GRIT LAB: THE SCIENCE AND PRACTICE OF PASSION AND PERSEVERANCE

PSYC 005 / OIDD 005 / Paideia 005 Fall 2020

<mark>SYLLABUS UPDATED AS OF AUGUST 2, 2020</mark>

Angela Duckworth, Rosa Lee and Egbert Chang Professor at the University of Pennsylvania

Synchronous, interactive classes via ZOOM: Wednesdays 3 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET (attendance required and recorded but in the event you cannot attend a given class, a recording will be available).

Professor Duckworth's office hours via ZOOM are optional. During these times, please feel free to unmute yourself and join in a more informal conversation:

> *Wednesdays 5:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. ET*
> *Fridays 9 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. ET*

TA office hours via ZOOM: You will meet either individually or as a team with your TA at least every other week (and more often if you like)! There will be 60 separate 10-minute options (details to be announced) each week that should accommodate all student schedules. If you choose to meet as a team that week, choose 2 consecutive slots (20 minutes in total).

Credit: 1.0 CU pass/fail only based on 100% completion of weekly out-of-class experiments, essay reflections, quizzes, attendance, and in-class participation

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

The aims of Grit Lab are two-fold: (1) to equip you with generalizable knowledge about the science of passion and perseverance, and (2) to help you apply these insights to your own life. At the heart of this course are cutting-edge scientific discoveries about how to foster passion and perseverance for long-term goals. As in any undergraduate course, you will have an opportunity to learn from current research. But *unlike* most courses, Grit Lab encourages you to apply these ideas to your own life and reflect on your experience.

Attendance is essential and will be recorded via Poll Everywhere except in the case of religious or secular holidays, as long as you contact your assigned TA within the first two weeks of class.

HOW WILL I GET TO KNOW FELLOW STUDENTS AND MY TA?

You will be assigned to a team of 5 students. As a team, you will meet each Wednesday in a Zoom breakout room to discuss the previous week's assignment. Each week, 1 of student will be designated the moderator of the team discussion. Each TA will be assigned to mentor 4 teams (so 20 students in total), and as noted above, you'll meet with your TA at least once every week as a team or individually as you prefer.

WHAT DO I DO WHEN IT'S MY TURN TO MODERATE TEAM DISCUSSION?

The following is a "default" script for team discussions, but if you choose, you can modify as you see fit when it's your turn to be moderator. Given the small size of teams, it should be possible for everyone to unmute themselves for the entirety of the team discussion.

- ❏ Pulse check: Each student has a minute to share an update about their past week.
- ❏ Reflections: Each student reads aloud their weekly reflection responses, followed by quick comments
- ❏ Synthesis: What are common insights? What questions do you still have? And what one question would you like to contribute to the cohort conversation you'll have with your TA?

WHAT WILL SYNCHRONOUS CLASSES BE LIKE?

Despite the size of this class, we will meet synchronously for two hours via Zoom each week. This will enable you to ask questions in real time, to engage in activities designed to complement the lecture, and also to engage with your classmates during pair-and-share activities.

I'm asking you to keep your video cameras on throughout class. You're welcome to use a virtual background if there are privacy concerns (e.g., other people living with you in the background). Do mute yourself during the full group lecture. You're welcome to eat, drink, and otherwise make yourself as comfortable as possible throughout the class. If, for whatever reason, you need to have a dog, cat, roommate, parent, little brother, little sister, or other friend join you, that's fine!

The quality of this class depends on your participation. Please have your cell phone on mute and face down—but close by for periodic Poll Everywhere activities. Please have all other tabs on your computer closed. During lecture, I recommend adjusting your view such that the slides are about the same size as my picture, but of course that's up to you!

WHAT DO WE DO OUTSIDE OF CLASS?

The word "experiment" derives from the Latin *experior* for "to try." Every week, you will "try" applying research insights to your own life by completing a design .

Afterwards, you'll respond to specific reflection prompts posted on Canvas, in the Discussion section, by *Tuesday at midnight*. If we don't receive yours by this time, we'll reach out to you to find out if you're okay.

On Wednesday, you will read your reflection aloud and discuss it with classmates on your team.

Finally, there will be asynchronous content (e.g., interviews with Penn alumni who exemplify passion and perseverance) and readings. A weekly online quiz ensures you're learning key concepts from this material as well as from the required readings. In accordance with psychologist Benjamin Bloom's philosophy of mastery-based learning, you will have the opportunity to retake any quiz as often as you like but will not be considered to have passed the quiz, and therefore access the reflection section, until you have achieved a score of 100%.

