

# PSYC 3400: Positive Education

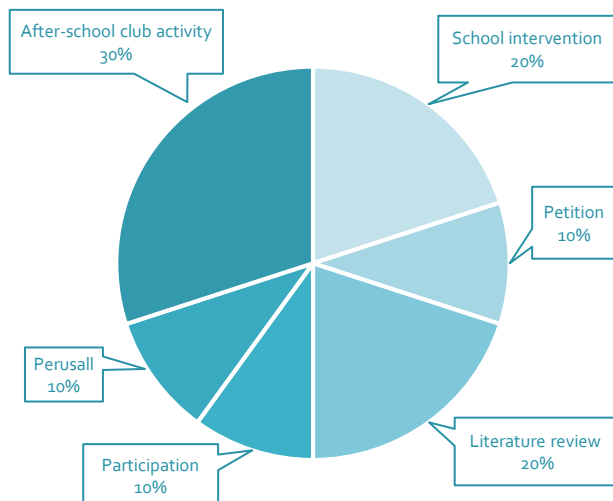
Spring 2024: Mondays 1:45-4:45pm in Perry World House 108

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Office hours: Mondays 10:30am-12:30pm, Thursdays 9am-11am in Levin 123

Calendly link: <https://calendly.com/carolineconnolly/spring-2024-office-hours-appointments>

## ASSESSMENT



## COURSE GOALS

- 1 Understand the contributions of laboratory and field research to the study of positive education
- 2 Develop an understanding of research methodology and apply this knowledge
- 3 Explore the scope and limitations of research when understanding well-being as a scientific area of inquiry
- 4 Apply positive psychology to real life, considering outcomes for the individual and society
- 5 Explore areas of personal interest to ensure the coverage and breadth in areas of positive education
- 6 Think critically about the ability to define and quantify areas of well-being using the scientific method
- 7 Work collaboratively with peers, fostering equity and inclusion in the classroom

## Weekly activities (how to schedule your workload)

Each class is organized according to a specific topic. You are expected to complete assignments associated with any given topic (e.g., reading, activities) prior to your scheduled class (with the exception of in-class group activities). Here is the recommended sequence of activities for each topic:

### PRE-CLASS

Complete reading assignments and individual assignments.

### DURING CLASS

Participate in class, and contribute to group activities. Upload completed group activities at the end of class, if relevant.

### POST-CLASS

Consolidate your understanding of the topic, and engage with group members about larger group projects (after-school club activity, intervention proposal).

## Grading policy

If you would like to dispute a grade, you must do so within one week of receiving this grade.

A+	100-97	B+	89-87	C+	79-77	D+	69-67
A	96-94	B	86-84	C	76-74	D	66-60
A-	93-90	B-	83-80	C-	73-70	F	59-0

## Participation

Students earn credit for in-class participation and completing assigned activities. Participation grades will be posted quarterly.

	Discussion Preparation	Class contribution	Engagement	Synthesis
Excellent	Posting thoughtful and relevant contributions that can be catalysts for discussion	Active participation with thoughtful insight, respectful interaction with peers	Responding critically to others' ideas and active listening	Integrating questions, others' responses, and assigned readings to build thoughtful analysis
Good	Posting contributions that are relevant, but lacking sophistication	Relevant frequent participation, but without critical insight	Adequate engagement, but limited involvement with peers' contributions	Adequate integration of material, but with limited complexity
Mediocre	Tangential or uninspiring contributions posted	Adequate contributions; or dominating discussions with irrelevant points	Inattentive when not speaking, or reiterating what others have already said	Restating others' conclusions rather than drawing your own
Inadequate	Not posting, or poor contributions	Infrequent or anecdotal contributions	Disengaged, or making superficial points	Unoriginality in contributions

## Course Description

This seminar synthesizes research about preserving and promoting well-being amongst students. We will work together to explore the research and applications of positive education through a number of meaningful activities. This includes running an after-school club for 3rd to 5th graders at a local elementary school from January 22-March 18. In addition, you will write a literature review, draft a petition in support of student well-being, and propose an evidence-based intervention.

Class time will largely be used for discussion, after-school club sessions, and group activities. Since two of your four major projects involve engagement with your peers, we will utilize our class time efficiently to this end.

You are expected to read a lot of material outside of class. The majority of your out-of-class time will be spent reading. In a college environment, this isn't surprising. This seminar only meets once weekly, so the assignment load per class is roughly double what it would be for a twice-weekly course.

