

**American University of Beirut
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Department of Psychology**

PSYC 234: Positive Psychology

Fall 2017

Class location: Nicely 322

MWF at 11am

“The aim of Positive Psychology is to catalyze a change in psychology from a preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building the best qualities in life.”

Martin Seligman

Instructor: Joyce Chedid, PsychD

Email: jc34@aub.edu.lb

Office Hours: By appointment, Wednesdays & Fridays 9am-10am

Office location: Jesup 105

I. Course Overview and Learning Outcomes:

The course aims to bring positive psychology to life for you by addressing the key theory, research and applications in this field. Positive psychology is a science of positive individual traits and subjective experiences promising to prevent pathologies and enhance humans' quality of life. The primary focus is on what makes life meaningful and worth living. Key areas that are studied are courage, wisdom, hope, creativity, future mindedness, happiness, empathy and spirituality. These form the factors that further allow humans, communities and societies to flourish.

By the end of this course, you will:

1. Gain a thorough summary of positive psychological science.
2. Practice and apply positive psychology principles in your daily lives.
3. Demonstrate a critical appreciation of positive psychological theories.
4. Be able to formulate well-evidenced arguments through completing essays that draw on academic resources.
5. Develop skills in critical thinking, analysis, and self-reflection through class discussions, essays and portfolios.

II. Teaching Methodology and Techniques:

The course will be taught through lecturing, group discussions, class activities, and visual material like PowerPoint presentations and videos.

III. Resources available to students:

The core text for this course is

Title: Positive Psychology, The Scientific and Practical Explorations of Human Strengths, 3rd edition
Authors: Lopez, S.J., Teramoto Pedrotti, J., & Snyder, C.R.
Publisher: Wiley Blackwell

In addition, extra readings will be provided throughout the semester, as well as short assignments. Students are required to check their Moodle accounts regularly for any course updates and extra material. Students are further encouraged to visit the library and book tutorials on how to use online databases. The final essay will require the use of research.

IV. Grading Criteria:

The final grade for this course is based on the total percentage of the midterm exam, final assignment, portfolio, participation and attendance, as distributed below:

Assignment	Type	Percentage
Midterm Exam	Short essay questions	30%
Final Exam	Research paper	30%
Portfolio (includes a 1000 words reflective essay)	Choice of 10 out of 12 “Personal Mini-experiments”	30%
Attendance	Class attendance	5%
Participation	Class discussions (based on reading the chapters before class and doing the mini-experiments)	5%

Guidelines and grading rubrics for the portfolios and final research paper will be posted on Moodle. Students are required to familiarise themselves with Turnitin.com to ensure that their work is not plagiarised.

V. Course Policy:

All students are expected to abide by the American University of Beirut’s academic rules and regulations that include, but are not limited to, academic integrity, plagiarism and absences.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory and punctuality is a must. Attendance will be taken at the start of each session and once completed no one will be allowed to enter. The allowed number of absences for MWF classes is 1/5 of the total sessions (i.e. 7 sessions). Students who miss more than 7 sessions will be asked to drop the course. All mobile phones and other hand-held devices must be turned off before entering the class, remain off and put away throughout the session. If a student’s phone rings during class, the student will be asked to leave.

Academic dishonesty: Please be aware that AUB regulations related to academic dishonesty are quite clear (see AUB webpage for details). Cheating at exams, plagiarism, presenting work you did not do, violating rules of proper academic conduct and other related matters will be dealt with according to strict AUB recommendations. Academic dishonesty may produce an automatic and irreversible fail.

Exams and Assignments: Missing an exam or failing to present on the assigned date will lead to a rescheduling or make up exam **only if** the student provides an adequate AUBMC medical note, or excuse letters that are acceptable by the AUB administration.

Other: In line with AUB’s mission “to foster freedom of thought, respect for diversity, critical thinking, personal integrity, and civic engagement”, each student in this course is required to contribute to a learning environment that is inclusive and respects diversity. Hence, I ask all students to:

- Respect and value each other’s experiences, values and beliefs
- Feel comfortable to communicate their own beliefs, experiences, opinions and values in a respectful manner

- Honour their own and others' individuality and uniqueness
- Be open to others' views
- Appreciate the opportunity to learn from each other in an educational and safe setting
- Keep confidential any discussions that may be of personal nature held in class
- Use this course as an opportunity to discuss ways that may enhance inclusivity across AUB and the community

“If you have documented special needs and anticipate difficulties with the content or format of the course due to a physical or learning disability, please contact me and/or your academic advisor, as well as the Counseling Center in the Office of Student Affairs (Ext. 3196), as soon as possible to discuss options for accommodations. Those seeking accommodations must submit the Special Needs Support Request Form along with the required documentation.”

