

CLCS 199, The Pursuit of Happiness
Department of Literature and Culture, Fall 2018

I. COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: Fabio Ferrari, Ph.D.

Instructor's email: fferrari@fus.edu

Office hours: Tue/Fri 8:30 am - 11:30 am and Wed pm by appointment

Office location: Kaletsch Office 6

Class location: Kaletsch Classroom 6

Class meeting times: Mon/Thu 10:00 am - 11:15 am

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course provides a platform for scholarly exploration of happiness discourse as it is articulated from multiple disciplinary perspectives: psychology, sociology, linguistics, philosophy, religion/spirituality, cultural studies, and film. Students enrolled in this class will work collectively to analyse and reflect on the ideological implications and possible cultural bias implicit to diverse texts that purport, through various means, to render happiness more accessible to and sustainable for the general public. What can be learned about happiness discourse through guided efforts in close reading, focused critical thinking, theoretical reflection, and comparative textual analysis? Widely popularized theories of happiness frequently merge with compelling stories of a hero's inward and outward journey; the individual pursuit of an inalienable and self-evident right. This seminar invites students to consider this journey in terms of a social and cultural construct, assessing its possible strengths and weaknesses; the certain promises it holds, and the consequences it may also engender.

III. RATIONALE

First Year Seminar courses are required of all incoming students and designed to facilitate transition to university-level learning.

IV. COURSE GOALS

- 1) To gain familiarity with contemporary research and writings on happiness across various disciplinary perspectives, with a focus on Western scholarly approaches to the topic
- 2) To critically engage with happiness discourse and demonstrate the ability to deconstruct key concepts and analyse argument/exposition structure in academic writing and Ted presentations.

- 3) To foster the ability to integrate affective experience regarding happiness within a framework that allows for animated, informed scholarly discussion (both written and oral).
- 4) To foster life-long learning skills by encouraging personal and group reflection, and by facilitating the emergence of meaningful links between the abstraction of theoretical texts and the life experience of individual students.
- 5) To foster the idea of engaged theoretical reflection as a meaningful and necessary contribution of the individual to the collective good.

V. LEARNING OUTCOMES

As a First Year Seminar, CLCS 199 prepares the student for academic success. To that end, the learning outcomes of this course seek to:

- 1) Develop critical thinking and analytical skills;
- 2) Provide practice with synthesizing information from classroom discussion and reading;
- 3) To present information in a variety of formats, including class discussion, oral presentation, and in short essays and homework assignments;
- 4) To introduce students to FUS resources, including our libraries and databases, Writing and Learning Center, Student Affairs programming.

In addition, holistic development of the FUS student is also featured as an important first-year learning objective. To this end, FYS students are expected to:

- 5) Cultivate a meaningful link with the university's surrounding community through a variety of cultural initiatives (such as *Tutte le Strade* events and local field trips);
- 6) Develop intercultural awareness and maturity (recognizing difference as a value, through class discussion and debate; capitalizing on difference as a resource for life-long learning);
- 7) Demonstrate effective collaboration and leadership skills through successful teamwork initiatives in small-group settings.

VI. HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS COURSE

The FUS university classroom is a place for you to spread your wings. Please feel free to contribute as actively as possible to this collective learning project. Don't fall behind on the readings, type up your notes and questions before each class meeting and share the results of your hard work.

What you read needs to be meaningful *to* you in order for it to stay *with* you. This does not mean that you will "like" every reading or video/film text, nor are you expected to. Making a text meaningful to you means finding its value as a document that has personal resonance for you as an individual. This resonance can be intellectual, emotional, even physical. Ideas may come to you right away, or they may need prompting through dialogue with other classmates. From this perspective, it is the student who will make this class rewarding and of lasting value. It is up to the student to invest the necessary energy and commitment for ideas to take form and mature over time. Challenge yourself. Enjoy the process. Share your enthusiasm for ideas, foster your own intellectual process, and create original work that you are proud of.

VII. REQUIRED TEXTS AND FILM SCREENINGS

Reading

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly. *Flow. The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. New York, Harper Perennial Modern Classics 2011;

Bok, Sissela. *Exploring Happiness. From Aristotle to Brain Science*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010;

Haidt, Jonathan. *The Happiness Hypothesis. Finding Modern Truth in Ancient Wisdom*. New York: Perseus, 2006;

Hanh, Thich Nhat. *Happiness. Essential Mindfulness Practices*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 2009;

Mulnix, Jennifer Wilson and M.J. Mulnix. *Happy Lives, Good Lives. A Philosophical Examination*. Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2015.

Additional required course readings will be made available on the course Moodle site.

Film Screenings

Roko Belek. *Happy* (2011);

Michael Rossario Bennett, *Alive Inside* (2014).

Depending on the availability of these films for viewing on an FUS cloud, group screenings may be required outside of class time.