A note on academic integrity: Intellectual development requires honesty, responsibility, and doing your own work. Penn's Code of [Academic Integrity](#) applies to Grit Lab.

HOW DOES GRADING WORK?

You will receive a "P" on your transcript based on 100% completion of weekly out-of-class experiments, essay reflections, quizzes, attendance, and in-class participation. Otherwise, you will not receive credit for this course.

Students with disabilities who require accommodations can go [here](#) for Penn resources and can contact TA Tenelle Porter for more information about the support we will provide in Grit Lab.

HOW DO I PAY IT FORWARD?

Your team will create a 3-minute presentation to share at the end of class. This can be a prepared video or a "live" presentation. Actually, there are no real rules other than that it should be a way to summarize lessons learned for younger students (e.g., Penn First-Year Students).

You are also encouraged to write thank you notes, as you're moved to do so, to guest speakers. Your "care package" at the start of Grit Lab includes stamps and envelopes for this purpose.

Finally, each of you will contribute to, and receive, a peer recommendation summarizing teammate observations about your strengths and contributions. This will come in handy for fellowships and other applications.

TYPICAL WEEKLY SCHEDULE

When	What
Wednesday, 3PM to 5PM ET	Synchronous live lecture and group activities via Zoom ● 2:55 Zoom room open (login early if you anticipate tech problems, which you can troubleshoot by emailing your TA during this time) ● 3:00 Welcome by Angela ● 3:05 Breakout room discussions with your team ● 3:25 Breakout room discussions with your TA (20 students) ● 3:35 TAs aggregate questions for Angela to answer, and Angela offers additional "staircase thoughts" on prior week ● 3:50 10-minute BREAK ● 4:00 Interactive lecture for which you'll need your hard-copy Workbook ● 4:57 Kaizen feedback
Wednesday, 5:00 to 530PM ET	*Optional* office hours with Professor Angela Duckworth via Zoom
On your own, before Tuesday at midnight	● Read assigned materials for upcoming week's topic ● Complete Canvas quizzes about the readings ● Do the assigned activity ● Respond via Canvas to specific weekly reflections prompts
Friday, 9AM to 9:45AM ET	*Optional* office hours with Professor Angela Duckworth via Zoom
By appointment, required at least biweekly	Individual (10-minute) or team (20-minute) meetings with your TA via Zoom, scheduled via google calendar

CARE PACKAGE

According to your stated preference, we're getting you a "care package" of materials—either by mail (to be received prior to class) or to be picked up in person

in the lobby of 3675 Market Street on either Tuesday, September 1 or Wednesday, September 2 between 8am and 6pm ET.

- ❏ Grit paperback
- ❏ Workbook to accompany lectures
- ❏ Hard copies of assigned readings, but only if you requested them
- ❏ Stamps and envelopes for you to send thank you notes (on your own paper, and don't stress, it's the thought, not the stationary that counts)
- ❏ Some Grit Lab swag
- ❏ Some Penn Alumni office swag

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

1. Welcome to Grit Lab (Lecture on Wednesday, September 2, 2020)
   a. Lecture and discussion: What is grit? How is grit related to talent? How is success more like a journey than a destination? What are contrary perspectives to "grit is good"?

   b. In-class cohort activity: My Favorite Things BINGO

   c. Readings and/or videos to complete *before* class. Note that these are all available via PDF just in case there is a problem with delivery of your "care package":

      i. [Grit Preface and Chapter 1: Showing Up](#)

      ii. [Duckworth, A., & Gross, J. J. (2014). Self-control and grit: Related but separable determinants of success. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 23(5), 319-325*](#)

      iii. [Duckworth, A. (2019). Self-Reports Spur Self-Reflection. *MIT Sloan Management Review, 60(3), 14-16*](#)

      iv. [Love, B. (2019). 'Grit is in our DNA': Why teaching grit is inherently antiblack. *Education Week*](#)

      v. Grit guest interview with Cody Coleman

   d. Post-class experiment: Begin with the end in mind. Write a team recommendation letter for yourself for the end of this semester. What do you hope your team can say about you, especially what you contributed to others, and about how much you learned?

