

Quad Course: Art and Science of "What Works" in Life

PSY 232 | MW 1:25-2:40pm | Gross Hall 107 | ALP/SS/R






What Works?

There are potential sources of wisdom everywhere to help us figure out what "works" in our personal, social, and professional lives. In this course we'll **critically evaluate works of art and popular cultural productions** (e.g., music, film, literature, perspectives from artists) as well as **evidence from the social sciences** on how to navigate life.

2 classes/week

75-min active class 2x/wk.
Attendance required. Each class meeting will be a mix of personal reflection, group discussion, and mini-lectures. Each week we'll apply something we learned in class to our own lives to see if it works for us. No lab/section.

Course Sections

- I. Figuring yourself out 
- II. Social relationships, collaboration & leadership 
- III. Impact in the world 

Assessments

- Pre-class knowledge & advice sharing (S/U)
- Pre-class "art" reflection (S/U)
- In-class group notes (S/U)
- In-class "science" reflection (S/U)
- In-class group plan (S/U)
- Post-class data collection on new experience (S/U)
- Group recommendation report (A/B/C/D/F)
- Final presentation video (S/U)

Course Objectives

In this course you will...

- Become skilled in critically evaluating artistic works yourself and discussing art with others.
- Become skilled in critically evaluating scientific research results and claims and applying them to your own life.
- Gain new insight into how others navigate this world we live in together.
- Learn to effectively communicate and collaborate across difference.
- Develop new personal and professional skills for navigating and maximizing your Duke experience and life in general.

Professors



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Life is full of choices & mysteries. What's the best way to manage my stress? Does that person I think I love really love me fr fr? How can I make sure I'll have the impact I want in life? **When do we finally figure it all out?? Do we even?** In this course, we'll figure out a few things together in a highly interactive classroom setting leveraging resources from across Duke, taking inspiration from the broader art and science worlds, and by engaging the local community beyond the university.

Instructors

This course is co-taught by Faculty-in-Residence (FiRs) and Faculty Fellows affiliated with two quads, but anyone can take the class. It's listed as a psychology class, but it's a highly interdisciplinary course. The **three instructors have expertise in psychology, neuroscience, anthropology, critical theory, engineering, computer science, and more.** And even we three don't know everything to do all the course topics justice. There will be regular guests in the course throughout the semester. Many of them are connected to useful campus resources so you'll benefit from their expertise and learn about other supports for your Duke experience.

Meet or FLUNCH w Prof SL: <http://bit.ly/BookProfSL>

Meet or FLUNCH w Prof Daily: <https://calendly.com/shanibphd2>

Please use Ed Discussion in Canvas for all communication with the teaching team. We will not reliably or quickly respond to emails.

Course Structure

The class is divided into three sections:

- Figuring yourself out (weeks 3-5)
- Social relationships, collaboration & leadership (weeks 6-8)
- Impact in the world (weeks 9-12)

Class Meetings

We're all here to consume and learn together, evaluate how things work for us and others, and have fun together doing it! This class is very active. Most of the work of this class happens during class. It's critical that you are regularly in class (see attendance policies below for details on exceptions). With the exception of a few class meetings, most days of the class will have the same format:

Day Before Class: Reflect & Experience

Reflection & Advice Sharing

What advice would you give based on what you think/know right now about this topic? [\[survey\]](#)
Extraction of existing knowledge/beliefs/habits & your current advice related to that day's topic.

Experience & Evaluate "Art"

Look over an artistic / pop cultural production relevant to the topic for that upcoming class. Sometimes it will be a song, film clip, news story, book segment, podcast episode, commentary on current event, or some other thing. The main purpose of this is to get us thinking about that week's topic from our own perspective and someone else's. The other purpose of this is to gain experience appreciating, critiquing, and considering these products in an intellectually exploratory way rather than as a passive consumer. A goal of this course component is to develop skills in critically evaluating and integrating various sources of information in the world. [\[survey\]](#)

During Class: Share, Learn, Update?, Commit

Share

1:25-1:40pm

Small groups (of 4-5) sharing

Each person gets 2 minutes to share one detail about their belief or their reaction to the artistic production or perspective considered before class. Other group members listen without interruption. Final five minutes, two group members comment on what was most memorable about what someone else said. Free discussion of topic to fill remaining time. One group member records [\[group note\]](#).

1:40-1:45pm

5m break/stretch/fun

Learn

1:45-2:15pm

Mini-lecture/discussion/activity

What do other people know/think about this? What resources are available to learn more and engage?

2:15-2:20pm

5m break/stretch/fun

Evaluate "Science" & Update?

