

San José State University Psychology Department
Psyc 190, Capstone: The Science of Meaningful Life,
Section 3,
Fall 2014

Instructor:	Jennifer Gregg, Ph.D.
Class Days/Time:	Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30 -11:45am
Classroom:	DMH 347
Prerequisites:	PSYC 100W and senior standing. Pre/Corequisite: PSYC 120 or PSYC 018.
Office Location:	DHM 317
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Office Hours:	Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:00 – 1:00pm

Course Description

This capstone course is an integrative survey of current viewpoints and issues in psychology, how they developed and likely future directions of psychology. This section will be an introduction to and critical appraisal of theories and research in psychology that examines the nature of psychological well-being. Theories of what increases well-being, as well as the paradoxical effects of attempting to increase positive emotions will be discussed in the context of empirical studies. Forgiveness, kindness, gratitude, mindfulness, and other factors thought to be related to well-being will be succinctly defined and existing studies on the effect of these constructs on well-being will be examined.

Prerequisite: PSYC 100W and senior standing. Pre/Corequisite: PSYC 120 or PSYC 018.

Learning Outcomes

The two primary goals of the course are (1) to provide students with a general understanding of the various constructs thought to be related to psychological well-being, and (2) to develop an ability to think critically about these constructs and the empirical study of them.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

CLO1: have a familiarity with the main constructs thought to be related to psychological well-being

CLO2: think critically about the empirical study of constructs related to psychological well-being

CLO3: understand, interpret, and apply knowledge gained from empirical studies of constructs related to psychological well-being

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirements...

PLO1 – Knowledge Base of Psychology – Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

PLO3 – Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology – Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.

PLO4 – Application of Psychology – Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

PLO5 – Values in Psychology – Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

Required Texts/Readings

This course will not utilize a textbook, but instead students will utilize readings provided by the instructor for each topic.

Definition of a Credit Hour

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in

<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>

Classroom Protocol

This classroom is a professional environment for you, and should be treated that way. There is a lot of interaction in this class, both with the professor and with your fellow students in groups, so professionalism on your part is very important.

Here are some basic guidelines, for those of you who have little experience in a professional context:

Turn your phone off before class begins and never, ever take your phone out during class. If I see your phone I will ask you to leave. If you need to take notes on your phone, you should find another section of this course immediately and give your spot to one of the students trying to add.

Please do not sleep in this class. I know there are special cases where something comes up and you must attend class when you're not your best, but please do not disrespect me or your fellow students by sleeping here. If I catch you sleeping, you will be asked to leave.

You may not use a laptop in this class unless you sign an Agreement of Proper Computer Use. This agreement requires you to confirm your understanding of the penalty for using your computer for *anything* except taking notes in this class: immediate, non-negotiable failure of the course. Inappropriate computer use by other students is the number one complaint I receive, so please do not be tempted to assume that if you sit in the back of the room you will not be caught surfing the web in my class.

My office is room DMH 317. My phone number there is 924-5621. If I am not in my office, please leave a message for me at this number or, better yet, email me. I will have regular office hours as posted at the top of this syllabus. If you cannot make one of these times, you can call, e-mail, or see me after class to set an appointment. I want to be available to you. The best time to catch me is right after class, but let me know if you need to see me at another time. With office hours it is first come, first served. If you do not want to wait or were not able to see me, please set a time with me individually. During office hours we can discuss course questions, psychology as a career, or other topics of interest to you.

Please be respectful of the thoughts, opinions, and experiences of others. Many of the topics in this class may have personal significance to some students. Please make a special effort to listen to one another – particularly while in the groups, since the temptation is there to socialize with other group members rather than listen to the person speaking.

Canvas and E-Campus

This course is now on the new learning system for the University, Canvas. To get there go to <https://instructure.com>. The login is your SJSUOne name and the password is your SJSUOne password. Easy peasy.

All of the readings, assignments, and material for this class will be available on Canvas.

The Canvas page will also have a copy of the course schedule, which I will try to update as we go along. If you have trouble accessing the webpage or downloading any of the items there, come and talk to me.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the [current academic calendar](http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/) web page located at http://www.sjsu.edu/academic_programs/calendars/academic_calendar/. The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Grading is based on the sum of the following:

10 response papers, 10 points per paper

100 points

+

Participation

100 points

+

1 presentation

100 points

+

1 term paper

100 points

400 points possible in the course

Well-Being Response Papers

In order to allow you to think critically about the readings and assignments for this course, you will turn in a 1-2-page, double-spaced reaction paper for each week's Well-Being assignment, and its relation to the reading you did for class.

