

WEBSITE TEMPLATE

Course	5208 F
Instructor	John Zelenski
Term	Fall 2026
Email Address	John.zelenski@carleton.ca
Office Location	A525 LA
Office Hours	TBD

COURSE DESCRIPTION/INSTRUCTORS STATEMENT

The positive psychology movement has helped restore balance to mainstream psychological science that has often focused on pathology and undesirable facets of human nature (e.g., mental illness, cognitive errors, traumatic experience, prejudice, aggression). Most people are happy most of the time; human cognition usually produces correct or adaptive responses; resilience is common, not exceptional. To better understand *typical* experience and functioning, we must understand strengths, pleasurable states, accomplishment, pro-social behaviour, and mental health. This course will survey research and theory on these topics, cutting across traditional sub-disciplines such as personality, social, developmental, cognitive, and health psychology. Although the focus of this class will be psychological research, there will be some opportunity for personal reflection and application.

The course is structured as a graduate seminar where it will be important for students to read assigned material ahead of our class meetings and be prepared to discuss them (i.e., suggest implications and applications, integrate with other findings, raise critical questions, etc.).

EVALUATION

This is a seminar class where active participation will be important.

Evaluation will be based on active engagement, completion of assigned readings and small assignments, and a larger capstone project/report.

TEXT

Most readings will be primary source documents (journal articles, chapters).