

Buffalo Hide Academy December Board Report 2022

Happiness Class

Beginning in November and ending in December, Buffalo Hide Academy facilitated an opportunity for professional development for the staff from all over the district as well as BCC faculty and community members. The class, “The Science of Happiness for Educators,” provided through the University of Montana in Missoula, took place remotely for 2 hours every Tuesday evening for 6 weeks.

The content of the class originally came about as a response to research in suicidality. Scholars found an abundant amount of evidence that specific interventions and activities had a significant statistical effect on reducing suicide rates among individuals.

Students in the class explored the concept and practice of happiness through 7 different aspects: emotional, cognitive, social, physical, spiritual, behavioral, and contextual or environmental. Each week of the class focused on one of these aspects. In addition to a rich slideshow presentation of information, accompanied by thorough and engaging lecture, students had ample time within the class to connect personally with each other around the topic of their own experiences of happiness here in Blackfeet country, which most participants found most meaningful.

The class also brought a focus on happiness in the field of education, tying the content to how we can interact with our students and incorporate aspects into lesson planning and pedagogy. (see appendix for class syllabus as well as examples of assignments for the course)

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT!

Jay LaPierre



Name, age, nicknames, zodiac sign.	Jay Junior LaPierre, current senior at BHA, 18 years old, Capricorn...
Tell us a little about yourself - interests, hobbies, goals...	Jay is thoughtful, super funny, and driven to find solutions to problems he experiences. He's lived in Browning his whole life, but all over town - Death Row, Low Rent, etc. Jay grew up fast with life circumstances being difficult. He learned to understand the world is a little f'ed up, but you just have to keep going.
What's BHA been like for ya?	When Jay made the switch to BHA, it made life a little easier. He enjoys the environment here. He has learned that he's sometimes lonely, but he's also got great bros that mean a lot to him. Jay has learned to speak his mind more than anything.
What are you most proud of in your high school career so far?	He's most proud of continuing to deal with his depression in a way that doesn't harm himself.
What's next in life?	<p>Jay's not really sure what life holds next, he's focused on making a living right now, and he'll take whatever's on the table.</p> <p>We at BHA are super proud of Jay and the fact that he continues to face and overcome his demons. He's cranking through credits right now and on track to graduate this year. He never misses a day of school, and hustles to make it hear and get his work done. Jay also works full time outside of school (Taco John's), so he's a busy man! Congrats Jay. We appreciate you letting us join you for your journey through high school.</p>

Staff Introduction



Your Name: Lacey Salois

Where did you graduate?: Browning high school

Family: I have one daughter Dani Shawn, she is the best blessing ever, and my entire world.

What is your job title: Home School Coordinator

What is your job?: Making the home to school connection. Making sure students have a ride to school if needed, also to appointments and bringing home sick students. Work on attendance making home calls and home visits. Organize the food pantry and help make food bags for students to take home, as well as our school's closet for students. Step in wherever needed.

What is your favorite part of your job: My favorite part about my job is the students I get to work with everyday and our incredible staff at Buffalo Hide Academy

Fun fact about yourself: Brenda Bird taught me how to cook

Appendix

COUN 595: Happiness for Educators (1 credit) SYLLABUS – UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA – Fall/Spring 2022

Department of Counseling

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION: Daniel Salois, Ph.D. – Contact Dan via email (preferred) at Daniel.Salois@mso.umt.edu

OFFICE HOURS: Rather than standard Zoom Office Hours, because this is an online course, office

hours will be by appointment. Just email me and we can set up a Zoom or phone conversation. If

you happen to be in Missoula, we can meet face-to-face as long as we follow University of Montana masking and distancing protocols.

SCHEDULED CLASS MEETINGS: Class meets live on Tuesdays from 4:30pm to 6:20pm, beginning

Tuesday, November 15. Although live/synchronous attendance is recommended, you can also complete the course asynchronously. The final class meeting is on Tuesday, December 20.

COURSE CONTENT AND DESCRIPTION: Educators throughout the U.S. are more stressed and less

appreciated than ever. Unfortunately, educators have limited strategies for directly addressing

their sources of stress (e.g., the pandemic, school district mask policies, obtrusive criticism from

parents, low pay, student distress, etc.). This course, “Happiness for Educators” will provide a platform through which educators can learn about evidence-based happiness interventions they

can use with themselves and with their students. We will describe, discuss, and experience specific

evidence-based happiness strategies. Although evidence-based happiness strategies are not magical techniques that immediately transform lives, they are research-based and shown to make

small and meaningful differences in hope, physical health, and emotional well-being. During the

course, we will define happiness, read happiness articles and book chapters, examine scientific

research studies, conduct research experiments in class, complete happiness lab assignments, and

use published instruments to measure personal happiness and well-being.

