

PSYC 4360—Advanced Topics in Psychology (Undergraduates)

PSYC 5380—Seminar in Psychology (Graduates)

Topic: Psychology of Happiness in Scandinavia

Summer 2024

Professor: Lauren Deaton, MA, MBA

Instructor information:

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Course Description (from catalog for PSYC 4360): Thorough explorations of topics of substantial scholarly interest in psychology. Prerequisite: Senior standing in psychology or consent of instructor.

Course Description (from catalog for PSYC 5380): Seminars of topical interest in specialized areas of psychology. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

Topic: Psychology of Happiness in Scandinavia

Delve into the fascinating world of happiness and well-being through the lens of Scandinavian culture and psychology. This course offers a comprehensive exploration of the factors that contribute to personal fulfillment and happiness within the context of Scandinavian societies. Drawing upon principles from positive psychology, sociology, and cultural studies, students will examine the unique social, economic, and cultural factors that shape the Scandinavian approach to happiness. Through a combination of theoretical discussions, case studies, and experiential exercises, participants will gain a deeper understanding of the Scandinavian perspective on well-being and its implications for individuals and communities.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the key concepts and theories related to the psychology of happiness, with a specific focus on the Scandinavian perspective.
- Analyze the cultural, social, and economic factors that contribute to well-being and happiness within Scandinavian societies, including the role of social welfare systems, work-life balance, and outdoor activities.
- Evaluate the impact of Scandinavian cultural values, such as hygge, lagom, and friluftsliv, on individual happiness and societal well-being.
- Apply principles of positive psychology and Scandinavian happiness research to personal and professional contexts, developing strategies for enhancing well-being and promoting happiness in daily life.

- Critically assess the effectiveness of Scandinavian approaches to education, healthcare, and quality of life in fostering long-term happiness and life satisfaction.
- Engage in reflective practices and self-assessment to identify personal strengths, values, and goals related to happiness and well-being, and develop action plans for ongoing self-improvement.

Required Texts:

There will no texts that are required in this course.
Handouts of other assigned readings available on Canvas.

Suggested Texts:

The Little Book of Hygge by Meik Wiking ISBN: 9780241283912

Grade Breakdown for Undergraduate Students:

Daily Happiness Practice	10%
Presentation	20%
Reflective Reading Assignments	20%
Attendance/Participation	30%
Travel Journal	20%

Grade Breakdown for Graduate Students:

Daily Happiness Practice	10%
Presentation	20%
Reflective Reading Assignments	20%
Attendance/Participation	30%
Travel Journal	20%
Happiness/Contention Thought Experiment Assignment	CR/NC

Assignments:

In Tyler:

- **Daily Happiness Practice**
 - Part of the course will involve your self-directed goals to be a happier person. You will complete exercises and activities such as meditation, gratitude expression, volunteering, etc. You will keep a journal of your activities and submit a (1/2 page – 1 page) reflection each day describing your activities. Each day in class, we will start with a check in concerning what you tried for your daily happiness practice.
 - The exercises and activities that you select must be directly related to hygge, lagom, or friluftsliv.
 - You will complete 4 practices: 1 Monday night (5/13), 1 Tuesday night (5/14), 1 Wednesday night (5/15), and 1 Thursday night (5/16).

- These activities and reflection will be worth 10% of your grade.
- **Presentation**
 - During the last class period in Tyler, students will be asked to give a 5-8 minute presentation on a cultural, social, or environmental factor that contributes to happiness and well-being in Scandinavia. More information on this presentation will be posted on canvas.
 - You will need to approve your topic with me by Tuesday, May 14. This is to ensure that everyone is presenting over a different topic.
 - You can choose to do this presentation individually or in a pair. If you choose to do it in a pair, then your presentation will need to be 10-15 minutes in length and you will need to include an activity for the class. No activity is required if you complete the presentation individually.
 - This presentation will be worth 20% of your grade.
- **Reflective Reading Assignments**
 - Each evening after class, I will ask that you reflect over what you have learned in the previous class period or over an assigned reading. I will provide direction over what your reflections should entail on canvas.
 - You will complete 4 reflections and turn them in over canvas.
 - These reflections will be worth 20% of your grade.

