Application for Course Inclusion as a General Education Course (not including FYS)

Course number __PSY3319________ Title: Positive Psychology

Catalog description: Aims to introduce students to recent science, theory and practice in the area of positive psychology. This area of psychology empirically examines the positive side of human behavior and experience. Topic areas include: Happiness, Flow, Positivity Traits, Hope, Positive Relationships

Instructor name(s): (If more than one instructor teaches)
1. Francis W. Craig
2. Karen Crisp

For which area are you requesting your course approval?

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Please include course syllabi and relevant related course documents to support your request for inclusion.

(1) Describe how your course will advance the overall mission of the GE Program.

PSY3319 ("Positive Psychology") is an important course for any college graduate and fits perfectly with the mission statement of Gen Ed. This course meets the overall mission of the GE Program by developing the following competencies:
- Knowledge of the (a) conceptual bases, (b) language or terms, and (c) research methods of psychology
- Basic library, Internet, and computer-based information-seeking skills
- Critical thinking to evaluate conflicting psychological explanations and theories
- Oral and written communication skills using language of discipline
- Appreciation of cultural and individual differences and diversity in human behavior
- Lifelong pursuit of personal growth (for example, making informed choices about positive cognitions, behaviors and relationships and understanding how their choices can affect their overall well-being and long-term health)
- Application of research in positive psychology to students’ own lives

(2) Describe (when appropriate) how the course will include any or all of the following: a) substantial opportunities for oral and/or written communication, b) encourage active and participatory learning, or c) promote application of general education knowledge, skills, and dispositions to students’ lives outside of and beyond the university experience.

Substantial opportunities for oral and/or written communication
This course provides students the opportunity to communicate substantially in both oral and written from through class discussion and review of others discussion points (asking appropriate questions, adding comments) and writing assignments (reaction papers, group activities assignments). Students will write well over 1500 words for the semester via multiple discussion board assignments and personal reflections.
Encourage active and participatory learning
This course provides students with the opportunity to be active and participatory learners by encouraging class participation (asking appropriate questions, adding comments). Required Discussion Board posting and responding will help create a community of learners, rather than a group of individuals.

Promote application of general education knowledge, skills, and dispositions to students’ lives outside of and beyond the university experience
One of the primary objectives of this course is to provide students with the opportunity to topics pertaining to positive psychology to real world experiences and use these to direct student to better lives and experiences in the future.

(3) There are a number of goals of the GE Program (see instructions). Which will your course will promote?
2. Students will acquire knowledge of the foundations and characteristics of educated discourse.
3. Students will acquire knowledge of the unity and diversity of humanity.
6. Students will acquire knowledge of scientific information as it is applied to personal and social decisions.
7. Students will acquire knowledge of the approaches of the liberal arts disciplines.
8. Students will exhibit skills in critical and analytical thinking.
9. Students will exhibit skills in effective written and oral communication.
15. Students will develop dispositions to make socially responsible and personally fulfilling life choices.
16. Students will develop dispositions to live sustainability.
18. Students will develop dispositions to form opinions and modify positions based on evidence.

a. Describe how your course meets the relevant course objectives for the chosen area (these can be found in the middle column of the General Education Plan on pages 6 – 21).

The course meets the learning objectives in the General Education Plan by:

1) Examine the relation between natural and social environments
During the course the topics related to positive cognition and behavior outcome will be reviewed. Student understanding of this relationship will be assessed in exams and discussion board reflections. For example, the impact of the ratio of positive cognitions to negative cognitions will be explored from an evolutionary perspective.

2) Examine the possible of a sustainable future
The role of positive psychology in having a sustainable future will be addressed. For examples, topics Flow and social entropy and negentropy will be discussed. For examples, in a review of the concept of “Flow” historical cases of the wide reaching effects of less and more chaotic individuals are examined. Students will also examine personally the impact of minor behavioral and cognitive changes on a more sustainable future.

3) Examine the sustainability of social and economic policies or personal behaviors
This course focuses on the social and personal aspects of positive psychology. Topic discussions, reflections, and activities will focus on positive living in one personal life as well with one’s social and occupational relationships. Other relevant discussion will include the role of wealth and happiness, and the nature of job that tend to produce more and less meaningful experiences.
4) Examine the influence of human actions such as technological innovations, wars, and environmental disasters, or economic challenges on the well-being of societies and individuals.
Class discussion, lectures, and activities will address the influence of human actions of societies and individuals. For example, the influence of medical and technological advances and cognitive and emotional challenges that have emerged as a result will be examined.

5) Require students to read texts and engage in writing that totals at least 1500 words.
Students’ engagement in writing will be completed by having students write three article review and reviews papers based on information, research, and theories discussed in the course. Each paper will be a minimum of 500 words (meeting the 1500 word requirement). In addition, students will work in small groups to complete activities throughout the semester which include short essays and other writing assignments. Thus, the amount of writing in this course will well-exceed the 1500 word requirement.

b. Describe the types of activities and assignments students will complete to demonstrate the relevant desired student learning outcomes (e.g. in-class discussion, reflection paper, homework assignments, exam, etc). In other words, how will you be assessing students’ competencies in the relevant learning outcomes?

Describe how legal, political, scientific, economic, or personal action can be used to address issues of sustainability.
This course will focus on the role of personal action and responsibility, as it pertains to the improvement of our long term experience. This is clearly a matter of personal sustainability. This SLO is demonstrated by having students complete exams to assess understanding of such issues, reflective posts on relevant readings, and assessment activities.

Use principles of sustainability to analyze a real-world problem.
This SLO is demonstrated by having students examine area of personal, occupational and interpersonal difficulty and examine one’s personal role in improvement of those areas. Students may find that cultural belief may contribute to a confusion of what constitutes individual satisfaction and personal positivity. Area such as gender roles and evolutionary development are a necessary part of fully examining this topic and relating to a host of problematic beliefs that affect cultural patterns of thought and behavior. Students’ understanding and ability to challenge common real-world beliefs pertaining to happiness and good living (such as I must have money to be happy, happiness is all you need in life, happiness is an easily movable state of being). This SLO is demonstrated by having students complete exams to assess understanding of such issues, reflective posts on relevant readings, and assessment activities.

Describe constructive steps that could be taken to improve living conditions for the people of the world.
Improving their own and others living conditions pertaining to issues of positive cognition and behavior are key components of the course. This SLO is demonstrated by having students complete exams to assess understanding of such issues, reflective posts on relevant readings, and assessment activities.

_______ Approved by GES
_______ Approved by GES, pending minor change
_______ Not Approved by GES

Recommendation Dates and Signatures:
Department:
Gen’l Education Subcomm.
Signature:
Date: _9-9-2013_
Academic Affairs Committee:

University Senate:

President: