

Framingham State University
Division of Professional and Continuing Education
Course Syllabus

COURSE NAME: Using the Power of Optimism in your Classroom

DATES/TIMES: Spring I 2024

CREDIT HOURS: One graduate credit.

INSTRUCTOR: Caroline Maloney
(978) 270-3952

LOCATION: Online

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will explore the relationship between the power of optimism and student social-emotional learning. Students and teachers will learn how optimism can positively impact their academic and personal lives. The course will also cover the fundamentals of social-emotional learning and its importance in developing critical life skills.

Learning Outcomes:

Participants will:

- Develop tools to meet the Social/Emotional needs of their students
- Identify the “superpowers” for optimism
- Reflect on how each superpower can enhance your mental health and apply it to your life and career
- Reflect on how each superpower can enhance your classroom and teaching practices
- Put each of the superpowers into action with a plan to use in your practice

Superpowers:

Openness-Courage-Simplicity-Humor-Gratitude-Fun
Compassion-Creativity-Authenticity-Love

The course will address the 5 Core Competencies of Social Emotional Learning listed on the MA Department of Education’s site:

Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/sel/default.html?section=sel-five-core#topics>

COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

- a) Online attendance is mandatory which includes posting several times a week to the discussion board
- b) Participants will be expected to complete the weekly assignments on time, including readings, video viewing, written responses, and participating in a class discussion.
- c) A final project is required and due before the end of the course

Course Materials:

Required Book: [Life is Good: The Book](#) by John and Bert Jacobs
Available on Amazon for around \$20 new or as little as \$1-2 used.



COURSE OUTLINE:

WEEK ONE: Openness and Courage

Assessment: Read chapters 1 & 2

Pick an activity from each chapter to complete. One should be for your personal growth and one that you can do with your students by creating an activity.

- Follow the Leader: Let the child be your teacher (Self-awareness)
- “Yes, And” (Relationship building)
- Everything is a Once-in-a-Lifetime experience (Self Management)
- Join the Try-athlon (Self-awareness)
- See Rejection as your best teacher (Self-awareness)
- Look forward (Self management)

Post a response to the weekly discussion board topic.

WEEK TWO: Simplicity, Humor and Gratitude

Assessment: Read chapters 3-5

Pick an activity from each chapter to complete. One should be for your personal growth and one that you can do with your students by creating an activity.

- Matter up (Self-management)
- Unplug (Self-management)
- Take it outside (Self-management)
- Bring it home (Relationship skills/Self-management)
- Work it around (Relationship skills)
- Get your vitamin L (Self-awareness)
- Pump your own fuel (Relationship Building)
- “Get to” (Self-awareness)
- Celebrate Thanksgiving 365 (Self-awareness)

Post a response to the weekly discussion board topic.

WEEK 3: Fun, Compassion and Creativity

Assessment: Read chapters 6-8

Pick an activity from each chapter to complete. One should be for your personal growth and one that you can do with your students by creating an activity.

- Customize (Self Management)
- Get a move on (Self Management)
- Let loose (Self Awareness)
- Help yourself (Self Management)
- Just like me (Relationship Building)
- Give presence (Self Awareness)
- Mind your Space (Self Management)
- Exploreate (Self Awareness)
- Team up (Relationship Building)

Post a response to the weekly discussion board topic.

Week 4 Authenticity and Love

Assessment: Read chapters 9 & 10

Pick an activity from each chapter to complete. One should be for your personal growth and one that you can do with your students by creating an activity.

- Take a Stand (Self Awareness)
- Get Lost, Get Found (Self Management)
- Tune In (Self Awareness)
- Do What You Love, Love What You Do (Responsible Decision Making)
- Take Your Love Everywhere You Go (Self Awareness)
- Express Yourself, Today (Self Awareness)

Post a response to the weekly discussion board topic.

