

Cape Breton University  
**Happen.**  
**Sustainable Happiness**  
**EDUC 4104**

*Sustainable happiness is happiness that contributes to individual, community, or global wellbeing and does not exploit other people, the environment, or future generations. (O'Brien, 2010).*

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### **Department Mission and Core Focus**

The Department of Education at Cape Breton University is committed to preparing teachers for their responsibilities as educators in both local and global contexts. To achieve this, we provide programs in both pre-service and continuing teacher education that emphasize disciplined professional inquiry while reflecting the best classroom practice and the results of current research on teaching and learning. The Department of Education is dedicated to preparing teachers, who will be knowledgeable, skilful, flexible, caring pedagogues and responsible members of the profession.

A core focus for the Education programs at Cape Breton University is Education for Sustainability (EfS). This vision of EfS is inclusive of the three realms of sustainability – environment, society and economy and addresses content, context, pedagogy, global issues and local priorities. Teachers and teacher candidates will engage in learning designed to cultivate, critical thinking, creativity, knowledge, and skills to actively address challenges with sustainable solutions. EfS supports the values of interdependence, empathy, equity, personal responsibility, social justice and holistic perspectives required to participate in society and to live sustainably and well.

### **Course Description**

This course will consider happiness and subjective well-being from the perspectives of psychology, interpersonal relationships, community, and the natural environment by familiarizing students with the research emerging in those areas. Students will also explore the impact that individual and national pursuits of happiness have on the well-being of people around the world and the natural environment. Opportunities for engaging in sustainable happiness will be addressed. The role of formal, non-formal, and informal education in shaping one's view of happiness will be discussed.

## Course Readings

**These readings are available in the course module.**

Boniwell, I. & Ryan, L. (2012). *Personal well-being lessons for secondary schools*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Carney, P. (2015). *Well aware: Developing resilient, active, and flourishing students*. Don Mills (Canada): Pearson.

Happiness Research Institute (2015). *Sustainable happiness*. Why waste prevention may lead to an increase in quality of life. <http://www.happinessresearchinstitute.com/>

Helliwell, J, Layard, R., & Sach, J. (Eds) (2012). *World happiness report*.

Lyubomirsky, S. (2007). Practicing gratitude and positive thinking. In *The how of happiness: A scientific approach to getting the life you want*. New York: Penguin Press.

MacConville, R. (2008). *Teaching happiness: A ten-step curriculum for creating positive classrooms*. London: Optimus Educaiton.

O'Brien, C. (2010a). *Sustainable happiness and health – Teacher's Guide*. Available at: <http://sustainablehappiness.ca/teachers/>

O'Brien, C. (2010b). Sustainability, happiness and education. *Journal of Sustainability Education*, (1).

O'Brien, C. (2016). Sustainable happiness and education *Education for Sustainable happiness and wellbeing*. Taylor & Francis/Routledge.

O'Brien, C. (2016). Wellbeing for all, sustainably, *Education for Sustainable happiness and wellbeing*. Taylor & Francis/Routledge.

O'Brien, C., & Howard, P. (2016). The Living school: The emergence of a transformative sustainability education paradigm, *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 10(1) 115-130.

O'Grady, P. (2013). *Positive psychology in the elementary school classroom*. New York: Norton and Company.

Seijts, G. H., Gandz, J., Crossan, M., & Reno, M. (2015). Character matters: Character dimensions' impact on leader performance and outcomes. *Organizational Dynamics*, 44. (optional)

Seligman, M. (2002). Can you make yourself lastingly happier? *Authentic happiness*. Toronto: Free Press, pp. 45-61.

Senge, P. (2012). Creating the schools of the future: Education for a sustainable society. *Solutions*, May-June, 3(3). <http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/node/1116>

### Supplementary Resources

Your Personal Inquiry project will draw upon resources in the supplementary reading (available in Moodle and the online articles listed below) **and** at least one of the web sites listed below. If you would prefer to search for an article and website that are not listed here, please discuss this with me.

#### Online Articles

There are articles posted as Supplementary Reading on our course site. Additionally, the following articles are available online.

Green, S. Positive education: Creating flourishing staff and schools.  
<http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/inpsych/2011/april/green/>

Henrickson, J. & Doering, A. (2013). Teaching sustainability through adventure. *Journal of Sustainability Educaiton*. [http://www.jsedimensions.org/wordpress/content/teaching-sustainability-through-adventure\\_2013\\_06/](http://www.jsedimensions.org/wordpress/content/teaching-sustainability-through-adventure_2013_06/).

Medrick, R. (2013). A pedagogy for sustainability educaiton. *Journal of Sustainability Educaiton*. [http://www.jsedimensions.org/wordpress/content/a-pedagogy-for-sustainability-education\\_2013\\_06/](http://www.jsedimensions.org/wordpress/content/a-pedagogy-for-sustainability-education_2013_06/).

