

COURSE OUTLINE

HUMN-102

The Psychology of Happiness: A Humanities Approach

3 Semester Hours

Humanities Core Course

HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Description

This course will examine the paradigm shift from pathology to strength-based and resiliency efforts to enhance optimism, decrease stressors and increase subjective well-being. The format of the course will be didactic, participatory, experiential and interactive, with assigned readings, activities, testing and analysis to create an environment that is conducive to learning new concepts, skills and applications in the growing field of “happiness.” While field study in this area is often labeled Positive Psychology, this course will introduce those ideas through background reading, but delve more deeply into the practical skills that students can apply in daily living to enhance happiness and subjective well-being. Prerequisite: Eligible to enroll in ENGL-121. (3 hours weekly)

Statement on General Education and Liberal Learning

A liberal education prepares students to lead ethical, productive, and creative lives and to understand how the pursuit of lifelong learning and critical thinking fosters good citizenship. General education courses form the core of a liberal education within the higher education curriculum and provide a coherent intellectual experience for all students by introducing the fundamental concepts and methods of inquiry in the areas of mathematics, the physical and natural sciences, the social sciences, the arts and the humanities, and composition. This course is part of the general education core experience at Howard Community College.

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Comprehend research that supports the principles, strategies and skills of happiness and subjective well-being.
2. Develop an understanding of how happiness can be applied to life-situations.
3. Access and utilize the myriad assessment tools available for measuring / re-measuring happiness.
4. Understand the value of gratitude, spirituality, flow, altruism, forgiveness, flourishing and hope as they pertain to happiness.
5. Acquire insight into individual strengths and virtues.
6. Understand, practice and evaluate strategies toward increasing happiness and overall quality of life.
7. Experience a stable increase in happiness as a result of practicing happiness-inducing techniques.
8. Develop a zest for living a virtuous, satisfying and positive life!

Major Topics

- I. Review of Positive Psychology – Traits and States
- II. Happiness – Subjective Well-Being and Flourishing
- III. Love, Relationships, Gratitude, Growth, Hope
- IV. Strengths, Contentment, Altruism, Flow
- V. Spirituality, Forgiveness, Meaning and Purpose

Course Requirements

Grading/Exams: Grading procedures will be determined by individual faculty members but will include all of the following

1. Class Participation
2. Unit Assignments (reading and out-of-class activities)
3. Discussion
4. Readings

Writing: Two 1000-word research papers and graded daily journal entries, evaluating guest speakers and reporting on strategy experiments

Other Course Information

This course is a Humanities Core Course and an Arts and Sciences and Humanities Elective.