USC Marshall
School of Business

MKT 404: Happiness and Wellbeing in the Marketplace
Spring 2022 | Mon/Wed 4:00 - 5:50 p.m. PST
JFF 236 | 4 units
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Office Hours: Wednesdays 8:45 - 9:45 a.m. PST or by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this class, we'll seek to understand consumers' happiness and wellbeing. We'll analyze and discuss several popular books, articles, videos, and podcast episodes related to happiness and wellbeing, reflecting the diverse perspectives of scientists (psychologists, sociologists, economists, and neuroscientists), thought leaders, and businesspeople. We'll discuss consumers' participation in the $12 billion self-improvement industry (e.g., health-related products, apps, online courses, and in-person trainings), which may or may not contribute to happiness and wellbeing. In addition to the self-improvement industry, we'll discuss 1) the impact of marketing across industries on consumer happiness and wellbeing, and 2) the emerging field of *social marketing*, in which individuals leverage commercial marketing strategies to increase individual wellbeing and societal welfare.

This is an area of study that is extremely complex. What is happiness? How should one increase their happiness? How should researchers study happiness? What is a marketer's role in eliciting and sustaining happiness? While these questions may seem straightforward and the answers may seem obvious, they are actually quite challenging to answer.

A thorough understanding of consumer happiness and wellbeing will not only help you become a better marketer, but also help you in your personal and professional life (regardless of the organizational context you choose to work in). It will enable you to increase others' happiness (through products, marketing communication, customer service, etc.), and increase your own happiness through the perspectives you adopt and decisions you make.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course aims to equip you with the knowledge and skills needed to:

- compare definitions of happiness and wellbeing (as these concepts have been defined by academic researchers and practitioners in various fields, including Marketing, Psychology, Economics, Health Sciences, and Public Policy).
- evaluate methods and measures used in the empirical study of happiness and wellbeing.
- consider the various factors that influence happiness and wellbeing in the marketplace and the conditions under which they do so.
- improve communication about happiness and wellbeing in personal and professional life.
- analyze and assess the effects of various products (e.g., social media) and marketing communications (e.g., Dove Real Beauty) on consumer happiness and wellbeing.
- develop marketing strategies that will generate profit and increase consumer happiness and wellbeing.