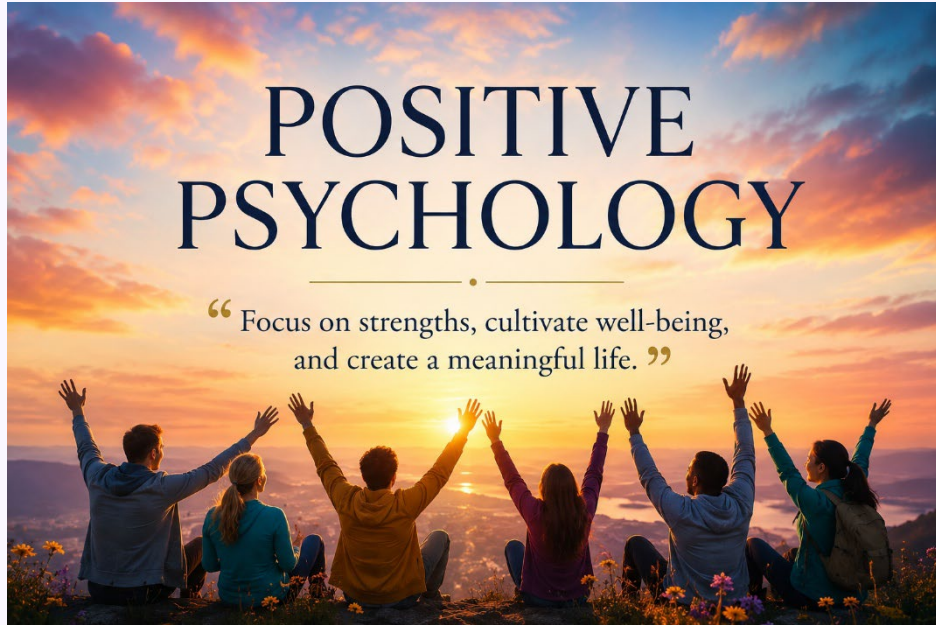



Sul Ross State University – Behavioral and Social Science Department PSY 3303 Course Syllabus



Course Title:	Positive Psychology
Required Texts (1):	Perusall (in Blackboard): Dabbs, K. (2024). <i>You belong here: The power of being seen, heard, and valued on your own terms.</i> Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
Contact Information:	Alicia M. Trotman, PhD – alicia.trotman@sulross.edu
Student Hours:	By appointment: https://calendly.com/amtsulross/summer-hours
Prerequisites:	PSY 1302

Description

My name is Professor T, Dr. T, or Ms. T—as long as it is a respectful acknowledgement—and I am surprised that I am teaching this course. Why? I am a humanistic psychologist, so I recognize the full gamut of what it means to be human: the good, the bad, and the ugly. All of these experiences contribute to our ontological refinement and growth. Our failures soften the edges of our successes. So, teaching only the positive end of the spectrum is new for me. However, that does not mean we cannot learn to find the positive lining within every story, or smile when life becomes difficult. How can we do this? Learning this material will give you the language and processes you need to be-come your best self, even when everything around you seems to be at its worst. This course invites you to notice the strengths already living within you, and to understand how those strengths can unfold through your lived experience.

The light  resides in you.

¹ OpenAI. (2026). Positive psychology [AI-generated image created with ChatGPT, GPT-5.5]. ChatGPT.

Course Objective:

This course is designed to introduce you to the psychological study of positive outcomes and experiences in psychology. We will study the science of the conditions and processes that enable individuals to thrive (not just survive), and groups and institutions to function at optimal levels. We will explore the research behind the concepts and practices, and learn the cognitions and emotions that promote well-being.

Student Learning Outcomes:

Throughout the course, you will be encouraged to think about how the research presented can shed light on what is occurring in your own lives. Briefly stated, the objectives of this course include (though are not limited to):

1. Given that we tend to move towards blame and evidence-poor criticism, students will identify the human strengths and virtues that help people live better lives and illustrate how these strengths and virtues have supported their own lives.
Method of Formative Assessment: Assignments, *Perusall* Assignments, and Final Exam
2. Given that mental illness appears to foreground mostly on what's wrong, students will examine what's right and demonstrate the ability to read, evaluate, and discuss positive psychology research.
Method of Formative Assessment: Journals, Assignments, and *Perusall* Assignments
3. Given our bias towards negative information, or thinking that the positive outcome is the exception, students will analyze positive emotional and cognitive states and processes and provide concrete solutions to restoring balance and well-being.
Method of Formative Assessment: Discussions, *Perusall* Assignments, and Final Exam
4. Given the human tendency to remain in survival mode and respond more readily to potential threats than potential rewards, students will analyze behaviors that generate positive outcomes and identify approaches for transforming behaviors to enhance life circumstances for both the individual and the collective.
Method of Formative Assessment: Discussions, Journals, *Perusall* Assignments
5. Given the importance of adopting a balanced perspective on every human's experience, this course will provide space for students to evaluate themselves from a positive psychology perspective. You can practice this discovery by consistently posting comments and working as a member of our team to explore dilemmas in our *Perusall* assignments, your journal entries and assignments.
Method of Formative Assessment: Discussions, Journals, *Perusall* Assignments