Response papers based on Well-Being assignments **must include all of the following:**

1 – your reaction to the assignment and what you found

2 – an analysis of this reaction related to the readings on the topic (i.e., did your experience match the research results, etc)

3 – at least two critical questions you can pose to the class. The emphasis should be on questions that will generate discussion.

Participation

Participation is crucial in this class, and will be worth as much as all of the response papers put together together. You cannot gain participation points for class periods that you miss or come significantly late to. I expect you to contribute to every week's discussion, both by sharing your experience AND ALSO by joining in the discussion. That is what will earn you 100% of your participation points.

Group Presentation

The learning project you will engage in this course will consist of a group project utilizing your skills as a critical thinker and scholar to educate yourself and your classmates about a specific aspect of well-being. Each group will sign up for one of 8 additional topics, and will provide readings on the topic to the class as needed. The additional topics include:

Curiosity
Grit/Determinism
Optimism
Hope
Compassion
Empathy
Play
Joy

You will work in small groups researching the topic of your research paper to create a class lecture on the topic. In total, you will be instructing the class for one whole class period.

- Your oral presentation should last approximately **45 minutes**, and should include all of the following:
 - Introduction of the topic
 - **Academic** definition(s) of the topic
 - Summary of **research literature** on the topic
 - How topic relates to other constructs studied in the class
 - Any research or literature on how topic can be used clinically or to help people
- In addition to your 45-minute presentation, you will also involve the class in a **Planned Group Activity** related to your topic, which should be followed by you leading the class in a large or small group(s) discussion. This part of your presentation should last approximately **20-30 minutes**.
- *Examples of the group activities:* focus groups discussing challenges and issues of defining your construct, prepared vignettes/role plays for class members to discuss, small group discussions of media articles related to your topic (you provide).
- Remember that for presentations, professionalism will be a large part of your grade. Despite the fun nature of some of the topics, you will be

teaching the class about these constructs and should take this assignment seriously. Your presentations should be based on the **research literature**, and **should not contain references from webpages or other non-academic sources**, except as applied examples (i.e., videos, case examples, etc).

Individual Research Paper

You will be required to write a 10- page paper on any of the constructs studied in the class. You can write your paper on your group topic if you wish, or select from any of the other topics in the class. Note: if you write your paper on your group topic, you must be very careful to make sure all of the writing is your own. If you turn in a paper with content written by another student, this will be considered plagiarism and you will fail the course. Your paper should include a comprehensive literature review and must be written in APA style.

- Please **address ALL of the following** in the body of your manuscript
 - Technical definition of the topic
 - background review of research literature on the topic
 - your analysis of the literature and its applicability to psychology as a science
 - possible or current applications of construct to clinical or other populations

Be sure to write your paper in proper APA format (See APA Publication Manual, 5th Ed. for organizational guidance.)

Grading Policy

The grading policy for the course will be the following:

Grading Policy

A+ = 100-97%	A = 96-93%	A- = 92-90%
B+ = 89-87%	B = 86-83%	B- = 82-80%
C+ = 79-77%	C = 76-73%	C- = 72-70%
D+ = 69-67%	D = 66-63%	D- = 62-60%
F = 59-0%		

University Policies

Academic integrity

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University's Academic Integrity policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm), located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Disability Resource Center](http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/) (DRC) at <http://www.drc.sjsu.edu/> to establish a record of their disability.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The [Writing Center website](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/) is located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>

PSYC 190 / Capstone: Science of a Meaningful Life

Course Schedule Spring 2014

Table 1 Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Reading	Due
1	8-26-14	Overview of the Course		
	8-28-14	Introduction to Well-Being as a Concept and Goal, Defining & Measuring Well-Being		
2	9-2-14	Well-Being cont.	Seligman, M.E.P. & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive psychology: An introduction. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 55 (1), 5-14.	Response Paper 1
	9-4-14	Well-Being cont.	McNulty, J. K., & Fincham, F. D. (2012). Beyond positive psychology? Toward a contextual view of psychological processes and well-being. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 67(2), 101. Diener, E. & Seligman, M.E.P. (2002). Very happy people. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 13, 81-84.	