2:20-2:30pm

Individual reflection [\[survey\]](#)

What did you learn? What challenged your existing beliefs? Did anything change your mind? Anything to try?

Commit

2:30-2:40pm

Group planning

What should we do about it? With your group members, identify something that you could try in your own life in the next week based on something you learned in class today. [\[group suggestion\]](#)

Vote [\[via in-class poll\]](#) on activity for whole class to try.

Days After Class: Try it!

Within a few days of class, try one of the things identified in a class that week. Complete the [\[survey\]](#) about how it went before Sunday evening.

Assessments

Pre-class knowledge & advice sharing (S/U) - credit for any thoughtful response (examples will be provided in class); sometimes you won't know anything about a topic and that's great but we do want you to say more than "I don't know anything". **Due before every class starts.**

Pre-class personal reflection (S/U) - response to the "art" material. **Due before every class starts.**

In-class notes from group conversation (S/U) - must include something from each member attributed to that member, include one thing that someone found memorable about someone else's thought/idea. Students alternate being group note takers. **Due during class.**

In-class personal reflection (S/U) - response to the "science" material. **Due during every class.**

In-class group plan (S/U) - clear and concrete plan to try something new submitted for classroom polling. **Due during every class.**

After-class weekly personal reflection on new experience (S/U) - document experiences (joys/fun, challenges/confusion) and initial outcomes (did it work for you?). **Due the Sunday following every class.**

Group-based recommendation (specs A/B/C/D/F) - Make recommendations for yourselves and others based on the collective experiences of your group members over the semester. Recommendation must address 2 or more of the topics of the semester and provide a clear recommendation for how to help future students with this issue. Anonymous group members ratings of you will need to show fair contribution the recommendation. The ideal outcome is that everyone gets the same grade, but grades will be weighted accordingly if contributions aren't approximately equal. **Due the last day of class.**

Final presentation (S/U) - Record your own intellectual auto-ethnography! This will be an individual video to share with instructors only. In about 5ish minutes, describe your journey to now, how you have been challenged/changed/strengthened in existing beliefs during this course, and any other details about how this course has affected you intellectually, socially, or otherwise. **Due the last day of class.**

Grading

This class will use **specifications grading** (sometimes called "specs grading"). The focus is on establishing clear expectations and being rewarded for your continued engagement with each component of the course in a simple and very transparent way. There are many small things to complete each week but almost everything is graded S/U. However, in this course overall you will receive a letter grade (unless you opt for S/U overall which we will approve). **Only whole letter grades will be assigned (A, B, C, D, F). There will be no + or - grades.** The end of semester group-based assessment will be letter graded (whole letter grades again) with a clear rubric. Final grades are determined based on bundles:

Grades for bundles

A: >90% class attendance, >90% S on personal reflections, 4 group note S, A/B group-based rec, final reflection S

B: >80% class attendance, >80% S on personal reflections, 3+ group note S, A/B group-based rec, final reflection S

C: >70% class attendance, >70% S on personal reflections, 2+ group note S, A/B/C group-based rec, final reflection S
D: >60% class attendance, >60% S on personal reflections, 1+ group note S, A/B/C/D/F group-based rec, final reflection S/U
F: do less than above

You can **redo (or turn in one day late) three** personal reflections and **one** group note.

One-shot for the graded group-based recommendation and the S/U final reflection.

Attendance, Due Date Policies & Making Up for an Excused Absence

This class is very active. You have to be in class to complete everything. You will be given credit for attending class through [Acadly](#). If you haven't used it yet, please download the app and set up your account. We won't start tracking attendance through the app until week 2. If you miss a class (unexcused), you will miss out on the opportunity to complete the surveys and miss learning the content for that class period. Your presence in class confirmed through Acadly is required for credit on the activities that day. If you're not there, you could get notes from someone else but you won't be able to complete all the class surveys. More details on Trinity attendance policies are available [here](#). More details on Pratt attendance policies are available [here](#).

Pre-Class and In-Class Surveys need to be completed by the time class starts (pre) or during class (in). Post-Class surveys need to be completed by the Sunday evening following class. If you don't turn in a survey, you will get a U. See grading for how this could affect your grade.

No course assessments get dropped. However, specs grading allows some flexibility in recognition of possible extra personal and academic stress and health concerns this semester.

If you have to miss class for an athletic event, excused illness, or academic conference or event, contact the professors **in advance of the absence** on Ed Discussions in Canvas. If you reach out after missing class, there will be no credit options for the activities during class that day. If you are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms, [contact student health](mailto:dshcheckin@duke.edu) (dshcheckin@duke.edu, 919-681-9355). Learn more about current university policy related to COVID-19 at <https://coronavirus.duke.edu/>.