In Tyler & Scandinavia:

Participation/Attendance

- Attendance in this class is not only mandatory but also very important. Your contributions will be invaluable and you need to be here every day. Each absence will result in a full letter-grade reduction (10%) of your grade. Obviously, this is a serious matter, so try to plan. Unquestioned absences include sickness, job interviews, personal matters, etc. Therefore, if you anticipate having to miss class at any point, please plan accordingly. If a University activity will cause you to miss more than two classes, please see your instructor. Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform me before the class begins. Attendance will be counted at both the Tyler location and mandatory events/excursions while in Scandinavia.
- Participation/attendance will be worth 30% of your grade.

In Scandinavia:

Travel Journal

- While participating in the travel study portion of the class, students will keep a journal. This journal will contain responses to prompts that the instructor gives throughout the course. You will turn in your journal once you return to the United States or at the concluding dinner in Estonia.
- This will be graded on completion and effort. I'm not going to read your innermost thoughts, so you are free to write openly.

- Your Travel Journal will be worth 20% of your grade.

Graduate Students Only:

If you are enrolled in PSYC 5380, you will have to complete one additional assignment due the advanced nature of the graduate coursework. This assignment will be graded on a credit/no credit basis, meaning if you do not complete this assignment, you will receive a grade of incomplete in the course.

Happiness/Contention Thought Experiment Assignment

If you are a graduate student, you will be writing a research paper discussing the differences between Happiness and Contention. You will need to discuss how your field of clinical or counseling psychology views these concepts and if happiness or contention is really a goal for clients you might be seeing once out in the field.

More information will be posted concerning this assignment on Canvas.

You may turn this assignment in while in Tyler or in Scandinavia. The last day to turn this assignment in will be May 30, 2024.

Grading Scale: 100–90%=A, 89–80%=B, 79–70%=C, 69–60%=D, and any grade below 60%=F.

Make-up and Late Work: Deadlines and times are firm. Late assignments will not be accepted or awarded any credit.

Course Schedule:

Tyler Timeline

	Topics Covered:	Assignments due:
Monday, May 13	Cultural Psychology, Us Vs. Them Hygge, Lagom, & Friluftsliv	Daily Happiness Practice #1 Reflection #1
Tuesday, May 14	What is happiness? Predictors of Happiness	Daily Happiness Practice #2 Reflection #2
Wednesday, May 15	Happiness Across the Life Span Positive Relationships, Health & Resilience Guest Speakers: K. Allen and Y. Ralph	Daily Happiness Practice #3 Reflection #3
Thursday, May 16	The Politics of Happiness The Ethics of Anger Guest Speaker: G. Bock	Daily Happiness Practice #4 Reflection #4
Friday, May 17	N/A	Presentations Reflection #5

Fly to Copenhagen on May 18 → Arrive on May 19

Scandinavia Timeline

	Location:	Activities Planned:
Sunday, May 19	Copenhagen, Denmark	Harbor & Canal Cruise Welcome Dinner
Monday, May 20	Copenhagen, Denmark	The Glass Market Round Tower National Museum of Denmark
Tuesday, May 21	Copenhagen, Denmark	Hygge & Happiness Sustainability Tour Church of our Savior Circle Bridge
Wednesday, May 22	Copenhagen, Denmark	Amalienborg Castle Rosenborg Castle Class Meeting #1
Thursday, May 23	Copenhagen, Denmark	Smorrebrod Making Class The Happiness Museum
Friday, May 24	Copenhagen to Stockholm	Flight to Stockholm (AM) Tour of Stockholm Nobel Museum Archipelago Boat Tour
Saturday, May 25	Stockholm, Sweden	Skansen Vasa Museum

Sunday, May 26	Stockholm, Sweden	Free Day!
Monday, May 27	Stockholm, Sweden Overnight Ferry to Helsinki	Class Meeting #2 Swedish Fika
Tuesday, May 28	Helsinki, Finland	Walking Panoramic Tour
Wednesday, May 29	Helsinki, Finland	Nuukio Reindeer Park Haltia Nature Center Class Meeting #3
Thursday, May 30	Helsinki, Finland	Day Trip to Tallinn Walking tour Farewell Dinner
Friday, May 31	Helsinki, Finland	Fly back to USA

Fly to Dallas on 5/31 or extend your trip, whichever you have decided on.

Final grades for the course are due on June 4, 2024. Your grade will be finalized on this day.