

Happiness, Well-Being, and Morality

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Used in the seminar taught at Ruhr-University Bochum in summer 2018. The seminar is open for advanced bachelor students in Philosophy, master students in Philosophy, Psychology, and the Cognitive Sciences

The concepts of happiness and well-being have interested philosophers of all era, but recently this field of study has gained more attention because of the interest of social scientists. Happiness and well-being researchers address questions such as “What is happiness?”, “How happy are people with their lives?” and “What makes people’s lives go well?” In this seminar, we will try to answer those questions with the help of philosophical and psychological literature on happiness and well-being. The seminar focusses on the nature, measurement, and moral significance of well-being. It provides an introduction of the various accounts on happiness and well-being in philosophy and psychology.

Moreover, well-being has been a fundamental concept also in moral philosophy. When discussing well-being, moral philosophers refer to the elements that constitute the good life. Most moral philosophers agree that there is a strict connection between the good life and the right action. However, what is the connection between well-being and morality is still an open question that we will also investigate in this seminar. So in addition to analysing the concept of well-being itself, we will also discuss how it can be used to understand what is morally right and wrong.

We invite students with various philosophical and psychological backgrounds. The seminar will be very interdisciplinary, providing introductions to the relevant debates in the respective fields. The seminar will be held in English.