Following an excused absence, please watch the lecture recording shared after class on Canvas in Modules as soon as you can and complete every survey you can. **An excused absence doesn't exempt you from that class material. Those surveys will still count.** Do them asynchronously in the order you would if you were attending class. The only things you won't be able to make up are the group conversations. That's okay; you'll just do your group notes on another day.

In the event of inclement weather or other connectivity-related events that prohibit class attendance, we will notify you how we will make up missed course content and work. Asynchronous catch-up methods may apply.

Schedule of Class Meetings & Topics

Date	Details	Professor Lead & Guests
Mon Aug 28	FDOC - What works??	Profs SL, Daily, Lane
Wed Aug 30	Why & how to evaluate art and science?	Profs Lane & SL
Mon Sep 4	No Class: Labor Day	
Wed Sep 6	How to evaluate scientific evidence	Prof SL
Mon Sep 11	Physical health & performance - exercise & sleep	Kim McNally (Recreation & Physical Activity)
Wed Sep 13	Physical health & performance - nutrition	Franca Alphin, MPH (Student Health)
Mon Sep 18	Cognitive health & fitness	Prof SL
Wed Sep 20	Cognitive balance	Paige Vinson MEd & David Frankel MED (Academic Guides)
Mon Sep 25	Emotional/Mental health & well being	Thomas Szigethy, MA (DuWell)
Wed Sep 27	Inner self - spirituality/ religion/belief	Abdullah Antepi (Associate Vice Provost for Community-Engaged Research & Teaching)

Mon Oct 2	Examining our differences - disability	Christina Kline, JD (Executive Director for Disability Management)
Wed Oct 4	Examining our differences - class/wealth/privilege	Jenny Wood Crowley, PhD (Assistant Vice Provost of Intellectual Community)
Mon Oct 9	Examining our differences - gender identity & sexual orientation	Angel Collie, MDiv (CSGD)
Wed Oct 11	Examining our differences - race/ethnicity	Linda Capers (CMA) & Stacia Solomon, M.Ed. (MLWC)
Mon Oct 16	No Class: Fall Break	
Wed Oct 18	Interacting across differences	Deondra Rose, PhD (Public Policy, History, & Political Science)
Mon Oct 23	What is purpose?	Christian Ferney, PhD & Katherine Jo, PhD (Kenan Institute for Ethics)
Wed Oct 25	The dangers of purpose; finding meaning	Jesse Summers, PhD (Kenan Institute for Ethics)
Mon Oct 30	Practical Guide to Cultivating Meaning	Christian Ferney, PhD & Katherine Jo, PhD (Kenan Institute for Ethics)

Wed Nov 1	Leadership	Gary Bennett, PhD (Dean of Trinity College)
Mon Nov 6	Collaboration	TBD
Wed Nov 8	Relationships	Corey Pilson (Balthrop Cassidy Fellow)
Mon Nov 13	Evaluating your impact	Profs SL & Daily
Wed Nov 15	What worked for us? Semester data review!	Prof SL
Mon Nov 20	No Class: Thanksgiving Break	
Wed Nov 22	No Class: Thanksgiving Break	
Mon Nov 27	Making the most of Duke	Student & Alumni Panel
Wed Nov 29	Make plans to make the most of Duke	Academic Guides, DAEs, ARC staff, PSLs
Mon Dec 4	Course Reflection Activity	Profs SL, Daily, Lane
Wed Dec 6	Course Reflection Activity	Profs SL, Daily, Lane

Privacy

We know you're living in a generation where it feels like privacy is dead. Don't give up! We still respect you having some things to yourself. It's important to us that you feel comfortable being



open with us and each other. We collect a lot of potentially sensitive data in this course. Only the profs have access to your responses and, honestly, we're not nosy or voyeuristic enough to pay attention to who is saying what. We won't go looking for anyone's responses to anything. We don't have your NetIDs memorized, so your responses look like they come from a random student to us. We asked for your name and NetID today because we are writing a script that will merge your survey results and compute your response rate in order to enter your scores in the gradebook. We will not otherwise match your name to your responses. That bit of code will count your responses and only carry your count into the file that has your name. Your individual answers and names will never be in the same file. We plan to add your response rates to the gradebook after each main course section (you, others, everybody).

