

1. Course: Happiness Fulfilment and Bliss

- Instructor: Prof. Shailendra Raj Mehta, O.P. Jindal Distinguished University Professor, JGU.
- 3-credit course.
- Prerequisites: None
- Undergraduate and Graduate students are welcome.

2. Overview

Welcome to this transformative course on Happiness, Fulfillment, and Bliss. Designed to dramatically accelerate your progress in life and help you achieve your full potential, this course offers a unique and integrated perspective. We will move beyond conventional approaches by combining insights from modern and Indian psychology, alongside Western and Indian philosophy, providing you with deep insights not typically found elsewhere. Our primary objective is to equip you with practical tools to deepen your experience of happiness, fulfillment, and bliss.

The course "Happiness, Fulfillment, Bliss" is a comprehensive, multidisciplinary program designed to provide college students from diverse backgrounds with a deep understanding of happiness, fulfillment, and bliss. By integrating insights from positive psychology, philosophy, and empirical research, alongside perspectives from India and other Eastern nations, this course aims to offer both theoretical knowledge and practical applications to enhance students' well-being.

You will explore fundamental concepts such as mindset, understanding how your perception of the world (through selection, relationship, and meaning) shapes your reality and enables a growth mindset to overcome challenges and foster success. We will examine emotional intelligence, teaching you to recognize, label, and manage emotions within yourself and others, fostering empathy and effective decision-making. A significant focus will be placed on focus itself, exploring its importance in an information-rich world, identifying sensory and emotional distractions, and providing strategies like Ikigai and skill stacking to enhance your concentration and purpose. Furthermore, we will examine physical and mental health through the lens of modern science and ancient traditions like Ayurveda, covering essential pillars like sleep, nutrition, exercise, and stress modulation through meditation, recognizing that a healthy body is crucial for overall well-being and achieving your full potential. Finally, we will deconstruct the five layers of being (physical, emotional, mental, intuitive, and spiritual) from Indian philosophy, understanding how their interconnectedness influences your ability to live a well-integrated and blissful life. This is an experiential course where you will directly engage with these practices, aiming for deep transformation and helping you realize capabilities, self-efficacy, and accomplishment effortlessly.

A lot of thought, engagement and reading has gone into the preparation of the course. Much of the material is unique, not to be found anywhere else in this form. Everything is based on published scientific research in behavioral psychology or neurosciences, or on the deep reflective traditions of Modern Philosophy, Indian Philosophy and Indian Contemplative Traditions.

Even though it has been taught several times, the course is constantly evolving, based on my engagement with teaching and my continued process of reading and reflection. For this reason, I am deeply grateful to my students and to my co-instructors for their feedback. It is a distillation of a lifetime of engaging with these issues and working with senior leaders around the world. Therefore the enclosed session flow and reading is only an approximate *ex-ante* guide, subject to evolution based on interactions with you.

2.1.Objectives

- The objectives of the course are:
- Understand key concepts and theories of happiness, fulfillment, and bliss.
- Explore the psychological, social, and biological bases of well-being. Apply strategies to enhance personal and communal well-being.
- Critically evaluate research methods and studies on well-being.
- Develop personal philosophies and practices that promote a fulfilling and blissful life.

2.2.Teaching Methods

Various teaching methods will be used:

- Lectures and Readings: These provide foundational knowledge and current research findings necessary for understanding the course material.
- Guest Lecture: An outside expert will be invited, offering students diverse perspectives on happiness and well-being.
- Group Discussions: Critical thinking and personal reflection are encouraged through group discussions, where students can share their thoughts and learn from their peers. Experiential Activities: Practical exercises such as mindfulness sessions, gratitude journals, and happiness projects allow students to apply theoretical concepts in real-life situations.
- Assessment: A mix of quizzes, reflection papers, and a capstone project ensures that students engage with the material in a meaningful way and can demonstrate their understanding.

3. Class Rules

Of particular interest are the class rules:

- This class is a three hour laboratory for transformation.
- Everything about this class – its three hour format, its 15 minute break followed by meditation and its discussion format is designed for transformation
- It requires a safe, structured place for intense discussions
- It will require everyone's full attention. No sleeping in class. Drink a cup of coffee before coming to class or during the break if necessary
- This class will be a structured dialogue. I have a lot of material to share with you, but you can stop me at any time and ask questions. In fact, questions are encouraged.
- We will require respectful attention to each other, so there will be only one conversation at any given time.
- It will be a three hour class with a 15 minute break in between.
- The break will be followed by a 10 minute beginners Vipassana meditation in every class.
- No electronic media (laptops, iPads, phones, etc...) or other distractions will be allowed. Please take notes in the most cognitively effective way, that is by hand. Electronic media may only be used for presentations.
- We will start on time. If you come in late or leave the class (except during the break) for any reason, you will lose attendance for that day.
- No exceptions. Period.