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes, but unexpected things happen, and planned things happen, too. Students miss class due to illness, family responsibilities, job interviews, etc. If you miss class, reach out if you need help. *Always* get in touch if you miss more than two classes, so I can help you navigate your absence. Your participation is part of your course performance, so it's important to work together through your absence. There is a difference between a student who a) misses a class and continues to engage with the course, and b) disappears from the course for a stretch. I want you to do well in this course. Please keep in touch if you have a unique situation.

## Course Assessment

Assessment	Project type	Deadlines	Percentage
Participation	both	2/12, 3/11, 4/1, 4/22	10%
Engaging with literature via Perusall	individual	continuous	10%
Literature review	individual	2/12, 9am	20%
Petition project	individual	3/11, 9am	10%
After-school club activity	group	2/12, 2/26, 3/11, or 3/18	30%
School intervention proposal	group	4/29, 9am	20%
Total:			100%

**Participation (individual)****10%**

Students earn credit for in-class participation, as well as completing assigned activities. These are designed to stimulate thought and discussion. Most assigned activities occur in class, and some involve groupwork. Occasional activities may be assigned as homework. Participation grades will be assigned to each student at four points during the semester. You will earn a participation grade for each quarter, independent of the other quarters. For example, lack of participation in the first quarter will not harm your participation grade in the second quarter.

**Engaging with the literature via Perusall (individual)****10%**

All readings are posted as assignments in Perusall (accessible via Canvas). You are expected to read and comment upon the assigned reading, as well as respond to your classmates' comments. Engaging with the readings counts towards your grade in this course. Your two lowest Perusall assignment grades will be dropped. (FYI: If you make an 'anonymous' comment in Perusall, your classmates will not see your identity, but I will. Anonymous comments will be recognized as yours, thus counting toward your total contribution for that assignment.)

**Literature review (individual project)****20%**

A literature review summarizes and synthesizes the scholarly research in a specific area. In this case, your specific area will be a meaningful psychology-based issue that affects student education/wellbeing (e.g., social belonging). You are expected to cite at least eight peer-reviewed sources in your literature review. You are welcome to include assigned reading assignments among these. Please supply all sources at the end of your review in APA style. Your literature review should be less than 2,000 words (excluding references).

The content of your literature review will dovetail with your petition (described below). However, your literature review will have a different purpose, as well as scope, compared to your petition. The literature review will be broad, exhaustive, and academic. Your literature review will present the relevant research in this area, with the intention of informing the audience about the psychological research about this issue. This will be an academic paper. This contrasts with your petition where the intention is to implore relevant groups to move forward with a solution to a related problem. The petition will be specific, solution-focused, and brief. For example, you could write a literature review summarizing the psychological research on the benefits of mindfulness in education, and you could write a petition calling for a mandatory mindfulness curriculum across the school district of Philadelphia.

**Petition (individual project)****10%**

You will write a petition about a meaningful psychology-based problem of your choosing that affects student education/wellbeing. For example, you could petition for mandatory teacher-training about inclusive teaching in an entire nation. The problem you choose may impact students locally, nationally, or in another region of the world (you are welcome to focus on West Philly, your hometown, a foreign country, etc.). You must be able to identify a specific problem that requires an evidence-based solution grounded in positive education. Your problem should be relevant to your literature review. If you are struggling to identify a problem, consider circumstances that inhibit some aspect of PERMA in education (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Accomplishment).

We will generally follow the template used by [change.org](https://www.change.org) for this project. This is an effective structure, but your project will require considerable depth (e.g., evidence), as well as citations. You are expected to draw from your

literature review for this. Your literature review prepares you to write your petition, so use it for this purpose. We will discuss and workshop these projects in class, but this will be completed and graded individually. Please see the petition guidelines posted on Canvas. Your petition should be less than 600 words (excluding references).

You are not required to post your petition on [change.org](https://change.org), send it to the intended recipient, nor share it with a larger audience. If you would like to do so, that is your choice.