Grading Criteria:

Weekly board discussion participation 40%

Weekly homework assignments 40%

Final Project 20%

Final Project

Participants are required to develop one of the following;

-Develop a presentation demonstrating the power of optimism for your staff. (teachers and support staff (such as guidance, psychology, or administration)

-Develop a unit/lesson for a class that would be appropriate for your population of students.

Grading Criteria:

Weekly discussion board participation 40%

Week 1 Discussion Post					
Criteria	Ratings				Pts
Initial Post	20 to >15.0 pts Excellent Post fully addresses the topic and question. Demonstrates a proficient understanding and is engaging. Student asks questions to stimulate the discussion.	15 to >10.0 pts Competent/Good Post shows understanding and explanation to topic and question. Posts an adequate question to the group if applicable.	10 to >5.0 pts Proficient/Acceptable Post lacks understanding or detail to the topic and question. Student forgets to post a question if required.	5 to >0 pts Inadequate Post not tied to topic or relevant. Shows little effort or understanding to topic.	20 pts
Additional postings/responses within discussions	20 to >15.0 pts Excellent Student responds to at least 3 other posts. Posts refer to what others have written, provides details from information gathered within the course, and encourages new ideas.	15 to >10.0 pts Competent/Good Responds to 2-3 posts, but lacks detail and information gathered, encourages some new ideas	10 to >5.0 pts Proficient Responds to only 1 post with adequate detail	5 to >0 pts Inadequate Responds to only 1 post but with lack of detail	20 pts
Information/Details	20 to >15.0 pts Excellent Post meets the 150-200 words requirement. Post is detailed and relevant to weekly reading and information.	15 to >10.0 pts Competent/Good Post completed with some information and relevance. 100-150 words	10 to >5.0 pts Proficient Post is adequate, but lacking detail. Less than 100 words	5 to >0 pts Inadequate Less than 50 words, does not refer to what others have written	20 pts
Clarity and Mechanics	20 to >15.0 pts Excellent Contributes to discussion with clear, concise comments formatted in an easy to read style that is free of grammatical or spelling errors.	15 to >10.0 pts Competent/Good Contributes to discussion with clear, concise comments formatted in an easy to read style with very few grammatical or spelling errors.	10 to >5.0 pts Proficient Posts are adequate with clarity, some grammar or spelling errors.	5 to >0 pts Inadequate Post is lacking clarity and several grammar/spelling errors. Student not reviewing work before submitting	20 pts
Punctuality	20 to >15.0 pts Excellent Initial post and response posts are submitted on time	15 to >10.0 pts Competent/Good The initial post is submitted 1-2 days late. Response posts on time.	10 to >5.0 pts Proficient The initial post is submitted 3 or more days late. Response posts on time.	5 to >0 pts Inadequate Both initial and response posts are late but within 3 days of due date.	20 pts
Total Points: 100					

Weekly homework assignments 40%

Criteria	Levels of Achievement			
	Excellent	Above Average	Adequate	Inadequate
Information and Details	20 Points Main points well developed with high quality and quantity support. Reveals high degree of critical thinking.	15 Points Main points well developed with quality supporting details and quantity.	10 Points Main points are present with limited detail and development.	5 Points Main points lack detailed development. are vague with little evidence of critical
Level of Content	20 Points Content indicates synthesis of ideas, in-depth analysis and evidences original thought and support for the topic. 200+ words	15 Points Content indicates original thinking and develops ideas with sufficient and firm evidence. 150+ works	10 Points Content indicates thinking and reasoning applied with original thought on a few ideas. 100-150 words	5 Points Shows some thinking and reasoning but ideas are underdeveloped and unoriginal than 100 words.
Use of Resources; Readings and Websites	20 Points The writing is connected to the reading/resources with much evidence supporting the information. Proper citing of resources demonstrated.	15 Points The writing is somewhat connected to the reading/resources with some evidence supporting the information. Proper citing of resources demonstrated.	10 Points The writing is lacking connection to the reading/resources. Proper citing of resources not included.	5 Points There is very little connection to the reading/resources and no evidence of them.
Clarity and Mechanics	20 Points Writing is free of distracting spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors; absent of fragments, comma splices, and run-ons.	15 Points Writing has few spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors allowing reader to follow ideas clearly. Very few fragments or run-ons.	10 Points Writing has several spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors	5 Points Spelling, punctuation, and grammatical create distraction, making reading difficult. Errors are frequent.
Punctuality	20 Points The assignment is completed on time	15 Points The assignment is 1-2 days late	10 Points The assignment is 3 days late	5 Points The assignment is more than 3 days late

