**PHIL2330: 'Happiness, Well-being, and the Good Life'**

**Carleton University**

**Summer 2023 (July 04- August 16)**

**Mondays and Wednesdays 11:35AM - 14:25PM**

**Tory Building, Room 342**

In-person, Hy-Flex (online and in-person): students are welcome to attend classes in person, or to tune in over zoom to attend the class synchronously. The classes will **not** be recorded or be made available in any way asynchronously.

**Instructor: Dr. Kate Lawson**

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**Office Hours: online by appointment**

**TA: Balthazar Stengelin**

**Contact:** [**balthazarstengelin@cmail.carleton.ca**](mailto:balthazarstengelin@cmail.carleton.ca)

**Office Hours: online by appointment**

*We will both do our best to respond to your emails within 48 hours Monday-Friday. We will not respond to emails on evenings and weekends, so please be sure to ask your questions with ample time.*

Course Description:

In this course we will consider what it means to be happy and how we can live a rich and fulfilling life. The pursuit of happiness is a quest that has been taken by myriad thinkers across time and in all walks of life. In North America, we tend to think of happiness as a shallow concept that we are required to exhibit in public, while making small talk, or which can be fulfilled by material acquisitions. This type of happiness attached to appearances, pleasure-seeking and capitalism is never truly fulfilled because it always requires more, and it often necessitates turning away from life’s uncomfortable realities. Philosophy, as the exploration of knowledge and the love of wisdom, seems to be at odds with this shallow version of happiness. The philosophical exploration of happiness is a question of living a meaningful life on a much deeper level. This means investigating the realities of our world and still finding meaning, depth, and a deep sense of inner fulfillment. But can one truly be happy without some sort of pleasure? We will turn to the history of “western” philosophy and examine the question of human mortality as it affects us politically, individually, and environmentally. Questions of friendship, solitude, and social justice will also be investigated as they pertain to human happiness. Additionally, the course will look to Indigenous, Buddhist, and Hindu perspectives on living a good life. Ultimately, students will have a number of perspectives, questions, and possibilities for living an examined life that is also one filled with meaning, purpose, and happiness.

Course Preclusions: None

Prerequisite(s): None

Learning Outcomes:

• to understand and be able to reconstruct the arguments in favour of different concepts of happiness, well-being, and the good life in the history of philosophy

• to be able to critically analyse, relate and juxtapose different approaches to the good life

• to be able to defend, in consideration of a broad range of philosophical arguments, your own personal approach to how to live a good life

**Course readings and texts:**

All required readings for this course will be made available to you online through Ares. However, our final indigenous readings are only available to read through the library one person at a time due to copyright. For this reason, you may consider purchasing this one text *Restoring the Kinship Worldview*, or perhaps borrowing it earlier and saving the pdf version to read at a later date. It is available through a number of online sites including amazon. For more, please see: <https://www.northatlanticbooks.com/shop/restoring-the-kinship-worldview/>

If you want to purchase a physical copy of any of the books in which our reading selections are found, the corresponding editions can be easily found and purchased online. *This is not required*.

*Please do the day’s reading before attending class. This will help you to understand the lecture and engage more thoroughly with the material during our class discussions.*

**Readings:**

Viktor E. Frankl, *Man’s Search for Meaning*, “The case for a Tragic Optimism,” trans. Ilse Lasch (Bostin, MA: Beacon Press, 2006), 135-154.

Plato, “The Apology” in Plato’s *Apology, Crito* and *Phaedrus*, trans. Henry Cary (Andrews UK Ltd., 2012), pp. 10-45.

Montaigne, Michel de. “That to study philosophy is to learn to die,” and “On Solitude,” in *The Complete Essays*, trans. & ed. MA Screech (New York: Penguin, 2003), pp. 89-108 and 266-278.

Jan Zwicky, *Learning to Die: Wisdom in the Age of Climate Crisis*, “A Ship from Delos” (University of Regina Press, 2019), pp. 41-71.

Aristotle, Books II and VIII of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross, (Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 142-162.

Ricard, Matthieu. “A Buddhist View of Happiness,” *Journal of Law and Religion*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (February 2014), pp. 14-29.

Vivekananda, *The Yogas and Other Works*, “Realization,” ed. Swami Nikhilananda (New York: Ramakrishna-Vivekanada Center, 1996), pp. 259-270.

Hannah Arendt, "Action and 'The Pursuit of Happiness,'” in *Thinking without a Bannister,* ed. Jerome Kohn (New York: Penguin, 2006), pp.201-219.

Bell hooks, Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations, “Chapter 20: Love as the practice of Freedom,” (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 289-299.

