Current Topics in Psychology (PSY280): Moral Psychology
Fall 2015, Tuesdays 3:30-6:00PM; 120 Spence Laboratories

Professor: Daryl Cameron, Ph.D.
Office: 140 Spence Laboratories
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Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:00-3:30; or by appointment (email me)

Course Description:
How do we decide whether an action is morally right and wrong, or whether a person deserves blame or forgiveness? What causes us to help or harm, cooperate or cheat? Moral philosophers have long debated these questions, but psychologists and neuroscientists use the scientific method to systematically study these topics. This course will give you a broad survey of the field, and illuminate specific debates and cutting-edge trends. Many prominent scholars will visit us over Skype. By the end of the course, my goal is for you to have a ready-to-implement research project that bridges your current interests with ongoing debates in moral psychology.

Course Assignments:
(1) Readings and Thought Papers: Each week, you are expected to complete all of the readings and submit a thought paper online through ICON. You should also send your thought paper by e-mail to the discussion leader for that week. The thought papers should be submitted online and to the discussion leader by 8 pm of the Sunday before class. This thought paper should be about two pages (double-spaced), and provide a critical analysis of the week’s readings. It should not simply be a summary of these readings—because we all will have read them—but should instead focus on integrating and critically analyzing their implications for theory and the real world. These questions, plus class participation, make up 40% of the final grade. Note: There is no thought paper due for the first week of class.

(2) Leading Discussion: Each of you will lead discussion once during the semester. This involves compiling and organizing everyone’s thought papers to facilitate class discussion. You will e-mail out a Word document with the organized questions by midnight of the Monday before class. In class, you will lead off discussion, and then assist with me in moderating discussion for the rest of the session. Discussion leading is worth 20% of the final grade.

(3) Research proposal and presentation: Based upon the course readings and our discussions, you should develop a question or problem that you can address in an experimental design. The proposal should be 15 pages long and APA-formatted (double-spaced, 1” margins, 12-pt Times New Roman). In addition to the introduction and methods, you should provide a results section with expected results, and a discussion section drawing out implications of your findings. In the final class, you will give a 15-minute PowerPoint presentation summarizing the theoretical background and method of your proposed experiment, which will be followed by feedback from the class. Feedback should be incorporated into the paper, which will be due on ICON at midnight on Wednesday, Dec. 16. The paper is 25% of the final grade; the presentation is 15%.
Course Schedule (readings subject to change on ICON):

**Week 1 (August 25): Introduction to Moral Psychology**


**Week 2 (September 8): Empathy & Morality**

Skype Guest Star: Jamil Zaki, Stanford University


**Week 3 (September 15): Moral Dilemmas**

Skype Guest Star: Piercarlo Valdesolo, Claremont McKenna College


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**Week 4 (September 22): Moral Emotions**

Skype Guest Star: Kristen Lindquist, UNC Chapel Hill


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**Week 5 (September 29): Moral Intuitions**

Skype Guest Star: Chris Oveis, UC San Diego


**Week 6 (October 6): Moral Functions**

Skype Guest Star: Tage Rai, Northwestern University


**Week 7 (October 13): Moral Politics**

Skype Guest Star: Jesse Graham, University of Southern California

**Week 8 (October 20): Moral Minds**
Skype Guest Star: Kurt Gray, University of North Carolina


**Week 9 (October 27): Moral Cognition & Moral Self**
Skype Guest Star: Jay Van Bavel, New York University


Week 10 (November 3): Moral Motivation
Skype Guest Star: Paul Piff, University of California Irvine


Week 11 (November 10): Moral Behavior

**Week 12 (November 17): Moral Brains**
Skype Guest Star: Liane Young, Boston College


**Week 13 (December 1): Moral Disorders**
Skype Guest Star: Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, Duke University


**Week 15 (December 9): Research Project Presentations**
Guest Stars: The class!
Collegiate Policies

Administrative Home
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the administrative home of this course and governs matters such as the add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and other related issues. Different colleges may have different policies. Questions may be addressed to 120 Schaeffer Hall, or see the CLAS Student Academic Handbook (http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/).

Electronic Communication
University policy specifies that students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their University of Iowa e-mail address (@uiowa.edu). Faculty and students should use this account for correspondences. (Operations Manual, III.15.2. Scroll down to k.11.)

Accommodations for Disabilities
A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services and then meet privately with me to make particular arrangements. See www.uiowa.edu/~sds/ for more information.

Academic Honesty
All CLAS students or students taking classes offered by CLAS have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

CLAS Final Examination Policies
The final examination schedule for each class is announced by the Registrar generally by the tenth day of classes. Final exams are offered only during the official final examination period. No exams of any kind are allowed during the last week of classes. All students should plan on being at the UI through the final examination period. Once the Registrar has announced the date, time, and location of each final exam, the complete schedule will be published on the Registrar’s web site and will be shared with instructors and students. It is the student's responsibility to know the date, time, and place of a final exam.

Making a Suggestion or a Complaint
Students with a suggestion or complaint should first visit the instructor, then the course supervisor, and then the departmental DEO. Complaints must be made within six months of the incident. See the CLAS Student Academic Handbook (http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/).

Understanding Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community have a responsibility to uphold this mission and to contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment should be reported immediately. See the UI Comprehensive Guide on Sexual Harassment (http://www.uiowa.edu/~eod/policies/sexual-harassment-guide/index.html) for assistance, definitions, and the full University policy.

Reacting Safely to Severe Weather
In severe weather, class members should seek appropriate shelter immediately, leaving the classroom if necessary. The class will continue if possible when the event is over. For more information on Hawk Alert and the siren warning system, visit the Public Safety web site (http://police.uiowa.edu/stay-informed/emergency-communication/)

Emails
In accordance with the Psychology Department’s email policy, all official course emails will be sent only to your UI email accounts. Students in this course are expected to check their email regularly (at least every other day) for updates or other important course information sent by email.

My Policy
During our classes, I ask that you shut down all (non-note-taking) electronics unless invited to do otherwise. In other words, resist the urge to send email, texts or tweets; check Facebook; read the news; or otherwise engage online via your computer, tablet, or phone during class!