



**Creativity and the Good Life  
PSYC UN3621, 4 points**

**Department of Psychology – Columbia University**

**Fall 2019**

**Instructor:** Scott Barry Kaufman, Ph.D.

Office:

Class Meets: Monday 12:10-2:00pm

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**BULLETIN DESCRIPTION**

Is it possible to make sense of something as elusive as creativity? Yes, it is. This seminar will review the latest science of creativity, and how creativity is relevant to everyday life, society, and the good life. A wide variety of perspectives within the field will be highlighted, including different theories of the creative process and ways of assessing creativity.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Is it possible to make sense of something as elusive as creativity? Yes, it is. This seminar will review the latest science of creativity, and how creativity is relevant to everyday life, society, and the good life. A wide variety of perspectives within the field will be highlighted, including different theories of the creative process and ways of assessing creativity. Linkages between creativity and allied psychological constructs—such as intelligence, imagination, playfulness, personality, and motivation—will be explored. Both biological and cultural components of creativity will be discussed, as well as creativity’s role in healing from mental illness and flourishing at both an individual level as well as a societal level. Also, attempts to increase creativity in individuals, in schools, and in the workplace, will be reviewed and critiqued. In addition to learning about the latest science of creativity, students will also have an opportunity to propose new directions for the field.

Prerequisite: PSYC UN1001 The Science of Psychology, or an equivalent introductory psychology course, along with instructor permission.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

The mission of this course is to provide an up-to-date understanding of theoretical and empirical advances in the science of creativity. More generally, my hope is that this course enhances your appreciation of how the scientific method can improve the good life for all people.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Respectfully and thoughtfully engage in discussions with others about complex and nuanced topics within psychology,
- Understand and articulate key concepts, findings, and controversies in the science of creativity,
- Understand the research methods (including measures, interventions, and research paradigms) used to assess and improve creativity,
- Evaluate evidence for the validity, both internal and external, of empirical claims in contemporary scientific research on creativity,
- Learn how to generate and test novel approaches to the science of creativity,
- Articulate how the science of creativity is (or is not) relevant to your own life and can help you live your own best life.

## ROLE IN THE PSYCHOLOGY CURRICULUM

PSYC UN3621 Creativity and the Good Life is a seminar open to advanced undergraduate students majoring in Psychology and for students participating in the Psychology Postbaccalaureate Certificate program. Senior majors and Psychology postbacs will have priority in registration, followed by junior majors, followed by non-majors. This course will fulfill the following degree requirements:

- For the Psychology major or concentration and the Psychology Postbaccalaureate Certificate program, this course meets the Group III (Social, Personality, and Abnormal Psychology) distribution requirement.
- For Psychology majors and Psychology Postbac students, this course fulfills the seminar requirement.

## READINGS

In addition to reading relevant peer-reviewed empirical journal articles, the following texts will be assigned in this course:

- James C. Kaufman & Robert Sternberg (2019). [\*Cambridge Handbook of Creativity\*](#) (CHC)

*This is an up-to-date compendium of the latest empirical research findings in the science of creativity. Each chapter details the latest research findings, perspectives, and debates surrounding the particular topic covered.*

- Scott Barry Kaufman & Carolyn Gregoire (2016). [\*Wired to Create: Unravelling the Mysteries of the Creative Mind\*](#) (WTC)

*This is a popular press review of the latest science of creativity. This should be a fun, easy to read supplement to the research chapters that will be read in the Handbook.*

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**Class preparation and participation (20%).** The assigned readings are designed to increase your knowledge on the latest advancements in the science of creativity and to hone your ability to think about the science critically. The topics discussed are complex and leave open a lot of space for criticism and debate. Strong preparation and participation will allow us to have high-level, constructive discussions that can help move the field forward. It is important that you engage with the material during class discussions since active participation in these discussions is so important for learning the information and broadening your perspective on the material. If you feel that regularly contributing to class discussions is difficult for you, you should raise this issue with me as soon as possible. In such cases, we might be able to work out a way for you to feel more comfortable and prepared to contribute to the discussions.

Effective class preparation and participation includes:

- Asking insightful or clarifying questions.
- Connecting the reading to other reading you've done in the course or reading you've done on your own (including relevant media sources), drawing parallels and/or contrasts among findings.
- Actively listening to fellow classmates and responding to their ideas respectfully, even if you disagree with their views.
- Offering thoughtful critiques of the research methodology and providing suggestions for how it might be improved.

**Leading two discussions throughout the course of the semester (10%).** On the first day of class, you will have the opportunity to sign up to lead a discussion at least once in the semester. This requires generating a thoughtful question based on the readings that is likely to stimulate multiple perspectives, and also requires guiding the discussion in a productive direction.

