



SENATE COMMITTEE ON CURRICULAR AFFAIRS
COURSE SUBMISSION AND CONSULTATION FORM

Principal Faculty Member(s) Proposing Course

Name	User ID	College	Department
Robert William Roeser	rwr15	Health and Human Development (HH)	Not Available

Academic Home: Health and Human Development (HH)

Type of Proposal: Add Change Drop

Course Designation

(HDFS 108N) Art and Science of Human Flourishing

Course Information

Cross-Listed Courses:

Prerequisites:

Corequisites:

Concurrents:

Recommended Preparations:

Abbreviated Title: Art & Sci of Human Flourishing

Discipline: General Education

Course Listing: Inter-Domain

Special categories for Undergraduate (001-499) courses

Foundations

Writing/Speaking (GWS)

Quantification (GQ)

Knowledge Domains

Health & Wellness (GHW)

Natural Sciences (GN)

Arts (GA)

Humanities (GH)

Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS)

Additional Designations

Bachelor of Arts

International Cultures (IL)

United States Cultures (US)

Honors Course

Common course number - x94, x95, x96, x97, x99

Writing Across the Curriculum

First-Year Engagement Program

First-Year Seminar

Miscellaneous

Common Course

GE Learning Objectives

GenEd Learning Objective: Effective Communication

GenEd Learning Objective: Creative Thinking

GenEd Learning Objective: Crit & Analytical Think

GenEd Learning Objective: Global Learning

GenEd Learning Objective: Integrative Thinking

GenEd Learning Objective: Key Literacies

GenEd Learning Objective: Soc Resp & Ethic Reason

Bulletin Listing

Minimum Credits: 3

Maximum Credits: 3

Repeatable: NO

Department with Curricular Responsibility: Human Development And Family Studies (UPHH_HDFS)

Effective Semester: Upon Approval

Travel Component: NO

Course Outline

A brief outline or overview of the course content:

This course offers students the opportunity to explore human flourishing - defined as a life of deep meaning, fulfillment and service to others. Students will be taught about flourishing through the lens of science, philosophy, and their own experience. Through exposure to diverse scientific theories and research on the skills associated with flourishing, to philosophical and religious writings on human happiness and wellbeing, and to various reflective exercises and contemplative practices (e.g., mindfulness and compassion meditation), students will develop conceptual knowledge, experiential insight, and practical skills related to flourishing.

A listing of the major topics to be covered with an approximate length of time allotted for their discussion:

Foundations of Human Flourishing (3 weeks)

Topics including Defining Flourishing and the Varieties of Happiness; Foundations in Human Plasticity and Mental Training; and Human Resilience

Domain of Flourishing 1 - Awareness (3 weeks)

Topics include: Focus, Emotion, and Mindfulness

Domain of Flourishing 2 - Connection (3 weeks)

Topics include: Interdependence, Compassion, Diversity

Domain of Flourishing 3 - Wisdom (3 weeks)

Topics include: Identity, Aesthetics, Values

Domain of Flourishing 4 - Integration (3 weeks)

Topics include: Courage, Performance

Course Description:

This course offers students the opportunity to explore human flourishing - defined as a life of deep meaning, fulfillment and service to others. Students will be taught about flourishing through the lens of science, philosophy, and their own experience. Through exposure to diverse scientific theories and research on the skills associated with flourishing, to philosophical and religious writings on human happiness and wellbeing, and to various reflective exercises and contemplative practices (e.g., mindfulness and compassion meditation), students will develop conceptual knowledge, experiential insight, and practical skills related to flourishing. The course begins by introducing a conceptual framework that defines flourishing in terms of foundations, domains and dimensions. First, students will learn about the foundations of flourishing in terms of the unique human capacities for reflection, resilience and transformation. Second, students will learn about four major domains and related dimensions that characterize flourishing, including the domains of awareness (e.g., focus, emotion, mindfulness), connection to others (e.g., interdependence, compassion, diversity), wisdom (identity, aesthetics, values) and integration of one's values and intentions in everyday living (e.g., courage, performance). Together, in a supportive and highly experiential learning environment, students will be encouraged to envision, articulate and pursue their own unique path to flourishing during their time in college and beyond based on their intellectual and experiential learning in the course. By the end of this course, students are able to: (I) Demonstrate foundational knowledge, including the ability to analyze and describe the relevant concepts and theories in multiple intellectual fields on the nature and cultivation of human flourishing, and the ability to recognize the possibilities, value, and relevance of cultivating personal flourishing in their own lives in relation to flourishing in social relationships, communities, and institutions; (II) Experience deep engagement in terms of being familiar with the basic personal experiences relating to individual qualities of human flourishing in order to make personal sense of them, and master individual practices for assessing and developing them; and (III) Understand real-world applications in terms of acquiring skills, sensibilities, and perspectives relating to individual qualities of human flourishing, which they are able to apply in the diverse contexts of their lives.

The name(s) of the faculty member(s) responsible for the development of the course:

Name: Robert William Roeser (rwr15)

Title:

Phone:
Address:
Campus: UP
City:
Fax:
Name: Gabriela Winqvist (gew10)
Title: Instructor
Phone: +1 814 863 0353
Address: 0266 Recreation Bldg
Campus:
City:
Fax:

Course Justification

Instructional, Educational, and Course Objectives:

This section should define what the student is expected to learn and what skills the student will develop.

