

NCLC 375 – Section 4 Special Topics
“From Crisis to Well-Being”
New Century College / George Mason University / Fairfax, Virginia

Prof. Suzanne Carmack, PhD, MFA, MEd (Suzie)

Term: Fall 2015

Class time, room: Enterprise Hall 275 / Mondays 7:20 – 10 pm

Email: scarmac2@gmu.edu

(email is the best way to reach me)

Office hours: By appointment: phone, in-person or skype

Introduction / Course Overview

How do individuals, communities and cultures foster and promote well-being, especially when faced with stress and/or crisis? This course will broadly examine the multiple objective and subjective approaches to well-being that exist in the literature, and in every day life. Students will learn how these understandings of the objective and subjective perspectives of well-being can then be applied in health, wellness, and welfare contexts for individuals, communities, and cultures. We will specifically examine how stress and/or crisis challenge well-being, and also serve as a catalyst for the creation and/or promotion of well-being. The role that communication plays in transforming stress and crisis into well-being will be emphasized.

Pedagogical Approach

This course will approach the well-being of individuals, communities, and cultures from both objective and subjective perspectives. By combining OWB and SWB perspectives each week, students can better understand the dialectic tension that occurs between evaluations of “other” and “self” with regards to well-being, and why this tension creates both challenges and opportunities in health, wellness and well-being promotion.

Objective well-being (OWB) is traditionally measured by “other”: a party, agency, and/or individual in reference to a person. For example, a person’s safety, security, and welfare (mentally, physically or emotionally) can be measured by a therapist, police officer, county agency, counselor, or public health official.

Subjective Well-Being (SWB). is concerned with ways that “Self” can experience and/or evaluate physical, mental, emotional, social, financial, ethical and/or spiritual dimensions of well-being. Subjective well-being (SWB) examines how an individual personally conceptualizes (thinks about/frames) happiness, health, life satisfaction, meaning and purpose, and how they feel they are doing/feeling/thinking/ being within those key areas.

Required Readings:

Carmack, S. (2015) *Well-Being Ultimatum: A Self-Care Guide for Strategic Healers* – those who live in the leadership, service and healing of others. Body Doctrine Press: Fairfax, VA.

Contemporary Readings in Objective and Subjective Well-Being: See References List

Course Evaluation Matrix

Weekly Readings Aha's and Discussion (Participation)	30
1) Write a weekly reaction to the week's readings (your aha's)	
2) Post on blackboard by Sunday at 5 pm	
3) Respond to one fellow student's post (new student each week)	
4) Come to class ready to discuss the readings (participation expected)	
Wellbeing Narrative Assignment – Meaning and Purpose	15
Discuss what meaning and purpose mean for you, your Ability to handle stress and crisis, and your well-being (both objective and subjective). Mixed methods inquiry is required (qualitative and quantitative)	
Due NLT Nov 9; 5 – 8 pages; 12 pt font; 5 source minimum	
New Media Analysis (Individual Project)	5
1) Find an example of New Media coverage of that week's topic	
2) Post onto blackboard by Sunday at 5 pm	
3) Present to the class and be ready to discuss link/s to readings	
Quizzes	30
Final Group Innovation Project (no more than 4 persons per group)	20
* Topic must be approved no later than Sept 16, 2015	
Option 1: Literature review of dimension of well-being	
Option 2: Research proposal for well-being study	

Course Calendar (Meets Once Per Week)

Aug 31	<u>Stress, Crisis and Well-being: A Biopsychosocial Intro</u> Introductions – to each other and the course material and expectations Homeostasis and why it matters Floyd, Pauley, Hesse, 2010
Sept 7	Labor Day – No class
Sept 14	<u>Intro to Subjective Well-Being (SWB) Part 1: Theory & Rhetoric</u>

RQ: Is SWB Quality of Life, Life Satisfaction, Self-Actualization and/or Preference Hedonism?