### **After-school club activity (group project)**

**30%**

Working in a group of ~5 students, you will research and construct an activity for our Penn Alexander after-school club. This age-appropriate activity should be grounded in positive education research to support student well-being. Assessment for this project will be based on the following:

<b>After-school activity project assessment</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Selection of 2-3 assigned readings for class discussion (selected 2 weeks prior)	10%
Brief UPenn group presentation in class immediately prior to session	10%
Leading UPenn class discussion and/or activities immediately prior to session	10%
Lesson plan documentation (prepared 2 weeks prior to session)	20%
Execution of PAS in-class activity	40%
Post-activity summary	10%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **School intervention proposal (group project)**

**20%**

Students will work in groups of 3-4 to create a proposal aimed at fostering well-being in a school environment (though not higher education). Each group will propose a practical and beneficial application of the field of positive psychology to a school. This can be a service, program, amenity, or resource directed to students and/or staff. The area of focus for the school intervention proposal cannot be the same area of focus used in group members' other projects. Each student group will create a proposal as a course assignment. We do not intend to implement these proposals, but all proposals will be shared with your classmates on the final day of class.

In completing this proposal, your intervention must be an empirically-based approach, grounded in positive education, aiming to improve wellness in a school environment. Student groups are expected to:

- State your well-being goal: What are you improving and why?
- Identify the target of this application: Who will this impact?
- Outline the steps necessary to implement this application: How will this occur in a school?
- Supply empirical evidence from peer-reviewed sources: What evidence is there that this will be effective?
- State why this a worthwhile use of resources: Why should this proposal be supported?
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of this approach: What are realistic expectations of how this will improve well-being?

You will read appropriate peer-reviewed research articles for this. You are expected to include at least six peer-reviewed research articles in your references (completed in APA style). You are welcome to include assigned reading assignments among these. Students will be given class time to develop their proposals. You are encouraged to use the provided assessment guidelines to structure your presentation.

This project will be submitted as an in-class group presentation (typically using PowerPoint, but you are not restricted to this format). Regardless of the format you choose, your proposal should be eight minutes or less. For proposals over eight minutes long, only the first eight minutes will be graded.

While this project is a live presentation, you must submit your related materials for review. Each group must upload their proposal presentation slides (or relevant visual materials of their choosing) and script to Canvas by 4/29 at 9am. The script is roughly the text component of your presentation in a Word doc. Grades will be deducted until these materials are submitted.

### **Online submission of assignments**

You must upload your assignments to Canvas prior to the specified deadline. The deadline for each assignment is provided at the beginning of the semester so you have plenty of time to prepare. Any assignment submitted after the deadline will be penalized (except in cases where you use your two allocated 'late days' for individual projects as described below). Aside from a few unique cases, there are no extensions. Late submissions will count as late for all group members.

Grades for late assignments will be reduced as follows:

- Submitted after the deadline on the day the assignment is due, if applicable: -5%
- Submitted between 12am and 11:59pm one day after the assignment is due: -10%
- Submitted between 12am and 11:59pm two days after the assignment is due: -20%
- Submitted between 12am and 11:59pm three days after the assignment is due: -30%
- Any assignment submitted after this will not be graded. It will receive a zero.

### **Grade policies for group projects**

When submitting a group project, all group members consent to the quality of work therein. That is, each group member approves the quality of work for the entire project (e.g., for all group members). For this reason, you are expected to review and proofread the entire project prior to submission. Post-submission complaints that a group member didn't do 'their share' of the work reflects a breakdown in group cohesion, communication, and division of labor. These are all components of group work that the group as a whole must navigate prior to submission, and part of the project itself.

If your group would like to contest a project grade, all group members must email me individually saying they consent to this process which may result in a grade increase or decrease. That is, this process may reduce your grade. I must receive all requests within one week of the project grade posting online.

### **Late days for individual projects**

Late days aim to help you during the semester. Each late day allows you to submit an assignment up to twenty-four hours late. You have two (2) late days to use during the semester. To use your late days, submit your assignment after the deadline. You do not need to ask permission to use your late day(s), nor provide any explanation. Both late days may be used for one assignment. Late days may not be used for group assignments.

## **Final grade policy**

Final course grades that are 0.5 or higher are rounded to the next whole number. This applies only to your overall grade for the course, not individual grades (e.g., each project). For example, a 93.5% for this course would be an A, while a 93.4% would remain an A-. Final course grades are not negotiable. The grade you earned from your assessment is the grade that will appear on [Path@Penn](mailto:Path@Penn). All requests for higher grades will be denied. Granting these requests is unfair to other students, and it undermines the value of educational assessment. If you are unable to complete coursework during the semester, please contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss how to move forward with your assessment.