Course Objectives: HDFS108 Art and Science of Human Flourishing

Objective 1. Students will demonstrate comprehension of diverse scientific and cultural/philosophic visions of flourishing, as well as the constituent qualities and skills that constitute human flourishing through performance on class reflection papers, essays and quizzes.

Objective 2. Students will explore key qualities of flourishing such as mindful awareness, aesthetic awareness and compassion through various reflective exercises.

Objective 3. Students will master key skills related to flourishing (e.g., attentional focus, self-compassion) through engaging in contemplative practices (e.g., mindfulness practice).

Objective 4. Students will explore and articulate a vision of flourishing for themselves that they can begin to create in their academic and social lives during their college years through their final projects.

Evaluation Methods:

Include a statement that explains how the achievement of the educational objective identified above will be assessed. The procedures for determining students' grades should be specifically identified.

Student progress and performance with regard to these objectives will be evaluated with exams/quizzes, writing assignments and class attendance/participation.

The following assessment strategies will be used in the course:

1. Tests/quizzes: 30-40%
2. Reflective weekly and integrative essays: 10-20%
3. Contemplative practice and practice journals: 10-20%
4. Classroom and lab attendance/participation: 30-40% (class attendance, discussion participation, in-class group practice activities)

Relationship/Linkage of Course to Other Courses:

This statement should relate the course to existing or proposed new courses. It should provide a rationale for the level of instruction, for any prerequisites that may be specified, or for the course's role as a prerequisite for other courses.

This course is intended to introduce students to numerous theories and research related to human development, health, and flourishing.

It is intended primarily for first-year students transitioning to college, and the topics of flourishing that are covered in the 15 weeks of the semester are meant to introduce, stimulate and motivate students to take other courses related to these topics in areas like biology/ecology, mind-body wellness, interpersonal communication and intercultural competence, and philosophy and religion.

Relationship of Course to Major, Option, Minor, or General Education:

This statement should explain how the course will contribute to the major, option, or minor and indicate how it may function as a service course for other departments.

This course is not required for the HDFS major or minor.

A description of any special facilities:

N/A

Frequency of Offering and Enrollment:

The course will be offered annually. Enrollment will vary year by year, but the interactive components will likely work best with 60 students in the course.

Alignment with General Education Objectives

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION – the ability to exchange information and ideas in oral, written, and visual form in ways that allow for informed and persuasive discourse that builds trust and respect among those engaged in that exchange, and helps create environments where creative ideas and problem-solving flourish.

KEY LITERACIES – the ability to identify, interpret, create, communicate and compute using materials in a variety of media and contexts. Literacy acquired in multiple areas, such as textual, quantitative, information/technology, health, intercultural, historical, aesthetic, linguistic (world languages), and scientific, enables individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, to lead healthy and productive lives, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.

CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL THINKING – the habit of mind characterized by comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a conclusion. It is the intellectually disciplined process of conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action.

INTEGRATIVE THINKING – the ability to synthesize knowledge across multiple domains, modes of inquiry, historical periods, and perspectives, as well as the ability to identify linkages between existing knowledge and new information. Individuals who engage in integrative thinking are able to transfer knowledge within and beyond their current contexts.

CREATIVE THINKING – the capacity to synthesize existing ideas, images, or expertise in original ways and the experience of performing, making, thinking, or acting in an imaginative way that may be characterized by innovation, divergent thinking, and intellectual risk taking.

GLOBAL LEARNING – the intellectually disciplined abilities to analyze similarities and differences among cultures; evaluate natural, physical, social, cultural, historical, and economic legacies and hierarchies; and engage as community members and leaders who will continue to deal with the intricacies of an ever-changing world. Individuals should acquire the ability to analyze power; identify and critique interdependent global, regional, and local cultures and systems; and evaluate the implications for people's lives.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICAL REASONING – the ability to assess one's own values within the social context of problems, recognize ethical issues in a variety of settings, describe how different perspectives might be applied to ethical dilemmas, and consider the ramifications of alternative actions. Individuals should acquire the self-knowledge and leadership skills needed to play a role in creating and maintaining healthy, civil, safe, and thriving communities.

What component(s) of the course will help students achieve the General Education Learning Objectives covered in the course? Provide evidence that students in the course have adequate opportunities to achieve the identified learning objectives.

Integrative Thinking Objectives: The course is designed to introduce students to multiple dimensions (foundations, awareness, connection, wisdom, embodiment) and associated themes related to human flourishing across the course of the semester. These dimensions and themes are derived from both psychological / social science and the world's philosophic and religious traditions. Thus, one key objective of the class is to support students in integrating conceptual insights into what constitutes human flourishing from the perspectives of both the sciences and the arts/humanities. In addition, the course is designed to expose students to 3rd person approaches to knowing through content readings and lectures (e.g., conceptual knowledge), 2nd person ways of knowing arising from discussion with instructors and peers around concepts of flourishing (e.g., communal dialogue), and 1st person approaches to knowing through reflection and engagement in contemplative practices like mindfulness and compassion meditation (e.g., personal experience). Thus, a second key objective regarding integration is the coordination of 1st, 2nd and 3rd person ways of knowing about flourishing. Finally, the last weeks of the course focus specifically on the dimension of "Integration" - how students can take what they are learning conceptually, communally, and experientially and begin to form a vision and plan of action for how they can actively and consciously create a life of flourishing that benefits themselves and others simultaneously. In all three of these ways, we aim to cultivate the integrative thinking around (1) art/humanities and science; (2) different ways of knowing; and (3) the topics of the course as a whole.