Readings (see references list and blackboard)

Diener, Scollon & Napa, 2014

Angner, 2010;

Jayawickreme, Forgeard, & Seligman, 2012

Sept 16

Intro to Subjective Well-Being Part 2: Crisis Context

RQ: How does context influence subjective well-being?

Readings (see references list and blackboard)

Duckworth, Steen, Seligman, 2005

Leikas, & Salmela-Aro, 2014

Backholm, & Björkqvist, 2010

DUE: Quiz 1 + Topic for Group Project

Sept 19

Extra Credit Opportunity – Event at National Mall

Sept 21

Intro to Objective Well-Being (OWB)

RQ: How does well-being influence societal welfare, and vice versa?

Readings (see references list and blackboard)

Conceição & Bandura

Gallup report on Well-being, 2013

New Media Presentations: 1 - 8

Sept 28

Stress, Crisis and Well-Being in Relationships

RQ: How does forgiveness transform stress or crisis into well-being?

Readings (see references list and blackboard)

Menahem & Love, 2013

New Media Presentations: 9 - 16

Oct 5

Stress, Crisis and Well-Being in Chronic Illness

RQ: How can well-being thrive during chronic illness? (explain)

Readings (see references list and blackboard)

Barbic, Bartlett, & Mayo, 2013

Han, 2012

New Media Presentations: 17 - 25

Oct 13 *

* Tuesday

Stress, Crisis and Well-Being at Work

RQ: Why does well-being matter in the workplace?

Readings (see references list and blackboard)

Cole, Daly and Mak, 2009

Bakker, et. al., 2008

Palmer, 2003

DUE: Quiz 2

Oct 19

Personal Inquiry: Mindfulness, Stress and Wellbeing

RQ: How does mindfulness influence intrapersonal communication?
Weinstein, Brown and Ryan, 2009

- Oct 26 **Personal Inquiry: Sense-Making and Well-Being**
RQ: How do you make sense of your well-being?
Carmack, 2015 (Well-Being Ultimatum text)
Koenig, et. al., 2010
- Nov 2 No Class: Instructor at APHA conference
Work independently with groups on Group Presentation
- Nov 9 **Personal Inquiry: Meaning, Purpose and Well-Being**
Discussion of Narratives
DUE: Narrative Assignment
- Nov 16 **Personal Inquiry: Culture and Well-Being**
RQ: How does your sense of culture influence well-being?
Kortenkamp, 2002
Diener and Diener, 2009
DUE: Quiz 3
- Nov 23 Final Group Innovation Projects - Group Presentations
- Nov 30 Final Group Innovation Projects - Group Presentations
- Dec 7 Final Group Innovation Projects - Group Presentations

References / Reading List

- Angner, E. (2010). Subjective well-being. *Journal Of Socio-Economics*, 39(3), 361-368.
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- Backholm, K., & Björkqvist, K. (2010). The effects of exposure to crisis on well-being of journalists: a study of crisis-related factors predicting psychological health in a sample of Finnish journalists. *Media, War & Conflict*, 3(2), 138-151.
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- Bakker, A. B., Schaufeli, W. B., Leiter, M. P., & Taris, T. W. (2008). Work engagement: An emerging concept in occupational health psychology. *Work & Stress*, 22(3), 187-200.
- Barbic, S. P., Bartlett, S. J., & Mayo, N. E. (2013). Emotional Vitality: Concept of Importance for Rehabilitation. *Archives of physical medicine and rehabilitation*, 94(8), 1547-1554.
- Carmack, S. (2014). Making Sense of Well-Being: A Mixed methods applying sense-making theory to explore the role of communication competence and social support in physical, emotional, mental and comprehensive well-being. Dissertation. <http://digilib.gmu.edu/xmlui/handle/1920/8841>
- Cole, K., Daly, A., & Mak, A. (2009). Good for the soul: The relationship between work, wellbeing and psychological capital. *The Journal of Socio-Economics*, 38(3), 464-474.
- Conceição & Romina Bandura. (---) Measuring Subjective Wellbeing: A Summary Review of the Literature. Retrieved January 20, 2015:
http://web.undp.org/developmentstudies/docs/subjective_wellbeing_conceicao_bandura.pdf
- Diener, E., & Scollon, C. N. (2014). The What, Why, When, and How of Teaching the Science of Subjective Well-Being. *Teaching Of Psychology*, 41(2), 175-183.
- Diener, E. and Diener, M. (2009). Cross-Cultural Correlates of Life Satisfaction and Self-Esteem. *Culture and well-being*. Dordrecht, NL: Springer.
- Duckworth, A. L., Steen, T. A., & Seligman, M. P. (2005). Positive psychology in clinical practice. *Annual Review Of Clinical Psychology*, 1629-651.
- Floyd, K., Pauley, P. M., & Hesse, C. (2010). State and trait affectionate communication buffer adults' stress reactions. *Communication monographs*, 77(4), 618-636.
- Gallup (2013). The State of Global Well-Being (report).

