

TITLE: THE SCIENCE OF HAPPINESS & WELL-BEING

Credit: 2-0-2 / Elective (24 lectures and 24 labs = 48 hours)

Time period: Spring and Autumn Semesters

Objectives: To make students aware of why happiness is so important in life; to make them realize that it can be studied scientifically; to understand and get a feel of the practices that can make one happy; to complete the course with a basic training on how to improve one's quality of life.

Broad areas to be covered (48 hours):

Unit 1: Defining happiness and understanding its mechanisms (4 hours lecture +4 hours lab/activities)

Unit 2: Exploring its key ingredients (4 hours lecture +4 hours lab/activities)

Unit 3: Happiness within: key components and how they work (4 hours+4 hours lab/activities)

Unit 4: Happiness without: field testing happiness with people (4 hours+4 hours lab/activities)

Unit 5: Happiness at work: Applying the lessons to every day work life (4 hours+4 hours lab/activities)

Unit 6: A critical reevaluation: Are we happier now and does it make a difference? (4 hours+4 hours lab/activities)

Duration of the course: One Semester

Approach:

The proposed short course attempts to (a) understand happiness scientifically, and (b) develop a hands-on experience by exploring its various components through introspection, experience, psychometric measures, other scientific tools and project activities.

It will start by attempting to understand the meaning of happiness and by exploring its psychology and physiology – to understand what science has to tell about its impact on our body and mind. Next, it looks at the various ingredients that come together to make one happy – again with reference to scientific evidences. Having established the relevance and scientific validity of happiness and its components, next it will attempt to give students a firsthand experience of the practice of different components of happiness. This will be done with the accompaniment of scientific measures. One will look within first, to understand oneself, and then understand how relationships and associated emotions are keys to happiness. The course will end with self-reflection and feedback to make the course more meaningful.

Themes		Lecture Topics	Activities associated with the class	Expected outcomes
1-4	Defining happiness and understanding its	Why should I be happy rather than	- Happiness quiz and baseline measures	Why happiness is important

	mechanisms	successful?	- How the mind works when happy: the psychology - videos about brain changes – happiness and other states	How it improves our total functioning and impacts our performance and success
		Happiness and the mind		
		Happiness and the brain		
5-8	Exploring its key ingredients	Cultural and environmental factors	- Measuring personality traits - Measuring attitudinal components -	Understanding how researchers have identified its key ingredients Insight into how it affects our total being
		Personality and attitudinal factors; Genetic factor		
		Attitudes of happiness		
9-12	Happiness within: Key components and how they work	Gratitude, forgiveness, empathy and compassion	- tools for introspection and self-report -EEG, Polygraph and visual measurements - Mindfulness training*	A basic understanding of how research into happiness is conducted & learning various emotion regulation strategies
		Mindfulness		
13-16	Happiness without: field testing happiness with people	Emotional intelligence and stability	-testing EI and relating it to happiness exercises, activities and field trips -relationship games	Social and cultural activities as well as testing how they work – through scientific tools
		Resilience		
		Building relationships and developing altruism		
17-20	Happiness at work: Applying the lessons to every day work life	Happiness and workplace success	- Assessment of various personality dimensions related to work life balance	Development of strategies in order to be happy at workplace
		Developing positive strategies for work-life balance		
21-24	Are we happier now? What changed and why it makes a difference?	Discussion, self-assessment, feedback about course	- post assessments & measurements - assessments tools tested	Feedback about self as well as the course for future improvement

** Many of the introspective and mindfulness training components will start at the beginning of the course and continue for four weeks till the end of the course.*

Team: Professors D. Suar, V. N. Giri, Rajlakshmi Guha, Tuheena Mukherjee/Sushmita Mukherjee, Sangeeta Bhattacharya and P. Patnaik (Coordinator)

Visiting faculty: Professor Manas K. Mandal, DRDO

Special sessions: Profs. A. Basu, A. Routray and P. Rajib

Books

- *The How of Happiness*, by Sonja Lyubomirsky (Penguin Press, 2008)
- *Born to Be Good*, by Dacher Keltner (W.W. Norton, 2009)
- *The Compassionate Instinct*, Dacher Keltner, Jason Marsh, Jeremy Adam Smith (eds.) (W.W. Norton, 2010)