Social Responsibility and Ethical Reasoning Objectives: The course is focused heavily on issues of social responsibility and ethics insofar as it focuses heavily on the conceptual and experiential explorations of awareness and self-inquiry, and the relationship between personal transformation and social transformation. Specific weeks and topics of the course ask students to reflect on and work to cultivate personal qualities like attention, awareness, and our fundamental interdependence with others; on empathy and compassion for others, and on awareness of one's own values and the skills needed to courageously live those values out in myriad social contexts. Weekly reflective essays on these topics; contemplative training in focus, mindful awareness and compassion for self and others; and a final project in which one envisions of life of flourishing for oneself that also serves the world in important ways are some of the components of the course that will help students realize these social-responsibility and ethical goals.

How will students be assessed to determine their attainment of the Learning Objective(s) of General Education covered in this course? This assessment must be included as a portion of the student's overall performance in this course.

Each week, students explore a different theme related to flourishing. They watch recorded lectures at home, complete readings, and engage in classroom exercises and contemplative practices that are related to that theme (e.g., lectures on attention and focus, readings on attention, and practice of focused attention meditation). In an effort to assess students progress towards meeting our (a) Integrative Thinking and (b) Social Responsibility and Ethical Reasoning objectives, there are four main assessment practices:

(1) Each week, they also must complete a quiz on the conceptual content of the lectures and readings.

(2) Each week they must also complete a self-reflection paper that covers 5 areas:

- Define the quality in a more conceptual manner (e.g., what is compassion?).
- Describe what a quality (e.g., compassion) looks like using examples from personal experience.
- Discuss why the quality may be relevant personally/socially, etc.
- Explain some of the factors that might impede/cultivate the quality.
- Apply your knowledge, by noting, practically speaking, what might be done to cultivate this quality.

(3) At the end of each of the major themes that define flourishing (e.g, attention, emotion, and mindfulness as dimensions related to the overarching theme of in "awareness"), students are asked to integrate together their three "first-order" essays on each individual theme into a higher order synthesis on the overarching theme - e.g., What does awareness, in terms of paying attention and being aware of our sensations, feelings and thoughts, have to do with "flourishing"? Each integrative essay covers the following points:

- What is the relationship among the three topics of flourishing that are linked together under this module?
- How do these relate to our capacity to flourish or not?

- Provide some examples from your own life and observations, as well as reading and lectures.

(4). Personal practice journals. Each week, students are given a practice and skill to develop (e.g., develop attention through focused attention meditation, develop somatic awareness through body scan meditation). Students are responsible for engaging in, reflecting on and documenting how much they are able to practice the skills underlying flourishing. In addition, they are asked to "apply these skills informally in life" and note any experiences in this regard. Thus, this assessment focused on doing and applying the skills of flourishing - integrating them into life in the service of a personally satisfying and socially responsible, ethical life.

General Education Domain Criteria

General Education Designation: Inter-Domain

GHA Criteria

- Explain the methods of inquiry in Health and Wellness fields and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas
- Describe multiple perceptions and dimensions of health and wellness (emotional, spiritual, environmental, physical, social, intellectual, and occupational)
- Identify and explain ways individuals and/or communities can achieve and maintain health and wellness
- Describe health-related risk factors and explain changes in knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, activities or skills that have the potential of improving health and wellness
- Disseminate knowledge about health and wellness and demonstrate behavioral practices needed to engage in healthy living across the life span

What components of the course will help students achieve the domain criteria selected above?

GHW Student Learning Criteria:

1. Describe multiple perceptions and dimension of health and wellness. The course is fundamentally about visions of optimal health and wellbeing - what we call "flourishing." Through lectures, readings, and class exercises, students learning multiple ways of thinking about health and wellness. In the Foundations theme, for example, student learn about different kinds of happiness (e.g., hedonism and eudaimonia); about the interaction of body and mind, and about how training the mind can affect the body and health.
2. Identify and explain ways individuals/communities can achieve and maintain health and wellness. Through labs and training in contemplative practices, we teach students basic stress-management, mindfulness, and compassion skills that research in psychology and neuroscience have confirmed promote reductions in stress and distress, improvements in emotional wellbeing, and improvements in physical health due to less stress reactivity.
3. Disseminate knowledge about health and wellness across the lifespan.

Through the readings and lectures, as well as classroom reflections, we help students to (a) know the research (3rd person knowing) and (b) explore their own experience (1st person knowing) of how regulation of attention, greater awareness and compassion for self and others, and increased awareness of aesthetic beauty in nature and the arts conduce towards a life of health, wellbeing and flourishing. We even get them, on the first and last day of class, to engage in an imagined contemplation on the last day of their lives about "what makes my life worth living" and suggest that they can take this knowledge and "pay it forward" - devoting more time to being in nature, connecting with others, practicing meditation as these are the very things they have found, and science suggests, leads to health and wellbeing.

