Master of Applied Positive Psychology

The first in the world, and always on the cutting edge

Penn’s innovative MAPP program, the first in the world and still the only one in the US to teach the principles of applied positive psychology, allows students to earn a world-class graduate degree without interrupting their careers. Created under the leadership of Dr. Martin Seligman (Faculty Director and positive psychology founder) and Dr. James Pawelski (Director), the MAPP program opened its doors in the fall of 2005, and presents an extraordinary opportunity for students from diverse backgrounds to become actively involved in a cutting-edge and growing area of study.

The program benefits from the hands-on involvement of interdisciplinary scholars who are innovators in groundbreaking applied research in the field. Classes are taught by Dr. Seligman and other leading figures and are held on campus one weekend each month. In the intervening weeks, classes are taught via a variety of distance-learning methods, making the program accessible to students choosing to work full time and living across the US and around the world. The program trains students in the history, theory and basic research methods of positive psychology and in the application of positive psychology in various professional settings.
World-class faculty

The program draws on faculty within the University of Pennsylvania's School of Arts and Sciences as well as on other preeminent local and international leaders in the field.

MARTIN E.P. SELIGMAN, PhD
Instructor of Introduction to Positive Psychology

Martin is currently Zellerbach Family Professor of Psychology in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania as well as Director of the Positive Psychology Center. He works on learned helplessness, on depression, on optimism and pessimism, and on positive psychology.

JAMES O. PAWELSKI, PhD
Instructor of Foundations of Positive Interventions and Humanities and Human Flourishing

James is the Director of Education and Senior Scholar in the Positive Psychology Center and Adjunct Associate Professor of Religious Studies in the School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania. His current research interests include connections between positive psychology and the various disciplines in the humanities, the philosophical underpinnings of positive psychology, and the development, application and assessment of interventions in positive psychology.

ANGELA DUCKWORTH, PhD
Instructor of Research Methods and Evaluation

Angela is Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. Her research centers on self-control (the ability to regulate emotions, thoughts, and feelings in the service of valued goals) and grit (perseverance and sustained interest in long-term goals). She is particularly interested in the subjective experience of exerting self-control and grit – and conscious strategies which facilitate adaptive behavior in the face of temptation, frustration and distraction.

OTHER RECENT FACULTY AND LECTURERS

- Roy Baumeister, PhD
- Paul Bloom, PhD
- Dan Buettner
- Ellen Charrly, PhD
- Nicholas A. Christakis, MD, PhD, MPH
- David Cooperrider, PhD
- Jane Dutton, PhD
- Chris Feudtner, MD, PhD, MPH
- Barb Fredrickson, PhD
- Jane Gillham, PhD
- Adam Grant, PhD
- Jonathan Haidt, PhD
- David Levin
- Meredith Myers
- Martin E.P. Seligman, PhD
- Ryan Niemiec, PhD
- Ken Pargament, PhD
- Gloria Park, PhD
- Adam Potkay, PhD
- Issac Prilleltensky, PhD
- Peter Raiton, PhD
- Tom Rath, MAPP
- Karen Reivich, PhD
- Paul Rozin, PhD
- Judy Saltzberg Levick, PhD
- Barry Schwartz, PhD
- Mark Stern, PhD
- George Vaillant, MD
- Kathleen Vohs, PhD
- Amy Wrzesniewski, PhD

Deeply committed students

Each year, approximately 40 students attend this competitive program, representing diverse backgrounds and a wide range of personal and professional interests. For some, the degree provides tools for transforming a business, institution or practice; for others, it provides the foundation for a specialization in positive psychology within a clinical or research career.

Admissions and eligibility

Students applying to the MAPP program must hold a bachelor's degree and have an excellent academic record. Working professionals with three or more years of professional experience should submit:

- Three letters of recommendation
- A professional résumé
- An essay describing their interests and experience

Applicants who have graduated in the past three years, and applicants with fewer than three years of professional experience, will be required to submit GRE scores in addition to the application materials.