Seligman, M. Positive education.  
<http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/newsletter.aspx?id=1551>.

#### Web Sites

Values In Action: <http://www.viacharacter.org/www/en-us/home.aspx>

Green Schools - <http://seedsfoundation.ca//index.asp?pid=9>

Joint Consortium on School Health - <http://www.jcsh-cces.ca/>

Learning for a Sustainable Future - <http://www.lsf-1st.ca/>

Free the Children - <http://www.freethechildren.com/getinvolved/educator/>

Children and Nature Network - <http://www.childrenandnature.org/movement/naturalteachers/>

Learning Gardens - <https://thekitchencommunity.org/learning-gardens/>

The Barefoot College - <http://www.barefootcollege.org/default.asp>

Green School – Bali - <http://www.greenschool.org/>

Sustainable Happiness: <http://sustainablehappiness.ca/>

Action for Happiness - <http://www.actionforhappiness.org/>

Positive Psychology Center - <http://www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu/>

Living Planet Community - <http://community.wwf.ca/>

Happy Planet Index - <http://www.happyplanetindex.org/>

UPENN Positive Psychology Center: <http://www.ppc.sas.upenn.edu/teachingpp.htm>

Learn and Flourish: <http://www.learnandflourish.com/>

Character Education: <http://www.goodcharacter.com/>

Journey North: <http://www.learner.org/jnorth/>

Earthducation: <http://lt.umn.edu/earthducation/>

<b>Date and Themes</b>	<b>Assigned Reading, Assignments and Activities</b>
<b>Sept 10</b>  Introduction to sustainable happiness, positive psychology and happiness studies	Read for next class: 1. “World Happiness Report” Helliwell et al (pages 3-7) 2. “Can you make yourself lastingly happier?” by Seligman ASSIGNMENTS: 1) Complete “Sustainable Happiness Footprint Chart” and submit by September 17
<b>Sept 17</b>  Wellbeing Positive Communication Genuine Wealth	Read for next class: 1. “Teaching Happiness” (MacConville) 2. Positive psychology in the elementary school classroom (O’Grady) or <i>Personal well-being lessons for secondary schools</i> (Boniwel and Ryan) 3. “Well Aware” (Carney) ASSIGNMENT: 1) Interview the happiest person you know and submit one-page summary by September 24
<b>Sept 24</b>  Living Campus and Living Schools Earth Charter Nature as Mentor	Read for next class: 1 The Living school: The emergence of a transformative sustainability education paradigm (O’Brien & Howard)  ASSIGNMENT: Genuine wealth activity (due October 1)
<b>October 1(Meet online)</b>  Story of Stuff Sustainable consumption Water Footprint	Read for next class: 1. “Wellbeing for all, sustainably” by O’Brien 2. “Sustainable happiness and education” by O’Brien ASSIGNMENT: Shifting consumption activity (due October 8) RESPOND TO QUESTIONS IN ONLINE DISCUSSION
<b>October 8</b>  Understanding Interdependence Leader Character	Read for next class: 1. “Creating the schools of the future by Senge - <a href="http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/node/1116">http://www.thesolutionsjournal.com/node/1116</a> 2. Sustainable happiness report pages 1-20 ASSIGNMENT: Interdependence Map (due October 15)
<b>October 15</b>  Health Promoting Schools New Pedagogies for Deep Learning Sustainable Happiness Project Preparation	Read for next class: Choose a reading and a web site from the supplementary resources list. Use these as the basis for your own inquiry into a question that interests you about sustainable happiness, positive psychology or sustainability education. ASSIGNMENT: Develop Sustainable Happiness Project Plan and submit by October 22

<p><b>October 22</b></p> <p>Personal Inquiry Project Meet with Catherine regarding your SH project plan</p>	<p>Reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Sustainable Happiness and Health Education – Teacher’s Guide” by O’Brien (just browse through it) Available at: <a href="http://sustainablehappiness.ca/teachers/">http://sustainablehappiness.ca/teachers/</a></li> </ol> <p>ASSIGNMENT: Submit one-page summary describing key lessons learned from your personal inquiry – submit to discussion section by October 29; respond to at least submissions by your classmates</p>
<p><b>October 29</b></p> <p>Work independently</p> <p>Sustainable Happiness Project</p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT: Continue work on your sustainable happiness project. One-page summary due November 27.</p>
<p><b>November 5</b></p> <p>Work independently</p> <p>Sustainable Happiness Project</p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT: Continue to work on your sustainable happiness project.</p>
<p><b>November 12</b></p> <p>Gratitude Review SH Project progress</p> <p>Sustainable Happiness Project</p>	<p>Reading:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. “Practicing gratitude and positive thinking” by Lyubomirsky</li> </ol> <p>ASSIGNMENT: Gratitude Activity. Due November 19</p>
<p><b>November 19</b></p> <p>Sustainable Happiness Project</p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT: Lesson plan related to health outcomes due Dec. 3</p>
<p><b>November 26</b></p> <p>Share sustainable happiness projects</p>	<p>ASSIGNMENT: Lesson plan related to health outcomes due Dec. 3</p>