GS Criteria

- Explain the various methods of inquiry used in the social and behavioral sciences and describe how the contributions of these fields complement inquiry in other areas
- Identify and explain major foundational theories and bodies of work in a particular area of social and behavioral sciences
- Describe the ways in which many different factors may interact to influence behaviors and/or institutions in historical or contemporary settings
- Explain how social and behavioral science researchers use concepts, theoretical models and data to better understand and address world problems
- Recognize social, cultural, political and/or ethical implications of work in the social and behavioral sciences

What components of the course will help students achieve the domain criteria selected above?

GS Student Learning Criteria:

1. Identify and explain major theories.

The course, through lectures and readings, presents students with Greek/Roman, Asian and European philosophic perspectives, as well as scientific theories on the concept of flourishing.

2. Describe the ways in which many different factors may interact to influence behaviors and/or institutions in historical or

contemporary settings.

In the weeks on awareness and on wisdom, we discuss the myriad mental and self-related factors, especially attention emotion, and values, that consciously and unconsciously motivate our behaviors.

The key lesson here at the individual level is interdependence. In addition, the theme of connection presents students with ideas on the fundamentally interdependent nature of ourselves, humanity, and even life and climate. This contextualizes notions of self and personal flourishing within the wider array of societal and institutional forces that shape selves and flourishing. We also use these lectures to describe the fundamentally interdependent nature of personal and social flourishing - they both need one another.

3. Recognize social, cultural, political and/or ethical implications of work in the social and behavioral sciences.

The entire accent of this course is on how without ethics, there is no vision of flourishing that brings lasting happiness. To think we can be happy in an unequal and warming world where so many are suffering is opened up for rational analysis and critical inquiry. Is such a happiness independent of others really possible? Desirable? The lectures, readings and reflection papers, as well as in-class exercises and discussions all bear on the social, cultural, political and/or ethical implications of our discussion of what it means to flourish.

Integrative Studies

Explain how the intellectual frameworks And methodologies of the two Knowledge Domains will be explicitly addressed in the course and practiced by the students.

Theoretical approaches to human flourishing, from the social and natural sciences as well as the arts/humanities, will be presented through readings and lectures.

Practical understanding of well-being, and in-class and outside of class practices and exercises to apply techniques of breathing, awareness, embodiment, etc. in order to improve well-being will be taught. Thus, we present material conceptually that integrates conceptual frameworks from science and humanities, and we also teach students practices derived from humanistic traditions that have now been studied scientifically. At all levels, the different knowledge domains are presented together.

Demonstrate that each Of the two domains will receive approximately equal attention, providing evidence from course topics, assignments, or other course components, and that students will integrate material from both domains.

Students will learn about four major domains and related dimensions that characterize flourishing, including the domains of awareness (e.g., focus, emotion, mindfulness), connection to others (e.g., interdependence, compassion, diversity), wisdom (identity, aesthetics, values) and integration of one's values and intentions in everyday living (e.g., courage, performance). Each week, there will be a reading and lecture on these domains and dimensions from both a scientific/humanities as well as a practical perspective. Furthermore, in addition to readings and lectures, each week students will be introduced to and asked to practice a specific health/wellness practices related to flourishing/wellbeing. In this way, students will be invited to explore each dimension of flourishing in the course through the lens of social science, the arts and humanities, and first-hand personal experience.

Each written assignment, journals and essays, will draw from both domains in terms of conceptual knowledge and personal experience (30% final grade). Quizzes and exams (30% final grade) will also draw from both domains, but more from the social and behavioral sciences. On the other hand, students' engagement in contemplative practice and their lab participation (30% final grade) will primarily reflect the GHW domain. In this way, approximately equal attention is given to both domains

Briefly explain the staffing plan. Given that each Inter-Domain course is approved for two Knowledge Domains, it will be taught by an instructor (or instructional team) with appropriate expertise in both domains.

Currently course is taught by two instructors, one for each domain. There are instructors in HDFS with ability to teach both GS and GHW. The course needs to be taught by an instructor / instructors who have content knowledge and practical expertise in the humanistic and scientific study of flourishing, and who are comfortable and conversant with leading contemplative practices like mindfulness or compassion meditation. In addition, instructor(s) need to be able to manage group discussions and respond in real time to arising ideas, issues, and concerns of students as they engage with the material intellectually and experientially.

Describe the assessments that will be used to determine students' ability to apply integrative thinking.

Student progress and performance with regard to these objectives will be evaluated with exams/quizzes, writing assignments, contemplative practice logs, and class attendance/participation.

All these written assessments, including the practice logs, allow students to apply the knowledge they are learning to their day-to-day experiences through written reflection and analysis in the first-person perspective.

Campuses That Have Offered () Over The Past 4 Years

semester	AB	AL	BK	BR	BW	CR	DS	ER	FE	GA	GV	HB	HN	HY	LV	MA	NK	PC	SH	SL	UP	WB	WC	WS	XC	XP	XS	YK
----------	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

UPLOADED DOCUMENTS FOLLOW:

Art and Science of Human Flourishing - HDFS 197x - FALL 2017

Penn State University

Week	Theme	Class Exercises - Mondays	Class Exercises - Wednesdays	Lab Contemplative Practices	Lab Exercises
1	Flourishing	Defining Flourishing; Identity-Objects-based Introductions; Envisioning a Life of Flourishing Exercise	Mindful Listening Exercise, Poem "Enough"; Last Day of Your Life Exercise	Focus on Breath Practice	Learning / Remembering Names Circle Exercise
2	Plasticity	Defining and Discussing Plasticity; Personal Experiences of Plasticity Exercise	Negative Bias Exercise - 3 Things We Remember from 1st Week at Penn State	Body Scan Practice	Mindful Introduction and Discussion of Lab Norms
3	Mindfulness	Defining and Discussing Mindfulness: What's Here Now Exercise; Neuroplasticity Video	Herbie Hancock Non-judgmental Video; Reperceiving / Reification Exercise	Focus on Sound and Silence Practice	Question and Answer Session on Practices
4	Focus	Defining and Discussing Focus; Mind the Music/Focus on Sound Practice; Listening with Distraction Exercise	Mindful Eating Exercise; Our Experiences with Distress Exercise	Open-Awareness Practice	Question and Answer Session on Practices
5	Emotion	Defining and Discussing Emotion; Remembering Positive Experiences Exercise, Emotion in Flourishing Discussion	Circumplex Model Discussion & Check-in; Building Our Emotional Vocabulary Exercise	Mindfulness of Emotions Practice	Question and Answer Session on Practices
6	Happiness	Defining and Discussing Happiness; Sympathetic Joy Exercise	Discussion of Types of Happiness; Stoics Philosophy Video/Mindful Note-Taking	Self-Compassion Practice	Hedonic Treadmill and Eudaemonia Discussion
7	Resilience	Defining and Discussing Resilience; Personal Experiences of Resilience Exercise	Review of Resilience Concepts; Factors that Affect Resilience Exercise	Gentle Yoga Practice	Question and Answer Session on Practices
8	Interconnection	Defining Interconnection/Interdependence; Mapping Webs of Meaningful Relationships (Caring Figures) Exercise Gratitude Video Contemplation with David Stendl-Rast	Mapping Webs of Meaningful Places (Homes) Exercise; Thich Nhat Hanh Teaching on Interdependence of Paper	Loving-Kindness Practice	Life Questions and Notecard Exchange Exercise
9	Compassion	Defining Compassion; HH Dalai Lama Video on Compassion; Compassion vs. Empathy Exercise; Roots of Morality in Babies Video	Video of Children Defining Kindness; Just Like Me Exercise; Seeing Difficult Person Exercise	Active Compassion Practice	Hidden Vulnerabilities Exercise
10	Diversity	Defining Diversity and Inclusion; Us/Them Automatic Bias Exercise; Sapolsky Video on Stress, Us/Them Biases, and Malleability	Centerlands/Borderlands Video; Centerlands/Borderlands at Penn State Exercise	Self-Compassion Practice	Debrief of Diversity Week Discussion
11	Identity	Defining and Discussion Identity; Self-Expression through Possessions Exercise; 10 Identity Descriptors Exercise	Discussion of Meanings of Identity; Identity Encounters Exercise	Mindfulness of Senses Practice	Contemplation of Poem - "The Journey" Authenticity in Identity Discussion
12	Aesthetics	Defining Aesthetics; Focus on Rain Practice; Focus on Jazz Practice; Personal Experiences with Awe & Elevation Exercises	Shawshank Redemption Video; Art-as-Meditation Focus on Coloring Exercise; Art Forms in Our Lives Exercise	Mind-the-Music Practice	Savoring Nature Practice
13	Values	Defining and Discussing Values; Three Wishes Exercise	Personal Values Survey and Profile Exercise; World Citizen Values Exercise	Gratitude Practice	Identifying and Reframing "Should Be" Values
14	Courage	Defining and Discussing Courage; Personal Experiences with Courage Exercise; Peace of Wild Things Poem	What I Learned from 100 Days of Rejection Video; Penn State Bucket List Exercise	Arriving Integrated Practice	Approaching the Tiger Exercise
15	Performance	Defining and Discussing Performance; Michael Jordan Video, Mindsets Exercise	3 Hashtags for Course Student Exercise	Longer Integrated Practice	Teach Us One Thing You Learned Exercise

HDFS108N
Art and Science of Human Flourishing
 Department of Human Development and Family Studies
 College of Health and Human Development
 Penn State, University Park
3 Credits¹

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is the purpose of your life? What is the purpose of your education? What does it mean to not just survive, but to thrive, or flourish? How can your undergraduate years become a greenhouse for flourishing for you – where you gain insight and knowledge, but also learn to be even more creative, caring, resilient, engaged, happy, and part of a community to which you make significant contributions? Are there practices by which you can cultivate what it takes to live a flourishing life?

This course aims to assist you in finding the answers to these questions for yourself, building a sustainable base for flourishing during your undergraduate years and beyond. You will explore scientific, philosophical, and artistic ideas about flourishing, while experimenting with contemplative practices that work directly with your mind, body, emotions, and relationships. Together we will investigate the cultivation of flourishing according to a model with five dimensions understood in terms of fourteen distinct qualities:

1. *Awareness*: plasticity, mindfulness, focus
2. *Wellbeing*: emotion, happiness, resilience
3. *Connection*: interdependence, compassion, diversity
4. *Wisdom*: identity, aesthetics, values
5. *Integration*: courage, performance