- Han, Y. Grief and Work: The Experience of Losing a Close Coworker by Cancer. *Journal of management inquiry*. (07/2012) , 21 (3), p. 288 – 296
- Jayawickreme, E., Forgeard, M. C., & Seligman, M. P. (2012). The engine of well-being. *Review Of General Psychology*, 16(4), 327-342.
- Koenig Kellas, J., Trees, A. R., Schrodtt, P., LeClair-Underberg, C., & Willer, E. K. (2010). Exploring links between well-being and interactional sense-making in married couples' jointly told stories of stress. *Journal of Family Communication*, 10(3), 174-193.
- Kortenkamp, K. (2002). The well-being of children involved with the child welfare system: A national overview.
- Leikas, S. s., & Salmela-Aro, K. (2014). Personality types during transition to young adulthood: How are they related to life situation and well-being?. *Journal Of Adolescence*, 37(5), 753-762.
- Menahem, S., & Love, M. (2013). Forgiveness in psychotherapy: the key to healing. *Journal Of Clinical Psychology*, 69(8), 829-835. doi:10.1002/jclp.22018
- Palmer, S. (2003). Whistle-stop tour of the theory and practice of stress management and prevention: Its possible role in postgraduate health promotion. *Health Education Journal*, 62(2), 133-142.
- Weinstein, N., Brown, K. W., & Ryan, R. M. (2009). A multi-method examination of the effects of mindfulness on stress attribution, coping, and emotional well-being. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 43(3), 374-385.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Integrity

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. Under no circumstances is it permissible to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters relating to academic work. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct, and cases of academic misconduct will be treated seriously, will most likely result in a failing grade on the assignment or in the course, and will be reported to the Mason Honor Committee. Another important aspect of academic integrity includes the free exchange of ideas, and we will often have vigorous discussion in this class. We fully expect that all aspects of this class will be conducted dialogically with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. For more information, visit: <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/> Instructors may use Blackboard SafeAssign on assignment submissions in this course.

Attendance and Participation Policy

You are expected to be in class on time every day and should come to class prepared and ready to participate in class activities and discussion. Attendance and grades are highly correlated in any class, and most in-class assignments cannot be made up if you are not present in class. You are expected to attend class for the entire duration of the semester, including the last day of class and through the reading days and the designated Final Exam period for all your classes.

However, we understand that emergencies, illnesses, the death of loved ones, participation in university sponsored activities (e.g.: debate tournament or basketball game in which you are competing as a university representative), and important religious observances sometimes make it impossible for you to attend class. For these excused absences and emergencies, you are expected to provide written third-party documentation in advance whenever possible. Examples of third-party documentation include a calendar of religious observances, a letter from your coach that specifies the days on which you will need to miss class because you are away from campus for a competition, an obituary or funeral program, or a note from your doctor. In the case of illnesses or emergencies for which it is impossible to notify your instructor in advance, you should contact your instructor as soon as possible via email and then provide documentation as soon as you are able to return to class course overview.

