

# IND-1318A: Art & Science of Happiness for Teachers

## Course Syllabus

- **Instructor: Dr. Maryam Torbati**
- **Number of Credits/Units: 3 Semester Credits/Units**
- **Format: Online Self-Paced Course**

### Course Description:

We always question “What is happiness, how can we best pursue it, and why should we?” As a result of A BIG RESEARCH STUDY of these questions and related questions, Harvard University now offers the course "Philosophy of Happiness" and according to the syllabus, the course is being taught with the goal of "examining the concept of human happiness and its application in everyday living as discussed since antiquity by philosophers, psychologists, writers, spiritual leaders, and many others."

When we ask “why?” research tells us we should believe in the importance of happiness, because Happiness can transform individuals’ learning. Happiness lives in us by empowering and inspiring us to live from a place of gratitude, authenticity, and joy. These impacts make giant ripples: When people feel happy, the world becomes a better place and learning becomes easier.

For this reason, we’re serious about teaching and inspiring more people/teachers to find out more about the happiness factor in learning. This course is geared for teachers, and their students.

Did you know that happy people are healthier too?

Everyone wants to be happy, or at least we all think we do. But what is happiness? Why do advertisements, pharmaceutical companies, doctors, parents, and teachers all think they know the big answer? We know it when we feel it, and certainly when we don't. We want to maximize it for ourselves and for those we care about. For many people, it is the ultimate aim in life that motivates everything they do. Yet despite our familiarity with the concept, happiness is still difficult to define, hard to measure, and even more troublesome to explain or predict. This course fronts up to this challenge by exploring the scientific evidence, methods, and models that can be used to investigate happiness and its relation to learning

and memory. The course will begin by introducing the major problems of happiness including the personal problems we face in optimizing it in everyday life, the philosophical problem of how to define happiness, and the scientific problems faced by attempts to quantify, model, and explain it. We will be exploring and interrogating recent work in the current field of psychology often referred to as “happiness studies/happiness factor,” beginning with Daniel Gilbert’s Stumbling on Happiness and Happiness Advantage by Shawn Achor. The course will include the relation to learning in a wide variety of texts, with an emphasis placed on looking at scientific studies and newspaper articles alongside literature (both contemporary and canonical).

### **Course Objectives:**

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- View the world and peacebuilding from a Happiness standpoint.
- Make connections to the types of Happiness
- Apply the knowledge and skills they have already mastered to their classroom
- Analyze the intricacies of cross-cultural perspective on Happiness.
- Apply learning techniques that can be used with children to develop Happiness within the classroom.
- Assess the value of Happiness and analyze the effort to welcome happiness to every concept.
- Utilize the research behind Happiness.
- Practice skills that encourages a positive point of view of Happiness.
- Review and analyze strategies that support a Happiness education.
- Review the pedagogical approaches to Happiness.
- Prepare activities that promote Happiness.
- Review Happiness biases.
- Explain effective Art of Happiness techniques that you can use immediately.
- Identify habits of diverse classrooms and how they work step by step.
- Identify major benefits of employing the Art of Happiness.

- Explore Happiness approaches to behavioral, cognitive, affective, social and ecological theory and practice.
- Define “Happiness” in many perspectives.
- Identify techniques and strategies associated with traditional and contemporary models of Happiness.
- Organize the classroom environment to maximize Happiness instruction.
- Explain concepts that bring about positive interaction
- Specify classroom conditions that promote students’ Happiness.
- Discuss methods of discipline, motivation, and general classroom climate that are required to accommodate students’ Happiness.
- Analyze a given classroom situation and describe and justify the Happiness strategy or strategies most likely to be effective in maintaining an effective classroom environment.
- Identify possible causes of unhappiness.
- Identify ways that technology can be used to assist a teacher in becoming more effective in creating happiness in learning communities.
- Describe how this can help ELD and Special Ed students.
- Summarize the importance of the Art of Happiness in the classroom.
- Align all of these to Common Core.

