



MACS325

Happiness: investigating its causes and conditions

Autumn session 2009

8 credit points, prerequisite 36 credit points at 200 level

SUBJECT OUTLINE

Subject coordinators

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Email: bmartin@uow.edu.au

Web <http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/sts/bmartin/>

Office hours

Tuesdays 10:00–12:00; Thursdays 14:00–15:00

Office hours

Mondays 20.30-22.30; Wednesdays 18.30-20.30

Assessment Summary

	Assessment	Format	Length	Due Date	Weighting
1	Attendance			Weeks 1-13	<i>See Notes</i>
2	Participation	Weekly oral reports plus participation	30-60 seconds	Reports weeks 1-11	10%
3	Oral report	Presentation	12 minutes maximum	Allocated in class	15%
4	Activity	Class time organised by student group	<i>See notes</i>	Allocated in class	25%
5	Consultancy	Report	2500 words or equivalent	2pm Wednesday 3 June	50%

Class Contact Details

Class times and locations are available from the University's website. Please note that class times on the timetable are provisional.

Students should have enrolled in classes via SOLS before week 1.

Those with timetabling difficulties should Chris or Brian.

Subject description

We will explore what is known about the causes and conditions for happiness as individuals, in interpersonal relationships and as society. The question “how can we be happy?” will be approached in an interdisciplinary fashion through various perspectives including cultural studies and cultural angles on psychology, economics and sociology. Students will develop skills and concepts for being informed, responsible independent learners who can solve problems, communicate effectively and use appropriate research methods of observation and questioning (interviews and surveys).

Learning outcomes; graduate qualities

1. Think critically about happiness and its connections with personal, social, political and economic issues (independent learners).
 2. Develop understanding of a range of views about happiness and their relation to theories (informed).
 3. Learn ways to reflect on and think creatively about happiness and related concepts (independent learners; problem solvers).
 4. Develop research skills, including interviewing (effective communicators; problem solvers).
 5. Develop and improve oral presentation and writing skills (effective communicators; responsible).

Informed

Have a sound knowledge of an area of a disciplinary study or interdisciplinary area of study offered by the Faculty of Arts through its majors with an understanding of its current issues, their contexts and developments over time.

Independent Learners

Engage with new ideas and ways of thinking, enquiry and critical analysis of issues and research through a sequence of subjects that culminates in the ability to reflect broadly on their field of study. Acknowledge the work and ideas of others.

Problem Solvers

Take on challenges and apply the relevant skills required to respond effectively to the central issues raised. Be flexible, thorough and innovative and aim for high standards.



Effective Communicators

Effective Communicators
Articulate ideas and convey them effectively using a variety of modes. Engage collaboratively with people in different settings. Recognise how culture can shape communication.

Responsible

Responsive
Understand how decisions can affect others, and make ethically informed choices. Appreciate and respect diversity. Act with integrity as part of local, national, regional, global and professional communities.

The Faculty Graduate Qualities can be found on the following website:
<http://www.uow.edu.au/arts/current/FacultyGraduateQualities/index.html>

Subject schedule

Week	Week beginning	
1	2 March	Introductions; name game; the bell; Seligman questionnaire; what is happiness?
2	9 March	1-minute reports; model oral report; model classroom activity; plan for consultancy
3	16 March	1-minute reports; oral reports; meditation/mindfulness; short reading
4	23 March	1-minute reports; oral reports; classroom activity; short reading; brainstorm; preparation for consultancy
5	30 March	1-minute reports; oral reports; classroom activity; short reading
6	6 April	1-minute reports; oral reports; classroom activity; short reading
	13 April	mid session recess
7	20 April	1-minute reports; oral reports; classroom activity; short reading
8	27 April	1-minute reports; oral reports; classroom activity; preparation for consultancy; short reading
9	4 May	1-minute reports; oral reports; classroom activity; preparation for consultancy; short reading
10	11 May	1-minute reports; oral reports; classroom activity; preparation for consultancy; short reading
11	18 May	1-minute reports; classroom activity; preparation for consultancy; short reading
12	25 May	preparation for consultancy; short reading
13	1 June	review
14	8 June	study recess
15	15 June	exam period

What happens in class

- Activities organised by Chris/Brian (weeks 1-13)
- Weekly 1-minute reports (weeks 1-11)
- Oral reports (weeks 3-10)
- Classroom activities (weeks 4-11)
- Preparation for the consultancy (weeks 1-7)
- Feedback on doing the consultancy (weeks 8-12)

Text book

Martin E. P. Seligman, *Authentic happiness* (Sydney: Random House Australia, 2002).