VIII. ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

1) Reading Reactions & Discussion Questions

20%

The student will keep a digital notebook of reading reactions as a single Word document in which s/he transcribes her/his insights and reflections on each assignment. Notes should zoom in on key ideas, interesting quotations accompanied by brief reflections, and 1-2 discussion questions arising from each set of readings (1 page approximately per assignment). The notes should serve above all to frame what you are learning, stimulate class discussion, and demonstrate close reading skills and progress in critical thinking. Please print out your notes before each class as you may be asked to read your work aloud. Do cite from the text and indicate page numbers when giving examples to support an idea. The reading reactions will be handed in for graded evaluation prior to Midterm and Finals. The final version of the journal, uploaded to Moodle on our scheduled final exam date, should include a preface in which the student shares (1) the personal highlights of the course and (2) a one-page self-assessment of what they have learned, as well as their main take-away message(s) from the course.

2) Class Discussion & Participation

20%

CLCS 199 is a student-driven seminar which relies on informed, focused dialogue as the principal means for student learning and intellectual growth. To be successful in this class, students must be careful readers and vocal in their efforts to share their thoughtful considerations about the texts under examination. As an FYS, this course also asks students to attend a number of workshops and events, organized by the Office of Student Life (*Tutte le Strade* program) and the Writing and Learning Center. Student attendance of these events counts in equal measure towards the participation grade. With regard to OSL event attendance, the academic mentor is responsible for assessing your participation. She will inform you about how she prefers to document your participation. In the past this was done informally using social media platforms. See more, below, about the course mentor as a peer support resource in this class.

3) Student Talk on Happiness

25%

Each student will deliver a 20-minute presentation on happiness studies that draws from both the readings assigned for class, the student's personal reflections, and independent research (3 new sources minimum). A required workshop on electronic research skills will be organized to help you with this task. The talk should loosely follow a TED-talk presentation structure. Presentations must include effective visuals and be explicitly linked by the student to some of the key concepts explored in the course. Credit will be given to those presentations that contribute new perspectives to texts we have covered (including video texts), offering original interpretations and sparking further discussion. Presentations must be clearly structured, precisely timed, and well-rehearsed. Research should demonstrate the ability to hone in on a specific question you are exploring. Please upload a PowerPoint version of your presentation to Moodle on the day you are scheduled to present.

4) Student Reflective Essay and Final Exam Panel Discussion

25%

By the end of the semester, the student will write a 7-8 page paper which builds on and provides further depth to the ideas explored in the student's Talk on Happiness. The content of the papers will be shared during our final class meeting in a small group panel format. Four panellists will summarize the content of their paper findings, speak specifically to the research component of their work, and ask and answer each other's questions so as to create a series conclusive class dialogues on happiness studies and discourse. This panel discussion will be considered as equivalent to a final exam. The panels will be thematically organized and chaired by the academic mentor who will also prepare questions for each group.

5) First-Year Project and Showcase

10%

Your Academic Mentor for this class will be primarily responsible for designing, developing, coordinating, and helping to assess the FYS class project and its final showcase. More information on this aspect of the course will be provided to you soon by your mentor. In the past, the Showcase has typically taken the form of an interactive exhibit of some kind, a film project, or a performance. The format is open and should reflect the strengths of the group under the direction of the mentor who always has the final word on content and presentation.

Grading Scale

Essays are given letter grades: **A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F.**

Grading Scale for Assignments and Final Examination:

A : 94-100	B+ : 88-89	C+ : 78-79	D+ : 68-69	F : 0-59
A- : 90-93	B : 84-87	C : 74-77	D : 64-67	
	B- : 80-83	C- : 70-73	D- : 60-63	

Final Course Grade (based on an average of letter grades according to the following grade points):

A : 4.0	B+ : 3.3	C+ : 2.3	D+ : 1.3	F : 0.0
A- : 3.7	B : 3.0	C : 2.0	D : 1.0	
	B- : 2.7	C- : 1.7	D- : 0.7	

IX. POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Attendance Policy: A total of two absences will be tolerated during the course of the term as long as efforts are made by the student to make up all homework and missed in-class work. A third absence will automatically result in a grade reduction from the final grade (i.e. a B+ would drop to a B). Five unexcused absences will result in a report to the dean and the registrar.

Please note that late arrival to class may be recorded as an absence.

Students failing to complete the assigned readings may, in some cases, be considered equivalent to an absence.

Respect for other students and the learning process as a whole is a priority in this course. Disrespect of any kind will not be tolerated.

Internet surfing or messaging during class time will result in an automatic lowering of your participation grade.

Late papers/written assignments will be penalized 10 percentage points per academic day without documented evidence of a major disruption to your work. No papers will be accepted more than 5 days after the deadline. Students must retain a final draft until the work is returned.

X. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Please refer to Franklin's Statement on Cheating and Plagiarism in the Academic Catalog for the full version but, to summarize here, you are to do your own work. Behavior such as copying the work of others, using third-party services, or any other circumvention of doing your own work are dishonest and not acceptable in this class or at this institution.

For papers and presentations, this includes proper use of references and citations. Copying text without the use of quotations, or paraphrasing the ideas of others without proper citations, are both examples of plagiarism and thus unacceptable.

For testing situations, this includes the use of notes, cell phones, talking to others, or copying off of the exam of others.

The first case of academic dishonesty will result in an automatic grade of a zero on the assignment and a report to the Dean. The second case will result in expulsion from the university.

XI. RESOURCES

Academic Mentor

To help you succeed at FUS, first year students benefit from the experience and guidance of an Academic Mentor: Gabriella Munoz. Students should not hesitate to seek advice from their mentor for academic advice or support of any kind. Gabriella will post office hours on our Facebook course page, which she will manage, and you are required to meet with her (individually or in small groups) once before travel and once following travel. Her e-mail address is gabriella.munoz@student.fus.edu

The Writing and Learning Center and Fowler Learning Commons

The WLC organizes workshops that will help you succeed as a university student. You can also write to the director of the WLC to schedule individual appointments for help on your papers or study skills. The WLC is also the office to contact if you have any documented learning challenges that may entitle you to extra time or the use of a computer in exam settings.

The office is located on the second floor of the LAC.

To schedule an appointment at the WLC you may drop by or email: wcenter@fus.edu.

Information Technology

The IT office at Franklin is on the first/ground floor of the LAC. If you are having problems with your email or internet connection you can stop by IT for assistance or contact the help desk: helpdesk@fus.edu

Please e-mail Linda Rey-Della Corte if you are having problems with Moodle, the portal we use for uploading and downloading documents in this class: ldellacorte@fus.edu

FUS Libraries

A librarian will hold a workshop to introduce you to our libraries and electronic databases. If you need help with research in advance of the workshop you may also schedule a one-on-one appointment with Clélie Riat: criat@fus.edu

XII. COURSE SCHEDULE

ORIENTATION

August 23:

Introduction to the Course

Tutte le Strade: 5 events required, two indicated on the syllabus in Week 1 and 2 of your choice. Events recommended by your professor or mentor are preferred. Please write up a short summary of what you learned at each event.

August 24:

New Student Registration

Please prepare for your first advising meeting and familiarize yourself with the MyFranklin registration platform

WEEK 1

August 27:

Syllabus Review

"The Paradox of Choice" Barry Schwartz

https://www.ted.com/talks/barry_schwartz_on_the_paradox_of_choice?referrer=playlist-what_makes_you_happy

"The Right to Happiness" Roberto Saviano

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nPEOIOTWxa8>

August 28, 7:00 pm: in the Auditorium: *CONVOCATION (REQUIRED EVENT)*

August 30, 10:00 am: Meet in Auditorium: *ALCOHOL KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS (REQUIRED EVENT)*

August 30:

https://www.ted.com/talks/nic_marks_the_happy_planet_index

August 31: DEADLINE FOR SCHEDULE CHANGES

WEEK 2

September 3:

Prepare to Discuss: Jennifer Wilson Mulnix, *Happy Lives, Good Lives* (3-57; 93-113)

https://www.ted.com/talks/mihaly_csikszentmihalyi_on_flow

September 6:

Prepare to Discuss: Jennifer Wilson Mulnix, *Happy Lives, Good Lives* (117-146; 265-297)

https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_gilbert_asks_why_are_we_happy

WEEK 3

September 10:

Prepare to Discuss: Jennifer Wilson Mulnix, *Happy Lives, Good Lives* (175-230)

https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_waldinger_what_makes_a_good_life_lessons_from_the_longest_study_on_happiness

September 13:

Prepare to Discuss: Jennifer Wilson Mulnix, *Happy Lives, Good Lives* (230-262)

https://www.ted.com/talks/matthieu_ricard_on_the_habits_of_happiness?referrer=playlist-what_makes_you_happy

WEEK 4

September 17:

Prepare to Discuss: Jennifer Wilson Mulnix, *Theories of Happiness* (81-95; 117-151)

https://www.ted.com/talks/tania_luna_how_a_penny_made_me_feel_like_a_millionaire

September 20:

Prepare to Discuss: Sara Ahmed, *The Promise of Happiness* (1-20)

https://www.ted.com/talks/daniel_kahneman_the_riddle_of_experience_vs_memory?language=en

WEEK 5

September 24:

Prepare to Discuss: Chalmers Brothers, *Language and the Pursuit of Happiness* (i-1 - i-4; iii-1 –iii-4; 11-85)

September 27:

Prepare to Discuss: Darrin M. McMahon, *Happiness: A History* (454-480)