### **Areas Addressed:**

- A. Introduction to global Happiness
- B. Understanding multiculturalism and Happiness
- C. Observing cultural differences and responding to these differences
- D. Developing tools for combating pessimism
- E. Celebrating cultural similarities and differences
- F. Championing the case for Happiness

### **Required Textbook:**

[The Happiness Advantage: The Seven Principles of Positive Psychology That Fuel Success and Performance at Work](#). by Shawn Achor, ISBN-10: 0307591549, ISBN-13: 978-0307591548.

The course is also based on the following textbooks:

- [The Happiness Project: Or, Why I Spent a Year Trying to Sing in the Morning, Clean My Closets, Fight Right, Read Aristotle, and Generally Have More Fun](#) by [Gretchen Rubin](#) (Mar 1, 2018)
- [The Happiness Factor: How to Be Happy No Matter What](#) by [Kirk Wilkinson](#) (Oct 1, 2017)
- [Stumbling on Happiness](#) by Daniel Gilbert (2016)
- [What Happy People Know: How the New Science of Happiness Can Change Your Life for the Better](#) by [Dan Baker](#) and [Cameron Stauth](#) (Jan 19, 2017)
- [Focused, Unstuck and Back in Action. The Secrets for Happiness and Improving Your Life No Matter What!](#) by [Myra Goldick](#) (Jan 12, 2016)
- [How Happiness Happens](#) by [Max Lucado](#)
- [Peace With God: The Secret of Happiness](#) by [Billy Graham](#)
- [Happiness](#) by [Randy Alcorn](#)
- [Count It All Joy: Discover a Happiness that Circumstances Cannot Change](#) by [David Jeremiah](#)
- [Happiness](#) by [JC Ryle](#)
- [The Richest Man Who Ever Lived: King Solomon's Secrets to Success, Wealth and Happiness](#) by [Steven K. Scott](#)
- [Happiness](#) by [Joan Chittister](#)
- [Switch on Your Brain: The Key to Peak Happiness, Thinking and Health](#) by [Dr. Caroline Leaf](#)
- [The Good Life: What Jesus Teaches about Finding True Happiness](#) by [Derwin Gray](#)
- [Choose Joy: Because Happiness Isn't Enough](#) by [Kay Warren](#)
- [The Only Way to Happiness: The Beatitudes](#) by [John MacArthur](#)

### **CCSS Standards for the Art and Science of Assessment:**

- Describe and define what is Happiness.
- Recognize what unhappiness is before it happens step by step.

- Create learning environments based on respect & mutual kindness toward one another.
- Compare & contrast different types of happiness and unhappiness.
- Development of critical thinking based on the best inclusion strategies.
- Why the classroom has to be a microcosm of global environment.

### **Takeaways – What this course gives you:**

- A focus on how students are thinking and how they can relate to each other and how they are growing as thinkers and learners.
- Insight on ways students develop problem-solving through well happiness thinking
- A vision of building classrooms based on real life problems.
- Information on the expression of multi perspectives learning
- Strategies for going beyond the classroom and text to connect with students' lives.
- Methods of classroom participation in self-reflection and self-evaluation.
- Tools to help teachers shape timely instructional strategies targeted to immediate student needs through diverse point of views.

### **Assignments**

#### **Assignment 1.1 Reflection and Goals**

Reflect on your past experience with the Art of Happiness and describe your future goals for enhancing learning through the Art of Happiness course.

#### **Assignment 1.2 Art of Happiness Book Review and Application**

Required textbook.

## **Assignment 2.1: Readings/Videos to Acquaint You with the Art of Happiness**

This assignment will help you to understand and reflect on what you have read about and viewed and how you can transfer this knowledge to your classroom.

## **Assignment 3.1: Art of Happiness Lesson Pre-Planning**

Produce creative activities for implementing the Art of Happiness in your teaching curriculum.

## **Assignment 4.1 & 4.2: Lesson Plan and Presentation**

Create a detailed, multi-paged, 3-Day lesson plan for applying the Art of Happiness methods in your curriculum.

Create a 10-slide *PowerPoint* project based on the course readings, to present to an audience of peers.

## **Forum Posting**

Share your experience with other course participants