COURSE PURPOSE AND LEARNER OBJECTIVES: The purpose of this course is to introduce educators to theories and strategies of positive psychology and the pursuit of happiness. Specific

learner objectives include:

1. Identify evidence-based interventions for pursuing happiness and well-being
2. Adopt science-based critical thinking skills for evaluating positive psychology and “happiness” literature
3. Apply and experience evidence-based happiness interventions
4. Create a lesson plan to deliver at least one evidence-based happiness strategy in the classroom

TEACHING METHODS:

- ☑ Lectures/class demonstrations
- ☑ Class activities and discussions

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- ☑ Examinations and homework assignments
- ☑ Individual happiness consultation meetings

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS: If you are a student with a disability and wish to discuss reasonable accommodations for this course, please contact me privately to discuss the specific

modifications you need. I am happy to do my best to make this course maximally accessible. I may

request that you provide a letter from the Office for Disability Equity (ODE) verifying your accessibility needs, but I am also open to working with you in more informal ways. If you have not

yet contacted Disability Services, located in Lommasson Center 154, please do so to gain clarity

regarding your rights, your disability, and to coordinate modifications. For more information, visit

the ODE website at <https://www.umt.edu/disability/>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the

Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at

<http://www.umt.edu/AS/APSA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

READINGS: We have many specific readings, podcasts, and video viewing assignments. These are listed in this syllabus and will be posted, with links, on Moodle. The goal of these readings, videos, podcasts, and experiential assignments is to immerse you into the evidence-based happiness literature. If you have any issues regarding access to the course readings and resources, please contact Dan for accommodations or alternative assignments.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS: You will complete several small course assignments. The list of assignments will look large, but they’re all small and based on the idea that small changes in everyday behavior add up and contribute to your well-being and lead you toward the philosophic

goal of a “well-lived life.” These assignments are based on empirical research, moral philosophy, positive psychology theory, and psychotherapy theories. One major goal of this class is to use science-based approaches to get you to behave in ways that are likely to increase your personal well-being. We want you to complete your assignments using an experimental mindset; each assignment might (or might not) improve your mood or wellbeing. The orientation to wellness will build itself into habitually healthy physical, psychological, spiritual, social, and emotional ways of being, while also helping you develop critical/scientific thinking skills about popular claims for quick happiness.

The list below is a general list of assignments along with their respective point values. Detailed descriptions of your assignments are included following the SCHEDULE OF CLASS TOPICS.

On Moodle, the class topics and assignments are scheduled week by week (Moodle calls these

“sections”). Specific protocols for the active learning assignments will be on Moodle.

Readings,

podcasts, and video titles and links are included on the SCHEDULE OF CLASS TOPICS in this syllabus

and in the Moodle weekly sections.

1. Initial and Final Happiness Self-Assessments (10 points each; 20 points total)
2. Active Learning Assignments (9 assignments at 5 points each; 45 total points)
3. Class attendance/participation (note: to obtain attendance credit, all participants, including

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asynchronous class participants, need to submit responses to the “questions of the day”; 8 classes, 5 points each; total 40 points)

4. Lesson Plan Development (4-5 pages; 40 points)

5. Three-hour asynchronous video instruction (to complete the required classroom hours for a one credit course, we need 15 instructional hours. Twelve (12) hours come from our weekly class meetings. These three additional hours are needed to meet the required minimum hours (30 points).

CLASS AND LAB ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS AND POLICY: Attendance is expected. We will take

attendance at all classes. If you’re taking the course synchronously (live), you will need to post

responses in the Zoom Chatbox to in-class attendance/participation questions in real time. If you’re taking the course asynchronously by watching video recordings of each class, you will need

to email me with your responses to the in-class questions. Each class is worth 5 points.

Absence Policy: We count all absences as absences, regardless of whether the absences were for legitimate reasons. Our reasoning is that we can't judge which absences should be "excused" and which should count. We also have a responsibility to make sure you're getting the educational experience you've paid for. Therefore, as long as you're not in the virtual room (or view the video and answer the in-class questions), you get an absence. However, we also want to be fair. If you're motivated, you always can earn your absence points back. All you have to do is to contact me, and I'll provide you with a "make-up" assignment (which will usually be to just watch the class video and respond via email to in-class questions).

GRADING PROCEDURES: There are 175 possible points in the course. The course is graded Credit/No Credit. To obtain credit, you will need at least 70% (122) of the 180 points. If you have concerns about grading procedures or require special assistance for any reason, please contact me ASAP so I can address your concerns.

APPROXIMATE SCHEDULE OF CLASS TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS: (The schedule below is an approximation: The actual schedule may vary):

Date In-Class Topics Assignments Due – All due dates are midnight MST or MDT.