Campus Emergencies, Closures, and Class Cancellations

George Mason University is dedicated to preparing staff and students in the event of an emergency. All students in this class are encouraged to register for Mason Alert, a system that allows university officials to contact the community during an emergency by sending a text message. In addition, we all need to take a minute to view the emergency procedures poster in our classroom. This poster explains what to do in the event of medical emergency, fire, tornado, violence, power outage or other bad event. Please let your instructor know if you would like to discuss these procedures or any information on emergencies. If you are not currently registered for Mason Alert please text MASON to 411911 or visit the website: <https://alert.gmu.edu>

If campus is closed for any reason (power outage, snow, etc.), you should not assume that class activities are cancelled. In the event of a snow day or other campus closure that prevents us from meeting in our normal classroom, we will typically hold class online. You should watch your email for a message from your instructor that will provide instructions about how the class will proceed.

If your instructor is not present at the start of class, please check your emails for updates. If the instructor is not present within 15 minutes after the start of class you are free to dismiss. Check your emails regularly over the next 24 hours for updates.

Campus Resources

There are numerous campus resources that are available to help you succeed in this class, your academic career, your career after you leave GMU, and to manage the many challenges that all of us face at some point. For more details, please see a list of some of these resources online at <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus/>

A few of these include

- University Writing Center
- Learning Services
- Academic Advising and Transfer Center
- Student Health Services

- Counseling and Psychological Services
- University Career Services
- Military Services
- WAVES
- ODIME

You are the person most responsible for your learning experience throughout your time here at George Mason. Your instructor is second in that chain. It is your responsibility to communicate with your instructor about anything that you feel may inhibit your learning experience. If the results of those discussions are unsatisfactory, try again. If your instructor still does not seem to understand the concern, your next level

Classroom Conduct and Professionalism

Professionalism includes coming to class with a positive attitude, engaging in dialogic communication (e.g., respecting others' opinions, not interrupting in class, being respectful to those who are speaking, working together in a spirit of cooperation), and arriving to class on time and prepared for the class session. If you are engaging in any type of inappropriate behavior, you may be asked and required to leave for the remainder of that class session. If all goes well in the class, students tend to share information of an "interpersonal" nature"- it goes with the territory. You wouldn't want something said about you to people all around campus, so keep others' revelations confidential and do not talk about your classmates outside of class, and that goes for all of your classes. Each student is expected to be conscious and respectful of classroom diversity. While students may disagree on many topics, every person should respect the perspective of his/her fellow classmates, instructor, and invited guests.

Bring the course textbook, syllabus, your class notes, any needed assignments and drafts, paper, and a writing utensil with you to each class meeting. Laptop computers, tablets, mobile phones, and other electronic devices may be used before and after class, but please do not use them during class unless you have been asked to use them for a specific class activity. Electronic devices tend to be a distraction for you and for other students, and research even shows that using your mobile phone during class reduces note taking by 62% and reduces subsequent grades on exams by 1 ½ letter grades (Kuznekoff & Titsworth, 2013). Silence all cell phones before class begins and put them away. If you are using your cell phone or laptop during class, I reserve the right to confiscate it until the end of the class period or to ask you to leave the class.

Students who interrupt class discussions by frequently arriving late to class, who constantly interrupt others without thoughtfully listening to their comments, or who ask questions (in class and over email) that would more appropriately be answered by a simple glance at the syllabus (e.g., "When is this due?", "What do we have to read for next class?," "Did we do anything important when I missed class?," etc.) not only reflect poorly upon themselves, they also actively devalue the educational experience of others. Keep a copy of the course syllabus and schedule on hand and refer to them often; we expect you to take responsibility for your learning and to keep track of assignments and deadlines throughout the semester.