Wahinkpe Topa and Darcia Narvaez, eds. *Restoring the Kinship Worldview* (Berkley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2022):

      Robin Wall Kimmerer, "All earth entities are Sentient," pp. 89-96

      Martin Brokenleg, "Generosity as a way of life," pp. 147-156

      Winona Laduke, "Laws of nature as highest rules for living," pp. 183-190

      Greg Cajete, "Becoming Fully human," pp. 191-200

      Ilarion Merculieff, "An Emphasis on Heart Wisdom," pp. 267-275

*These page numbers are for the physical copy of the book in this edition. If the online book has different page numbers please instead refer to the chapter title and read that chapter.*

**Evaluation**

**Weekly Content quizzes:** 7 quizzes worth 5% each for a total of **35%**

Quizzes will be made available to take on Brightspace each Friday. The first five quizzes will all be due by August 16 and the final two are due on August 25.

**Worksheet on Platonic Happiness:** Thesis and arguments in support of a paper on Plato, Montaigne, and Zwicky, **5%**

Workshop in class on July 17

Due Monday July 24 via Brightspace submission.

**Reflection on Friendship and solitude**: A brief paper that sets out Aristotle’s argument for friendship and Montaigne’s argument for solitude and finally offers your own argument, **10%**

250 – 300 words, times new roman, 12-point font, see rubric on Brightspace for details.

Due Monday July 31via Brightspace.

**Test on Buddhist and Hindu content:** Two short answer, and one long answer on Vivekanada and Ricard, **10%**

Range test on Brightspace available to take any time between Wednesday August 2 and Friday August 4.

**Test on Revolution and Happiness** Two short answer, and one long answer on Arendt and hooks, **10%**

Range test on Brightspace available to take any time between Monday August 7 and Wednesday August 9.

**Paper on Platonic Happiness**: **30%**

Due August 25 through Brightspace submission. This final essay will be a “take home exam.”

Workshop in class August 9

**Class Schedule**

**Wednesday, July 05**

First half:

Introduction to the course: Expectations, grades, syllabus, and what it means to seek happiness in this life.

Second Half:

Because this is the first class, we probably will only take the first half of class. I will be available for questions after class.

Reading:

Frankl, 135-154 (Trigger warning: suicide, depression).

Quiz One: Frankl and Man’s Search for Meaning

**Monday, July 10**

First Half:

Setting the scene, context, and implications of Plato, Socrates, and the history of “western” philosophy.

Second Half:

The Good Life according to Plato

Readings:

Socrates’ defense, Plato, *The Apology*, sections 1-16, pp.10-26

Socrates’ view of the good life Plato, *The Apology*, sections 16-22, pp. 27-35

**Wednesday, July 12**

First Half:

Socrates’ living well as an acceptance of death

Second Half:

Montaigne as a philosopher and his use of Socrates’ acceptance of death

Reading:

Death as a blessing Plato, *The Apology*, sections 23-33, pp. 35-45Michel de Montaigne “That to study philosophy is to learn to die,” pp.89-108.

Quiz Two: Socrates and Plato

**Monday, July 17**

First half:

Zwicky’s expansion of Socrates’’ philosophy to consider how to live well in the face of climate change

Second Half:

Workshop on Platonic Happiness worksheet

I will go over the expectations and purpose of the worksheet and answer questions from students in person as well as online via zoom.

Reading:

Jan Zwicky, Learning to Die: Wisdom in the Age of Climate Crisis, “A Ship from Delos,” pp.41-71.

**Wednesday, July 19**

First half:

Setting the scene, context, and implications of Aristotle, and the history of “western” philosophy.

Second Half:

Aristotle on friendship as essential to the good life.

Reading:

Friendship as essential to the good life Aristotle, Book VIII of the Nicomachean Ethics, pp. 142-162

Quiz Three: Montaigne and Zwicky on Plato

**Monday, July 24**

First Half:

Montaigne on Solitude as imperative for the good life.

Second Half:

Classroom discussion/ debate: Is it better to have friendship or solitude?

The discussion/ debate will take place in person with the opportunity for students online to participate via zoom chat or audio/ visual.

Reading:

Michel de Montaigne, “On Solitude.”

**Worksheet on Platonic Happiness Due**: Thesis and arguments in support of a paper on Plato, Montaigne, and Zwicky via Brightspace submission.

**Wednesday, July 26**

First half:

Buddhism and Happiness

Second Half:

Hinduism and Happiness

Reading:

Ricard, Matthieu. “A Buddhist View of Happiness,” *Journal of Law and Religion*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (February 2014), pp. 14-29.

Vivekanada, “Realization,” pp. 259-270.

Quiz Four: Aristotle and Montaigne on Friendship and Solitude

**Monday, July 31**

First Half:

Classroom discussion/ debate: Buddhist versus Hindu happiness

The discussion/ debate will take place in person with the opportunity for students online to participate via zoom chat or audio/ visual.

Second Half:

Arendt on Happiness

Reading:

Hannah Arendt, "Action and 'The Pursuit of Happiness,'” pp.201-219.

**Reflection on Aristotle and Montaigne due.**

**Wednesday, August 2**

First Half:

bell hooks, love, and social justice

Second Half:

Classroom discussion/ debate: Is change/ revolution a help or a hindrance to happiness?

The discussion/ debate will take place in person with the opportunity for students online to participate via zoom chat or audio/ visual.