Final Project 20%

Criteria	Ratings				Pts
Content and Quality	25 pts Excellent Information is accurate and comes from reliable sources. Used many facts, details and examples to explain and review the Simple 4 and how they all work together for overall Wellness.	20 pts Competant/Good Used many facts and details to explain the topic. Information came from trusted sources.	15 pts Needs Improvement Had information on the topic. More facts and details needed.	5 pts Incomplete Did not have facts or details about the topic. Information was false or only opinion.	25 pts
Professional Appeal/Creative	25 pts Excellent Slide show was very visually interesting and creative. It would fit as a very helpful aid when teaching an audience the topic.	20 pts Competant/Good Slide show was visually interesting and helpful for audience.	15 pts Needs Improvement Slide show lacked visual appeal in several slides.	5 pts Incomplete Little effort was put into creating the slides.	25 pts
Resources and Citing	25 pts Excellent There was evidence that a variety of resources from the class were used in this project. At least 3-4 sources were used for information and were properly cited on the bottom of the slides, including image sources.	20 pts Competant/Good There was some evidence that a variety of resources from the class were used in this project. 2-3 sources was used for information and were properly cited on the bottom of the slides, including image sources.	15 pts Needs Improvement There wasn't much evidence of sources used from the class. Sources were not properly cited on the slides.	5 pts Incomplete There is very little evidence of sources used.	25 pts
Punctual	25 pts Excellent Slide show is submitted on time	20 pts Competant/Good The slide show is 1-2 days late	15 pts Needs Improvement The slide show is 3 days late	5 pts Incomplete The slide show is 4 or more days late	25 pts
Total Points: 100					

Grades by points:

94-100: A 90-93: A-

87-89: B+ 83-86: B

80-82: B- 77-79: C+

73-76: C 70-72: C-

Academic Honesty Policy:

Integrity is essential to academic life. Consequently, students who enroll at Framingham State University agree to maintain high standards of academic honesty and scholarly practice. They shall be responsible for familiarizing themselves with the published policies and procedures regarding academic honesty. Academic honesty requires but is not limited to the following practices: appropriately citing all published and unpublished sources, whether quoted, paraphrased, or otherwise expressed, in all of the student's oral and written, technical, and artistic work. Please refer to the academic honesty policy in the FSU Graduate Catalog, Student Conduct section on page 21.

Academic Accommodations Policy

Framingham State University offers equal opportunities to all qualified students, including those with disabilities. The University is committed to making reasonable accommodations as necessary to ensure that its programs and activities do not discriminate, or have the effect of discriminating, based on disability. Disability/Access Services works with students with ADD/ADHD, learning and psychiatric disabilities, students with mobility disabilities, students who are blind or low vision, students who are d/Deaf or hard of hearing, and students with chronic medical conditions. Please refer to the link below for more information: <https://www.framingham.edu/academics/center-for-academic-success-and-achievement/disability-access-services/index>

Framingham State University Whittemore Library: Whittemore Library provides access to numerous online databases for all FSU students and faculty. These databases are used to search for journal or newspaper articles. Many of these articles are available in full text. All databases accessed from off-campus require you to log in before being able to search. Follow these simple directions: Go to: <http://www.framingham.edu/wlibrary>