Themes

For your oral report, classroom activity and consultancy, you should use ideas from research in any of the following areas. You're welcome to propose other areas; check with Brian or Chris.

advertising
altruism
architecture
cognition
communication technology
community
competition
diet
economics
ethics
fashion
forgiveness
friendship
globalisation
gratitude
health take place
love
medicine
mindfulness
money
music
optimism
psychology
relationships
religion
spirituality
sport
television
work

Requirements and assessment tasks

Subject Requirements

- You are required to attempt every component of assessment to pass the subject.
- Extensions for written work can be granted only when applications for special consideration are made through SOLS.
- Penalty for late submission of work: 10 marks per day out of 100.
- The subject coordinators reserve the right to hold an additional oral examination for any piece of assessment.

Attendance

Attendance is required. If your attendance is less than 80%, you may be required to submit an additional assessment task to pass the subject.

Classes are omitted from the calculation when a special consideration request is made through SOLS justifying absence on medical or compassionate grounds. If you are present for only part of a class, that counts as fractional attendance.

Why is attendance so important? Because MACS325 classes are interactive. Part of your learning is from other students, and other students learn from you.

Task 1 Participation

Due date Weeks 1-11

Weighting 10%

Length 30-60 seconds each week

For each of the weeks 1 to 11, you are expected to read a section of the textbook, make some relevant observations about the causes and conditions of happiness in everyday life and give a verbal report about this to the class lasting 30 to 60 seconds. Describe your observations and how they relate to the week's reading.

An important skill for you to learn and practise is to speak to the others in the class without reading. Jot down a few notes to remind you about key points, or go entirely from memory. If you get nervous, practise by yourself one or more times. One minute goes by very quickly!

You will be marked only on whether you give a report, *not* on how well you do it. So go ahead and experiment with different forms of delivery: for

example, be dramatic, or draw everyone in by starting with intriguing details.

Your participation mark starts at 10 out of 10. You lose one mark for every week you do not give a one-minute report or participate in the class.

Weekly topics for 1-minute reports

1. *Signature strengths*

Read Seligman, "Your signature strengths," pp. 134-161, and calculate your score for each of the 24 signature strengths. Alternatively, go to <http://www.authentichappiness.com> and fill out the online signature strength survey.

2. *Positive feeling and positive character:* Seligman, chapter 1, pp. 3-16, including the survey on p. 15

3. *Why be happy?* Seligman, chapter 3, pp. 30-44, including the scale on p. 33

4. *Can you make yourself happier?* Seligman, chapter 4, pp. 45-61, including the scale on p. 46

5. *Satisfaction about the past:* Seligman, chapter 5, pp. 62-82, including the surveys on pp. 71 and 78

6. *Optimism about the future:* Seligman, chapter 6 pg 83-101 including the survey on pp. 84-87

7. *Happiness in the present:* Seligman, chapter 7, pp. 102-121

8. *Renewing your strength and virtue:* Seligman, chapter 8, pp. 125-133

9. *Work and personal satisfaction:* Seligman, chapter 10, pp. 165-184

10. *Love:* Seligman, chapter 11, pp. 185-207

11. *Meaning and purpose:* Seligman, chapter 14, pp. 250-260

For any given week you can, if you prefer, use a different reading than Seligman that covers similar issues.

Task 2

Oral report on observation and theory

Due dates

In class in weeks 3 to 10.

The week for your oral report will be decided in class.

Weighting 15%

Length 7 to 12 minutes

You give an oral report on observations you've made and recorded about the causes and conditions of happiness in everyday life. You must link your observations to happiness writings and to research on a theme in the list.

