Happiness and Well-Being (PHIL 3433.29600)
Brian Kim
Email: brian.kim@okstate.edu
Office Hours: Online (by appointment)

Topic
What is happiness? Is the goal of life to be happy? Does everyone strive to be happy? What is the relationship between a happy life and a good life? The course aims to connect our philosophical questions about happiness to empirical questions about happiness. After all, philosophical questions about happiness and well-being are often closely related to psychological, biological, and economic questions about happiness and well-being. And in recent years, there has been a boom of empirical research on happiness. For example, how do we live happy lives? What type of people are happy? How are wealth and happiness related? Does happiness depends upon our genetic makeup? Can we measure a person’s happiness? Can we compare the happiness of individuals, groups, countries? How do we evaluate our own happiness and the happiness of others? The hope is that by considering these empirical questions we will be able to gain insight into the philosophical questions we started out with.

Course Materials
All the readings will be provided on the course website.

Requirements
Written Responses (25%) There will be an online forum for discussion where you will be asked to regularly submit comments and responses.

Quizzes (30%) There will be short weekly quizzes that are meant to keep you on track with the course.

Two Exams (20%) 10% each

Written Assignments (25%) The written assignments will be expository. The first of these will be an exposition of the empirical work that we will discuss (12.5%). The second will be an exposition and application of the philosophical work that we will discuss (12.5%).

NB: Your scores for each component of the grade are weighted according to the percentages here. If you don’t know how to calculate a weighted grade, please ask.
Topics and Schedule

The official course schedule will be posted on the course website. There will be three parts to the course. The first part will cover the science of happiness and the readings will be posted online. The second part will cover the philosophy of happiness and the readings will come from the textbook. And the final part will be more exploratory where we consider topics such as aging, death, and the absurd.

Class Policies

• No late written responses: Don’t ask as there will be no exceptions.

• No late quizzes: Each weekly quiz will have a deadline (i.e. completion time). If you do not complete the exam in that time, you will not receive any credit.

• Make-up exams: The only circumstance under which a make-up work will be accepted is with some official excuse (e.g. doctor’s note, note from academic advisor, etc.).

• Email Policy: I usually set aside a time in the late afternoon (before 5pm) each weekday to reply to emails. If you email me by mid-afternoon then I will typically reply the same day, otherwise, I will reply the next day. Also, if you ask me a question whose answer can be found either on the syllabus or on the class website, then you will not receive an answer. So if that’s the case, then just check the syllabus or the class website for the answer.

Grading Policy

• You should keep track of your own grades, but I will do my best to provide you an accurate and update record of your grades. This shall be available on the course website.

• No Individual Extra Credit: Fairness demands that every student has the same opportunities. Therefore, I will not provide any extra credit on an individual basis.

Academic Honesty

Oklahoma State University is committed to the maintenance of the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct of its members. This level of ethical behavior and integrity will be maintained in this course. Participating in a behavior that violates academic integrity (e.g., unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, multiple submissions, cheating on examinations, fabricating information, helping another person cheat, unauthorized advance access to examinations, altering or destroying the work of others, and fraudulently altering academic records) will result in your being sanctioned. Violations may subject you to disciplinary action including the following: receiving a failing grade on an assignment, examination or course, receiving a notation of a violation of academic integrity on your transcript (F!), and being suspended from the University. You have the right to appeal the charge. Contact the Office of Academic Affairs, 101 Whitehurst, 405-744-5627, academicintegrity.okstate.edu.