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ELWICK, Alex (CANNIZZARO, Sara)

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**Abstract**

This paper investigates the higher education literature surrounding happiness and related notions: satisfaction, despair, flourishing and well-being. It finds that there is a real dearth of literature relating to profound happiness in higher education: much of the literature using the terms happiness and satisfaction interchangeably as if one were tantamount to the other, such conflation being due to the move towards consumerism within higher education and the marketisation of the sector. What literature there exists that actually deals with the profound happiness of students in higher education, generally argues that in the United Kingdom institutions do not currently do enough to promote happiness in higher education. These findings imply that flourishing, contentment and well-being should be regarded as legitimate goals of higher education, alongside satisfaction and related economic outcomes that are currently promoted across academic and policy literature, university rankings and the National Student Survey. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)