## **Course Culture**

I aim to provide an intellectually engaging and supportive environment for students. Your unique perspective is valuable, it deepens the experience of your peers', and it contributes to the success of this class. Please contribute your insight throughout the semester during our in-class activities. A primary goal of this course is to immerse students in the ideas and research of positive education. You will develop knowledge of these areas through exploration and discussion in this seminar. Please reach out to me if you need assistance to fully participate in this course, and please contact me if you have suggestions to improve the quality of the course.

All participants in this seminar deserve to be treated with respect, regardless of their race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, religious beliefs, physical or mental health status, or socioeconomic status. To this end, you should expect respect from your peers and myself. Similarly, you are expected to demonstrate respect to others through your words and actions, including respectfully engaging with opposing perspectives. We are all currently learning about diverse perspectives and identities. If something was said in class by anyone that made you uncomfortable, please talk to me. Preserving positive relationships with each other is part of the success of this course.

## **Course success: how to excel in this course**

Academic ability develops over time and takes effort. Persist. There will be much student collaboration, so intellectual engagement with your peers will be crucial to your success:

- Read and engage with the assigned reading prior to class via Perusall. This is a reading-intensive course, so give yourself plenty of time for each assignment.
- Participate in class. Use class time to flesh out ideas and speculate. I applaud students for stretching their thinking during discussions. Try to become comfortable sharing your 'half-baked' ideas so we can develop them together.
- Do not wait until the last minute to complete your assignments. Your coursework is manageable *if* it is dispersed through the semester. Do not make your life stressful by procrastinating.
- For group projects, challenge each other's ideas and engage with the material. Work with your group and support each other. I allocate class time to group work, so use this time wisely.
- Relate course material to the world around you and your understanding of the field of psychology. Think about how you can apply what you learn.

I have high, and achievable, expectations of you in this course. I will support you to reach your educational goals. This course will be challenging, but your effort will be evident in your performance. If your performance in class is impacted by experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to contact me. I want to be a resource for you. If you feel wary of this course, or you are concerned about your performance, reach out during office hours. I want to hear from you.

## Relevant College policies

It is important that you have the resources you need to be able to focus on learning in this course. This includes both the necessary academic materials, as well as taking care of your day-to-day needs.

- Students experiencing difficulty affording the course materials in this course, or any other course, should reach out to the Penn First Plus office ([pennfirstplus@upenn.edu](mailto:pennfirstplus@upenn.edu)).
- Students who are struggling to afford sufficient food to eat every day and/or lack a safe and suitable space to live should contact Student Intervention Services ([vpul-sisteam@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:vpul-sisteam@pobox.upenn.edu)).
- Students may also wish to contact their [Financial Aid Counselor](#) or Academic Advisor about these concerns.

You are welcome to notify me if any of these challenges are affecting your success in this course, as long as you are comfortable doing so – I may have resources to support you.

### [SNF Paideia Program](#)

This course is part of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation (SNF) Paideia Program, which serves as a hub for civic dialogue in undergraduate education at Penn. SNF Paideia designated courses examine the theory and practice of dialogue across differences from diverse disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives. They also explore the interplay among dialogue, citizenship, service, as well as individual and community wellness. Collectively, they are intended to provide students with the scholarly and applied knowledge, skills, ethical orientations, and experiences necessary for integrating their personal, professional, and civic identities – that is, for “educating the whole person.” You can get more involved at <https://snfpaideia.upenn.edu>.

### [Code of Academic Integrity](#)

You must familiarize yourself with the Code of Academic Integrity in the University of Pennsylvania. It is your responsibility to ensure your behavior does not violate this code. You must observe the policies regarding various forms of academic dishonesty. The following statement about academic dishonesty has been provided by the University of Pennsylvania, “Activities that have the effect or intention of interfering with education, pursuit of knowledge, or fair evaluation of a student’s performance are prohibited.” Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and may be handled by the Center for Community Standards & Accountability. More information is available here:

<http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/>

The only appropriate use of AI in this course is for brainstorming ideas (similar to how you would use Google as a search engine). You are not permitted to use ChatGPT (or any similar tools) for any project or assignment that contributes to your assessment in this course. Using such tools will be considered a violation of Penn’s [Code of Academic Integrity](#), and suspected use will be reported to the Center for Community Standards & Accountability. Please contact me if you have any questions about this policy.

### [Student Financial Services](#)

Any student may consult with Student Financial Services to find out what support they are eligible to receive to cover course costs or other items that ensure their health, safety, and secure learning environment.

