

**GROUP PROJECTS GUIDELINES**  
**Course: Sociology of Happiness (SC082)**  
**Term: Spring 2009**  
**Instructor: Esteban Calvo**  
**Web: [www2/bc.edu/~calvobra/teaching.htm](http://www2/bc.edu/~calvobra/teaching.htm)**

During this semester, students will be working in groups of four to five people on one specific question that they have about happiness. Students can constitute their own group or ask me to place them in a group.

Each group will either select one topic from the syllabus or propose other topic to be studied throughout the semester. Each group will formulate the study topic as a controversial question (i.e. a question that can be answered with opposing views). Stating a controversial question will help you both to narrow down the topics and to find topics of greater interest.

Each group must schedule a meeting with me to get the topic approved. **The deadline to get the topics approved is February 16.** At least one day before the meeting, study groups should write a proposal, upload it into a single Google Document, and invite each member of the group and me to be collaborators. The proposal should include: (1) a title page with the name of the project, full name of all group members, and a word count; (2) a one page project summary of the proposed topic and main question; and (3) a study plan describing tasks, due dates, and person in charge of each task.

Once my approval of the topic is granted, each group will start uploading their progress into their Google Document on a weekly basis. By the end of the semester, the Google Document should turn into a final report including: (1) an introduction where you clearly state the controversial question and clearly delineate the sides of the controversy; (2) a development section where you review the literature using an effective structure to present theories and evidence, and assess alternative positions in the controversy; (3) a conclusion where you summarize your argument, make it clear that you come down on one side of the controversy, and explain what you learned from the study; (4) references; and (5) tables and figures. The progress report should never exceed 4,000 words (excluding references) at any given point in time. Please update the word count in the title page as necessary.

Each group will be responsible for:

1. Keep the Google Document on-line and updated throughout the semester, so I (and eventually other students in the class) can read them.
2. Give me privileges to comment and edit the document (do not grant this privilege to other people that are not members of your group).
3. Update the document on a weekly basis (check the syllabus for required updates).
4. Submit their updated document for evaluation at two time points: **a first draft of the final report is due April 14 at 12pm in my email** (10% of the final grade) and the **final report is due May 1 at 12pm in my email** (30% of the final grade).

Both grades will be based on the quality of the reports, as well as on the timing and periodicity of the updates. To ensure the participation of all group members, I will ask that group members evaluate each other's participation at the end of the semester. If there is any evidence of an unequal work load distribution, I will take this into account to adjust the grade of each member of the group. Unless groups have a valid and documented excuse (including phone numbers of a doctor or coach for me to call), I will not give credit for late group project submissions.

Groups should format their reports using the 3rd edition of the ASA Style Guide or the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style. Try to keep things simple to avoid problems with your Google Document (advanced tools, and overdone figures or tables can be problematic). Groups should cite all their sources, even unpublished work by their classmates. The course is based on collaboration among the students and thus students are strongly encouraged to share their questions, thoughts, and findings, within and between study groups. However, uncited references to the work of other groups will be considered plagiarism. Students are responsible for knowing the University's academic integrity policy is and how cheating and plagiarism are defined.

Sometimes I will break the class into the study groups to give you time to get organized and to discuss your progress. Groups are strongly encouraged to meet with me by appointment to seek additional guidance. The best way to get in touch with me outside of the classroom is through email.