4. Course Policies

4.1. Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Learning and knowledge production of any kind is a collaborative process. Collaboration demands an ethical responsibility to acknowledge who we have learnt from, what we have learned, and how reading and learning from others have helped us shape our own ideas. Even our own ideas demand an acknowledgement of the sources and processes through which those ideas have emerged. Thus, all ideas must be supported by citations. All ideas borrowed from articles, books, journals, magazines, case laws, statutes, photographs, films, paintings, etc., in print or online, must be credited with the original source. If the source or inspiration of your idea is a friend, a casual chat, something that you overheard, or heard being discussed at a conference or in class, even they must be duly credited. If you paraphrase or directly quote from a web source in the examination, presentation or essays, the source must be acknowledged. The university has a framework to deal with cases of plagiarism. All form of plagiarism will be taken seriously by the University and prescribed sanctions will be imposed on those who commit plagiarism.

4.2. Disability Support and Accommodation Requirements

JGU endeavours to make all its courses accessible to students. In accordance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (2016), the JGU Disability Support Committee (DSC) has identified conditions that could hinder a student's overall well-being. These include physical and mobility related difficulties, visual and hearing impairment, mental health conditions and intellectual/learning difficulties e.g., dyslexia, dyscalculia. Students with any known disability needing academic and other support are required to register with the Disability Support Committee (DSC) by following the procedure specified at <https://jgu.edu.in/disability-support-committee/>

Students who need support may register any time during the semester up until a month before the end-semester examination begins. Those students who wish to continue receiving support from the previous semester, must re-register within the first month of a semester. Last-minute registrations and support might not be possible as sufficient time is required to make the arrangements for support.

The DSC maintains strict confidentiality about the identity of the student and the nature of their disability and the same is requested from faculty members and staff as well. The DSC takes a strong stance against in-class and out-of-class references made about a student's disability without their consent and disrespectful comments referring to a student's disability.

All general queries are to be addressed to disabilitysupportcommittee@jgu.edu.in

4.3. Safe Space Pledge

This course may discuss a range of issues and events that might result in distress for some students. Discussions in the course might also provoke strong emotional responses. To make sure that all students collectively benefit from the course, and do not feel disturbed due to either the content of the course or the conduct of the discussions. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all within the classroom to pledge to maintain respect towards our peers. "This does not mean that you need to feel restrained about what you feel and what you want to say.

Conversely, this is about creating a safe space where everyone can speak and learn without inhibitions and fear. This responsibility lies not only with students but also with the instructor.

P.S. The course instructor, as part of introducing the course manual, will discuss the scope of the Safe Space Pledge with the class.

5. Sessions

Session 1	Laboratory for Transformation rules. What are we passionate about? Setting the stage. The Nature of our Being. Integration.	(Vallerand, 2010), (Basu, 2011),
Session 2	The neurotransmitters dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and endorphin. The Nature of Craving. The Junction Point Model: The Nature of Enlightenment. Elvis. Glenn Gould. Vivekananda.	(Carr, 2010), (Thilly, 2022), (Pearlman, 2016), (Alter, 2018), (Lembke, 2021)
Session 3	Mindset, Nature of Colour Perception, Schemas, Growth Mindset, Meaning, The Story of Andrew Carnegie	(Pastoureau, 2018), (Dweck, 2017), (Frankl, 2013), (Carnegie & Van Dyke, 2019)
Session 4	The SRM Model, Andrew Carnegie, The nature of Focus, The Three Idiots Exercise, Trust, Dunbar Number, Weak Ties	(Carnegie & Van Dyke, 2019), (Green et al., 2001), (Granovetter, 1995),
Session 5	Focus, Top down and Bottom up Thinking	(Kahneman, 2011), (Goleman, 2013)
session 6	Ikigai, Skill stacking	(Goleman, 2013)
Session 7	Difficult Conversations	(Stone et al., 2023)
Session 8	Emotional Intelligence	(Brackett, 2019), (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009), (Goleman, 2006)
Session 9	Exercise	(Lieberman, 2021)
Session 10	Health	(Chopra, 2001)
Session 11	Meditation Theory Vipassana and introduction to TM	(Kabat-Zinn, 2016), (Kabat-Zinn & Hanh, 2013), (Maharishi, 2001)
Session 12	How to do the Impossible, Mahatma Gandhi and the Freedom Movement, Rana Dattatreya, and the construction of the Vivekananda Rock Memorial.	(Guha, 2019), (Trust & Ranada, 2015)
Session 13	Virtues, Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics	(Crisp, 2014)
Session 14	Design as a Way of Life	(Kelley & Kelley, 2013)
Session 15	Summary and Review	

6. Overall Evaluation

	Assignment	Marks	Modality/Format	Dates
1	Term Paper 1	25 marks	Individual and Take home essay based	23rd September 2025
2	Reflection Sheets	25 marks	In Class Reflections	Submitted at the end of each class
3	Group Project	20 marks	Live presentation by the group	TBA
4	Final Exam	30 marks	In-class closed book individual exam	TBA

6.1. Term Paper

This is an individual take-home essay based assignment for 25 marks. Write out a 500 word reflective essay based on the following prompt.

“Money, success, and pleasure contribute to happiness, but do they guarantee fulfillment?” Critically analyze this statement using real-life examples. Where do you stand on this issue, and why? Bring in perspectives discussed in class while analyzing.

Formatting Guidelines:

- Font: Times New Roman, size 12, double-spaced
- Format: Mention your full name, student ID and batch and program in the beginning of your document.
- File Naming: Please name your files that has your name and your program (eg - MansiRathourBBA or MansiRathourBALLB, etc.)
- File Type: Word Document

Note: The assignment would be put through AI & Plagiarism software. Please submit your original work by the deadline given. Plagiarised or AI generated content will not be evaluated and will be given a "0" or fail mark/grade. Please be extremely careful about this. Do not resort to any unfair and unethical means for completion of assignments.

Evaluation - Your review will be assessed based on:

- Depth of Reflection – Thoughtful engagement with personal or observational experiences, demonstrating deep introspection and connection to course themes.
- Critical Engagement – Thoughtful reflection and original perspectives.
- Clarity and Structure – Logical flow, coherence, and well-supported arguments.
- Formatting and Style – Strict adherence to Formatting and Style Guidelines.

Key Things to remember:

- Marks – 25
- Format – Individual take home essay
- Deadline – by 23rd September 2025, 11:59 pm
- Submissions – on UMS

6.2. Reflection Sheets

6.2.1. Before Class Begins

When you arrive in class, you will receive a pre-printed reflection form. This form has two halves: one for Key Learnings and one for Application in Your Life. Keep this form in front of you throughout the three-hour session along with your notebook. You do not need to fill it out during the class itself—your primary task during the session is to be fully present, engaged in the dialogue, and attentive to the material being discussed. However, I encourage you to jot down brief notes, key words, or page numbers from your notebook that might serve as anchors when you return to complete the form at the end. Think of these as breadcrumbs that will help you retrace your thinking later. Do not worry about being neat or comprehensive in these interim notes; they are simply for your own reference.

6.2.2. Completing the Form: Key Learnings (First Half)

In the final 10 minutes of class, before we conclude, take the first half of your form and write down the key learnings from today's session. Ask yourself: What concept, framework, or insight from today's three hours stood out to me? How have I progressed in my meditation? What shifted in my understanding, or what became clearer? You might write about a specific example the instructor gave, a perspective shared by a classmate during discussion, or a connection you made between today's material and something from a previous session. Be specific rather than generic—instead of writing "learned about emotional intelligence," write something like "understood that labeling emotions precisely (not just 'sad' but 'disappointed' or 'frustrated') actually changes how I can respond to them."

Your response should be 4-6 sentences. If you found yourself resisting or disagreeing with something discussed today, you may also note that here—resistance often signals an important edge of your learning. Write in your own words; this is not a test of whether you memorized what I said, but rather a record of what *you* understood and found meaningful.

6.2.3. Completing the Form: Application in Your Life (Second Half)

Once you have completed the first half, move to the second half of the form and write your response to this question: How will you apply this learning in your life in the next week? This requires you to think concretely. Identify a specific situation, relationship, decision, or habit where today's learning is directly relevant. Your response should be 4-6 sentences. For example, if today's session was on difficult conversations, you might write: "I will practice the skills we discussed when I speak with my roommate about the noise in our shared space this Thursday evening. I will prepare by remembering the 'three conversations' framework and will focus on understanding their perspective before defending my own position." Be as concrete as possible: name the person, situation, or timeframe. You should also note any potential obstacles or habits of yours that might get in the way: "I know I tend to interrupt when I'm anxious, so I will set an intention to pause and listen fully before responding." Your response should be 4-6 sentences. This is not about achieving perfection or guaranteeing success—it is about making a conscious, specific commitment to practice.