Each week of the semester we will explore one of these fourteen qualities to understand its components and dynamics, experiment with cultivating skill and experience in its development, and further explore how those skills can be applied in day-to-day life. You will explore how to work with your own inherent potential for flourishing, in ways that contribute to effective learning, healthy relationships, optimal performance and the discovery of purpose and passion in your studies, career, and life.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course offers an opportunity for you to explore human flourishing through the lens of the world's body of knowledge and in the context of your own life. We have defined flourishing in terms of fourteen distinct qualities and we hope that by the end of the class you will have *built the foundations* for conceptually understanding human flourishing, *engaged* flourishing yourself in an experiential fashion, and *experienced the benefits* of such practical engagement in your own life. By the end of this course, you will be able to:

I. Demonstrate foundational knowledge

- Analyze and describe the relevant concepts and theories in multiple intellectual fields on the nature and cultivation of human flourishing in its individual fourteen qualities and the various extrinsic and intrinsic factors influencing them.
- Recognize the possibilities, value, and relevance of cultivating individual qualities of human

¹ There are no prerequisites for this course. The course fulfills GenED requirements.

flourishing in your own life, friends, community, and institutions.

II. Experience deep engagement

- Familiarize yourself with the basic personal *experiences* relating to individual qualities of human flourishing in order to make personal sense of them, and master individual *practices* for assessing and developing them.

III. Understand real-world applications

- Acquire *skills*, sensibilities, and perspectives relating to individual qualities of human flourishing, which you can *apply* in diverse contexts of your life towards greater flourishing in your personal life, academic performance, and ultimately professional and civil contexts.

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

This course also meets General Education objectives related to (a) integrative thinking and (b) social responsibility and ethical reasoning.

Integrative Thinking Objectives: The course is designed to introduce students to multiple dimensions (foundations, awareness, connection, wisdom, embodiment) and associated themes related to human flourishing across the course of the semester. These dimensions and themes are derived from both psychological / social science and the world's philosophic and religious traditions. Thus, one key objective of the class is to support students in integrating conceptual insights into what constitutes human flourishing from the perspectives of both the sciences and the arts/humanities. In addition, the course is designed to expose students to 3rd person approaches to knowing through content readings and lectures (e.g., conceptual knowledge), 2nd person ways of knowing arising from discussion with instructors and peers around concepts of flourishing (e.g., communal dialogue), and 1st person approaches to knowing through reflection and engagement in contemplative practices like mindfulness and compassion meditation (e.g., personal experience). Thus, a second key objective regarding integration is the coordination of 1st, 2nd and 3rd person ways of knowing about flourishing. Finally, the last weeks of the course focus specifically on the dimension of "Integration" - how students can take what they are learning conceptually, communally, and experientially and begin to form a vision and plan of action for how they can actively and consciously create a life of flourishing that benefits themselves and others simultaneously. In all three of these ways, we aim to cultivate the integrative thinking around (1) art/humanities and science; (2) different ways of knowing; and (3) the topics of the course as a whole.

Social Responsibility and Ethical Reasoning Objectives: The course is focused heavily on issues of social responsibility and ethics insofar as it focuses heavily on the conceptual and experiential explorations of awareness and self-inquiry, and the relationship between personal transformation and social transformation. Specific weeks and topics of the course ask students to reflect on and work to cultivate personal qualities like attention, awareness, and our fundamental interdependence with others; on empathy and compassion for others, and on awareness of one's own values and the skills needed to courageously live those values out in myriad social contexts. Weekly reflective essays on these topics; contemplative training in focus, mindful awareness and compassion for self and others; and a final project in which one envisions a life of flourishing for oneself that also serves the world in important ways are some of the components of the course that will help students realize these social-responsibility and ethical goals.

COURSE PRE-REQUISITES

There are truly no prerequisites for this course. Intellectually, the course will range widely across the sciences, humanities, and the arts, but do so in a way that does not assume any specialized prior knowledge.

We will provide you with key vocabulary at every point to support you in building up a basic knowledge in each area. Experientially, the course will explore a series of practices that are all learned from the ground up. You are ready as long as you bring a willingness to put the time, awareness, and commitment the course requests. If at any point, you struggle with the intellectual or experiential explorations of the course, we urge you to immediately contact us to discuss how to best address those challenges.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND BACKGROUND

Three University Alliance

This course arose as a collaboration between three universities (University of Virginia, University of Wisconsin, Madison, and Penn State) to provide a new form of experiential and scholarly education in the college atmosphere for incoming students. As the emerging inter-disciplinary science and art of human flourishing develops in the world, we saw this as a key time to offer students a unique course to explore what it means to flourish in our short lives on this wonderful planet, and during the short time we spend at college/university. It is founded in a vision of the university as a place that develops the whole person, and not just a place where we are to find a career interest and path. We see that as a critically important goal, and also see students' broader intellectual, social-emotional and ethical development as part of the university's mission. This course is about asking the big questions of ourselves and our lives, in particular, what does it mean to not just survive but to thrive and flourish? The source is unique in its structure, its labs, and in having a research project associated with it.

"Flipped" Classroom Structure

The main class meetings are two 50-minute sessions per week; all enrolled students meet with the course instructors and teaching assistants. The course will use what is called a "flipped" format in that the lectures that would otherwise be delivered in the classroom are instead flipped out into recordings that are reviewed online outside of class. The main class meetings will thus become workshops of highly experiential exercises and exchanges. Any given class may have the following elements: question and answers on any topic, experiential exercises, and reflective dialogs.

Contemplative Labs

The contemplative lab is one 50-minute meeting per week of students in 20 person groups with an instructor and/or a teaching assistant. This lab focuses on group practice and discussion.