Disability Accommodations

If you have a learning or physical difference that may affect your academic work, you will need to furnish appropriate documentation to the Office of Disability Services. You can contact ODS at <http://ods.gmu.edu> 703.993.2474, or stop by SUB I Room 4205. If you qualify for accommodation, the ODS staff will give you a form detailing appropriate accommodations for your instructor. In addition to providing your professors with the appropriate form, please take the initiative to discuss accommodation with them at the beginning of the semester and as needed during the term. Because of the range of learning differences, faculty members need to learn from you the most effective ways to assist you. If you have contacted the Office of Disability Services and are waiting to hear from a counselor, please tell your instructor.

Diversity

George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, course overview philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason's commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes, and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.

Extra Credit

You will have one opportunity for extra credit for this course. Details will be explained in your first class session. The total amount of EC points available are only 3 points for the course. So, if you ended the course with an 82, you would have the ability to earn an additional 3 course points, making your total for the semester an 85.

Grades

Your final grade will be based on the following scale:

A+
97-100 (970-1000)
A
93-96 (930-969)
A-
90-92 (900-929)
B+
87-89 (870-899)
B
83-86 (830-869)
B-
80-82 (800-829)
C+
77-79 (770-799)
C
70-76 (700-769)
D
60-69 (600-699)
F
59 or less (599-0)

Incomplete grades will not be given in this course except in rare cases in which students have completed the course but are prevented from attending the final exam due to a documented serious medical emergency or other excused absence that truly cannot be avoided. In these cases, you should first attempt to reschedule the exam during the final exam period and an Incomplete will only be considered if this is impossible. In these cases, you should contact your instructor immediately to make arrangements. If your instructor has not heard from you by the end of the exam, it is highly likely that you will receive a zero on the exam. Your instructor may defer to the Basic Course Coordinator to determine if an Incomplete is warranted.

Grade Appeals

The time to challenge the merit of an individual assignment is during the semester and within one week after the assignment evaluation is returned. Once the semester has ended and your final semester grade is posted, it is not appropriate to then challenge the merit of individual assignment grades earned during the semester. Students often are not aware of what conditions qualify for a grade change after the completion of a semester. The appeal request must fit into one or more of the following categories:

1. A change from a temporary to a final grade either before or after a University deadline (such as an "Incomplete" to an "A")
2. A computational or technical error (such as an issue with an auto calculation)
3. A recording error (such as a professor recording an "18" instead of an "81").

If you believe there is an error in your final semester grade, you should first approach your instructor with clear and concrete justification and evidence to support your appeal in the category or categories above. If

you're not able to resolve the issue with your instructor then bring your appeal and justification to the Asst. Dean for New Century College. Once the semester has ended, the Dean will not hear appeals regarding the merit of individual assignment grades earned during the semester, as those should be resolved with the instructor during the semester.

Late Work Policy

Unless otherwise announced, all assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day that they are due. Late work will not be accepted except in the case of a documented personal emergency or excused absence, and you will not be allowed to make up assignments or exams unless you have third-party documentation of an excused absence or emergency. It is your responsibility to provide written documentation from a third party of your emergency or university-excused absence. Except in the very rare case of last minute emergencies (e.g.: you were hit by a car as you were walking to class and were taken to the emergency room), you should let your instructor know about any excused absences, provide documentation, and make arrangements for making up any missed work in advance. When the nature of the emergency makes it impossible to make up work in advance, students will be given a deadline to complete missed work, usually within one week of the original deadline. Technology failures, work-related absences, work in other classes, oversleeping, or meetings with other professors are not considered a personal emergency. Even if students have a documented, excused absence, there are some types of work in this class that might be impossible to make up, such as in-class activities, workshops, group work, and individual or group presentations.

Privacy

Student privacy is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and is an essential aspect of any course. Your instructor cannot discuss your educational record with your parents, your friends, or anyone except for you. Because your GMU email is the only one that we can explicitly identify as belonging to you, your instructor will only communicate with you via email using your GMU address, and your instructor will not discuss grades via email. Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See <http://masonlive.gmu.edu> for more information.