6.2.4. Submission and Records

Once you have completed both halves of the form, you will submit it to me before you leave class today. Before you submit them, you should take a photograph of it for your records. These forms will be kept in a file for you, and you will receive a grade on each individual form. These forms serve two critical purposes: first, they help *you* create a detailed record of your learning and practice throughout the course that you can review later; second, they provide *me* with insight into what has resonated with each of you and where you might need additional support. In the final weeks of the course, you will have the opportunity to review all of your accumulated reflection forms as you prepare your final comprehensive reflection assignment. At that point, you will see patterns in your learning, evidence of how your understanding has evolved, and concrete examples of applications you have attempted—all of which will ground your final synthesis in lived experience rather than abstract theorizing. Treat each form as an honest record of your engagement with the material and your commitment to integration.

6.3. Group Project

This is a groups project assignment, where each group (5-8 members) should explore and present on a topic related to happiness, fulfillment, and bliss from a multidisciplinary lens. Each group will prepare a 10 min presentation followed by a 5 min discussion and Q&A space. Try to include case-studies, real-world examples, multimedia elements, and interactive components to make your presentation engaging.

Group allocation and dates for presentation:

- Students are encouraged to create and form their own groups by having an inclusive and ethical representation (gender, age, different programs, batches, etc.) With diversity and different skill set of students belonging to varied disciplinary training, you can bring in multidisciplinary perspectives in your group project. Each group should consist of 5-8 members.
- Finalize your groups and inform the Assistant Instructor by 7th October 2025.

- All members of the group will receive the same common marks unless an individual has not attended any preparation meeting or is absent on the day of the final presentation of the group. In such cases, no marks would be given to the said student.
- Once the groups have been formed, students should consult with Prof. Devyani Mourya and confirm on their dates and time for presentation by 1st November, 2025.

Possible themes - this is only a suggestive list of themes/topics. You may explore additional topics as long as it is aligned with the course.

- The Science of Happiness: What do psychology and neuroscience say?
- Eastern vs. Western Conceptions of Happiness: Contrasts and Commonalities
- Digital Age and Well-being: How Technology Affects Our Happiness
- The Role of Art and Creativity in Fulfillment
- Work, Productivity, and Happiness: Lessons from Different Professions
- Community, Relationships, and the Pursuit of a Meaningful Life

Evaluation - Your review will be assessed based on:

- Content Depth and Relevance (10 marks) – Clear understanding of the topic, strong connection to course themes, and well-researched insights.
- Application & Analysis (5 marks) – Effective use of real-world examples, critical thinking.
- Engagement and Presentation Skills (5 marks) – Effective communication, audience engagement, and clarity in delivery.

Key Things to remember:

- Marks – 20 (common for the entire group unless one is absent or not worked)
- Format – live in-class presentation by the group (10 mins for presentation and 5 mins for discussion)
- Submissions – send the PPT file prior to date of presentation to your course instructor and have it ready with you to present on the fixed date and time (date and time to be confirmed with Mansi Rathour for the same).

Deadlines:

- By 5th April or so – create your own groups (5-8 members)
- By 5th May or – confirm your dates and time of presentation

6.4. Final Exam

This would be an individual closed book examination for 30 marks. It will be an 1.5 – 2 hour closed book exam conducted in-class on 18th May 2026 (approximately). A set of prescribed readings (8-10) will be shared with you a month prior for the preparation of this final exam. The questions would be designed mainly from this set of prescribed readings while also bringing in personal reflections generated from classroom discussions. You will have a range of short answer questions (350-400 words) and long answer questions (600-700 words).

Syllabus

- Prescribed text/readings (8-10)
- Personal insights from classroom discussions

Note: Resorting to any kind of unfair or unethical means while the exam will lead to “0” or fail mark/grade. Please be extremely careful about this. Do not resort to any unfair and unethical means for completion of assignments.