Course Requirements:

1. The text must be obtained (DIGITAL, and older edition is acceptable).
2. Respect for students and lecturer must be maintained at all times when we meet online and in person. Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. We will do our best to embrace the difficulty of fruitfully discussing controversial and sensitive issues. Respect is a basic human characteristic that entitles each person to their own rights and identity. It also helps to nurture a healthy learning environment. If you recognize that respecting others may be a problem, please be courteous and alert me or more suitable personnel (e.g. Sul Ross State University psychologists, family members, lecturers, close friends) and or refer to the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).
3. During the course of this class, you may have strong emotional/psychological reactions to the course material and/or discussions. If you feel that you are having difficulty with the learning environment,

please discuss this with me immediately before continuing the course. Counseling and Accessibility Services (<https://www.sulross.edu/counseling-and-accessibility-services/>) can provide brief, short-term individual and group counseling or refer you to off-campus providers. You have already paid for these services through your Student Service Fee, whether you use them or not.

SRSU Accessibility and Disability Services:

SRSU Accessibility Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact counseling@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall, room 112, and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832.

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/356 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](https://www.timelycare.com/sulross). The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and Sul Ross International students.

Library Services Statement:

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu.

Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty, and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL), ScanIt, and Direct Mail to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

Tutoring Center

- ❖ Tutor.com offers FREE 24/7 online tutoring in over 200 subjects, including specialized support for ESL and ELL learners with native Spanish-speaking tutors.
- ❖ Access Tutor.com via Blackboard: Log in to your Blackboard account to get started anytime, anywhere.

Honoring Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Other instances of academic misconduct are lying in connection with your academic work, cheating, misrepresenting facts and/or collusion and **using open AI** sources unless **permission is expressly given** for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more

serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall. All these are contrary to the purpose of any educational institution and will be dealt with **most severely** to the extent of the university's disciplinary policy and/or through legal action if indicated. An instructor who determines that a student has been dishonest academically can at a minimum issue no credit for the assignment/exam, and/or pursue more severe penalties, including but not limited to failing the course. Further information about *Academic Honesty* can be read in the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

In this course, we may use generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) to examine the ways in which these kinds of tools may inform our exploration of the topics of the class. You will be informed as to when and how these tools will be used, along with guidance for attribution if/as needed. **Your use of generative AI tools must be properly documented and cited for any work submitted in this course.** Any use of generative AI tools outside of these parameters constitutes plagiarism and will be treated as such.

Marketable Skills

1. Speaking Effectively: Students will demonstrate competency in public speaking and communicating scientific information to diverse audiences.
2. Describing Feelings: Students will demonstrate empathic or active listening and conversational skills, and/or write clearly about their affective stance, respectfully attuned to the needs of their audiences.
3. Identifying Resources: Students will demonstrate the aptitude to locate, organize and evaluate the credibility of information from multiple sources.
4. Analyzing: Students will demonstrate ability to examine the underlying issues of a scientific problem, attending to the pertinent details and creating a plan of action, recognizing ambiguity and complexity as essential components.

Observing Class guidelines

Class Participation

This is a course that requires online interaction and discussion because it is an online asynchronous course. Your active, daily participation in this course is essential and required in order to be successful, including checking email daily and Black Board announcements, keeping up with your *Perusall* reading assignments, including commenting, and participating in online discussions. **Class attendance IS REQUIRED and participation is important.** Class participation and *Perusall* activity will be worth **31%** of the final grade. The percentage is considerable so your engaged presence will *help* your ability to complete all of assignments for this class.

Distance Education Statement. Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires a secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

Regular communications with the professor: The most efficient way of contacting me is by email or via *Messages* in Blackboard. It is essential that you keep me current on your progress and any difficulties you may be having so that I can respond in real time to support your success. GENERAL QUESTIONS are to be posted to *Messages* in Blackboard. For PERSONAL or PRIVATE ISSUES email me at alicia.trotman@sulross.edu or call me at 432-837-8147. I strive to respond as soon as possible. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours during the work week, please resend your email. If you do need to meet with me during student office hours, you can schedule a meeting with me here (<https://calendly.com/amtsulross/summer-office-hours>). Please note that my student office hours are limited during summer semesters so make an appointment as soon as you can.

Course Behaviors - Respect and Disruptions: Watch the VIDEO on NETTIQUETTE - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk_Zv7nB8 and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80uRE972uQ0>

All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the [Student Handbook](#) and the [Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog](#) and for abiding by the [University rules and regulations](#). Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize themselves with the requirements of such laws.

You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts in this web-based course in the same manner as in a face-to-face course. Please treat each other with dignity and respect and avoid disruptive behaviors. You are responsible for knowing what behaviors are acceptable versus unacceptable as referred to in the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

Late Assignments

You are expected to meet assignment, quiz, discussion, and journal deadlines. Journal posts submitted after their due dates will be marked as zero. *Perusall* readings and discussions will be marked as zero after **Wednesday July 1st**. Assignments will be reduced by 10% of the overall assignment for the first day of lateness and 40% for lateness beyond the first day.