List of Articles

Lectures 1-4	Biswas-Diener, R., Diener, E., & Tamir, M. (2004). The psychology of subjective well-being. <i>Daedalus</i> , 133(2), 18-25.
	Diener, E., Suh, E., Lucas, R. E., & Smith, H. L. (1999). Subjective well-being: Three decades of progress. <i>Psychological Bulletin</i> , 125(2), 276-302.
Lectures 5-8	Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Lucas, R. E. (2003). Personality, culture, and subjective well-being: Emotional and cognitive evaluations of life. <i>Annual Review of Psychology</i> , 54(1), 403-425.
	DeNeve, K. M. (1999). Happy as an extraverted clam? The role of personality for subjective well-being. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i> , 8(5), 141-144.
Lectures 9-12	Toussaint, L., & Friedman, P. (2009). Forgiveness, gratitude, and well-being: The mediating role of affect and beliefs. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 10(6), 635-654.
	Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology</i> , 84(4), 822.
Lectures 13-16	Goleman, D. (1998). What makes a leader? <i>Harvard Business Review</i> , 76(6), 93-103.
	Goleman, D. (2000). Leadership that gets results. <i>Harvard Business Review</i> , 78(2), 78-89.
Lectures 17-20	DelleFave, A., Brdar, I., Freire, T., Vella-Brodrick, D., & Wissing, M. P. (2011). The eudaimonic and hedonic components of happiness: Qualitative and quantitative findings. <i>Social Indicators Research</i> , 100(2), 185-207.
Lectures 21-24	Myers, D. G., & Diener, E. (1995). Who is happy? <i>Psychological Science</i> , 6(1), 10-19.

Other related readings

A: Philosophical and Spiritual Views on Happiness

Uchida, Y., & Ogihara, Y. (2012). Personal or interpersonal construal of happiness: A cultural psychological perspective. *International Journal of Wellbeing*, 2(4), 354-369. doi:10.5502/ijw.v2.i4.5

B: How Science Defines and Measures Happiness

- Kahneman, D. (1999). Objective happiness. *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology*, 3-25.
- Harker, L., & Keltner, D. (2001).

- Expressions of positive emotion in women's college yearbook pictures and their relationship to personality and life outcomes across adulthood. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80(1), 112. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.80.1.112
- Kreiman, G., Koch, C., & Fried, I. (2000). Imagery Neurons in the Human Brain. *Nature* 408, 357-361.
- Davidson, R. J., et al. (2003). Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. *Psychosomatic Medicine*, 65(4), 564–570.

C: Happiness and its benefits:

- Lyubomirsky, S., King, L., & Diener, E. (2005). The benefits of frequent positive affect: Does happiness lead to success? *Psychological Bulletin*, 131(6), 803. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.131.6.803
- Danner, D. D., Snowdon, D. A., & Friesen, W. V. (2001). Positive emotions in early life and longevity: Findings from the nun study. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80(5), 804. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.80.5.804

D: Happiness at Work

- Boehm, J. K., & Lyubomirsky, S. (2008). Does happiness promote career success? *Journal of Career Assessment*, 16(1), 101-116. doi: 10.1177/1069072707308140
- Warr, Peter, (2009). *The Joy of Work? Jobs, Happiness and You*. 1st ed: Routledge

D: Contemporary relevance

- Konrath, S. H., O'Brien, E. H., & Hsing, C. (2011). Changes in dispositional empathy in American college students over time: A meta-analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 15(2), 180-198. doi:10.1177/1088868310377395
- Kahneman, D. & Deaton, D. (2010). High income improves evaluation of life but not emotional well-being. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 107(38), 16489–16493. doi:10.1073/pnas.1011492107
- Lane, R. E. (2000). *The loss of happiness in market democracies*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Myers, D. G., & Diener, E. (1995). Who is happy? *Psychological Science*, 6(1), 10-19. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9280.1995.tb00298.x
- Myers, D. G. (2001). *The American paradox: Spiritual hunger in an age of plenty*. Yale University Press.
- Eden, D. & Aviram, A. (1993). Self-efficacy training to speed reemployment: Helping people to help themselves. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78(3) 352-360