COURSE GRADING

The workload for this course will amount to approximately 9 hours a week:

1. Participate in two class sessions: 2 hours
2. Participate in single contemplative lab meeting: 1 hour
3. Watch talks at home: 1 hour
4. Read readings at home: 1 hour
5. Do personal practices at home: 2 hours
6. Do assignments at home: 2 hours

Course Determinants of Grades

1. 16.67% - Attendance and Participation in Classes and Labs
2. 16.67% - Quiz on Lectures and Readings
3. 16.67% - Personal Practice
4. 16.67% - Reflective Journal

5. 16.67% - Four Pause and Reflect Essays
6. 16.67% - Final Exam

1. Attendance and Participation in Classes and Labs

Participation in every class and lab meeting is expected. Participation means showing up and fully engaging in exercises, dialogs, and practices. Attendance will be taken in classes and labs.

Our class revolves around your participation day after day, week after week. By showing up in body and mind for all exercises, dialogs, and practices, you have the opportunity to bring these concepts of human flourishing to life. Without this participation, our class's goals of weaving together intellectual and experiential understanding of these topics will not be possible. For you, the great benefit of fully participating is that you gain the ability to better understand and implement flourishing in your own life. It is also essential that you learn from each other to see the diversity of how these qualities of flourishing show up in different lives and contexts, which is one of the reasons you need to show up in body and mind for every single class meeting to engage with the classroom exercises and dialog with your fellow students.

How to Succeed: Come to every class and lab having reviewed the required materials for that week, and give your full attention and care to the exercises and dialogs.

Grading Method: Your class participation is monitored and factored into grades. Your participation is graded by beginning with 100 points (=A). Approximately 2 points are deducted for each missed class or lab, or a class in which you do not adequately participate (such as not filling in the worksheet fully).

Absences: If you have a serious illness that is resulting in absences, please contact your instructor or teaching assistant. If you have another issue, you can miss two meetings and still get an A. But if you have an institutional commitment that forces you to miss more than 1-2 meetings, please find another class with better times or less focus on class meetings.

2. Lectures, Readings and Weekly Quizzes

Weekly recorded lectures and readings are the primary source of content knowledge for the fourteen qualities of flourishing covered in this course. Students are expected to have studied these carefully prior to the week's first class meeting.

Our class is both an intellectual and personal journey; it is essential you master the scientific and contemplative vocabulary and theories behind each quality of flourishing to understand their individual nature, explanatory power, and value, and be able to utilize that understanding in analytically understanding your own life and the lives of others. Thus, doing the readings and listening to the lectures is critical. Practice without theory will inevitably stagnate or go astray.

Lectures each week explore the quality of flourishing covered that week (e.g. *compassion*) from diverse disciplinary perspectives (e.g., the sciences and arts/humanities):

1. *Science Lecture:* scientific theories and empirical research on topic (e.g., compassion)
2. *Arts and Humanities Perspectives* provide explorations of topic (e.g., compassion) from the world's diverse knowledge base in the arts and humanities

Readings each week also explore the topic from these two perspectives (for a total of 40 pages or less per topic per perspective), to support your exploration and learning of the theory and practice of the quality in

question.

How to Succeed: Watch and read. It is that simple. If you do this each week on schedule, you will naturally build up the necessary vocabulary and comprehension that you will allow you to build up a deep mastery of these materials over the semester which can then be deployed in other classes and contexts.

Grading Method: Each week on the first day of class (usually Mondays), there will be an online quiz with 6 questions which is only available during this time. You will take 14 quizzes; we will drop out your worst grade, so that 13 quizzes will factor into your final grade. You will start with 104 points (=BEYOND A+), and then each question missed (other than the dropped review) will result in the deduction of one point. Thus, even after missing 6 points you will still have an A.

3. Personal Practice and Practice Logs

There are two types of practice for each quality of flourishing each week, which you are required to do for a total of 120 minutes *per* week over at least 5 days. These are recorded in a practice log, with the date, start time and end time, and name of practice(s) done for each practice session. Practice logs are *due each Friday by 12pm Midnight*.

1. Working with Flourishing Quality (e.g., compassion training exercises): formal practices that should be done with complete focus and a formal beginning and end to cultivate the quality of flourishing within the immediate context of your own lives.
2. Taking Flourishing Quality into Everyday Life (e.g., seeing/doing compassion in everyday life): informal simple practices intended to guide you in cultivating the quality of flourishing within the laboratory of their own lives as you walk across campus, talk to friends, shower, and so forth.

Theory and knowledge is great, and application, or practice, is what makes it relevant to your life. These practices are the key to opening up the treasury of flourishing in your life, and in the communities and institutions in which you participate. Understanding takes many forms, and these practices are intended to enable you to develop experiential understanding of these qualities of flourishing in your body, emotions, mind, and relationships, while learning how to enhance them.

How to Succeed: Do the practice day after day, week after week - and come to us if you are having trouble or questions of any type. Personal development and self-awareness is all about regular and sustained practice - there is no magic bullet. Practice, persistence, and patience lead to flourishing!

Grading Method: Your practices are graded by beginning with 100 points (=A). Submit an up-to-date practice log at the end of every week to receive full credit. Your grade is not based upon the quantity or frequency of your practice (although we hope both will increase over the course of the semester) but upon consistent logging of your practice (and/or lack thereof) and submittal of that log every week in Canvas. Keep your log up to date and you will do well. Be honest with yourself and us regarding how much you are able to practice in a given week.

