



## SYLLABUS

### Social Science and the Study of Human Happiness (HONS 1990H)

#### LOCATION

Spring Semester 2009, Housing Demographics and Research Center - Conference Room, 3:35-4:25, Wednesdays

#### PROFESSOR

Russell N. James III, J.D., Ph.D., 203 Consumer Research Center, 706.542.4951, [rjames@uga.edu](mailto:rjames@uga.edu), office hours M & F 3:30-4:45 p.m., W 4:30-5:45 p.m. and by appointment

#### GRADUATE ASSISTANT – (Please contact for all grade-related questions)

Jasmine Giddens, [jag1022@uga.edu](mailto:jag1022@uga.edu), 104 Consumer Research Center, 706.542.4950, office hours T & R 9:00a.m.-12:30p.m. The graduate assistant posts all scores for this course. If you have questions about a posted grade, please contact the graduate assistant first.

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course examines a variety of social science approaches to understanding the definition, measurement, and determinants of subjective well-being. Special attention will be paid to quantitative analysis, population studies, economic theories, and multi-national comparisons.

#### REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

Kahneman, Daniel, Ed Diener, & Norbert Schwarz (1999) Well-Being. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

#### ACADEMIC HONESTY

If a suspected violation of the academic honesty policies of this University occurs by any student in this class, I reserve the right to address the situation as a violation of Academic Honesty, and thus will deal with the alleged violator immediately. It is expected that all students are familiar with and will stringently adhere to the University's Academic Honesty Policy. This policy can be found on-line at: <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/ahpd.htm>.

#### GRADING SCALE

A	93% +
A-	90% to <93%
B+	87% to <90%
B	83% to <87%
B-	80% to <83%
C+	77% to <80%
C	73% to <77%
C-	70% to <73%
D	60% to <70%
F	<60%

Each week students will be assigned to read an article from the text. Students should bring brief written comments to class. (Brief can be from a paragraph to a page.) The class period will focus on an interactive critical evaluation of the article including comparisons and contrasts with the approaches and findings of previously discussed

articles. In lieu of a final examination, students will write a brief paper describing their preferred approaches to answering one or more of the fundamental questions of subjective well-being and compare these with alternative approaches discussed during the semester. The paper should be a minimum of three single-spaced pages of text.

70% Participation/weekly written comments  
30% Final paper

### **GRADING STRUCTURE**

Your percentage score for any section is the sum of the percentage scores on each assignment in that section divided by the total number of assignments in that section.

### **ABSENCES/LATE WORK**

These late work options are not dependent upon the normative content of the proximate cause for your absence or other inability to timely complete the assignment. Consequently, it is not necessary or productive to share such personal information with the professor or graduate assistant.

Comments and reactions to the reading should be submitted in writing within two weeks from the original date of the class. For missed classes, this must be a minimum of two single-spaced pages, 1-inch margins, on 8.5 x 11 paper, using 12-point Times New Roman font, with no additional spacing or blank lines between paragraphs.

TWO-WEEK RULE: You have 14 days after grades are posted on WebCT to challenge or change the posted grade. If you believe you turned in an assignment and a zero is posted on WebCT, you must contact the professor or graduate assistant within two weeks after the score is posted. Two weeks (14 calendar days) following a grade posting (0 or otherwise), the posted score will become irrevocable.

### **CALENDAR**

The course calendar is tentative, and may be changed as the semester progresses. Changes to the calendar, assignments, or assignment dates will be announced in class. Thus, class attendance is necessary in order to be aware of all assignments.

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

A selection of articles assigned weekly, including, but not limited to:

Wouldn't It Be Nice? Predicting Future Feelings <i>George Loewenstein and David Schkade</i>	Close Relationships and Quality of Life <i>David G. Myers</i>
Objective Happiness <i>Daniel Kahneman</i>	Measurement Issues in Emotional Research <i>Randy J. Larsen &amp; Barbara L. Fredrickson</i>
Causes and Correlates of Happiness <i>Michael Argyle</i>	Reports of Subjective Well-Being: Judgmental Processes and Their Methodological Implications <i>Norbert Schwarz &amp; Fritz Strack</i>
Well-Being and the Workplace <i>Peter Warr</i>	Personality and Subjective Well-Being <i>Ed Diener and Richard E. Lucas</i>
National Differences in Subjective Well-Being <i>Ed Diener and Eunkook Mark Suh</i>	Personal Control and Well-Being <i>Christopher Peterson</i>
Gender Differences in Well-Being <i>Susan Nolen-Hoeksema and Cheryl L. Rusting</i>	Hedonic Adaptation <i>Shane Frederick and George Loewenstein</i>