## Evaluation and Assignments

### Participation – 10%

Your active participation in the class discussions is essential. Each week you will complete assigned readings and I will post discussion questions when we are meeting online rather than in class. In addition to your own response to these questions, I would like you to respond to at least **TWO** other posts that your classmates have made. You will find a participation rubric in the Course Menu in a section called “Rubrics.”

### Weekly Assignments – 50%

As you can see, this is a large proportion of your mark. Most weeks, there will be a short activity assignment to give you some practice with the concepts that we are exploring. For example, your first activity involves an interview. You will interview someone whom you believe is a “very happy” person. I’ll provide you with some questions to ask as you gather their story. You will then submit a one-page summary of their story and any insights that you gained from hearing it. As a group, we’ll look at similarities and differences across these stories.

### Sustainable Happiness Project – 30% Completion and Presentation by November 26<sup>th</sup> (Outline of plan Due by October 22<sup>nd</sup>)

This 6-week project is an opportunity for you to put your learning into practice. Once we are further into the course, it will make more sense to you what this assignment may involve. You will be developing a plan that enhances sustainable happiness for you, someone else (or many people) and/or the natural environment. Then you will implement your plan and report on the results. This project is an example of Project-Based Learning.

### Lesson Plan – 10% (by December 3)

You will develop one lesson plan that could be used to promote sustainable happiness. It will be linked to the Nova Scotia health education outcomes for P-9. You may select the grade level that interests you.

### Description of Weekly Assignments – 50%

- 1) **Sustainable Happiness Footprint Chart** – See chart posted in online course module (8 points) (Due Sept. 17<sup>th</sup>)
- 2) **Interview the Happiest Person You Know (8 points) (Due Sep. 24th)**

Think about the people in your life and consider who is the happiest person you know. That doesn’t necessarily mean the most jovial, effervescent person. It may be someone who is quietly happy, someone who is content with their life, someone who is enormously generous, someone who spreads joy. The person you interview could be any age! Submit a one-page summary.

Here are some questions you may wish to pose:

- a) My impression of you is that you are a very happy person. Please tell me what contributes most to your happiness?
- b) What lessons have you learned from overcoming obstacles in your life?
- c) Do you have any advice to share about living a happy life?

**3) Genuine Wealth (6 points) (Due October 1<sup>st</sup>)**

1. List at least 10 ways in which you are “genuinely” wealthy.
2. Select three items from your list in #1 and answer these questions:
  - a) Do you tend to take these for granted?
  - b) Do you express appreciation for this wealth (to yourself, to others, through creative expression, through prayer, or other means)? If so, describe how you do this.
  - c) How does your life sustain this genuine wealth? Is there more you could do to sustain it? If so, how?
  - d) Is this the kind of wealth that you may want to increase? If so, how might you go about doing that?
3. How do you contribute to genuine wealth collectively? For example, consider how you contribute to genuine wealth where you work, go to school, in your community, household, country, or globally.
4. Consider what more you might do to contribute to genuine wealth collectively – i.e. in one of the areas mentioned in #3. Consider how you might do this as a teacher.

**4) Shifting Consumption (6 points) (Due October 8<sup>th</sup>)**

This week, choose **ONE** of the following:

- a) Reduce your consumption of non-renewable resources
- b) Make one day a “Buy Nothing” Day (<http://www.adbusters.org/campaigns/bnd>)
- c) Shift your consumption of non-renewable resources toward renewable resources
- d) Take a “Techno Fast” and turn off your electronic devices for awhile
- e) Reduce your Water Footprint for at least one week (Review the product gallery section of the Water Footprint site (<http://waterfootprint.org/en/resources/interactive-tools/product-gallery/>). Identify one product that you regularly consume and one option that you have for reducing



your water footprint. E.g. reducing your consumption of meat, occasionally drinking tea rather than coffee. Once you have selected the option, try it for one week).

Submit a half-page summary of the activity you selected and explain why you chose this. Include a comment on whether you could see yourself persisting with this lifestyle choice or generating another option that you feel you could live with.