WEEK 6

October 1:

Prepare to Discuss: Sissela Bok, *Exploring Happiness* (1-82)

October 4:

Prepare to Discuss: Sissela Bok, *Exploring Happiness* (132-154)

WEEK 7

October 8:

Prepare to Discuss: William Davies, *The Happiness Industry* (1-39)

October 11:

Prepare to Discuss: William Davies, *The Happiness Industry* (245-276)

WEEK 8

October 15:

Michael Rossario Bennett, *Alive Inside* (2014)

October 18:

Michael Rossario Bennett, *Alive Inside* (2014)

WEEK 9 & 10 (Oct. 20 - Nov. 4)

ACADEMIC TRAVEL

WEEK 11

November 5:

Roko Belek, *Happy* (2011)

November 8:

Prepare to Discuss: Thich Nhat Hanh, *Happiness: Essential Mindfulness Practices* (ix-57)

STUDENT TALKS ON HAPPINESS

- 1.
- 2.

WEEK 12

November 12:

Prepare to Discuss: Thich Nhat Hanh, *Happiness: Essential Mindfulness Practices* (58-111)

STUDENT TALKS ON HAPPINESS

3.

4.

November 15:

Prepare to Discuss: Thich Nhat Hanh, *Happiness: Essential Mindfulness Practices* (111-159)

STUDENT TALKS ON HAPPINESS

5.

6.

WEEK 13

November 19:

Prepare to Discuss: Mihaly, Csikszentmihalyi. Flow. The Psychology of Optimal Experience (TBA)

STUDENT TALKS ON HAPPINESS

7.

8.

November 22:

Prepare to Discuss: Mihaly, Csikszentmihalyi. Flow. The Psychology of Optimal Experience (TBA)

STUDENT TALKS ON HAPPINESS

9.

10.

WEEK 14

November 26:

Prepare to Discuss: Mihaly, Csikszentmihalyi. Flow. The Psychology of Optimal Experience (TBA)

STUDENT TALKS ON HAPPINESS

11.

12.

November 29:

Prepare to Discuss: Mihaly, Csikszentmihalyi. Flow. The Psychology of Optimal Experience (TBA)

STUDENT TALKS ON HAPPINESS

13.

14.

WEEK 15

December 3:

FYS Showcase Preparation: Today the class should have decided on a clear plan with regard to the content and presentation of the upcoming showcase (exact date and time will be communicated to us by the WLC). Tasks should be equally delegated among students and your mentor will be assessing your teamwork so make every effort to be creative, collaborative, flexible, and resourceful.

STUDENT TALKS ON HAPPINESS

15.

16.

December 6:

Final FYS Showcase Preparation: Today you will simulate the showcase to ensure that all students are prepared and ready to make their public presentation to a campus-wide audience.

WEEK 16

Thursday, 13 December (Kaletsch Classroom 6, 8:30 am – 10:30 am):

Panel Presentation of Final Papers: With your mentor acting as organizing chair of each panel (groups she will have chosen based on thematic affinities), use the time normally reserved for exams to contribute your final thoughts on happiness studies; drawing from the work you have done on your final essays (which should be uploaded to Moodle, but also printed out before class). Please plan properly, be professional, create a meaningful final dialogue, and ask thoughtful questions.

CLCS 199: *The Pursuit of Happiness*
Grading Rubrics

Reading Reactions
(50 points)

1. Student demonstrates the ability to identify key ideas in a text and to think critically about an author's argument.
2. Student makes reference to specific passages in the text(s) under consideration, summarizing ideas and citing pages for easy reference in class discussion.
3. Student demonstrates an understanding of the text as a whole by explicitly identifying its organizing premise, thesis statement, purpose, or argument.
4. Student is able to extrapolate from the ideas presented in the assigned texts and produce questions appropriate for generating broader class discussion.
5. Over time, student's portfolio should create links between texts, video/film texts, and class discussion. A meaningful red thread should emerge as the portfolio develops.

Student Talk
(20 points)

1. The talk investigates topic-relevant questions which the student is able to articulate and explain in a way that full engages the class. (10 points)
2. The talk is original and thought provoking. It not only draws on interesting aspects of our readings/screenings and class discussion but adds something new to the subject: a new angle/insight, an evolved form of reflection, personal introspection, and independent research (15 points)

Essay Grading Rubric
(30 points)

1. The work builds on and gives to depth to ideas explored in the Student Talk. The work indicates how ongoing reflection and new research contribute to the evolution of a student's ideas. (10 points)
2. The work suggests that interesting conceptual links have been made with class readings/screenings and discussions. The work shows serious reflection and effort to engage readers and the audience of the final panel presentation. (10 points)
3. The writing is well-structured and the student's thoughts are clearly articulated. As a whole, the work is clear and thoughtful. The panel presentation shows confidence and care. (10 points)