

CP6202C Applied Positive Psychology
Dr. Donald A. Russell, Ed.D.
Associate Professor of Counselling Psychology
Contact don.russell@prov.ca
Office 3A34

Providence Theological Seminary
Winter, 2011
April 25-29, 2011

SYLLABUS

Course Description

An introduction to “Positive Psychology,” the empirical study of what permits people to flourish. The course will focus on positive traits or virtues, positive subjective experience and positive institutions from a psychological/theological perspective. Topics covered will include character strengths, love, wisdom, happiness, life satisfaction and meaning, resiliency and positive organizational dynamics. This course will first concern itself with the basics of positive psychology and then address exploratory, and empirically-validated psychotherapeutic and organizational interventions informed by this perspective.

Course Texts

Snyder, R., Lopez, S., Pedrotti, J. (Eds.) (2010). *Positive Psychology: The Scientific and Practical Explorations of Human Strengths*. New York: Sage.

Linley, P. A., & Joseph, S. (Eds.) (2004). *Positive psychology in practice*. New York: Wiley.

Course Requirements

Engagement Requirement

Students are required to be present for class sessions and engage with classroom discussions and exercises. As Peterson notes (2006) studying Positive Psychology is not a spectator sport – it is best when it is participatory. (Value for this requirement -10%)

Paper 1 - An articulation of Positive Psychology

Prepare a brief, 5-6 page response to the (popular) assertion that positive psychology is merely the power of positive thinking: Norman Vincent Peale repackaged for the new millennium. The paper should articulate a) what its goals are, b) how the movement self-consciously sets itself apart from the old, and why it can be acknowledged as a legitimate science. Be sure to support with citations from the literature. (Due date May 29, 2011) (Value for this requirement - 30%)

Paper 2 - Theological/Psychological Integration of Positive Psychology

Prepare a 6 -8 paper establishing and articulating an integration of Christian theology and spirituality with Positive Psychology. Where there is no meaningful integration identify that: where there is incompatibility between the two – acknowledge that. This paper

should be an evaluation of the ‘integratability’ of the two and a working paper on what that integration looks like in your current understanding. (Due date May 29, 2011) (Value for this requirement -30%)

Paper 3 – Case Study in Applying Positive Study

Prepare a 6-8 page paper that offers a conceptualization and treatment plan from a positive psychology perspective for a case study distributed in class. Group practise exercises will be done in class to prepare the student to capably complete this assignment. (Due date May 29, 2011) (Value for this requirement -30%)

Resources

- Aspinwall, L. Staudinger, U. (Eds.) (2002). *A Psychology of Human Strengths*. Washington: APA Press.
- Bryant, F. Veroff, J. (2006). *Savoring: A New Model of Positive Experience*. New York: Erlbaum.
- Diener, E., Biswas-Diener, R. (2008). *Happiness: Unlocking the Mysteries of Psychological Wealth*. New York: Wiley-Backwell.
- Fredrickson, B. (2009). *Positivity*. New York: Crown.
- Gilbert, D. (2007). *Stumbling on Happiness*. New York: Vintage.
- Haidt, J. (2006). *The Happiness Hypothesis*. New York: Basic Books.
- Joseph, S., Linley, L. (2006). *Positive Therapy*. Routledge.
- Keyes, C., Haidt, J. (Eds.) (2003). *Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-Lived*. Washington: APA Press.
- Myers, D. (1993). *Pursuit of Happiness*. New York: Harper.
- Peterson, C., & Seligman, M. E. P. (2004). *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. New York: Oxford University Press/Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Seligman, M. (2002). *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. New York: Simon & Shuster.
- _____ (1990). *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life*. New York: Pocket Books.
- Seligman, M. (2007). *The Optimistic Child*. New York: Mariner Books.
- Ong, A., Van Dulmen, M. (Eds.). (2006) *Oxford Handbook of Methods in Positive Psychology (Series in Positive Psychology)*. Washington: Oxford University Press.
- Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. (Eds.) (2001). *Handbook of positive psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Snyder, C Lopez, S. (eds.). *The Oxford handbook of positive psychology*. Washington: Oxford University Press.
- Snyder, C. Lopez, S. (2006). *Positive Psychology: The Scientific and Practical Explorations of Human Strengths*. Sage Pub.

Positive Psychology Center at UPenn Webpage:

www.positivepsychology.org

Positive Organizational Studies Webpage:
<http://www.bus.umich.edu/Positive/>