You should discuss at least three research sources, typically books or articles. One or two of these should be about research on happiness. One or two should be about one of the themes. Tell about the research and, if relevant, about the authors and their perspectives. Say how the research relates to your observations.

Timing: The maximum time per person per oral report is 12 minutes. You may be cut off at that time. Practise beforehand: you'll find 12 minutes is quite short!

We plan to have a computer in the room. If you're using a slide show, bring it to class on a flash drive or CD and arrive early so it can be put on the computer. (Sending it to yourself on email is not convenient.) If you're using YouTube or some other Internet source, bring the address on your flash drive or know exactly how to get to it quickly. Embedded web links in slide shows may or may not work, so don't rely on them — have a back-up method. Your help in this will make the classes go much more smoothly.

Checklist

- I've displayed, distributed and/or described an observation or set of observations.
- I've discussed three sources about happiness and my chosen theme.
- I'm prepared to talk to the class. I won't read text from my notes or my slides.
- I've organised my material to finish in less than 12 minutes.
- I've checked that computer and projection equipment will work without a delay.

Oral reports will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)

- Quality and relevance of observations
- Understanding of research in the areas of happiness and the theme chosen
- Application of research to the observations
- Organisation and expression.

Task 3

Classroom activity

Due dates

In class in weeks 4 to 11.

The week for your activity will be decided in class.

Weighting 25%

Students will form teams of 2-4 and present a learning activity within a tutorial that is designed to engage other students in one of the core skills that research tells us is pertinent to the development and maintenance of happiness.

Maximum time allocated for each classroom activity will be

- individual, 24 minutes
- team of two, 44 minutes
- team of three, 60 minutes
- team of four, 72 minutes

It's okay to take less than this amount of time.

Class activities will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)

- understanding of case material
- understanding of theory
- audience involvement
- aids (handouts, slides, posters, videos, costumes, props, music)

This is an activity, *not a presentation*.

Here are some examples of activities that are effectively organised to involve the audience and use many aids (the third and fourth assessment criteria). You show understanding of the case study and theory (the first two assessment criteria) by the content and organisation of materials used.

Sample 1

Students are put into groups of three according to the team's prearranged plan. The groups deal with a series of tasks: studying a handout and filling in a questionnaire; drawing a diagram; watching a two-minute video clip and writing a critic's summary comment; playing a game; and preparing questions for the other groups. At the end, each student answers a single probing question; the team picks up the answers.

Sample 2

Each student, on entering the classroom, is given an animal token and a questionnaire. After filling out the questionnaire and depositing it in a box, students go to one of four groups according to their token. Each group spends 12 minutes at each of four stations around the room. At each station, one of the team members runs an activity: a video followed by discussion, a game, a set of handouts followed by a quiz, and construction of a diagram. At the end, students fill out the same questionnaire in order to see how much they learned.

Sample 3

Each student is given a workbook, with text, pictures, cut-outs and quizzes. Slides are automatically projected on the screen; posters are on the walls; music is playing; a pile of cards is on a table. Some of the workbook exercises require use of information or clues from the slides, posters, songs and cards. Team members are available to answer individual queries. At the end, the team collects the pages of the workbooks filled out by students, leaving the main content of the workbooks for students to take away.

Guidelines

- *Don't talk to the class about the case study or theory.*

Why not? Because it's low on audience involvement, and it's inefficient.

Instead, use a handout with the same information. People can read text in a fraction of the time it takes to say it out loud.

- *Don't rely on verbal instructions.*

Why not? Because half the class won't be listening and some people won't hear them correctly.

Instead, provide written instructions in a handout, on a poster or a slide show. Only give instructions verbally, if necessary, to explain or reinforce written instructions.

- *Don't show a video for more than a minute or two at a time.*

Why not? Because it's low on audience involvement. Viewers quickly switch into passive entertainment mode.

Instead have a quiz or other exercise to fill out during the video, or show a minute's worth of the video, have a break for discussion, then show another minute, etc.

- *Don't tell the class to "get into groups."*

Why not? Because self-selected groups may not be the size or composition that you want.