What about privacy during class? The (front of the) classroom is recorded and shared with students who have an excused absence. As soon as we have access to the recordings we remove the sections of class where you are talking to each other. We can demo it if you want, but you cannot hear anything anyway during those discussions. It's just a roar of noise of all of you enjoying each other's company.

Behavior & Health

Duke Community Standard

All students must adhere to the [Duke Community Standard](#) (DCS): Duke University is a community dedicated to scholarship, leadership, and service and to the principles of honesty, fairness, and accountability. Citizens of this community commit to reflect upon these principles in all academic and non-academic endeavors, and to protect and promote a culture of integrity. To uphold the Duke Community Standard, students agree:

- I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors;
- I will conduct myself honorably in all my endeavors; and
- I will act if the Standard is compromised.

Regardless of course delivery format, it is the responsibility of all students to understand and follow all Duke policies, including academic integrity (e.g., completing one's own work, following proper citation of sources, adhering to guidance around group work projects, and more). Ignoring these requirements is a violation of the Duke Community Standard. -Any questions and/or concerns regarding academic integrity can be directed to the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards at conduct@duke.edu.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

Student mental health and wellness are of primary importance at Duke, and the university offers resources to support students in managing daily stress and self-care. Duke offers several resources for students to seek assistance on coursework and to nurture daily habits that support overall well-being, some of which are listed below

- **The Academic Resource Center:** (919) 684-5917, theARC@duke.edu, or duke.edu.
- **DuWell:** (919) 681-8421, provides Moments of Mindfulness (stress management and resilience building) and meditation programming (Koru workshop) to assist students in developing a daily emotional well-being practice. To see schedules for programs please see <https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/duwell>. All are welcome and no experience necessary.

If your mental health or stressful events negatively affect your daily emotional state, academic performance, or ability to participate in your daily activities, many resources are available to help you through difficult times. Duke encourages all students to access these resources.

- **DukeReach.** Provides comprehensive outreach services to identify and support students in managing all aspects of well-being. If you have concerns about a student's behavior or health visit the website for resources and assistance: <https://students.duke.edu/wellness/dukereach/>
- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS).** CAPS services include individual and group counseling services, psychiatric services, and workshops. To initiate services, walk-in/call-in 9-4 M,W,Th,F and 9-6 Tuesdays. CAPS also provides referral to off-campus resources for specialized care. (919) 660-1000 or <https://students.duke.edu/wellness/caps/>
- **TimelyCare (formerly known as Blue Devils Care).** An online platform that is a convenient, confidential, and free way for Duke students to receive 24/7 mental health support through TalkNow and scheduled counseling. duke.edu

Academic Support Resources

The Academic Resource Center (the ARC) offers services to support students academically during their undergraduate careers at Duke. The ARC can provide support with time management, academic skills and strategies, course-specific tutoring, and more. ARC services are available free to any Duke undergraduate student, studying any discipline. (919) 684-5917, theARC@duke.edu, or arc.duke.edu.

Pronoun Usage

Pronouns are meaningful tools to communicate identities, and using pronouns supports a campus environment where all community members can thrive. Please update your gender pronouns in Duke Hub. Learn more at the [Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity's website](https://centerforsexualandgenderdiversity.duke.edu)

Assistance & Accommodations

Technology Accommodations

Highly aided students who have limited access to computers may request loaner laptops through the [DukeLIFE Technology Assistance Program](https://dukelife.duke.edu/technology-assistance-program). Please note that supplies are limited.

Course Materials Costs

None! You'll make a video near the end of the semester. You can use your phone or laptop for this, but if you'd prefer to use a different recording device such as HD Video Camera, DSLR camera kit, Tripod, or a GoPro, [you can reserve rental equipment](https://link.duke.edu/you-can-reserve-rental-equipment) from the Link.

Academic Accommodations

If you are a student with a disability and need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to register with the [Student Disability Access Office \(SDAO\)](https://sdao.duke.edu) and provide them with documentation of your disability. SDAO will work with you to determine what accommodations are appropriate for your situation. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and disability accommodations cannot be provided until a Faculty Accommodation Letter has been given to me. Please contact SDAO for more information: sdao@duke.edu or access.duke.edu.

Religious Accommodations

Students are permitted by university policy to be absent from class to observe a religious holiday. Accordingly, Trinity College of Arts & Sciences and the Pratt School of Engineering have established procedures to be followed by students for notifying their instructors of an absence necessitated by the observance of a religious holiday. Please submit requests for

religious accommodations at the beginning of the semester so that we can work to make suitable arrangements well ahead of time. You can find the policy and relevant notification form here: <https://trinity.duke.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/religious-holidays>