



PRESS RELEASE

William L. Brooks
Communications Coordinator

E: William.Brooks2@LIFE.edu 1269 Barclay Circle
P: (678) 331-4342 Marietta, GA 30060
F: (770) 218-2850 www.LIFE.edu

LIFE UNIVERSITY TO LAUNCH BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN POSITIVE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE (PHDSC) Classes Set to Begin Winter Quarter – January 9, 2017

Marietta, Georgia, November 29, 2016 – Life University will officially launch a new Bachelor of Arts degree in Positive Human Development and Social Change in the Winter Quarter, 2017. The Bachelor's Degree in Positive Human Development and Social Change (PHDSC) is unique among Liberal Arts degrees in the country for many reasons. It was developed by Dr. Thomas Flores, Assistant Professor of Positive Human Development and Social Change, and Dr. Brendan Ozawa-de Silva, Associate Professor of Psychology and Associate Director of the Center for Compassion, Integrity, and Secular Ethics at Life University, to capture the original strength of a Liberal Arts Education, while preparing students for the rapidly changing economic, intellectual, cultural and social challenges of the 21st century. Other faculty across the College of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies then contributed with additional syllabus design.

“As we were developing the program, we were doing lots of research on current approaches to Liberal Arts education, while at the same time, trying to address some of its deficiencies,” Dr. Flores notes. “We took notice of the now commonly acknowledged ‘skills gaps’ among millennials in relation to employment trends. Across virtually every sector of employment markets, the research shows greater demand for skills in more holistic critical and creative thinking; effective communication and conflict resolution; leadership and working in team structures; and cultural diversity. What used to be considered ‘soft skills’ are now absolutely necessary in the job market. We also honored the current meaning and life purpose trends for millennials to tie their education to social good and positive purpose in the world. This is fully in line with Life University’s values and mission, and that is a major reason that the administration championed the creation of this degree.”

The degree offers a cutting-edge interdisciplinary curriculum and educational model. “What ties the degree together is that it is not interdisciplinary for the sake of being interdisciplinary. Rather, all the courses feed into the same thread of inner development and sustainable social change, and the interdependent relationship between the two. The very name ‘Positive Human Development and Social Change’ embodies the University’s commitment to an education that leads to greater personal integrity and responsible global citizenship. The various parts of the degree fit together like puzzle pieces, all facilitated by the educational model,” adds Dr. Ozawa-de Silva.

The “three-in-three” educational model is unique in the world of higher education.

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Within the context of rigorous academic coursework and practice labs, students study and cultivate knowledge in three domains: *personal* skills, such as emotional intelligence and ethical mindfulness; *social* skills such as compassion, empathy and empowering communication; and *systems-level* understanding. They can also choose to concentrate in Positive Business, Positive Psychology, Contemplative Studies, Secular Ethics, and Peace Studies & Sustainable Human Flourishing, or can elect to do a general degree without a concentration. The practice labs help students deepen their understanding in the three domains through three levels of knowledge processing: received knowledge, to critical insight and, finally, embodied understanding.

The degree offers a unique perspective organized around the first of LIFE's Core Proficiencies—integrity and citizenship—helping students to build capacities of ethical discernment and human flourishing in whatever path they choose but with a practical orientation to the skills they will need to succeed in the 21st century.

Life University has already begun offering elective courses within the PHDSC degree program, and students have responded enthusiastically. One student states: *"The PHDSC degree challenges us to explore the world around us and to invent creative solutions for the social issues that are prevalent today. PHDSC gifts us with the language necessary to express the things that we see and experience in our daily lives, and through that language we begin the dialogues needed to initiate change."*

The PHDSC degree is housed with the Department of Positive Human Development and Social Change. It will prepare students for graduate work in various fields (such as Peace and Conflict Studies, Business, Management, Contemplative Studies, Leadership, Psychology and other fields. It will also prepare students for work in the following fields, as well as jobs in fields that have yet to be created. Some current examples include:

- Business, Entrepreneurship, Corporate Philanthropy, Non-profit, and /or Humanitarian work in any size NGO
- Teaching (with credentialing process), Social Work, Peace Research and Education, Ministry, or Life Coaching
- Creative Economies (Film, Music, Entertainment, etc.)
- Human Resources, Sales, Marketing, and Strategic Planning.
- With further training, meditation instructors, consultants, or developers of interventions that employ contemplative approaches and /or secular ethics in education, healthcare and other fields.



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For more information, see: LIFE.edu/PHDSC.

About Life University

Founded in Marietta, Georgia in 1974, Life University is a health sciences institution most known for its chiropractic program, the largest single campus chiropractic program in the world. Life University is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award baccalaureate, master's and Doctor of Chiropractic degrees, and also has programmatic accreditation through the Council on Chiropractic Education (CCE), the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) and the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education (CAATE). The mission of Life University is to empower students with the education, skills and values necessary for career success and life fulfillment, based on a vitalistic philosophy.

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