**5) Interdependence Map (this will be initiated in class and continued on your own) (12 points) (Due October 15th)**

Your map should include at least 8 primary webs of interdependence with considerable detail on at least three areas. Additionally, you will investigate the interdependence chain for at least one item on your map. For example, if you drink coffee, you could trace the chain of interdependence for the coffee back to the place where the coffee is grown.

**6) Personal Inquiry Project – (5 points) (by October 29th)**

You will investigate some aspect of sustainable happiness, sustainability education or positive psychology that intrigues you. Articles and websites have been provided to make this search easily accessible. You may find it helpful to consider a question that has arisen for you as a result of the course readings or activities. E.g. How could positive psychology help with classroom management? How can adventure education make sustainability interesting to high school students? How do we teach hope and optimism about the environment given the serious environmental challenges we face?

Write a 1-2 page summary (double spaced) that summarizes your question, the article(s) you read and the web site(s) you explored. Post your summary in the online discussion section designated for this week.

**7) Gratitude Activity – (5 points) (due November 19)**

Happiness research consistently supports the value of expressing gratitude and appreciation. This activity will assist you to explore the benefits of gratitude.

Choose **ONE** of the gratitude activities listed below.

Gratitude Letter – Write a gratitude letter to someone who has been especially kind to you and has not been properly thanked and then deliver it to him or her in person, or send it to them. Read it to them if you'd like. Submit a one-page summary of your experience.

Gratitude Journal – Count up 5 things that you are grateful for per day for 5 days. Write these up and include a one-page summary of your experience during the week. You may want to record your experience daily rather than trying to recall your experience at the end of the week. Submit a one-page summary of your experience and the activity.

Appreciation – Every day for 5 days, make a point of thanking people whom you normally take for granted. Submit a one-page summary of your experience and the activity.

Artistic Expression – Create a song or work of art that expresses appreciation. Submit the song or work of art (or a picture if it).

**Late Assignment Policy** – You each have two “Get Off the Hook” vouchers which permits you to submit any written assignment late (no more than 2 days late) with each voucher. You may use only two vouchers during the course. Other assignments are expected to be on time unless you have discussed this with me. One point is taken away for each day late. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that any assignments submitted electronically, or otherwise, have been received by the instructor.

ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE
Sustainable happiness footprint chart	September 17
Happiness Interview	September 24
Genuine Wealth Activity	October 1
Shifting Consumption Activity	October 8
Interdependence Map	October 15
Sustainable Happiness Project Plan	October 22
Personal Inquiry summary	By October 29
Gratitude Activity	November 19
Sustainable Happiness Project	November 26
Lesson Plan	December 3

## STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with special needs should contact the Jennifer Keeping AccessAbility Centre on campus. Arrangements for accommodations will be made in collaboration with the Centre.

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are asked to review the section on ‘plagiarism’ found in the ‘current student’ section of Cape Breton University’s web site. Any assignment that is found to not meet these principles of academic integrity will receive a mark of zero.

## A NOTE ON WRITING QUALITY

B.Ed candidates, as post baccalaureate students, are expected to demonstrate a high standard of writing. Students who find writing difficult should consult the Writing Centre on campus for additional instruction and writing support.

## **PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

The B.Ed. program is an intense and demanding program of professional preparation in which teacher candidates are expected to demonstrate high levels of both academic and professional integrity. Such integrity is demonstrated in part by commitment to and attendance at all classes, workshops, tutorials, and practicum activities. Students are expected to come to class prepared to actively engage through discussion and participation.

Because the course is experiential in focus, and because assignments will draw from in-class activities and discussion, failure to attend regularly and/or on time will have an adverse effect on your learning and course grade. Students are expected to stay for the full duration of the class unless there are legitimate circumstances that dictate otherwise.

Except in the case of illness, religious observance, or for a compassionate reason, attendance at class is expected. Please notify the instructor by e-mail if you must miss a class for one of these reasons. Consistent with University policy on evaluated tasks acceptable documentation may be required if assignments/evaluated tasks are missed due to absence. Students are responsible for any missed materials and when acceptable documentation is received a mutually acceptable alternate arrangement for evaluation will be made. Penalties may be incurred unless alternate arrangements are made prior to the student's absence.

Please be respectful of the instructional space with regard to cell phones, music players, notebook computers or any other device that may be distracting for you, your colleagues or me. You are preparing to take your place in a professional community of teachers and are expected to demonstrate sensitivity for and adherence to the norms of respectful, polite and professional conduct

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

Please review CBU's inclement weather policy by going to <http://www.cbu.ca/pdfs/3-1-Weather.pdf>. Note that information on campus closures may be accessed by calling 539-5300 and selecting "9". If one of our classes is cancelled due to bad weather and we have an assignment due that day, the assignment should still be submitted to me using *Moodle*.