Course: Introduction to Positive Psychology

- Block: 1
- 6 ECTS

In the course Introduction to Positive Psychology, various theories and explanatory models on positive psychology will be introduced, but also theories that can make an additional contribution to traditional clinical theories will be explained.

Central theories of Positive Psychology “as a scientific study of optimal human functioning” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) will be introduced, discussed, explained and applied.

In this course, we start from the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 1998), which describes how positive emotions broaden one’s awareness and stimulate exploratory thoughts and actions, which over time build skills and resources leading to increased levels of well-being (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Moreover, students will be introduced to the PERMA model as a theory of well-being that consists of five elements (Positive Emotions, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning and Accomplishments). Also, Self-Determination Theory will be discussed as a prototypical example of a positive psychology theory as this theory provides a scientifically supported framework for understanding optimal functioning, while also addressing “negative” processes that can get in the way of optimal functioning (Sheldon & Ryan, 2011).