Week 1

11/15

**Introduction to
Happiness
Syllabus Review**

HERE'S THE ZOOM LINK FOR ALL LECTURES ALL SEMESTER:

<https://umontana.zoom.us/j/99501020064>

**READ: "Is it possible to become happier: And if so, how?"
(Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2007, pp. 129-145)**

HAPPINESS SELF-ASSESSMENT: (due on 11/19; 10 points)

HOMEWORK 1: Music and Emotion (due 11/20; 5 points)

HOMEWORK 2: Three Good Things (due 11/21; 5 points)

Week 2 Goal-Setting and READ: Time magazine – Fogg on goal-setting:

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11/22 Physical Happiness <https://time.com/5756833/better-control-emotions-better-habits/>

READ: Bono – Chapter 3 – Healthy Mind, Healthy Body
LISTEN: Hidden Brain, December 30, 2019 episode: Creatures of Habit: <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/787160734>
LISTEN: The Practically Perfect Parenting Podcast, Episode: Teens and Depression --
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/teens-depression/id1170841304?i=1000383659996>
WATCH: CBS – Forest Bathing video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W0MEFNyLPag>
WATCH: Three-hour video watching assignment and one-page summary and feedback (due 12/22; 30 points)
HOMEWORK 3: Witness something inspiring (due 11/28; 5 points)
HOMEWORK 4: Three happy places (due 11/29; 5 points)

Week 3
11/29

Cognition I: You are what you think.

READ: Lyubomirsky – Living in the present – pp. 180-204.
READ: Seligman – Positive education: Teaching well-being to young people – pp. 78-97.
WATCH: Steven Hayes on “What are you going to do with difficult thoughts?”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o79_gmO5ppg&list=PLeuYJUTX_ITbdKeEW4FKo_oC64pDxah1c&index=2&t=61s
HOMEWORK 5: Best possible self (due 12/3; 5 points)
HOMEWORK 6: Practice Savoring (due 12/5; 5 points)

Week 4
12/6

Visual Imagery and Cognitive Rehearsal

READ: Lyubomirsky – Practicing gratitude and positive thinking.
READ: John S-F Blog – Positive thinking is NOT rational thinking
HOMEWORK 7: Gratitude (due 12/12; 5 points)

Week 5 Social Connection and Personal

READ: Bono – Chapter 10 – Social Connection

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12/13 Strengths READ: Check out the website and blog

<https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/the-kindness-blog/2943-50-kindness-ideas-for-random-acts-of-kindness-day>

WATCH: Nicholas Christakis on Social Networks

https://www.ted.com/talks/nicholas_christakis_the_hidden_influence_of_social_networks?language=en

HOMEWORK 8: Acts of kindness assignment (due 12/17; 5 points)

HOMEWORK 9: Natural Talent Interviews (due 12/19; 5 points)

Turn in Lesson Plan Assignment: Due 12/19

Week 6

12/20

Managing Bad Days READING: Bono – Chapter 9 – Managing Bad Days

LISTEN: Hidden Brain, October 24, 2022 episode: A better way to worry. <https://hiddenbrain.org/podcast/a-better-way-to-worry/>

READ AND WATCH: Three-step emotional change technique <https://johnsommerflanagan.com/2017/03/12/revisiting-the-3-step-emotional-change-trick-including-a-video-example/>

HAPPINESS SELF-ASSESSMENT: (due on 12/23; 10 points)

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS: Each of the course assignments that count for points are described below.

1. Initial and Final Happiness Self-Assessments (10 points each; 20 points total): During the first and last weeks of class you'll be given a happiness self-assessment guide. We will use these self-assessments to deepen your understanding of yourself and for goal-setting. Your self-assessments are graded pass (10 + 10 points = 20 points) or not pass (0 points). To get your points, you need to turn in at least a one-page self-assessment that includes ideas about what you want and how you might get there.

2. Active Learning Assignments (8 assignments at 5 points each; 40 total points): These are short assignments designed to get you in the habit of incorporating various happiness-related activities into your life. These assignments are graded pass (5 points) or not pass (0 points). To get your five points you need to complete the bare minimum of a thoughtful response.

3. Class attendance (40 points): The class attendance policy is described above.

4. Lesson Plan Development (40 points): This assignment involves you developing a short happiness/positive psychology lesson plan that you “might” use in your classroom setting. You’re not required to implement this lesson, only to create one that’s so good that you might want to implement it or share it with other educators. You will be provided with a lesson plan template.

5. Three-hour asynchronous video instruction: (to complete the required classroom hours for a one credit course, we need 15 instructional hours. Twelve (12) hours come from our weekly class meetings. These three additional hours are needed to meet the required minimum hours. You will write a one-page reflection on content from the video instruction (30 points).