**Weekly reflection papers (20%).** The night before each class period you will be asked to submit a 1-page reading response to CourseWorks by 6:00pm. Write something you are proud (and comfortable) to share with others. Each reflection will be graded on the following scale: (3) excellent reflection, thoughtful, insightful, and integrative, (2) satisfactory, (1) incomplete or not relevant to the topic, and (0) not submitted.

**Research paper (40%).** The culmination of this course is the creation of a novel research proposal in the field of creativity. Choose a topic that can be addressed in an 8-10 page (not including references) paper. The paper will first introduce the topic, then review recent knowledge and advancements in the field, and then discuss your novel proposal. Think of this as a grant application. Justify why your proposed line of research is important, how it fills a gap in

the literature, and what study methodology you are proposing will help build new knowledge for the field.

**Research paper presentation (10%).** On the last day of class, you will briefly present your study proposal. You can use Powerpoint slides if you'd like.

## CLASS POLICIES

*Academic integrity:* As members of this academic community, we are responsible for maintaining the highest level of personal and academic integrity: “[E]ach one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity.... The exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited. In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others’ ideas in all of your research papers and projects... [and] you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent” (from the [Columbia University Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity](#)).

*Cheating and Plagiarism:* Whether intentional or inadvertent – plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity. Plagiarism is the practice of claiming or implying original authorship of (or incorporating materials from) someone else’s written or creative work, in whole or in part, without adequate acknowledgement. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism and/or how to properly cite sources, please come to me. I am more than happy to help. Similarly, if you put yourself in a situation, e.g., starting an assignment very late, in which you think your best option might be to cut some corners, see me. It is far better to submit your assignment late and incur that penalty than to compromise your academic integrity and potentially put your academic standing in jeopardy.

*Attendance:* Class participation is the foundation of this course. I realize that a student may need (for whatever reason) to miss a class. However, keep in mind that multiple absences will impede your ability to succeed in the course and will impact your participation grade. You will still be responsible for the work due in that class (e.g., reading responses).

*Late assignments:* It is not fair for you to get more time on your assignments than your peers. Therefore, no late reading responses will be accepted (they must be handed in person in class). If there’s an appropriate reason for turning in your final paper late, however, please discuss it with me well in advance so that we can work out an arrangement. I will have to penalize late final papers by 5 points for every day it is late.

*Class Etiquette:* Presence and participation is a critical aspect of this class. No cell phones will be allowed in class. Laptops are allowed solely for notetaking purposes, but if excessive laptop use interferes with your participation, or you are seen to be engaging in your laptop for reasons other than notetaking, I may ask you to bring a notepad instead.

*Students with Disabilities:* Students with special needs who may require classroom/assignment accommodations should make an appointment with me before or during the first week of class.

You should also contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in Lerner Hall before the start of the course to register for these accommodations. The procedures for registering with ODS can be found [here](#).

Changes to the Syllabus might happen during the course. The most recent version will always be posted to Courseworks.

## **COMMITMENT TO VIEWPOINT DIVERSITY, MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING, AND CONSTRUCTIVE DISAGREEMENT**

In order to create a classroom environment that supports respectful, critical inquiry through the free exchange of ideas, the following principles will guide this class:

- Treat every member of the class with respect, even if you disagree with their opinion;
- Bring light, not heat;
- Reasonable minds can differ on any number of perspectives, opinions, and conclusions;
- Because constructive disagreement sharpens thinking, deepens understanding, and reveals novel insights, it is not just encouraged, it is expected;
- All viewpoints are welcome;
- No ideas are immune from scrutiny and debate;
- You will not be graded on your opinions.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS**

### **1. Introduction and History**

- WTC: Preface
- CHC: Chapter 1 (pp. 9-26)

### **2. Creativity's Role in Everyday Life and Society**

- Silvia, P.J., Beaty, R.E., Nusbaum, E.C., Eddington, K.M., Levin-Aspenson, H., & Kwapil, T.R. (2014). Everyday creativity in daily life: An experience-sampling study of “little c” creativity. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 8, 183-188.
- WTC: Introduction
- CHC: Chapters 22 (pp. 462-480) & 30 (pp. 640-652)

### **3. Creativity Theories**

- Kaufman, J.C. & Beghetto, R.A. (2009). Beyond big and little: The four C model of creativity. *Review of General Psychology*, 13, 1-12.
- Furst, G., Ghisletta, P., & Lubart, T. (2014). Toward an Integrative Model of Creativity and Personality: Theoretical Suggestions and Preliminary Empirical Testing. *Journal of Creative Behavior*, 50, 87-108.
- CHC: Chapters 2 (pp. 27-43) & 9 (175-199)