Reading:

bell hooks, “Love as the practice of Freedom,” pp. 289-299.

**Test on Vivekananda and Ricard** (Available to do on Brightspace any time between now and Friday).

**Monday, August 7**- no class- Long weekend!

**Test on Arendt and hooks**. (Available on Brightspace any time between now and Wednesday).

**Wednesday, August 9**

First Half:

Workshop on how to write a philosophy paper.

Second half:

Group discussions and editing of final papers.

During the workshop, I will explain the expectations of the final paper and give students an opportunity to work on their paper as well as ask questions both virtually and in person.

Quiz Five: Arendt and hooks on happiness and the political

**Monday, August 14**

First Half:

Introduction to indigenous philosophy and the good life.

Connection to the earth as a path to the good life.

Second half:

Generosity and the laws of nature.

Readings:

Robin Wall Kimmerer, "All earth entities are Sentient," pp. 89-96

Martin Brokenleg, "Generosity as a way of life," pp. 147-156

Winona Laduke, "Laws of nature as highest rules for living," pp. 183-190

Quiz Six on Kimmerer, Brokenleg, and Laduke

**Wednesday, August 16**

First half:

What it means to be human and to think with one’s heart.

Second half:

Closing discussion of thinkers/ ideas brought up in the course.

Readings:

Greg Cajete, "Becoming Fully human," pp. 191-200

Ilarion Merculieff, "An Emphasis on Heart Wisdom," pp. 267-275

Quiz Seven on Cajete and Merculieff

**August 16- August 25**

**Final paper due. No extensions beyond this date are possible.**

**Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Summer 2023)**

**Assignments:**

Please follow your professor’s instructions on how assignments will be handled electronically.

**Evaluation:**

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

**Deferrals for Term Work:**

If students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, they should contact their course instructor no later than *three working days* of the due date. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of the term. Term work cannot be deferred by the Registrar.

**Deferrals for Final Exams:**

Students are expected to be available for the duration of a course including the examination period. Occasionally, students encounter circumstances beyond their control where they may not be able to write a final examination or submit a take-home examination. Examples of this would be a serious illness or the death of a family member. If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a take-home examination by the due date, you may apply for a deferral no later than *three working days* after the original due date (as per the University Regulations in [Section 4.3 of the Undergraduate Calendar](https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/examinations/#deferred-final-exams)). Visit the [Registrar’s Office](https://carleton.ca/registrar/) for further information.

**Plagiarism:**

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of ‘plagiarism’ as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. ([Section 10.1 of the Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations](https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/academic-integrity-and-offenses-of-conduct/#academic-integrity-policy))

**Academic Accommodation:**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term:

* *Pregnancy or religious obligation*: Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the [Equity Services website](http://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf).
* *Academic accommodations for students with disabilities:* If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, visit the [Paul Menton Centre website](http://carleton.ca/pmc).
* *Survivors of Sexual Violence:* As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton’s Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](http://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)
* *Accommodation for* [*Student Activities*](https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf)*:* Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist.

**Important Dates:**

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| May 4 Classes start.  May 10 Last day for registration and course changes for early summer courses.  May 17Last day for registration and course changes for full summer courses.  May 17 Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from early summer courses. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.  May 22 Statutory holiday, University closed.  May 31 Last day to withdraw from full summer courses with a full fee adjustment. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.  June 9 Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade for early summer courses before the official examination period.  June 16 Last day for early summer classes.  Classes follow a Monday schedule.  Last day for handing in term work, subject to any earlier course deadline.  June 17-18 No classes or examinations take place.  June 19-25 Final examinations.  June 25 Take-home examinations for early summer courses are due. | July 3 Statutory holiday, University closed.  July 4 Late summer courses begin and full summer courses resume.  July 10 Last day for registration and course changes for late summer courses.  July 17 Last day to withdraw from late summer courses with a full fee adjustment. Withdrawals after this date will result in a permanent notation of WDN on the official transcript.  Aug. 1 Last day for academic withdrawal from full and late summer courses.  Aug. 7 Civic holiday, University closed.  Aug. 9 Last day for summative tests or examinations, or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade for late summer and full summer courses before the official examination period.  Aug. 16 Last day of late and full summer term classes.  Classes follow a Monday schedule. Last day for handing in term work, subject to any earlier course deadline.  Aug. 17-18 No classes or examinations take place.  Aug. 19-25 Final examinations.  Aug. 25 Take-home examinations for late or full summer courses are due. |
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**Addresses:**

Department of Philosophy:

[www.carleton.ca/philosophy](http://www.carleton.ca/philosophy)

520-2110

Registrar’s Office:

[www.carleton.ca/registrar](http://www.carleton.ca/registrar)

520-3500

Academic Advising Centre:

[www.carleton.ca/academicadvising](http://www.carleton.ca/academicadvising)

520-7850

Writing Services:

<http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>

520-3822

MacOdrum Library

<http://www.library.carleton.ca/>

520-2735