



CIEE Seville, Spain

Course name:	Positive Psychology
Course number:	PSYC 3001 CSCS
Programs offering course:	Liberal Arts, Advanced Liberal Arts, Business and Society and Communication, New Media and Journalism – Spanish Programs
Language of instruction:	Spanish
U.S. semester credits:	3 credits
Contact hours:	45 hours
Term:	Spring 2020

Course Description

Psychology has done thousands of studies about unhappiness, anxiety, depression, distress, personality disorders and other related topics. Only recently has Psychology begun to study the theories, concepts and techniques that enhance well-being and happiness.

Positive psychology is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, to cultivate what is best within themselves, and to enhance their experiences of **love, work, and play**. Positive Psychology has three central concerns: positive emotions, positive individual traits, and positive institutions. Understanding **positive emotions** entails the study of contentment with the past, happiness in the present, and hope for the future. Understanding **positive individual traits** consists of the study of the strengths and virtues, such as the capacity for love and work, courage, compassion, resilience, creativity, curiosity, integrity, self-knowledge, moderation, self-control, and wisdom. Understanding **positive institutions** entails the study of the strengths that foster better communities, such as justice, responsibility, civility, parenting, nurturance, work ethic, leadership, teamwork, purpose, and tolerance. Positive psychology studies how human beings prosper in the face of adversity. It attempts to identify and enhance the human strengths and virtues that make life worth living and allow individuals and communities to thrive.

This course explores the concepts, research, techniques, and exercises that enhance well-being and happiness.

Learning Objectives

- Students will construct critical knowledge about the science of positive psychology.
- Students will develop an understanding of the 6 dimensions of happiness/subjective well-being (Courage, Justice, Humanity, Temperance, Transcendence and Wisdom) and the 24 strengths.
- Students will become familiar with the empirical measurements and tools used in positive psychology and will be able to apply them to themselves and others and interpret the scores.
- Hands-on experience with many of the key concepts in positive psychology.
- A solid sense of how to distinguish between science and intuition on a topic about which most people have a strong intuitive basis.
- A toolkit for putting scientific findings and theories into real-world practice.



Course Prerequisites

As an introductory course, there are no specific pre-requisites. A student does not need to have previously studied psychology. The course requires an enthusiasm and disposition to study and complete projects at the university level. This usually guarantees success for the achievement of the course objectives.

4 semesters of college-level Spanish (or equivalent). Students need to have a GPA of at least 2.5.

Methods of Instruction

- The methodology is based on the constructivist model; we will begin to work based on your previous ideas about the topic, we will debate and connect ideas with our own experience in order to achieve meaningful knowledge.
- Most of the work will be done during the classes; however, you will have to read and do some exercises at home, especially to prepare your final project (Project-based learning). I will explain it in detail during the classes.
- Participation is essential. You are the one who constructs your knowledge! I will give you lot of information and guide you in this process, but in the end what you learn will depend on your implication.
- All the students must prepare an **experiential final project**. Your final project will be presented in class. You are free to choose the topic and the way to do it, but I will help you. While you are exposing a topic, you are the leader of the class and should keep the attention of the rest of the class. This class-leadership attitude should be a good exercise for your academic and professional development.
- The ultimate goal is for students to experience the positive psychology construct first hand, self-reflect in a meaningful way, and, as a result, gain insight into the mechanisms and processes of the “good life.”

The presentation consists of:

- An explanation of the main ideas and concepts of your topic, illustrated with some videos, photos, etc. (6 minutes). Students will receive points if the class is actively involved in the presentation and/or if the student explains their personal motivation for choosing the topic.

The structure of a typical class would be:

- Students’ previous ideas about the topic. What do I know about it?
- Presentation of the topic (using different resources, multisensory ones). What do others know about it?
- Work based on your own experiences. How can I link what others say and what I think?
- Discussion and feedback. What have I learned? What would I like to know more and how?
- Each theme has at the end a series of assessing activities to be completed by the student. These activities must be done before their correction and discussion in class. This is an important part of the class so keep in mind that you would lower your final grade if do not bring the activities by the scheduled day.
- Each theme will be accompanied by a wide range of questionnaires and tests. This will give us the opportunity to deepen our knowledge on each theme and develop a critical thinking.