Key Things to remember:

- Marks – 30
- Format – closed book exam in-class, pen and paper exam, long (600-700) and short (350-400) answer questions
- Duration – 1.5-2 hour

Deadline:

- By 4th October – you will receive the prescribed list of readings/texts to prepare for this exam
- 5th November – in class closed book final exam for 1.5-2 hours

6.5.Grading

Percentage	Grade	Value	Description
80+	O	8	Outstanding – Exceptional knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and extraordinary critical and analytical ability
75 – 79	A+	7.5	Excellent - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, thorough understanding of issues; ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles and critical and analytical ability
70 – 74	A	7	Very Good - Sound knowledge of the subject matter, excellent organizational capacity, ability to synthesize ideas, rules and principles, critically analyze existing materials and originality in thinking and presentation
65 – 69	A-	6	Good - Good understanding of the subject matter, ability to identify issues and provide balanced solutions to problems and good critical and analytical skills
60 – 64	B+	5	Fair – Average understanding of the subject matter, limited ability to identify issues and provide solutions to problems and reasonable critical and analytical skills
55 – 59	B	4	Acceptable - Adequate knowledge of the subject matter to go to the next level of study and reasonable critical and analytical skills.
50 – 54	B-	3	Marginal - Limited knowledge of the subject matter and irrelevant use of materials and, poor critical and analytical skills
45 – 49	P1	2	Pass 1 – Pass with basic understanding of the subject matter
40 – 44	P2	1	Pass 2 – Pass with rudimentary understanding of the subject matter
<40	F	0	Fail - Poor comprehension of the subject matter; poor critical and analytical skills and marginal use of the relevant materials. Will require repeating the course

Absent	Ab	0	Absent - "Extenuating circumstances" preventing the student from taking the end- semester, or re-sit, examination as the case may be; the Vice Dean (Examinations) at their discretion assign the "Ab" grade. If an "Ab" grade is assigned, the student would appear for the end-semester, or re-sit examination, as the case may be, as and when the subsequent opportunity is provided by the University.
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7. Course Professor



Dr. Shailendra Raj Mehta is the O.P. Jindal Distinguished University Professor at O.P. Jindal Global University (one of the three private universities recognized as Institutions of Eminence by the Government of India) and Distinguished Visiting Professor, at Asia School of Business (set up jointly by Sloan School, MIT and the Central Bank of Malaysia) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. His prior appointments were President and Director of MICA and Distinguished Professor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Chairman of the Board of Management at Auro University where he was Acting Vice Chancellor and Distinguished Professor of Strategy, and as Provost & Vice Chancellor of Ahmedabad University. He returned to India in 2006/7 to head the collaboration between Duke CE (Duke University's Corporate Education Arm) and IIM-Ahmedabad as Regional Managing Director for India, West Asia, and the Middle East and as Visiting Professor of Business Policy at IIM-Ahmedabad. Before that, he was at Purdue University for 16 years, where he taught Economics and Strategic Management. While at Purdue, he co-founded Simulex Inc., a high technology company in the Purdue Research Park. Currently, he is a co-founder of a Fintech startup, S-Ancial, of which he also serves as the Chairman. He is also on the Board of one India's leading publicly traded companies.

Over the years, Dr. Mehta has consulted with and taught senior executives worldwide including executives from North America, Europe, Africa and Asia. The companies that he has worked with at the CEO, CXO or board level include the Bajaj Group, Bharat Petroleum, Black Management Forum of South Africa, Eli Lilly, Genpact, Honeywell, IBM, Infosys, Khazanah (the Sovereign Wealth Fund of Malaysia), Lockheed Martin, Medtronic, Microsoft, P&G, Paynet, Price Waterhouse Coopers, State Bank of India, Tata Group, Vedanta, and many agencies of the Indian, Malaysian and US governments, among others. He has also taught over a thousand Indian Administrative Service, Indian Foreign Service and Indian Revenue Service Officers.

He has done extensive research in the areas of Entrepreneurship, Industrial Organization, Information Economics and Experimental Economics. His research was the subject of a full-length review by the *Economist*. His work on creating world-class universities has been discussed around the world and profiled in over ten languages including Chinese, Russian, French, German and Arabic among others. He has a new book coming out, *Global Governance Futures: Digital Transformation and Democratic Reform*, Routledge Publishers, USA (Taylor and Francis Group), jointly edited with Preeti Shroff, Jagdish Sheth, and John Garrison.

His BA and MA are from Delhi University (St. Stephen's College and Delhi School of Economics respectively), his MPhil is from Balliol College, Oxford, and his PhD is from Harvard.

8. References

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