

Psychological Fitness (PSYC 461-004)

Fall 2012, Section 004. 3:00 - 4:15 pm TR in Robinson A249

Professor: Jerome Short, Ph.D.

Office: David King Hall 2019

Phone: 703-993-1368

Office Hours: 1:45 - 2:45 Tuesdays & Thursdays

Webpage: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~jshort> E-Mail: jshort@gmu.edu

Welcome! This course will introduce you to the theory and practice of psychological health promotion. You will have the opportunity to practice multiple psychological exercises to enhance your psychological health. I expect you to attend class regularly and to complete all reading assignments before each class. I will use class time for lectures, discussions, videos, and class demonstrations of psychological exercises.

*Last day to add course: September 4 *Last day to drop course: September 28

Requirements.

Two Exams. Your exams are worth 100 points each. The exams are 80% multiple choice (40 questions worth 2 points each) and 20% short answer questions (4 questions worth from 4 to 6 points each) based on classroom activities and the readings. The final exam is not cumulative.

Psychological Exercise Project. This project is worth 100 points and you will write a report in the form of a single-participant scientific study. I will give you a sample format that explains how to do each section. The report should include Introduction, Method, Results, and Discussion sections with a minimum of three references from psychology journals. Your report can range from 7 to 12 pages. I will provide measures to assess you twice. In between, you will implement and log at least 5 psychological exercises to help improve your psychological fitness.

Creative Project. This project is worth 100 points. You have a lot of options to carry out this project. The project must focus on some aspect of psychological fitness and could include a booklet for a group that could benefit from what you learn, a website, an instructional video, a TED lecture <http://www.ted.com>, an application for a smartphone, developing a series of new psychological exercises, a traditional research paper (7 to 12 pages and minimum of 10 references), or other ideas.

Missed Exam. You can make-up a missed exam if you have a note from a physician that you could not attend the exam. The professor will consider other reasons for missing an exam and will decide whether or not to allow the student to make-up the exam. Make-up exams may have a different format from the original exam.

Extra Credit. You can earn up to 8 points of extra credit that is added onto your point total for the class. There are two ways to earn these points. First, you can participate as a volunteer for three hours in psychology department research (2 points per hour). Alternatively, you can write a psychology journal article summary and critique on a content area covered by your book, or about a human service experience that is four typed pages (2 points per page).

Honor Code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work. Information about Honor Code policies is available at <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>

Academic Accommodations. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Official Communications via GMU E-mail: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Technology. Course readings and information will be available in Blackboard.

Grading. I will base your final grade on your point total as defined below.

A+ = 388 - 400 (97% or more) A = 372 - 387 (93 - 96%) A- = 360 - 371 (90 - 92%)
B+ = 348 - 359 (87 - 89%) B = 332 - 347 (83 - 86%) B- = 320 - 331 (80 - 82%)
C+ = 308 - 319 (77 - 79%) C = 292 - 307 (73 - 76%) C- = 280 - 291 (70 - 72%)
D = 240 - 279 (60 - 69%) F = 000 - 239 (below 60%).

Course Topics, Assignments, and Exam Dates.

8/28 **Psychological Fitness** Compton, W.C. (2005). Interventions for enhanced well-being (pp. 175-195). *Introduction to positive psychology*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

8/30 Short, J.L. (2012). Psychological fitness for older adults: A pilot intervention. *Seniors Housing & Care Journal*, 20(1), 71-84.

Kashdan, T. B., & Rottenberg, J. (2010). Psychological flexibility as a fundamental aspect of health. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 30, 865-878.

9/4 * Complete measures for time 1 for Psychological Exercise Project *

Seligman, M.E.P., Steen, T.A., Park, N., & Peterson, C. (2005). Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. *American Psychologist*, 60(5), 410-421.

9/6 Walsh, R. (2011). Lifestyle and mental health. *American Psychologist*, 66(7), 579-592.

Seligman, M.E.P., & Fowler, R.D. (2011). Comprehensive soldier fitness and the future of psychology. *American Psychologist*, 66(1), 82-86. Eidelson, R. Pilisuk, M., & Soldz, S. (2011). The dark side of comprehensive soldier fitness. *American Psychologist*, 66(7), 643-644.

9/11 **Healthy Thinking** Carver, C.S., & Connor-Smith, J. (2010). Personality and coping. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 61, 679-704.

9/13 Carver, C.S., Scheier, M.F., & Segerstrom, S.C. (2010). Optimism. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 30, 879-889.

9/18 Meevissen, Y.M.C., Peters, M.L., & Alberts, H.J.E.M. (2011). Become more optimistic by imagining a best possible self: Effects of a two week intervention. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 42, 371-378.

