

Psychology 175: Science of Mindfulness Winter, 2020

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Class Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 12:30 – 1:50 pm, Mandler 1539

Professor Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10 - noon, Rm. 5117 McGill Hall

Supplementary Text: Science of Mindfulness, Ronald D. Siegel
available at: <http://people.math.umass.edu/~rsellis/Honors391AH/2siegel-mindfulness.pdf>

Purpose: This course will review the scientific research surrounding the topic of Mindfulness, which has been approached from multiple disciplines including Buddhism, Positive Psychology, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Neuroscience. Mindfulness has an operational definition of “Paying attention, on purpose, to the present experience, without judgment”, and is intricately related to a variety of very human experiences, including those related to *oneself* -- deep emotions (joy and pain), gratitude, challenging our limiting “stories”, body awareness, as well as to *others* --- compassion, connection and love.

Because Mindfulness is so multi-faceted, with many variables involved, the scientific study of Mindfulness requires rigorous research methods and statistics to carefully parse out the relationships between different variables. **For this reason, a solid understanding (and appreciation) of research methods and statistics is a large focus of this course.** The mathematical modeling aspect of statistics is profound – it is what we humans use to approximate “the truth”.

Format: The first week will consist of me lecturing on Mindfulness as well as the “ins and outs” of statistical methods used to study Mindfulness. The following weeks will consist of everyone reading and discussing research articles (2 to 3 each week) on the topic of Mindfulness, with the emphasis on a different topic each week. For each week, the Tuesday session will be more of an overview on the topic and the papers (with myself leading the discussion).

Thursday will involve a more detailed discussion of the assigned papers, to be led by one of the students (assigned in advance), *although I will be helping you present (since this is difficult material!)*. Students should prepare about a **15 – 20 minute presentation**, and provide a **1- to 4- page summary of the paper**, for all the class to read (and I will provide a template for this). A list of *papers* for each week is provided along with the weekly schedule, *below*.

Grading: The grade for this class will be a weighted average of class participation (40%), your oral presentation (40%) (no slides needed), and the 1- to 4-page summary you write for your week (20%). Regarding *discussion*, because **I expect everyone to contribute, and everyone to have read the papers, I randomly call on people during class.** So, be prepared! *There is no final exam.*

IClicker: I will be using iClicker (see below) to take attendance, and monitor lateness. **Instructions for using iClicker are provided below.** *NOTE: Only ONE absence (or one lateness) will be allowed, after that, it will affect your grade.* Even so, please let me know in advance.

Weekly Schedule

Yellow highlight papers are reviews

Week 1 (Jan 7 and 9): Introduction to Mindfulness and “Basic Statistics”

- 1) Simmons et al, 2011. False-positive psychology: Undisclosed flexibility in data collection and analysis allows presenting anything as significant.

Week 2 (Jan 14 and 16): Psychological Mechanisms of Mindfulness

- 1) Grabovac et al. 2011. Mechanisms of mindfulness: A Buddhist psychological model.
- 2) Wallace & Shapiro, 2006. Mental balance and well-being - Building bridges between Buddhism and western psychology.

Week 3 (Jan 21 and 23): Measuring the “True Self”

- 1) Schlegel et al, 2009. Thine own self true self-concept accessibility and meaning in life.
- 2) Schlegel et al, 2012. To discover or to create-metaphors and the true self.

Week 4 (Jan 28 and Jan 30): Happiness (and is this different from Mindfulness?)

- 1) Veenhoven, 1988. The utility of happiness.
- 2) Myers & Diener, 1995. Who is happy?
- 3) Gilbert & Ebert, 2002. Decisions and Revisions: The affective forecasting of changeable outcomes.

Week 5 (Feb 4 and 6): Gratitude and Positive Psychology

- 1) Seligman et al, 2005. Positive psychology progress.
- 2) Jamieson et al, 2011. Turning the knots in your stomach into bows.
- 3) Chen et al, 2012. Does gratitude always work?