VI. Tentative Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Activities	Assignments
1	W August 30	Introduction to the course	Syllabus	
	F September 1	AL ADHA HOLIDAY No classes		
2	M September 4	Ch 1: Welcome to Positive Psychology	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 1
	W September 6	Ch 2: Eastern & Western Perspectives on Positive Psychology	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 2
	F September 8 (end of drop & add)	Ch 2: Eastern & Western Perspectives on Positive Psychology	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
3	M September 11	Ch 3: Classifications & Measures of Strengths & Positive Outcomes	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 3
	W September 13	Ch 3: Classifications & Measures of Strengths & Positive Outcomes	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	F September 15	Ch 3: Classifications & Measures of Strengths & Positive Outcomes	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
4	M September 18	Ch 4: The Role of Culture in Developing Strengths & Living Well	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	W September 20	Ch 4: The Role of Culture in Developing Strengths & Living Well	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	F September 22	HIJRA NEW YEAR HOLIDAY No classes		
5	M September 25	Ch 5: Living Well at Every Stage of Life	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 4
	W September 27	Ch 5: Living Well at Every Stage of Life	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter

	F September 29	Ch 5: Living Well at Every Stage of Life	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
6	M October 2	Ch 6: The Principles of Pleasure: Understanding Positive Affect, Positive Emotions, Happiness & Well-Being	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 5
	W October 4	Ch 6: The Principles of Pleasure: Understanding Positive Affect, Positive Emotions, Happiness & Well-Being	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	F October 6	Ch 6: The Principles of Pleasure: Understanding Positive Affect, Positive Emotions, Happiness & Well-Being	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
7	M October 9	Ch 7: Making the Most of Emotional Experiences: Emotion-Focused Coping, Emotional Intelligence, Socioemotional Selectivity, & Emotional Storytelling	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 6
	W October 11	Ch 7: Making the Most of Emotional Experiences: Emotion-Focused Coping, Emotional Intelligence, Socioemotional Selectivity, & Emotional Storytelling	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	F October 13	Ch 7: Making the Most of Emotional Experiences: Emotion-Focused Coping, Emotional Intelligence, Socioemotional Selectivity, & Emotional Storytelling	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
8	M October 16	MIDTERM EXAM	In class	Chapters 1→7
	W October 18	Ch 8: Seeing Our Futures Through Self-Efficacy, Optimism, & Hope	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 7
	F October 20	Ch 8: Seeing Our Futures Through Self-Efficacy, Optimism, & Hope	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
9	M October 23	Ch 8: Seeing Our Futures Through Self-Efficacy, Optimism, & Hope	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	W October 25	Ch 9: Wisdom & Courage: Characteristics of the Wise & the Brave	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 8
	F October 27	Ch 9: Wisdom & Courage: Characteristics of the Wise & the Brave	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
10	M October 30	Ch 9: Wisdom & Courage: Characteristics of the Wise & the Brave	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	W November 1	Ch 10: Mindfulness, Flow & Spirituality: In Search of Optimal Experiences	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 9
	F November 3	Ch 10: Mindfulness, Flow & Spirituality: In Search of Optimal Experiences	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	M November 6	Ch 10: Mindfulness, Flow &	Lecture &	Read chapter

11		Spirituality: In Search of Optimal Experiences	Discussion	
	W November 8	Ch 11. Empathy & Egotism: Portals to Altruism, Gratitude, & Forgiveness	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 10
	F November 10	Ch 11. Empathy & Egotism: Portals to Altruism, Gratitude, & Forgiveness	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
12	M November 13	Ch 11. Empathy & Egotism: Portals to Altruism, Gratitude, & Forgiveness	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	W November 15	Ch 12: Attachment, Love, & Flourishing Relationships	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 11
	F November 17	Ch 12: Attachment, Love, & Flourishing Relationships	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
13	M November 20	Ch 12: Attachment, Love, & Flourishing Relationships	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	W November 22	Ch 13: Balanced Conceptualizations of Mental Health & Behavior	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	F November 24 (last day for withdrawal from course)	Ch 13: Balanced Conceptualizations of Mental Health & Behavior	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
14	M November 27	Ch 13: Balanced Conceptualizations of Mental Health & Behavior	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter
	W November 29	Ch 14: Preventing the Bad & Promoting the Good	Lecture & Discussion	Read chapter + Personal Mini-Experiment 12
	F December 1	PROPHET'S BIRTHDAY HOLIDAY No Classes		
15	M December 4	Ch 14: Preventing the Bad & Promoting the Good	Lecture & Discussion	Read Chapter SUBMIT PORTFOLIOS
	W December 6	Ch 14: Preventing the Bad & Promoting the Good	Lecture & Discussion	
Exam period December 12 → December 22	To be assigned	FINAL		Submit

Note that the syllabus functions as a flexible framework for the course content and structure. Therefore, there will be modifications throughout the semester that will be announced in class. You are responsible for all changes even if you were not present in class during the announcement.