9/20 Wood, A.M., Froh, J.J., & Geraghty, A.W.A. (2010). Gratitude and well-being: A review and theoretical integration. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 30, 890-905.

9/25 Sedlmeier, P., Eberth, J., Schwarz, M., Zimmermann, D., Haarig, F., Jaeger, S., Kunze, S. (2012). The psychological effects of meditation: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*. Advance online publication, 34 pages.

9/27 **Healthy Identity** Markus, H.R., & Kitayama, S. (2010). Cultures and selves: A cycle of mutual constitution. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5(4), 420-430.

10/2 * Complete measures for time 2 for Psychological Exercise Project *

Plaut, V.C., Markus, H.R., & Lachman, M.E. (2002). Place matters: Consensual features and regional variation in American well-being and self. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(1), 160-184.

10/4 McKnight, P.E., & Kashdan, T.B. (2009). Purpose in life as a system that creates and sustains health and well-being: An integrative, testable theory. *Review of General Psychology*, 13, 242-251.

10/9 * No class * (Students attend Monday classes)

10/11 **Moral Health** Schulman, M. (2002). How we become moral: The sources of moral motivation. In C.R. Snyder & S.J. Lopez (editors): *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 499-512). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

10/16 ** Psychological Exercise Project due ** Park, N., Peterson, C., & Seligman, M.E.P. (2004). Strengths of character and well-being. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 23(5), 603-619.

10/18 Pargament, K.I., & Sweeney, P.J. (2011). Building spiritual fitness in the army. *American Psychologist*, 66(1), 58-64.

10/23 ** Exam 1 **

10/25 **Healthy Behaviors** Hofmann, W., Vohs, K.D., & Baumeister, R.F. (2012). What people desire, feel conflicted about, and try to resist in everyday life. *Psychological Science*, 23(6), 582-588.

10/30 Reynolds, E. K., MacPherson, L., Tull, M. T., Baruch, D. E., & Lejuez, C. W. (2011). Integration of the brief Behavioral Activation Treatment for Depression (BATD) into a college orientation program: Depression and alcohol outcomes. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 1-10.

11/1 Brick, C.A., Seely, D.L., & Palermo, T.M. (2010). Association between sleep hygiene and sleep quality in medical students. *Behavioral Sleep Medicine*, 8(2), 113-121.

11/6 Renner, B., Sproesser, G., Strohbach, S., & Schupp, H.T. (2012). Why we eat what we eat. The Eating Motivation Survey (TEMS). *Appetite*, 59(1), 117-128.

11/8 **Emotional Health** Catalino, L.I., & Fredrickson, B.L. (2011). A Tuesday in the life of a flourisher: The role of positive emotional reactivity in optimal mental health. *Emotion*, 11(4), 938-950.

11/13 Quoidbach, J., Berry, E.V., Hansenne, M., & Mikolajczak, M. (2010). Positive emotion regulation and well-being: Comparing the impact of eight savoring and dampening strategies. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 49, 368-373.

11/15 Algoe, S.B., & Haidt, J. (2009). Witnessing excellence in action: the 'other-praising' emotions of elevation, gratitude, and admiration. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 4(2), 105-127.

Algoe, S.B., & Fredrickson, B.L. (2011). Emotional fitness and the movement of affective science from lab to field. *American Psychologist*, 66(1), 35-42.

11/20 **Healthy Relationships** Gable, S.L., & Impett, E.A. (2012). Approach and avoidance motives and close relationships. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 6(1), 95-108

11/22 * Thanksgiving Holiday *

11/27 Cacioppo, J.T., Reis, H.T., & Zautra, A.J. (2011). Social resilience: The value of social fitness with an application to the military. *American Psychologist*, 66(1), 43-51.

11/29 ** Creative Project Due ** Gottman, J.M., Gottman, J.S., & Atkins, C.L. (2011). The comprehensive soldier fitness program: Family skills component. *American Psychologist*, 66(1), 35-42.

12/4 **Sexual Health** Stephenson, K.R., Ahrhold, T.K., & Meston, C.M. (2011). The association between sexual motives and sexual satisfaction: Gender differences and categorical comparisons. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 40(3), 607-618.

Bancroft, J., Long, J.S., & McCabe, J. (2011). Sexual well-being: A comparison of U.S. black and white women in heterosexual relationships. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 40(4), 725-740.

12/6 Lewis, M.A., Granato, H., Blayney, J.A., Lostutter, T.W., & Kilmer, J.R. (2011). Predictors of hooking up sexual behaviors and emotional reactions among U.S. college students. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, published online 11 pages.

12/13 ** Exam 2 ** (Thursday, 1:30 – 4:15)