4. Weekly Reflection Journals

Drawing upon the lectures, readings, and your own experiences and life, the journal entries are an opportunity to reflect on the qualities of flourishing to discover and express your own pathway through flourishing. Reflection journals are *due each Friday by 12pm Midnight*. Please submit the following:

- Reflection on Quality (e.g., compassion): The first sentence of each entry should be your own succinct definition of the quality, followed by a paragraph-long description of an incident in your own life or experience of others that you think exemplifies the quality. The rest of the entry should respond to the syllabus's prompt for that topic as it relates to your own experience and observations in relationship to the readings, talks, classroom exercises, and practices. It should be 300-500 words in extent overall.

Our goal for the weekly journals is to enable you to over the course of the semester:

- *Define* the quality in a more conceptual manner (e.g., what is compassion?).
- *Describe* what a quality (e.g., compassion) looks like using examples from personal experience.
- *Discuss* why the quality may be relevant personally/socially, etc.
- *Explain* some of the factors that might impede/cultivate the quality.
- *Apply* your knowledge, by noting, practically speaking, what might be done to cultivate this quality.

How to Succeed: there is no "right" or "wrong" and we won't grade on style - write however you want, but follow the above guidelines, do it on time, and give it sincere effort. Do those things and it will pay off with a deeper sense of what these ideas and qualities mean in relationship to lived life, and increased capacity to articulate the relationship of your own experiences with intellectual ideas and models.

Value: The journal is intended to facilitate you pondering the qualities of flourishing in your life and experience in the past, present, and ultimately future, as well as being to integrate the intellectual theories about those qualities with that first-person experience. By doing this in a written form week after week, it ensures that you are reflecting on each quality in real time and learning how to connect intellectual theory with your own life and experience with a focus on each individual topic. Research shows that cramming information into your mind leads to no long-term learning, while studying and then writing knowledge on a regular basis over a lengthy period of time leads to deep internalization of knowledge in ways that are persistent.

Grading Method: you start with 100 points. Each time you are late a point is deducted, and if it is later than 1 week, an additional point is deducted for each additional week; if an entry is clearly insufficient in length or quality, a point is deducted; if it is so insufficient as to be tantamount to not having done it, you will be asked to redo and points will be taken off instead according to the above schedule for tardy submissions. Submit on time, meet the minimum length, and take the assignment seriously, and you have an A+.

5. Pause and Reflect Essays

At the end of our multiple-week discussions of each of the first four modules (see course schedule above), you are asked to pause and reflect on the qualities of flourishing covered in that modules and compose summary reflections on those qualities in a way that interweaves your understanding of the theories and your own experiences (both in life and the formal practices). Each essay should have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion, and be 700-1000 words long. It is fine to reuse content from your journals. It is not acceptable to simply talk about your own experiences - you must also engage the various theories and vocabulary from the readings and talks. They are *due each Monday by class time on the week after the module is compete*.

Each essay should cover the following points:

- What is the relationship among the three topics of flourishing that are linked together under this module?
- How do these relate to our capacity to flourish or not?

- Provide some examples from your own life and observations, as well as reading and lectures.

How to Succeed: If you have invested yourself in the study of the theories, done the practices, and invested yourself in the journaling, the essays will be a natural extension of that work and writing. However, be careful to make sure that your essay makes sense as a whole and is clear and accurate, as well as has been carefully edited for problems with spelling and grammar.

Value: These written essays are also an exercise in integration of first person life experience and intellectual knowledge, while shifting the focus to regular synthesis that goes beyond individual qualities of flourishing to ponder how affiliated qualities interact and relate to each other. This enables you to develop understanding of flourishing in a more nuanced way, and thus be better poised to see the interaction of diverse elements in your own life as well as in theories.

Grading Method: Each exploration is worth 25 points, for a total of 100 points. These are critically graded for quality in expression and substance, so edit carefully. We are more than happy for you to experiment in style.

6. Final Exam

A final review is offered during the designated final exam period. It covers the theories, vocabulary, and practices cover over the course of the semester through a combination of various types of questions. We recognize that final exams are not popular and particularly not ones that involve significant content that has to be remembered. However, the long-term value is that this is a final opportunity to review the disparate theories and vocabulary you have been studying as a whole to both see interconnections, and hopefully lay the foundation for long term retention of this knowledge that you can use in your other classes and in your life. Studies have shown clearly that knowledge you cultivate regularly over an extended period of time, and then do a final synthetic review of, has the best prospects for persisting in you as knowledge you can use for personal, intellectual, and professional goals.

How to Succeed: The best path to succeed is to stay on top of the weekly assignments: listen to the lectures, do the readings, and the weekly journal assignments each week, come to class and engage with the practices and discussions. You should only need a basic review at the end to prepare for the final exam.

Grading Method: The exam is worth 100 points and points are taken off for mistakes.

FINAL GRADE DETERMINATION

Your total points out of the total possible 600 points will be divided by 6, and then a letter grade will be assigned based upon the following scale:

- 94-100: A
- 90-93: A-
- 87-89: B+
- 84-86: B
- 80-83: B-
- 74-79: C+
- 70-73: C
- 60-69: D
- 59-0: F