PRACTICING PERSEVERANCE

2. Goal setting and planning (Lecture on Wednesday, September 9, 2020)

   a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections

   b. Lecture and discussion: How do you get from intentions to results? How do I set a goal and make a plan?

   c. In-class activity: Make a wish for something you hope to accomplish over the next week, define the best Outcome if that Wish came true, identify an Obstacle that may get in the way, and make a Plan that gets around that obstacle. Next, do the same for this coming week: WOOP

   d. Readings and/or videos to complete before class:

      i. Oettingen, G. (2014). Stop being so positive. Harvard Business Review, 92(10), 9299.

      ii. Watch https://vimeo.com/286659372

      iii. Keller, L., Bieleke, M., & Gollwitzer, P. M. (2019). Mindset theory of action phases and If-Then planning. In K. Sassenberg & L. Vliek (Eds.), *Social Psychology in Action*, (pp. 23-37). Springer, Cham

      iv. Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2002). Building a practically useful theory of goal setting and task motivation: A 35-year odyssey. *American Psychologist, 57*(9), 705-717

   e. Post-class experiment: WOOPER—Follow your Plan, then Evaluate and, if possible, Repeat.

   f. Post-experiment written reflection: What was your Wish, Outcome, Obstacle, and Plan? How specific and challenging was your wish? How did it go? And how did your experience match up to what Gabriele presented in her lecture and essay?

3. Deliberate practice (Lecture on Wednesday, September 16 , 2020)

   a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections.

   b. Lecture and discussion: How do you practice like an expert?

   c. In-class activity: Memory game. Practice audit.

   d. Post-class reading:

      i. Grit Chapter 7: Practice

ii. [Ericsson, K. A., & Ward, P. (2007). Capturing the naturally occuring superior performance of experts in the laboratory: Toward a science of expert and exceptional performance. *Current Directions in Psychological Science,* 16(6), 346-350.](#)

iii. [Kurutz, S. (2020). Anders Ericsson, psychologist and 'expert on experts,' dies at 72. *The New York Times.*](#)

iv. Grit guest: Lindsey Vonn? Kerri Walsh?

e. Post-class experiment: Apply the principles of deliberate practice to a skill you want to improve. Make sure you identify a specific skill and articulate in advance what "improvement" looks like, exactly, then focus 100% while practicing, obtain immediate feedback and…repeat the cycle *at least once, and ideally more than once.*

f. Post-experiment written reflection: After considering the lecture and assigned readings, reflect on how successful you were in (a) identifying a specific target for practice, (b) concentrating 100%, and (c) getting feedback? Were you able to (d) repeat the deliberate practice cycle more than once? Were you successful in improving the skill? How is deliberate practice different from times in your life when practice did not pay off?

4. Feedback (Lecture on Wednesday, September 23, 2020)

a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections.

b. Lecture and discussion: How can I receive feedback optimally? How can I give feedback optimally?

c. In-class activity: Feedback calisthenics: Introducing yourself.

d. Post-class reading:

i. Grit Chapter 3: Effort Counts Twice

ii. [Wiggins, G. (2012). Seven keys to effective feedback. *Educational Leadership, 70(1),* 10-16.](#)

iii. [Schroeder, J., & Fishbach, A. (2016). Match your motivational tactic to the situation. *Harvard Business Review.*](#)

iv. Grit guest: Sarah Lewis?

e. Post-class experiment: TBA

f. Post-experiment written reflection: How, and from whom, did you ask for feedback? What factors helped you and what factors hindered you in asking for feedback? How much of this feedback was positive versus

negative? Was the feedback "wisely" delivered? On a scale from 0 (nothing learned) to 10 (completely open and eager to learn), how would you rate your reaction to this feedback?

5. Rethink failure and stress (Lecture on Wednesday, September 30, 2020)

   a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections.

   b. Lecture and discussion: What is the stress response, and how can you deal with it? Coping with failure and how that relates to perseverance and goal hierarchies.

   c. In-class activity: Two Stories exercise

   d. In-class Poll Everywhere: Stress Mindset Questionnaire

   e. Post-class reading:

      i. Grit Chapter 9: Hope

      ii. Eskreis-Winkler, L., & Fishbach, A. (2019). Not learning from failure—The greatest failure of all. *Psychological Science, 30*(12), 1733-1744.

      iii. Crum, A. J., Handley-Miner, I. J., & Smith, E. N. (in press). The stress mindset intervention. In G. M. Walton & A. J. Crum (Eds.), *Handbook of wise interventions: How social-psychological insights can help solve problems*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.

      iv. Grit Guest: TBA

   f. Post-class experiment: Fail intelligently. Do something that's too hard, apply for something you probably won't win, or otherwise get rejected. But choose a failure that can teach you something.

   g. Post-experiment written reflection : What did you learn from failing? Take the Growth Mindset quiz on page 180 and reflect on whether your mindset has influenced how you "appraise" the causes of your failure and, in turn, how you respond to failure.