University of Montana Land Acknowledgement

The University of Montana resides on the traditional lands of many Indigenous peoples including

the Selis (Salish), Ksanka (Kootenai), and Qlispe (Kalispel). Many other Indigenous peoples including the Amskapi Pikuni(Blackfeet), Nimiipuu (Nez Perce), Shoshone, Bannock, and Schitsu’umsh (Coeur D’Alene) also relied upon their traditional knowledge and relationships with

this land and this space for survival in the past and today.

Action statement: We acknowledge that educational, health, and legal systems have led to the

direct removal, oppression, and marginalization of Indigenous people throughout Montana and

the nation. The University of Montana strives to improve education, service, and scholarship for all

Indigenous peoples through actions aimed at respecting tribal sovereignty, empowering Indigenous scholars, and creating safe learning environments for all students to live, work, and

learn together in equitable and positive ways.

–This statement was developed with the Leadership of Dr. Annie Belcourt (Blackfeet, Mandan,

Hidatsa, Chippewa), Professor in the School of Community and Public Health Sciences

Happiness has many faces and various definitions. For this class, we're looking at happiness as including

(a) positive emotions, (b) a sense of meaning in your life, and (c) social connections.

As you begin this course, we'd like you to engage in a brief self-reflection on how you're doing in each of



seven different dimensions. For each numbered item below, write a few sentences about how you're

doing in each area. Whatever comes into your mind about (a) how you're doing and (b) how you might

move toward greater happiness would be great. There are no right or wrong answers. Also, for each

numbered item, rate how well you think you're doing on a scale from 0 to 10. Zero means you're totally

struggling and unhappy (with plenty of room to grow) and 10 means you're as happy as can be in that

area. There's no need to write long responses to these questions, but you can if you want to  .

1. Contextual Happiness: How are you feeling about the context of your life and how it contributes

to your happiness? For example, do you have places like home, school, and nature where you can go and feel calm and comfortable? Do you have places that bring up positive emotions in you? Or are you feeling triggered and unhappy in some of the places you spend time.

2. Emotional Happiness: How are you feeling about your emotional life? Are your positive and negative emotions mostly balanced? Or, would you like less negative and more positive emotions in your daily life?

3. Cognitive (Thinking) Happiness: We all spend plenty of time thinking about our families, our community, ourselves, and many other things. How do you feel about your thinking life? Do you feel like you could benefit from more positive thinking, or meditation, or from fewer negative thoughts?

4. Interpersonal (Social) Happiness: How are you feeling about your relationships? Do you feel connected to others in ways that are meaningful, fun, or pleasant? Do you feel there are ways you could grow or thrive more in the area of your social life?

5. Physical Happiness: How are you feeling about your physical self, your health, and your fitness?

This, of course, includes what you're eating (nutrition), how you're sleeping, and whether you're

getting enough physical movement or exercise. Are there ways you can improve in this area? If so, how?

6. Cultural and Spiritual Happiness: Happiness includes your connection with your culture and/or

feelings about spirituality, religion, and a higher power. How are you doing in the cultural and spiritual areas? How might you like to grow in these areas?

7. Behavioral Happiness: When we think of behavioral happiness, that includes the big picture of your daily habits. Are you behaving in ways that consistently contribute in positive ways to your emotional, social, cultural, spiritual, physical lives? If so, what are you doing? If not, what might you do to improve your happiness habits?

Due Sunday, November 20, 2022, 12:00 AM

Homework 1 – Music and Emotion

Music is a trigger for happiness, sadness, other emotions, and life memories. Sometimes our emotional responses to music are all about the music. Other times our emotional responses are about the personal links, associations, or memories the songs trigger. For example, when I listen to “Joy to the World” by Three Dog Night, I’m transported back to positive memories I had playing 9th grade basketball. The song, “Put the Lime in the Coconut” will forever take me back to a car accident that happened with my sister in 1973. It’s not unusual for us to turn to music to help regulate our emotions or to heighten particular feelings.

For this assignment, do the following:

1. Select a song that triggers positive emotions for you.
2. Listen to the song twice in a row and just let the song do its work. You can do this with a friend or by yourself.
3. After you’ve listened twice and let the positive feelings come, respond to the following prompts, and then upload your responses to Homework Assignment 1 on Moodle.
 - a. Write out the name of the song and the musical artist.
 - b. What emotion does the song bring up?
 - c. What’s your best guess (hypothesis) for why the song brings up those particular emotions? (Share the lyrics or the links to life events that make the song emotionally important to you).
 - d. When (in what situations) would you like to use your positive mood song in the future?

Consider this (not required): Mutually share positive emotion songs with someone else and talk back and forth about why the songs

trigger positive emotions for you and your partner. Also consider intentionally listening to positive emotion songs when you're feeling down or feeling the need for some positive emotions. Or maybe you'd prefer using the song(s) to amplify positive feelings when you're already feeling good.