- During this course we will watch one or two positive psychology movies, which will help us discuss key points.

Assessment and Final Grade

The evaluation will be in accordance with the policies of CIEE. **CIEE classes are not graded on a curve nor is there extra credit work. The final grade will be based upon the following criteria:**

- Midterm exam 20%
- Final exam 20%
- Activities 20%
- Active class participation 15%
- The final Project 15%

Course Requirements

Midterm exam

- 20 True or False questions and 5 short answers (Themes 1 to 4)

Final exam

- 20 True or False questions and 5 short answers (Themes 5 to 10)

Activities

- Each week, the student must complete the activities of a Theme and make an essay of the corresponding reading. See weekly schedule.
- Each student makes one presentation in class about a selected topic (power point format)

Active class participation

- In-class oral contributions, short in-class writing assignments, having read the assigned materials before the scheduled class meeting, raising issues that you did not understand during your readings, asking questions during discussions, and provide your opinion and thoughts on various relevant subjects.

The final Project

- Final oral presentation in class of a topic that was of your special interest during the semester and that includes an activity that involves the rest of the students.

Attendance policy

Students are not allowed to miss class for unjustified reasons. For each unexcused absence, the participation portion of the grade will be lowered. Hence, it will be very difficult to receive a 100 in the class. Please keep this in mind. If a student misses class twice without a valid excuse (a note from a physician in the event of an illness), then the professor will automatically lower the final grade by 5 points (on a 100-point scale) for each class missed thereafter. Students with 6 or more absences will fail the course.

Students should arrive to class on time. Arriving more than 15 minutes late for a class will count as an unexcused absence. Please note that an excused absence is one that is accompanied by a



doctor's note: signed stamped and dated. Travelling and/or travel delays are not considered valid reasons for missing class.

* Notes from a physician will only be valid and admitted by the Program Manager if the doctor confirms that the visit could not have been arranged at another time, or that the student was too ill to attend class that day.

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to act in accordance with their university and CIEE's standards of conduct concerning plagiarism and academic honesty. Use of online translators for work in Spanish will result in an automatic failure.

Linguistic Resource Center

Students are encouraged to use the Writing Center for help with class activities as well as for the final essay.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1

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|-------------------------------|--|
| 1.1. Topic | Theme 1: The science of Positive Psychology: An Introduction |
| Description of content | Introducing the scientific study of the positive aspects of human life from evolutionary, neuroscientific and sociocultural perspectives |
| Readings | |
| Other activities | Activity Video <i>Martin Seligman and the need of a Positive Psychology</i> .
Colloquium |
|
 | |
| 1.2. Topic | Theme 1: The science of Positive Psychology: An Introduction |
| Description of content | |
| Readings | Vázquez, C. y Hervás, C. (2008). Modelos de Bienestar. En <i>Psicología Positiva aplicada</i> (pp. 17-39). Bilbao: Desclee de Brower. |
| Other activities | a. Student Presentation (ppt format, 10 minutes exposition+ activity proposed for the rest of the class)
b. Rest of the class: Short Essay about the reading (10 lines + 1 thoughtful question to be discussed in class)
c. Instructor lecture |

Week 2

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|-------------------------------|--|
| 2.1. Topic | Theme 2: Universal Virtues? The high Six across History and East and West Cultures |
| Description of content | Are there universal human virtues and strengths across all cultures? |
| Readings | |
| Other activities | a. Textbook activities themes 1 and 2
b. The student will take the Carol Ryff Well-being Test |
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| 2.2. Topic | Theme 2: Universal Virtues? The high Six across History and East and |



West Cultures

Description of content

Readings

Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. (2004) *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. New York: Oxford University Press. Pages 33-53.