Week 6 (Feb 11 and 13): Compassion

- 1) Goetz et al, 2010. Compassion-An evolutionary analysis and empirical review.
- 2) Condon et al, 2013. Meditation increases compassionate responses to suffering.
- 3) Neff & Vonk, 2009. Self-compassion versus global self-esteem: Two different ways of relating to oneself.

Week 7 (Feb 18 and 20): Empathic Accuracy

- 1) Ickes, 1993. Empathic accuracy.
- 2) Cohen et al, 2012. Eye of the beholder- the individual and dyadic contributions of empathic accuracy and perceived empathic effort to relationship satisfaction.
- 3) Zaki et al, 2015. It takes two- the interpersonal nature of empathic accuracy.

Week 8 (Feb 25 and Feb 27): Meditation and Pain

- 1) Zeidan et al, 2015. Mindfulness meditation-based pain relief employs different neural mechanisms than placebo and sham mindfulness meditation-induced analgesia.
- 2) Zeidan et al, 2016. Mindfulness-meditation-based pain relief is not mediated by endogenous opioids.

Guest lecturer: Jennifer N. Baumgartner, PhD, Department of Anesthesiology, UCSD

Week 9 (Mar 3 and 5): Interoception (How does your body feel?)

- 1) Dunn et al, 2010: Listening to your heart: How interoception shapes emotion experience and intuitive decision making.
- 2) Fox et al, 2012: Meditation experience predicts introspective accuracy.
- 3) Sze et al, 2010: Coherence between emotional experience and physiology: Does body awareness training have an impact?

Week 10 (Mar 10 and 12): Oxytocin and the “Tend and Befriend” System

- 1) Kosfeld et al, 2005-Oxytocin increases trust in humans.
- 2) Bartz et al, 2010. Oxytocin selectively improves empathic accuracy.
- 3) Nave et al, 2015. Does oxytocin increase trust in humans? A critical review of research.

iClickers: I will be using iClicker to *take attendance*, and to start each class with a thought-provoking question, and I will share aggregated responses with the class. Your individual responses will be anonymous. You can buy a new iClicker or an old one. The mobile application, iClicker REEF will **not** be allowed.

Register: You must register your clicker through the course website (which is on **Canvas**: canvas.ucsd.edu). Look for “iClicker Registration” in the navigation menu on the left side of the page. Click on that link, and you will be prompted to enter your iClicker Remote ID (found on the bar code on the back of the clicker). When complete, you will see the clicker ID and the date you registered it. If you’re using a pre-owned clicker, there is no need for the previous owner to unregister, and you will not be charged a fee to register it through the course Canvas site. If you make a mistake in your entry, click on the “remove” link and re-enter the correct clicker ID information. If you encounter an error when trying to register your clicker, try using Chrome or Firefox instead of Safari or Internet Explorer. Please address any questions you have to: clickers@ucsd.edu.

Clicker frequencies: You may need to change your clicker frequency to match the base receiver in the classroom (which is **DD**). To change the frequency, hold the power button until the display flashes, then use the buttons to key in the correct code. Three things to note: 1) Prior to the start of the question(s) an image will appear on the screen reminding the class to switch to frequency DD. At that time, please verify that you are on the correct frequency before attempting to answer any questions. 2) An original iClicker remote always defaults to frequency AA when first turned on, so do not turn it off during your class once you have turned it on and set your frequency. 3) An iClicker2 or iClicker+ remote automatically turns off after 10 minutes of inactivity, but when you turn it back on it will remain on the last used frequency.

Batteries: It is recommended that you use Energizer, Rayovac, Eveready or another brand name battery in your clicker. Duracell (and some generic brand) batteries cause a problem in the device due to differences in the dimensions on the inside of the remote and the positive battery terminal that keep the two from making contact. Good batteries should last around 200 hours of class time.