### [Weingarten Center: \(includes \[Student Disability Services\]\(#\)\)](#)

The Weingarten Center offers a variety of resources to support all Penn students in reaching their academic goals. All services are free and confidential. To contact the Weingarten Center, call 215-573-9235. The office is located in Hamilton Village at 220 S. 40th Street, Suite 260. Learning consultations and learning strategies workshops support students in developing more efficient and effective study skills and learning strategies. Learning specialists work with students to address time and project management, academic reading and writing, note-taking, problem-solving, exam preparation, test-taking, self-regulation, and flexibility.

- [Learning consultations](#) which focus on academic skills and strategies such as test taking to time management.
- [Academic Tutoring](#) which give students subject-specific peer tutoring services to supplement support from faculty, TAs, and instructors.
- [Disability Services](#) which ensure equal access to all Penn programs to students with documented disabilities.

Disability Services offers drop-in hours Monday – Friday, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Weingarten Center ([directions](#)). Students can stop by and speak with a graduate assistant to address general questions about Disability Services, including how to start the registration process, how to complete a Semester Request, and assistance with scheduling tests.

### The Marks Family Writing Center

Provides expert help in writing for undergraduate students. Undergraduate students are able to schedule face-to-face or online appointments. All appointments must be scheduled ahead of time. Please email [tutorhelp@writing.upenn.edu](mailto:tutorhelp@writing.upenn.edu) for assistance.

### HELP Line

This is a 24-hour-a-day phone number for members of the Penn community who are seeking time sensitive help in navigating Penn's resources for health and wellness. Any member of the Penn community can utilize this service by calling 215-898-HELP. Calls will be answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by Division of Public Safety professionals trained in mental health referrals by staff from Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).

Students who are dealing with the complex emotional challenges of university life can use the HELP Line to receive information and referrals to the many health and wellness resources at Penn, including CAPS, Student Health Service, Student Intervention Services, Public Safety, and others. They may also call on behalf of a friend or acquaintance. If you or someone you know needs help, please call the HELP Line at 215-898-HELP.

<https://www.publicsafety.upenn.edu/announcing-the-898-help-line/>

### Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)

College can be challenging. Penn has a Counseling and Psychological Services program (CAPS). CAPS offers confidential free professional mental health services. The goal is to assist students in their adjustment to university life and help them take full advantage of the academic and social environment at Penn. Students can learn to manage personal problems and situational crises effectively, learn strategies to cope with academic stress, and develop self awareness, personal responsibility, and skills for life-long learning.

- Online scheduling: <https://uapps.vpul.upenn.edu/capsform/>
- Phone: 215-898-7021,
- Email: [caps@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:caps@pobox.upenn.edu) (please do not email for an appointment)
- Website: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/caps/>
- Address: 3624 Market Street, First Floor West, Philadelphia, PA 19104-2615

If you or someone you know is experiencing an emergency that cannot wait until the next day office hours, please call the main number (215-898-7021) and press # 1.

If you are uncomfortable reaching out to CAPS directly, I am happy to contact them on your behalf. In addition, there are various a range of other support resources on campus such as resident advisers, faculty members living on campus, academic advisers, and undergraduate advisers in each program of study. The Office of the Chaplain is also helpful.

### CaseNet

CaseNet is an academic support team in the College Office charged with providing a centralized response to all College students in academic difficulty ([www.college.upenn.edu/casenet](http://www.college.upenn.edu/casenet)). CaseNet can be reached at [col-casenet@groups.sas.upenn.edu](mailto:col-casenet@groups.sas.upenn.edu) or by calling 215-898-6341.

Cases referred to CaseNet include:

- Students who are ill or otherwise prevented from attending class for more than five days.
- Students in serious academic difficulty.
- Students who are hospitalized or who have other kinds of acute problems (victim of crime, etc.) that interrupt their normal schedule.
- Students who are experiencing personal or family concerns significant enough to interfere with their academic work or to impinge on those around them, including a death in the family.

### Reach-A-Peer Helpline

The Reach-A-Peer Helpline is a peer help line established in 1996 to provide peer support, information, and referrals to any and all students of the University of Pennsylvania. The service is open to all students who wish to share a problem, are in need of information, or just want to talk to someone about anything on their mind. RAPLine offers two services:

- Helpline: Our phone line is available every night while classes are in session (except holidays) from 9 pm to 1 am. Reach us at 215-573-2727.
- Texting: Our text service is available 24/7. Text us anytime at 215-515-7332 and one of our supporters will response as soon as possible.