6. Learning from and leaning on other people (Lecture on Wednesday, October 7, 2020)

   a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections.

b. Lecture and discussion: How do you grow grit with and for other people? Role models, mentoring styles, and cultures of grit.

c. In-class activity: Copy and paste exercise

d. In-class activity: Identify one role model and reverse engineer their gritty moment

e. Post-class reading:

    i.   Grit Chapter 10: Parenting for Grit

    ii.   Grit Chapter 12: A Culture of Grit

    iii.   Lee, T.H., & Duckworth, A. L. (2018). Organizational grit. *Harvard Business Review, 96*(5), 98-105.

    iv.   Angela's letter to Anders (video)

    v.   Grit guest: TBA

f. Post-class experiment: Send a gratitude letter to someone you've never properly thanked. Optionally, if you have the courage, record a video of you reading it and send it to them or, take a deep breath and actually read it to them in person.

g. Post-experiment written reflection: Whom did you thank? What was your gratitude letter experience like? Optionally, include the gratitude letter you wrote or excerpts thereof. How supportive and demanding was this person in your life? Whether or not you decided to thank a parent or coach, reflect on how your personal experiences do or don't match up to the stories in Chapters 10 and 12.

7. Rules, rituals, and habits (Lecture on Wednesday, October 14, 2020)

a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections.

b. Lecture and discussion: How do you scaffold grit? The process model of behavior, your brain on autopilot, why immediate temptation beats long-term goals, turning personal rules into habits

c. In-class activity: For something you want to practice daily (which can be the same thing you practiced previously, or something new), make a plan to turn it into a habit.

   d. Post-class reading:

      i. <u>Grit</u> Chapter 11: The Playing Fields Of Grit

      ii. Duckworth, A. L., & Gross, James J. (<mark>under review</mark> at *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*). Behavior change.

      iii. [Wood, W., & Neal, D. T. (2016). Healthy through habit: Interventions for initiating & maintaining health behavior change. *Behavioral Science & Policy, 2*(1), 71-83.](#)

      iv. Grit guest: TBA

   e. Post-class experiment: Enact your plan to turn deliberate practice into a daily habit.

   f. Post-experiment written reflection: Reflect on your attempt to do deliberate practice daily and connect this to relevant personal experiences—did you learn to practice by playing sports, music, or some other extracurricular activity? Did your coach, teacher, or parents more or less abide by the Hard Thing Rule (from Chapter 11)? When in your life, if ever, have you been part of a group that made deliberate practice a ritual?

8. Exploring your interests (Lecture on Wednesday, October 21, 2020)

   a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections

   b. Lecture and discussion: How do you develop an interest? Bloom's three stages of development, sampling, and the science of curiosity.

   c. In-class activity: Complete the Energy Buckets activity and then share with your partner.

   d. Post-class reading:

      i. <u>Grit</u> Chapter 6: Interest

      ii. [Silvia, P. J. (2008). Interest—The curious emotion. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 17*(1), 57-60.](#)

      iii. [Westgate, E. C. (2020). Why Boredom Is Interesting. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 29*(1), 33-40.](#)

      iv. Grit guests: TBA

   e. Post-class experiment: Take the ONET interest profiler linked in Canvas

    f. Post-experiment written reflection: In your free time, what do you find yourself spontaneously learning about? How is that related to your RIASEC score?

9. Affirming your values (Lecture on Wednesday, October 28, 2020)

    a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections

    b. Lecture and discussion: What orients us in life? Values, values affirmation, self-transcendent purpose

    c. In-class activity: Complete values card sort and share with your partner.

    d. Post-class reading:

        i. <u>Grit</u> Chapter 8: Purpose

        ii. <u>Schwartz, S. H. (2012). An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values. *Online readings in Psychology and Culture, 2*(1), 2307-0919.</u>

        iii. <u>Cohen, G. L., Garcia, J., Apfel, N., & Master, A. (2006). Reducing the racial achievement gap: A social-psychological intervention. *Science, 313*(5791), 1307-1310.</u>

        iv. Grit guest: TBA

    e. Post-class experiment: Write a This I Believe essay (500 words or fewer) and read it aloud to someone you care about.

    f. Post-experiment written reflection: How was it reading this essay aloud? Can you map any of Schwartz's values onto your essay? Compare and contrast writing this essay with the values affirmation intervention.