EVALUATION

Video Introduction & Syllabus Quiz – This is an asynchronous class, so we are not meeting as a class at any time during the semester. As a result, I will only see your products through your work and not have any idea how *you are uniquely you!* The video introduction helps to give the context I need. The syllabus quiz is to make sure you did not gloss over this... but actually read it! Therefore, I expect you to know what is expected of you in this class, and you know what is expected of me as your instructor.

Assignments – These ten (10) assignments are marked as (A) in the course schedule. These assignments are designed to challenge you to use your critical thinking skills, and to gain a stronger understanding of positive psychology perspectives.

Discussions – These two (2) discussions are marked as (D) in the course schedule. Both of these discussions are grouped, which means you will post within a small group in the class. You must post and respond to all these discussions in a timely manner, as shown in the course schedule. ***If not, you will receive a zero after the posted due date.*** A rubric is provided to assess how discussions are scored. All discussions must be completed by **Wednesday July 1st**.

Journals – These five (5) journal entries are marked as (J) in the course schedule. Your journal entries will not be shared with other students in the class and will be kept confidential, so you can choose to write freely. Your journal is available for the duration of the course but must be completed by their due dates. ***They will be marked as zero after their due dates.*** A rubric is provided to assess how journal entries are scored.

Perusall Readings & Discussions – There are 14 readings that will be uploaded into *Perusall*. Each reading will be marked as an assignment in *Perusall*. *Perusall* automatically grades your activity and tracks how much time you spend reading the chapter, how many highlights or notes made, commenting or responding to another's comment, and assesses the quality of your comments. There is a pre-assignment called 'Making the most of learning with Perusall' that provides information on how to use, and how to learn best with *Perusall*. The scores in *Perusall* range from 0 to 3. You can track your progress as you read through the assigned readings. Your grades are automatically synced to Blackboard at the end of the semester. However, I still enter them manually into Blackboard at the end of the semester to ensure the grades were accurately recorded.

Grading

Students are expected to complete reading assignments prior to class sessions and to engage in thoughtful discussions in light of these assignments.

Grading:	1000 points total	Final Grade
Video Introduction & Syllabus Quiz	70 points	7%
Assignments	100 (20 @ 10 assignments)	20%
Blackboard Discussions	60 (30 @ 2 discussions)	6%
Journals	360 (30 @ 12 journals)	36%
Perusall Readings & Discussions	210 (15 @ 14 readings)	21%
Participation:	100 points	10%

Course Outline

(This schedule and the topics listed below are subject to modification by the instructor.)

START HERE

Days	Content
May 27th	Getting Started Activities - Syllabus Quiz, Introduction Video

Unit 1 – Introduction to Positive Psychology

Days	Content
May 28th to MONDAY June 1st	Introduction to Positive Psychology <i>May 29th: LAST Day for late registration and schedule changes</i>
Homework	(J1) The Purpose and PERMA Profiler, and “Second Wind” (A1) What You Want to Experience

Unit 2 – Measures of Human Strengths

Days	Content
June 1 st to THURSDAY June 4th	Classifications and Measures of Human Strengths
Homework	(A2) Assignment 2 (J2) Journal 2
June 4 th to MONDAY June 8th	Discovering and Developing Your Strengths
Homework	(A3) Assignment 3 (J3) Journal 3

Unit 3 – You Belong Here!

Days	Content
June 8 th to THURSDAY June 11th	We Are All Outsiders & Belong to Yourself Your Four Identities & Lived Identity
Homework	(A4) Assignment 4 (D1) Discussion 1
June 11 th to MONDAY June 15th	Origin Stories & Learned Identity Guiding Principles & Lingering Identity
Homework	(A5) Assignment 5 (J4) Journal 4
June 15 th to THURSDAY June 18th	Sunset Old Stories & Loved Identity Build a New Table & Conclusion: Come as YOU Are
Homework	(A6) Assignment 6 (J5) Journal 5 (J6) Journal 6

UNIT 4: Positive Emotional & Cognitive States

Days	Content
June 18 th to MONDAY June 22 nd	Embracing Positive Emotions and Positive Affect <i>June 18th: LAST Day to withdraw from the course with grade of 'W'</i>
Homework	(J7) Journal 7 (J8) Journal 8
June 22 nd to THURSDAY June 25 th	Optimism, Hope, and Living with Purpose (2 readings)
Homework	(A7) Assignment 7 (A8) Assignment 8 (J9) Journal 9

Unit 5 – Prosocial Behaviors

Days	Content
June 25 th to MONDAY June 29 th	Acts of Kindness, Empathy, Gratitude, and Forgiveness (2 readings)
Homework	(A9) Assignment 9 (J10) Journal 10 (D2) Discussion 2

Unit 6 – Positive Environments

Days	Content
June 29 th to WEDNESDAY July 1 st	The Me/We Balance: Building Better Communities
Homework	(A10) Assignment 10 (J11) Journal 11 (J12) Journal 12
Wednesday July 1st	All Perusal readings and discussions, and class assignments must be completed.