Other activities

- a. Student Presentation (ppt format, 10 minutes exposition+ activity proposed for the rest of the class)
- b. Rest of the class: Short Essay about the reading (10 lines + 1 thoughtful question to be discussed in class)
- c. VIA TEST

Week 3

3.1. Topic

Theme 3: Understanding Emotions I

Description of content

We will explore the importance of emotions in the survival of the *Homo Sapiens* and in its well-being

Readings

Other activities

- a. Textbook activities theme 3
- b. Video *Dr. Ed Diener on Happiness and Character Strengths*. Colloquium

3.2. Topic

Theme 3: Understanding Emotions I

Description of content

Readings

- a. Doring, S (2012) Razón y Emoción. *Mente y Cerebro* pags 4-7
- b. Newen y Zinck (2015) Somos lo que sentimos. *Mente y Cerebro* pags. 8-13

Other activities

- a. Student Presentation (ppt format, 10 minutes exposition+ activity proposed for the rest of the class)
- b. Rest of the class: Short Essay about the reading (10 lines + 1 thoughtful question to be discussed in class)
- c. Video activity: *The Divided Brain*. Colloquium

Week 4

4.1. Topic

Theme 3: Understanding Emotions II

Description of content

We will explore the importance of emotions in the survival of the *Homo Sapiens* and in its well-being, analyzing the idea of Emotional dysregulation as a source of stress and depression.

Readings

Other activities

- a. The student will take the Emotional Intelligence test **MSCEIT**
- b. Video Activity: *Allan Schore talks about the importance of negative and positive emotions*. Colloquium



4.2 Topic	Theme 3: Understanding Emotions II
Description of content	
Readings	Ayan, S. (2016) Emociones bajo control. <i>Mente y Cerebro</i> 26-31
Other activities	a. Student Presentation (ppt format, 10 minutes exposition+ activity proposed for the rest of the class) b. Rest of the class: Short Essay about the reading (10 lines + 1 thoughtful question to be discussed in class) c. Video activity: <i>Emotions: An evolutionary perspective</i> . Colloquium

Week 5

5.1. Topic	Theme 4: Happiness and Eudaimonic Wellbeing
Description of content	We will focus on the notion of happiness, specifically on the concept of subjective wellbeing (SWB), how we measure wellbeing and the most recent findings on the correlates and predictors of happiness within cultures from around the world.
Readings	
Other activities	

5.2. Topic	Theme 4: Happiness and Eudaimonic Wellbeing
Description of content	
Readings	Hartmann, U. Schneider, U. (2003) La búsqueda de la felicidad. <i>Mente y Cerebro</i> . 78-83
Other activities	a. Student Presentation (ppt format, 10 minutes exposition+ activity proposed for the rest of the class) b. Rest of the class: Short Essay about the reading (10 lines + 1 thoughtful question to be discussed in class) c. Video activity: <i>What You Need To Be Happy by Professor Ed Diener</i> . Colloquium

Week 6

6.1. Topic	
Description of content	
Readings	
Other activities	Movie activity: <i>The Incredible Will Hunting</i>. (or other movie for this Positive Psychology course)
6.2. Topic	
Description of	



content
Readings
Other activities **Mid-term Exam (themes 1-4)**

Week 7

7.1. Topic	Theme 5: The Importance of Play
Description of content	<i>"You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation"</i> (Plato, 427-347 BC). We will study how crucial is play not only for children and adolescents but also for adults.
Readings	
Other activities	Textbook activities Theme 5 Video activity: <i>Stuart Brown: Play is more than just fun TED Talk</i> . Colloquium
7.2. Topic	Theme 5: The Importance of Play
Description of content	
Readings	Wenner Moyer, M. (2011) La importancia de jugar. <i>Mente y Cerebro</i> , 39-45
Other activities	a. Student Presentation (ppt format, 10 minutes exposition+ activity proposed for the rest of the class) b. Rest of the class: Short Essay about the reading (10 lines + 1 thoughtful question to be discussed in class)