Instead, decide in advance the size of groups and —

possibly — who you want in each one. You can allocate people to groups by some arbitrary criterion, such as birthdays, height or random numbers. Or you can allocate people according to their views about specific issues, such as about war. Or you can select the groups in advance, to get a desired mix of personality types. For example, to foster balanced participation, you might put the most talkative students in a group together, and the quietest ones.

A few specific points:

- Identify sources for any quotes, for example in handouts.

• Plan every detail. For example, if you want responses to a question, you might display the instruction "Everyone write down a response on a slip of paper" rather than "What do you think?" Planning details will make your workshop more engaging.

• Practise in advance to iron out difficulties and check that you can stay within the allotted time. Keeping to time can be a big challenge.

We'll assume you want each member of your group to have the same mark. Most groups do. But if not, here's an option. Suppose the mark for a group of three is 67. That's a total of 201 marks (3×67). You can allocate them in some non-equal way (e.g., 64, 64 and 73). Working in groups is a vital skill; don't avoid it because of the marks issue.

Task 4

Happiness consultancy

Due date: 2pm Wednesday 3 June

Weighting: 50%

Length: 2500 words

Submission

If you are in Chris's class, submit your report at Arts Central. Put your name on the cover sheet only.

If you are in Brian's class, put your report under the door to his office (19.2016). No cover sheet is needed.

On the report, put your student number but not your name. In the reflections, use a pseudonym for yourself and any other MACS325 student.

You work in a team of 2 to 4 students to carry out an assessment of the causes and conditions of happiness in a group. You make contact with an appropriate group, negotiate the conditions of your study, carry out an assessment of an identified issue of happiness within the group and make recommendations as to how happiness of the group's members could be increased. You write up a report for the group members and reflections on the project's methods and findings.

The group can be a business, government body, sports club, activist group, church, professional society or any other association of people who regularly interact. Do not use any group affiliated with the university. You must not make contact with vulnerable or “at risk” groups as per the research protocol below.

You should find out information about the group from various sources, including documents, observations and interviews. Each team should carry out the equivalent of 8 interviews of 15 minutes each.

You should write a report for interviewees and/or managers of the group. The report should be written as a group and be 1000 words. In it you should make recommendations as to how the group can increase happiness in one or two ways. It's usually better not to try to cover too many issues.

You should also write reflections on the research, including how you chose the group, how you obtained information, any difficulties encountered, any surprises, and what you learned that is relevant to your own lives. The reflections should be 1500 words, written and submitted as an individual task.

You should use findings from both happiness research and from one theme area. Include sources from both these areas.

Interview protocol

You are to talk only with competent adults who are not in a vulnerable category (including being unemployed, in prison, Aboriginal or under the age of consent). You may only make contact with adults able to give informed consent who might be broadly understood as “like you.”

In making contact with a group it is best to identify a person in authority. If you do not already know them you can phone to talk or make an appointment or write letters or e-mail. You are advised not to make unannounced visits to people you do not know. You will require a letter of consent from this person to conduct the research.

Participant information sheets, interview consent forms and sample questions will be provided, and ethical and practical aspects of interviewing covered in class. You must obtain signed consent forms from any person that you interview and you must hand in any recording of an interview to Chris or Brian at the end of the subject.

Consultancy reports will be assessed using these criteria (roughly equally)

- Understanding of research on happiness and the chosen theme area
- Understanding of the group and the causes and conditions of happiness in it
- Use of sources (about happiness, theme area and the group) — including interviews and observations
- Expression and appearance

UNHAPPY RADICAL



HAPPY RADICAL



Submission of Assignments

- Students must keep a copy of all work/assignments handed in.
- Essays sent by fax or e-mail will not be accepted unless agreed between the subject coordinator and student.

Return of Assignments

- The University's Code of Practice Teaching and Assessment requires that at least one assignment be assessed and returned before Week 9 of session.
- Brian will hold essays submitted to him until the end of week 3 of the following session. Assignments submitted to Chris at the end of session will be held at Arts Central (19.1050) until the end of week 3 of the following session. After this time, assignments will be disposed of. Please take your student card with you when collecting your work.