#### **4. Assessment of Creativity**

- Baer, J., Kaufman, J.C., & Gentile, C.A. (2004). Extension of the consensual assessment technique to nonparallel creative products. *Creativity Research Journal*, *16*, 113-117.
- Carson, S.H., Peterson, J.B., & Higgins, D.M. (2005). Reliability, validity, and factor structure of the creative achievement questionnaire. *Creativity Research Journal*, *17*, 37-50.
- CHC: Chapters 3 (pp. 44-68) & 11 (pp. 224-254)

#### **5. Creativity and Personality**

- Kaufman, S.B., Quilty, L.C., Grazioplene, R.G., Hirsh, J.B., Gray, J.R., Peterson, J.B., & DeYoung, C.G. (2015). Openness to experience and Intellect differentially predict creative achievement in the arts and sciences. *Journal of Personality*, *84*, 248-258.
- Feist, G.J. (1998). A Meta-Analysis of Personality in Scientific and Artistic Creativity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *2*, 290-309.
- WTC: Chapter 6 (pp. 81-98) and 8 (p. 122-144)
- CHC: Chapter 17 (pp. 353-373)

#### **6. Creativity and Motivation**

- Amabile, T.M., Hill, K.G., Hennessey, B.A., & Tighe, E.M. (1994). The Work Preference Inventory: Assessing Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivational Orientations, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *66*, 950-967.
- Grohman, M.G., Ivcevic, Z., Silvia, P., & Kaufman, S.B. (2017). The role of passion and persistence in creativity. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, *11*, 376-385.
- WTC: Chapter 2 (pp. 14-29)
- CHC: Chapters 13 (pp. 273-295) & 18 (pp. 374-395)

#### **7. Creativity and Intelligence**

- Jauk, E., Benedek, M., Dunst, B., & Neubauer, A.C. (2013). The relationship between intelligence and creativity: New support for the threshold hypothesis by means of empirical breakpoint detection. *Intelligence*, *4*, 212-221.
- Nusbaum, E., & Silvia, P.J. (2011). Are intelligence and creativity really so different? Fluid intelligence, executive processes, and strategy use in divergent thinking. *Intelligence*, *39*, 36-45.
- WTC: Chapter 5 (pp. 58-80)
- CHC: Chapters 10 (pp. 200-223) & 31 (pp. 655-676)

#### **8. Imagination, Play, and Creativity**

- Hoffman, J., & Russ, S. (2012). Pretend Play, Creativity, and Emotion Regulation in Children. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, *6*, 175-184.
- WTC: Chapters 1 (pp. 3-13) & 3 (pp. 30-44)

- CHC: Chapter 28 (pp. 607-622) & 34 (pp. 709-731)

## **9. The Biological Basis of Creativity**

- Beaty, R.E., Benedek, M., Kaufman, S.B., & Silvia, P.J. (2015). Default and executive network coupling supports creative idea production. *Nature Scientific Reports*.
- Beaty, R.E., Seli, P., & Schacter, D.L. (2019). Network neuroscience of creative cognition: Mapping cognitive mechanisms and individual differences in the creative brain. *Behavioral Sciences*, 27, 22-30.
- CHC: Chapters 6 (pp. 109-131), 7 (pp. 132-147), & 8 (pp. 148-172)

## **10. Cultural Perspectives on Creativity**

- Leung, A.K., Maddux, W.W., Galinsky, A.D., & Chiu, C. (2008). Multicultural experience enhances creativity: The when and how. *American Psychologist*, 63, 169-181.
- Vlad Glaveanu et al. (2019), Advancing Creativity Theory and Research: A Socio-Cultural Manifesto, *Journal of Creative Behavior*.
- CHC: Chapters 20 (pp. 421-447), 21 (pp. 448-461), & 23 (pp. 481-510)

## **11. Creativity, Mental Illness, and Healing**

- Zabelina, D.L., Condon, D., & Beeman, M. (2014). Do dimensional psychopathology measures relate to creative achievement or divergent thinking? *Frontiers in Psychology*.
- Forgeard, M.J.C. (2013). Perceiving Benefit After Adversity: The Relationship Between Self-Reported Posttraumatic Growth and Creativity. *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts*, 3, 245-264.
- WTC: Chapters 7 (p. 99-121)& 9 (pp. 145-162)
- CHC: 14 (pp. 296-318) & 15 (pp. 319-332)

## **12. Enhancing Creativity**

- Cropley, A.J. (1995). Fostering creativity in the classroom: General principles. In M. Runco (Ed.), *The Creativity Research Handbook Vol. 1* (pp. 83-114). Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press.
- CHC: Chapters 5 (pp. 88-104) and 27 (pp. 587-606)

## **13. Organizational Creativity**

- Amabile, T.M. (2012). Componential Theory of Creativity. *Harvard Business School Working Paper*.
- WTC: Chapters 4 (pp. 45-57) & 10 (pp. 163-186)
- CHC: Chapters 24 (pp. 515-545) & 26 (pp. 567-586)

## **14. Class Presentations**