Week 8

8.1. Topic	Theme 6: Living in the Present: Flow and Mindfulness
Description of content	
Readings	Carter, L (2013) Flow in Sport, Exercise, and Performance: A Review with Implications for Future Research. <i>Journal of Multidisciplinary Research</i> , Vol. 5, No. 3, 17-31
Other activities	a. Activity Video <i>Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi: Flow, the secret to happiness</i> . Colloquium b. Short Essay about the reading (10 lines + 1 thoughtful question to be discussed in class)
8.2. Topic	Theme 6: Living in the Present: Flow and Mindfulness
Description of content	
Readings	
Other activities	Workshop Mindfulness . Dra. Pilar Ariza. Expert in Mindfulness and Mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR)



Week 9

9.1. Topic	Theme 7: Creativity
Description of content	The act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality is not only for artists; it is a necessary mental tool to be used to adapt and adjust in this changing world.
Readings	a. Zeibig, D. (2015) Estrategias para un pensamiento creativo. <i>Mente y Cerebro</i> . 36-41 b. Müller, M. (2013) Evolución de la creatividad. <i>Mente y Cerebro</i> , 47.
Other activities	a. Students will take a Creativity test to measure it.

9.2. Topic	Positive Communication Workshop
Description of content	Dr. José Antonio Muñiz, Head of the Department of Communication and Education (Loyola University) will give a master-class about this important topic.
Readings	
Other activities	

Week 10

10.1. Topic	Theme 8: Resilience
Description of content	We will analyze the concept and (sometimes the Myth) of Resilience, its main factors, and how it can be improved
Readings	Stix, G. (2011) Claves de la Resiliencia. <i>Investigación y Ciencia</i> , 15-19
Other activities	a. Textbook activities theme 8

10.2. Topic	Theme 8: Resilience
Description of content	
Readings	
Other activities	Resilient Movie activity: "Lo Imposible" o "La Terminal"

Week 11

11.1. Topic	Theme 9: Humor
Description of content	Humor's conspicuous presence in the behavioral repertoire of humankind invites evolutionary explanations. We will explore different purposes of humor, such as facilitating cooperation among people. We will study the main theories concerning humor, such as Ramachandran's <i>False Alarm Theory</i> that suggests "the main purpose of laughter is for the individual to alert others in the social group that the anomaly detected by that individual is of trivial consequence"
Readings	Kraft, U. (2004) Investigación sobre el humor. <i>Mente y Cerebro</i> , 35-39
Other activities	Textbook activity Theme 9



11.2. Topic	Theme 9: Humor
Description of content	
Readings	Polimeni, J. Jeffrey, P. (2006) The First Joke: Exploring the Evolutionary Origins of Humor. <i>Evolutionary Psychology</i> 4: 347-366
Other activities	a. Student Presentation (ppt format, 10 minutes exposition+ activity proposed for the rest of the class) b. Rest of the class: Short Essay about the reading (10 lines + 1 thoughtful question to be discussed in class)

Week 12

12.1. Topic	Final project presentations
Description of content	The presentation consists of an explanation of the main ideas and concepts of the student's favourite topic, illustrated with videos, photos, or other audio-visual supports. (10 minutes). Students will receive points if the class is actively involved in the presentation and/or if the student explains their personal motivation for choosing the topic.
Readings	
Other activities	
12.2. Topic	Final exam (themes 5-9)
Description of content	
Readings	
Other activities	

Out of Classroom Activities

- Mindfulness and meditation workshop with expert Pilar Ariza.
- Master-Class: Positive Communication. Dr. José Antonio Muñiz. Loyola University

Course Materials

Readings

Compton, W. Hoffman, E. (2013). *Positive Psychology: The Science of Happiness and Flourishing*, 2nd Edition. Wadsworth: Cengage Learning.

Hefferon, K; Ilona Boniwell, I. (2011) *Positive Psychology: Theory, Research and Applications*. New York: McGraw-Hill.



Peterson, C. & Seligman, M. (2004) *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Siegel, R. (2009) *Harvard Medical School Positive Psychology: Harnessing the power of happiness, personal strength, and mindfulness*. Boston: Harvard University Press

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