mode, whereas students writing by hand are actively processing course material.

Students are allowed by law to record video or audio of class lectures. If you choose to do this, please set it up prior to class start time. The purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. A student who circulates a recording, even to another student in the course, without written consent of the instructor may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Academic Honesty

Please review the following guidelines on academic honesty:

1. <https://guides.uflib.ufl.edu/copyright/plagiarism>
2. https://flexible.dce.ufl.edu/media/flexible_dce_ufl.edu/documents/uf_policy_student_conduct.pdf

All sources and assistance used in preparing your papers and presentations must be precisely and explicitly acknowledged. The web creates special risks here. Cutting and pasting even a few words from a web page or paraphrasing material without a reference constitutes plagiarism. If you are not sure how to refer to something you find on the internet, you can always give the URL.

Please note: **“self-plagiarism”**, in which you submit work for one class that you completed for another, is still plagiarism, and will be treated as such.

Students are not permitted to use large language models (such as ChatGPT) or other AI-based text generation tools to complete written assignments for this course. Submitting work produced using one of these tools without prior written authorization constitutes academic dishonesty.

If you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, or about how to properly cite and acknowledge other work, please come and chat to me!

You should expect the minimum penalty for academic dishonesty to be a grade of E for the class (not just the assignment). All incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs. Repeat offenders may be penalized by suspension or expulsion from the university.

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Classroom Conduct

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Attendance, Illness, Religious Holidays, and Twelve Day Rule

Requirements for class attendance, religious holidays, and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Excerpt from the statement on absences:

“Absences count from the first class meeting. In general, acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to participate in class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays, and participation in official

university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused. Other reasons also may be approved.”

Course evaluation process

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>

Counseling and wellness/Emergencies

<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575;
The University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Writing studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in 302 Tigert Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshop

CLASS AND READING SCHEDULE

This schedule is subject to revision- please read all class announcements in Canvas.

Week 1

Jan 8th, 10th, 12th

- Roger Crisp- “Well-Being” (sections 1, 2, and 3 of entry in Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)
- Stephen M. Campbell- “The Concept of Well-Being”

Week 2

Jan 17th, 19th (no class Monday 15th)

- Russ Shafer-Landau- “Hedonism” (Ch 1 from “The Fundamentals of Ethics”)
- John Stewart Mill- “Hedonism” (excerpts)

Week 3

Jan 22nd, 24th, 26th

- Robert Nozick- “The Experience Machine”
- Russ Shafer-Landau- “Getting What You Want” (Ch 3 from “The Fundamentals of Ethics”)

Week 4

Jan 29th, 31st, Feb 2

- Chris Heathwood- “The Problem of Defective Desires”
- Dale Dorsey- “Preferences, Welfare, and the Status-quo Bias”

Week 5

Feb 5th, 7th, 9th

- Daniel M. Hausman and Michael S. McPherson- “Preference Satisfaction and Welfare Economics”
- Guy Fletcher- “Objective List Theories”, Ch. 12 in *The Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy of Well-Being*
- Brad Hooker- “The Elements of Well-Being”

Week 6

Feb 12th, 14th, 16th

- Hurka- “Perfectionism” (excerpts)
- Susan Wolf- “Happiness and Meaning: Two Aspects of the Good Life.”

Week 7

Feb 19th, 21st, 23rd

- Aristotle- “Nichomachean Ethics” (excerpts)
- David Velleman- “Well Being and Time”

Week 8

Feb 26th, 28th, Mar 1st

- Thomas Kelly- “Sunk Costs, Rationality and Acting for the Sake of the Past” (excerpts)
- Dale Dorsey- “Desire Satisfaction and Welfare as Temporal”

Week 9

Mar 4th, 6th, 8th

- Frederik Kaufman- “Is Death Bad? Epicurus and Lucretius on the Fear of Death”
- Steven Luper- “Retroactive Harms and Wrongs”

Week 10

March 18th, 20th, 22nd

- Thomas Nagel- "Death"

Week 11

March 25th, 27th, 29th

- Bernard Williams- “The Markropoulos Case: Reflections on the Tedium of Immortality”
- Samuel Scheffler- “Death and the Afterlife”

Week 12

April 1st, 3rd, 5th

- Niko Kolodny- “That I Should Die and Others Live”
- Molly Gardner- “Well-Being and the Non-Identity Problem”, Ch. 35 in *The Routledge Handbook of the Philosophy of Well-Being*

Week 13

Apr 8th, 10th, 12th

- Elizabeth Harman- “Can we Harm and Benefit in Creating?”

Week 14

Apr 15th, 17th, 19th

Week 15

Apr 22nd, 24th