Academic Consideration

Students who miss a deadline, or fall below the minimum attendance requirements, or otherwise find their work in the subject affected by illness or serious misadventure should lodge a formal request for Academic Consideration via SOLS. The procedures for lodging a request are available at:

[http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/st udentacademicconsiderationpolicy.pdf](http://www.uow.edu.au/about/policy/studentacademicconsiderationpolicy.pdf)

Penalty for late submission of work

Late work (i.e. any work required for assessment that has not been given an extension) will be subject to a 10% penalty per day. The penalty is applied to the original mark awarded. Work submitted after seven calendar days will not be marked and will be given a mark of 0.

Plagiarism

Students are responsible for submitting original work for assessment, without plagiarising or cheating, abiding by the University's policy on plagiarism as set out in the University Handbook under Universities Policy Directory and in Faculty Handbooks and subject guides. Plagiarism has led to the expulsion from the University.

For full details about the University's plagiarism policy see [www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserules /plagiarism.html](http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserules/plagiarism.html)

Faculty Handbook

The Faculty issues a Handbook free of charge to all students enrolled in an Arts Subject. It contains information on the structure of the Faculty's degrees, the majors offered, the more important University policies and other matters that may affect your time as a student in the Faculty.

Grievance Procedures

The term "academic grievance" refers to a complaint by a student concerning an act, omission or decision by a member of staff that adversely affects a student's academic experience. Some examples of a grievance include the following: failure to assess work in accordance with specified criteria; administrative error in the collating or recording of marks; failure to address requests for Academic Consideration in accordance with the Academic Consideration Policy; failure of a member of staff to adhere to General Course Rules or requirements of a relevant Code of Practice; failure to adhere to Faculty assessment or examination requirements.

The University and the Faculty of Arts have formal Student Academic Grievance Policies that are to be used *only after informal approaches* have been made to the relevant staff member. If the informal approach has an unsatisfactory outcome the student should follow the procedure outlined in the Faculty of Arts Student Grievance Form.

This form can be downloaded from the UOW website or a copy may be obtained from the Arts Central, Level 1, Building 19, Room 1050. For more information [http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/cour serules/studacgrievpol.html](http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserules/studacgrievpol.html)

Support Services

Both the Faculty and the University offer support services to its undergraduates.

Arts Central

Building 19 Room 1050
phone: 02 4221 5328
fax: 02 4221 5341
Mon – Fri: 8.30am to 5.30pm
Email: fac_arts@uow.edu.au
www.uow.edu.au/arts
For staff contact details, timetable, assignment cover sheets, handbooks, assignment submission, administrative forms and general information

Sub Dean

to make an appointment to see the Sub Dean, contact the Sub Dean's Assistant at Arts Central or phone: 02 4221 4838

Course Readers and Textbooks

UniShop – Building 11
phone: 02 4221 8050
fax: 02 4221 8055
unishop.uow.edu.au

Student Administration

Student Central – Building 17
phone: 02 4221 3927
fax: 02 4221 4322
e-mail: studenq@uow.edu.au
www.uow.edu.au/student/centre
www.uow.edu.au/student/sols

Woolyungah Indigenous Centre –

Building 30
phone: 02 4221 3776
fax: 02 4221 4244
www.uow.edu.au/aec

University Library, including the Faculty Librarian

Building 16
phone: 02 4221 3548
library.uow.edu.au

Student Equity and Diversity Liaison Officer

Viv McIlroy - Room 19.1075
Phone: 4221 3635
The Student Equity & Diversity Liaison officer provides support when dealing with:
- student welfare, both domestic & international;
- EdStart (grants for financially disadvantaged students);
- Liaison for the Disability program, Counselling, Learning Development, Careers etc.
- Developing social networks for students within faculties.

Learning Assistance

Learning Resource Centre – 19.G102
phone: 02 4221 3977
www.uow.edu.au/student/services/l1

Careers Service – Building 11

phone: 02 4221 3325
www.uow.edu.au/careers

Counselling Service – Building 11 (level 3)

phone: 02 4221 3445
www.uow.edu.au/student/services/cs