3	9-9-14	Strengths-Based Approach	Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2009). Character strengths: Research and practice. <i>Journal of college and scharacter</i> , 10(4), 1-10.	Response paper 2
	9-11-14	Strengths-Based Approach	Seligman, M. E., Steen, T. A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress: empirical validation of interventions. <i>American psychologist</i> , 60(5), 410.	
4	9-16-14	Positive Emotions & Problems with Positivity	Fredrickson, B.L. (2001). The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: The broaden and build theory of positive emotions. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 56, 218-226.	Response Paper 3
	9-18-14	Positive Emotions & Problems with Positivity	Mauss, I.B., Tamir, M., Anderson, C.L. & Savino, N. (2010). Can seeking happiness make people unhappy? Paradoxical effects of valuing	

			happiness. Emotion, 11, 807-815.	
5	9-23-14	Meaning and Values	Ryan, R.M. & Deci, E.L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 55, 68-78. King, L. A. (2001). The health benefits of writing about life goals. <i>Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin</i> , 27(7), 798-807.	Response paper 4
	9-25-14	Meaning and Values		
6	9-30-14	Generosity & Kindness	Dunn, E., Aknin, L.B. & Norton, M.I. (2008). Spending money on others promotes happiness. <i>Science</i> , 319, 1687. Lyubomirsky, Sonja, Kennon M. Sheldon, and David Schkade. "Pursuing happiness: The architecture of sustainable change." <i>Review of General Psychology</i> 9.2 (2005): 111.	Response Paper 5
	10-2-14	Generosity & Kindness		

7	10-7-14	Forgiveness	McCullough, Michael E., Lindsey M. Root, and Adam D. Cohen. "Writing about the benefits of an interpersonal transgression facilitates forgiveness." <i>Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology</i> 74.5 (2006): 887.	Response Paper 6
	10-9-14	Forgiveness	McCullough, M. E., & Witvliet, C. V. (2002). The psychology of forgiveness. <i>Handbook of positive psychology</i> , 2, 446-455.	
8	10-14-14	Gratitude	Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: an experimental investigation of gratitude and subjective well-being in daily life. <i>Journal of personality and social psychology</i> , 84(2), 377.	Response Paper 7
	10-16-14	Gratitude	Bono, G., Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2004). Gratitude in practice and the practice of	

			gratitude. <i>Positive psychology in practice</i> , 464-481.	
9	10-21-14	Savoring/Mindfulness	Brown, K. W., Ryan, R. M. (2003). The benefits of being present: Mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. <i>Journal of Personality & Social Psychology</i> , 84, 822-848.	Response Paper 8
	10-23-14	Savoring/Mindfulness	Oman, D., Shapiro, S. L., Thoresen, C. E., Plante, T. G., & Flinders, T. (2008). Meditation lowers stress and supports forgiveness among college students: A randomized controlled trial. <i>Journal of American College Health</i> , 56(5), 569-578.	
10	10-28-14	Mindfulness Approaches	Harris, R. (2006). Embracing your demons: an overview of acceptance and commitment therapy. <i>Psychotherapy in Australia</i> , 12(4), 2-	Response Paper 9
	10-30-14	Mindfulness Approaches		

			8. Baer, R. A. (2003). Mindfulness training as a clinical intervention: A conceptual and empirical review. <i>Clinical psychology: Science and practice</i> , 10(2), 125-143.	
11	11-4-14	Social Relationships & Love	Demir, M., & Weitekamp, L. A. (2007). I am so happy'cause today I found my friend: Friendship and personality as predictors of happiness. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 8(2), 181-211.	Response Paper 10
	11-6-14	Social Relationships & Love	Demir, M. (2008). Sweetheart, you really make me happy: romantic relationship quality and personality as predictors of happiness among emerging adults. <i>Journal of Happiness Studies</i> , 9(2), 257-277.	

12	11-11-14	Veteran's Day – no class		
	11-13-14	Group Presentations - Curiosity		
12	11-18-14	Group Presentations - Flow		
	11-20-14	Group Presentations - Play		
13	11-25-14	Group Presentations - Compassion		
	11-27-14	Thanksgiving Break – no class		
14	12-2-14	Group Presentations - Joy		
	12-4-14	Group Presentations - Empathy		
15	12-9-14	Group Presentations - Grit		Term Paper
16	12/16/14	Final Exam 9:45 – 12:15		
Final Exam		Final Exam Friday May 16 9:45am – 12:00pm		