10. Racing your strengths (Lecture on Wednesday, November 4, 2020)

    a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections

    b. Lecture and discussion: What is talent and does it matter? What are character strengths and why do they matter?

    c. In-class activity: Talent Card Sort

    d. In-class activity: Considering your strengths, interests, and values, write down three hypotheses for professions you might enjoy doing 10 years from now.

    e. Post-class reading:

      i.   <u>Grit</u> Chapter 2: Distracted by Talent

      ii.   [Duckworth, A. L., Eichstaedt, J., & Ungar, L. (2015). The mechanics of human achievement. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 9*(7), 359-369.](#)

      iii.   [Roberts, B. W., & Mroczek, D. (2008). Personality Trait Change in Adulthood. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 17*(1), 31–35.](#)

      iv.   Grit guest: TBD

f.   Post-class experiment: Invite 3 to 5 people who know you well to complete this on your behalf, then complete the self-report section of the Big Five 360 assessment.

g.   Post-experiment written reflection: Review your Big Five 360 feedback. Where is there agreement between your ratings and those who know you well? Where is there disagreement? How does this relate to your interests and values? What would you say are your top three talents?

11. What the world wants (Lecture on Wednesday, November 11, 2020)

a.   Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections

b.   Lecture and discussion: Real-world constraints and opportunities that will determine how much "demand" there is for what you end up doing professionally (both social impact and market-based pay); income and job satisfaction; agency versus grit

c.   In-class activity: Take out your phone and do some research on how much your three hypothesized future professions pay, see what you can learn about the (positive versus negative) social impact of these careers, consider the feasibility of securing a job in this field, and finally consider what a day in the life might look like in this career.

d.   Post-class reading:

      i.   <u>Grit</u> Chapter 5: Grit Grows

      ii.   [Kahneman, D., & Deaton, A. (2010). High income improves evaluation of life but not emotional well-being. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 107*(38), 16489-16493.](#)

      iii.   [Kundu, A. (2017). Grit and agency: A framework for helping students in poverty to achieve academic greatness. *National Youth-At-Risk Journal, 2*(2).](#)

      iv.   Grit guest: TBA

  e. Post-class experiment: Finish research on your three careers. Identify, and find contact information, for future curiosity conversations (see next week's assignment.) Quaker Net is a terrific resource for contacting alumni.

  f. Post-experiment written reflection: Write about the career option you feel most attracted to at this point. What are the salary and social impact implications? As of now, how do you feel about work-life balance, grit, and related issues of income and well-being?

12. [Goal hierarchies](#) (Lecture on Wednesday, November 18, 2020)

  a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections.

  b. Lecture and discussion: When to quit and when to grit? Goal hierarchies,, "callings", and curiosity conversations.

  c. In-class activity: Cold email

  d. Post-class reading:

      i.   <u>Grit</u> Chapter 4: How Gritty Are You?

      ii.   [Sheldon, K. M. (2014). Becoming oneself: The central role of self-concordant goal selection. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 18*(4), 349-365.](#)

      iii.   Grit guest: TBA

  e. Post-class experiment: Have one, two, or three curiosity conversations with people whose grit you admire. See Canvas for more information.

  f. Post-class experiment: PLOC activity

  g. Post-experiment written reflection: What did you learn that surprised you? What do you admire about the person(s) you interviewed?

November 25, Thanksgiving break

13. Pay it forward (Lecture on Wednesday, December 2, 2020)

  a. Cohort and team activity: reading and discussing reflections

  b. Lecture and discussion: For what and for whom? The basic human need to contribute, self-actualization and self-transcendence

    c. In-class activity: Five-minute favor

    d. Post-class reading:

        i. <u>Grit</u> Chapter 13: Conclusion

        ii. Koltko-Rivera, M. E. (2006). Rediscovering the later version of Maslow's hierarchy of needs: Self-transcendence and opportunities for theory, research, and unification. *Review of General Psychology, 10*(4), 302-317.

        iii. Frankl, V. E. (1966). Self-transcendence as a human phenomenon. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 6*(2), 97-106.

        iv. Grant, A. (2013). In the company of givers and takers. *Harvard Business Review, 91(4),* 90-97.

        v. Grit guest: TBA

    e. Post-class experiment: Prepare a one-minute video about one thing you learned in Grit Lab and how you applied it to your life. Share it with at least three students younger than yourself.

    f. Post-experiment written reflection: Take the PERMA survey that is emailed to you and then make final reflections on the past semester. What did you learn in this course that you hope to remember, and apply, 10 years from now?

14. Concluding Lecture (Wednesday, December 9, 2020)

    a. Lecture and discussion: Why grit is not enough, Aristotle's golden mean, and the tripartite theory of character

    b. Grit guest: TBA