



Universidad
de Navarra

Modern Happiness Studies (F. Económicas)
Guía docente 2023-24

PRESENTACIÓN

Breve descripción: Modern Happiness Studies follows an empirical, quantitative, and descriptive approach to happiness, understood as “individual subjective wellbeing”, from a variety of disciplines including economics, psychology, sociology, political science, and philosophy. The aim is to help individuals and collectives in their decision-making processes regarding wealth and income, consumption, work, political and religious institutions and their impact on happiness. It also offers a critical integration of all these inputs within an Aristotelian virtue ethics and common good framework.

Titulación: Todos los grados de la Facultad de Ade y Eco

Módulo/Materia: PARA LOS GRADOS DE ADE Módulo VII. Optativas. Materia 1. Optativas

PARA LOS GRADOS DE ECO Módulo VI. Optativas. Materia 1. Optativas

ECTS: 3

Curso, semestre: 4th & 5th years/ 2nd semester

Carácter: Optional

Profesorado: Alejo José G. Sison

Idioma: English

Aula, Horario: Fridays, 12-1:30 pm, A04, Edificio Amigos

COMPETENCIAS

PARA LOS GRADOS DE ADE

COMPETENCIAS

CB2 Que los estudiantes sepan aplicar sus conocimientos a su trabajo o vocación de una forma profesional y posean las competencias que suelen demostrarse por medio de la elaboración y defensa de argumentos y la resolución de problemas dentro de su área de estudio

CB3 Que los estudiantes tengan la capacidad de reunir e interpretar datos relevantes (normalmente dentro de su área de estudio) para emitir juicios que incluyan una reflexión sobre temas relevantes de índole social, científica o ética

CB4 Que los estudiantes puedan transmitir información, ideas, problemas y soluciones a un público tanto especializado como no especializado

CB5 Que los estudiantes hayan desarrollado aquellas habilidades de aprendizaje necesarias para emprender estudios posteriores con un alto grado de autonomía

CG2 Identificar, integrar y utilizar los conocimientos adquiridos en el argumento, discusión o resolución de problemas relevantes para lo económico y empresarial.



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CG5 Razonar de forma autónoma y crítica en temas relevantes para lo económico y empresarial.

CG6 Saber comunicar oralmente o por escrito resultados y análisis de utilidad en lo económico y empresarial.

PARA LOS GRADOS DE ECO

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CG2 Identificar, integrar y utilizar los conocimientos adquiridos en el argumento, discusión o resolución de problemas relevantes para lo económico y empresarial

CG5 Desarrollar la capacidad de razonamiento autónomo y crítico en temas relevantes para lo económico y empresarial.

CG6 Saber comunicar oralmente o por escrito resultados y análisis de utilidad en lo económico y empresarial.

PROGRAMA

Introduction: Happiness as "individual subjective well-being"

Happiness and income

Happiness and the psychology of human needs. The biotechnology of happiness.

Happiness and employment. Happiness and inflation

Happiness and institutions. Democracy. Religion.

Critique of Modern Happiness Studies. Integration

The digital life: Automation, robotics, and the future of work. New social media, liberal democracy, and participation.



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ACTIVIDADES FORMATIVAS

Welcome to the Modern Happiness Studies class! We meet **Fridays**, beginning **January 12**, in **room A04, Amigos Bldg.**, from 12 to 1:30 pm.

Before class, please go over the information in the ADI coursepage. Pay special attention to the "Actividades Formativas" tab, where you find a calendar of activities. There you will find several columns including the date, the topic to be covered, and the activity or assignment.

The classroom procedure is as follows. **Until January 19**, I shall take care of lecturing (accompanied by powerpoints) and leading the discussions in the more theoretical part of the course.

From January 26 onwards, classes will be divided into two periods. **During the first 45 mins**, I shall lecture based on powerpoints and the corresponding pages from the textbook. **During the second half, a group will be assigned to lead the case discussion**. This entails making a short summary and indicating the most salient issues in decision making. You may find the accompanying guide questions useful. Preferably, discussions will be carried out in person, although virtual interventions are also welcome. So discussion means moving forward or going beyond the text together with the other class members. Groups should also be open to some Q&A.

You can do the **Harvard Management Mentor Presentation Skills Course** on your own following this link: <https://hbsp.harvard.edu/import/899643>.

EVALUACIÓN

The final exam accounts for 40% of the grade, group presentation, 30%, participation in class discussions, 20%, and personal reflection essay, 10%. But first, you have to at least get a 5 in the final exam.

If the special June exam is the only basis for the final grade, a result of 8/10 is needed to pass (i.e., a 5 as a final grade).

Laptops and tablets are not allowed in class as they do more harm than good (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/students-are-better-off-without-a-laptop-in-the-classroom/>). Should you need to use them, ask for the professor's permission.

Guide Questions to Modern Happiness Studies

I. Introduction

What is the subject matter or object of Modern Happiness Studies (MHS)? What is its purpose? What are its defining characteristics as a field of enquiry?

Could you cite some major protagonists who have contributed to MHS? What backgrounds do they have? What methods do they employ?

What contributions could be expected from philosophers, particularly, Aristotle, to MHS?



II. Happiness and income

Explain Easterlin's 3 main research questions and discuss the responses he and others offered.

III. Happiness and the psychology of human needs

Could consumerist capitalism or a free-market economy by itself make us happy? Why not? According to Scitovsky, what role is education supposed to play?

IV. (Biotechnology)

Differentiate among the three levels of happiness (pleasures, life satisfaction, and the normative ideal) from the psychological perspective.

What's the relation between happiness and evolutionary psychology?

Explain the pharmacological and behavioral shortcuts to happiness.

V. Happiness and employment

Identify Frey and Stutzer's 4 main research questions and discuss their responses.

VI. Happiness and inflation

Are the effects of inflation on happiness symmetrical to those of unemployment?

VII. Happiness and institutions

What are institutions? How are they formed? What are the effects of direct democracy and federalism on happiness, in the case of Switzerland?

VIII. (Happiness and Families)

Explain the relationship between marriage and happiness.

Does marriage impact men and women differently in their happiness? Why?

IX. (Happiness and religion)

What are the research findings relating religious belief and practice with happiness?

Do principles from the psychology of religion support them? Explain.

Describe the explanatory gaps from the Catholic perspective.

X. Critique of MHS. Integration

According to Kenny and Kenny, how do welfare, contentment and dignity interact in producing happiness?

XI. The digital life

What are the 3 stages of digital transformation? What are the human advantages vis a vis AI? How is virtuous work possible in a digitally transformed environment?



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CONVOCATORIA ORDINARIA

CONVOCATORIA EXTRAORDINARIA

HORARIOS DE ATENCIÓN

Mondays, from 9-10 am in room 2040. Otherwise, write me an e-mail (ajsison@unav.es) to request for an appointment.

E-mail policy: Queries should be brief and ideally, answerable by a "yes" or "no". Beyond that, request for an appointment. Do not expect responses outside office hours, during week-ends or holidays. Questions about class schedules, exam dates and venues should be clarified by visiting the corresponding webpages. The professor reserves the right to answer these and other requests for information that have already been explained in class.

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

Textbook: A. J. G. Sison, Happiness and Virtue Ethics in Business. The Ultimate Value Proposition, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2015, 317 pp. (ISBN: 978-1-107-04463-0). (HVEB) [Localízalo en la Biblioteca](#)

Other readings will be indicated on the course webpage for each session.