

PSY 4200: Psychology of Morality
CRN: 46453
Fall, 2012
Meeting Room: McDonald 104
Meeting Times/Days: 1:00 – 2:15 Tuesdays and Thursdays

Instructor Contact Information:

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OFFICE HOURS: 1:00 – 2:00 Monday and Wednesday; 12:00 – 1:00 Tuesday and Thursday
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Text: There is no textbook for this course. Readings will be distributed via Canvas.

I. Course Description

Morality seems to be a universal feature of human thinking. People across time, place, and culture have a strong sense of right and wrong. While morality was once of primary interest to psychologists, interest in the topic saw a sharp decline in the last several decades. In recent years, however, there has been a resurgence of interest in the science of morality. Recently, scientists across a wide range of disciplines have made discoveries that bear on the question of how and why humans have a sense of morality.

The purpose of this section is to offer an introduction to this resurgence in moral psychology. In order to achieve this goal, we will read articles that introduce evolutionary, cognitive, neurological, developmental and social-psychological research in which the central phenomena are moral judgments, emotions, intuitions, and behavior. I hope that by the end of this section you will be positioned to critically address the following questions:

- 1) What is morality?
- 2) How do we know what is right and what is wrong?
- 3) Are some people truly immoral? Amoral? If so, why?
- 4) Finally, how can we explain why seemingly good “moral” people often do seemingly bad (immoral) things?

My true desire, however, is that by the end of this course you have more questions about moral psychology than you have answers.

II. Class Policies

A. College approved absences. Dixie College Policy explains in detail what needs to happen if you anticipate being absent from class because of a college-sponsored activity (athletic events, club activities, field trips for other classes, etc. Please read this information and follow the instructions carefully! The policy can be found at: <http://www.dixie.edu/humanres/policy/sec5/523.html>

B. Academic honesty. I believe that most students are honest, and I don't want to punish everyone for the few that aren't. However, I will not tolerate cheating, and if I discover that it has occurred, a zero grade will be given for that assignment or exam, at the very least. Repeated or aggravated offenses will result in failing the course or expulsion from Dixie State College.

Any time you take credit for work you did not do, you are cheating. This includes copying information from a library or internet source and presenting it as if it were your own words (plagiarism), handing in papers that you claim to be your own but that are actually, in whole, or in part, someone else's (a friend, relative, stranger, anonymous individual via some web-site wrote some or all of the paper), looking at someone else's answers on an exam, and asking someone who has already taken a test about what questions it contains.

If you cheat and I don't catch you it doesn't mean that you "beat the system." Rather, it means you violated the student code of conduct and forfeited your integrity, whether or not you are caught. It is better to fail an assignment or even a class than to cheat and lose the chance to continue your education. (See DSC Policy 34.1.1-4). Or maybe cheating is okay under certain circumstances? Sounds like a good course topic.

B. Turn off all electronic equipment before entering the classroom (laptops may be used to take notes only). After the first week of class, if I see you using unauthorized electronic devices of any kind at any time in the classroom (or using a laptop for anything other than taking notes), I will deduct 5% of your total course points for each offense.

C. Arrive on time.

D. Avoid leaving early. Not only is this distracting to your fellow students, it's distracting to me. I do understand that occasionally people must miss part of a class. **If you intend to do so, please let me know and then sit near the door if possible**, so you can slip out without distracting everyone.

E. If you have questions, please ask. You may try to see me after class, but don't get frustrated if there is not time. Best: come by my office during office hours or set up an appointment with me. You are my priority at DSC. We can find a time that works for both of us.

F. Attendance: Come to class. This is especially important in this class, as participation is a part of your grade.

III. Earning Points in the Course

A. Thought papers: 4 papers x 100 points = 400 points total

B. Participation Grade/Discussion Leader = 140 points total

C. Final Paper = 200 points total

Total Points Possible = 740

A. Thought Papers: No later than 10:00 p.m. on Tuesday as assigned you will submit to me (via Canvas) a thought paper. This should be as close as possible to *one single-spaced page in length written in 12pt. Arial Narrow font*. Each of these papers will be written in response to readings that I will provide to

you. Late papers will receive a zero.

Note well: I will not accept excuses for late papers or question submissions. Such excuses include, but are not limited to, technology failure of one type or another. You are responsible for ensuring that your submissions are submitted in Canvas by 6:00 p.m. Tuesday.

How to approach a thought paper (see also the grading rubric on Canvas)

1 – Read the first article as if you did not have to write about it later.

2 – Read the article again, this time, more carefully and thoughtfully, keeping in mind (**and jotting in the margins**) your thoughts, objections, and questions.

Repeat steps 1 and 2 for the remaining article(s)

3 – Sit down and draft your ideas and questions in a stream of consciousness way.

4 – Turn this in to a thoughtful, concise, logically constructed, and well written paper that does some or most of the following:

- a. Identifies and explains inconsistencies in reasoning, logic, or theory either within a single article or in comparison with other articles.
- b. Challenges or expands upon the assertions or conclusions made by the author with specific assertions and conclusions of your own.
- c. Raises new issues or questions that need to be addressed on the basis of current findings or assumptions.

***Every week you DO NOT submit a thought paper you should submit 2 thoughtful discussion questions regarding the readings/topic of the week by 10:00 p.m. Tuesday. If questions are not submitted by this time, you will receive a zero for participation for that week. You will be required to submit your questions via Canvas.**

Each thought paper will be graded on the following scale:

- A = 95 points
- A- = 90 points
- B = 85 points
- C = 75 points
- D = 65 points
- F = 55 points

B. Participation/Group Discussion Leader: Your participation in discussions will be an integral part of this course. I will rely on you, as upper-classwomen and men, to engage in thoughtful discussions of the topics and readings each week. I fully expect all members of the seminar to participate in these discussions and I or your group leader may call on you during class to provide your thoughts and opinions. Your group leaders will be grading your participation during discussion sessions.

During the first week of class, you will be assigned to a group of 6 students. The students scheduled to submit thought papers will also prepare to serve as group discussion leaders for the coming week's class.

To help you prepare, the six students from your group who are NOT writing papers will each submit 2 discussion questions that you will be able to collect via Canvas no later than 10:00 p.m. Tuesday (2 days before the discussion is to take place). Organize your discussion around these questions and your own impressions and insight. Remember, your success as a discussion leader will depend on the quantity and quality of GROUP discussion that takes place within your group. Your peers will be evaluating your performance as group leader (see the Rubric on Canvas).

C. Final paper: This paper represents your opportunity to organize and synthesize your impressions, thoughts, ideas, questions, and concerns regarding what we know (and more importantly what we don't know) about moral psychology. Questions you should use to guide you include: What direction should future theory and research in moral psychology take? How would you lead the field in this direction (i.e. what issues need to be resolved or explored in greater detail, and how might this be done? Why should it be done? Alternately, you may propose a synthesis of ideas in moral psychology (i.e. your own theory of morality that draws on much of the material/discussion from the class).

Remember – This paper is designed to be your unique insight into moral psychology, and that insight should be grounded primarily in your readings, your thought papers and discussion questions, and our in-class discussions.

This paper should be 8-10 pages long, double-spaced, in 12 pt. Arial Narrow font. It is due no later than Tuesday, December 11th at 10:00 p.m. Late papers will receive a zero. See the grading rubric on Canvas for more insight about the basis of evaluation for this paper.

IV. Grading Scale

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percent</u>
A	94% - 100%	C	74% - 76%
A-	90% - 93%	C-	70% - 73%
B+	87% - 89%	D+	67% - 69%
B	84% - 86%	D	64% - 66%
B-	80% - 83%	D-	60% - 63%
C+	77% - 79%	F	59% AND BELOW

You can convert the points you have earned into a percentage by using the following formula.

$$\text{Points you earned} \div \text{Points possible} = \text{your percentage}$$

V: ADMINISTRIVIA

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

If you are a student with a medical, psychological or a learning difference and requesting reasonable academic accommodations due to this disability, you must provide an official request of accommodation to your professor(s) from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) **within the first two weeks** of the beginning of classes. Students are to contact the center on the main campus to follow through with, and receive assistance in the documentation process to determine the appropriate accommodations related to their disability.

You may call **(435) 652-7516** for an appointment and further information regarding the Americans

with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 per Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The DRC is located in the North Instructional Building.

OTHER IMPORTANT CAMPUS RESOURCES

- IT Student Help Desk - dixie.edu/helpdesk
- Library - library.dixie.edu
- Tutoring Center - dixie.edu/tutoring
- Writing Center - dixie.edu/english/dsc_writing_center.php

OTHER IMPORTANT DATES/DEADLINES

Aug 23	Last Day to Waitlist
Aug 24	Last Day to Add Without Signature
Aug 27	Drop/Audit Fee Begins (\$10 per class)
Sep 3	Labor Day
Sep 4	\$50 Late Registration/Payment Fee
Sep 10	Last Day to drop without receiving a "W" grade
Sep 11	Courses dropped for non-payment
Sep 14	Last Day to Add/Audit
Oct 1	Graduation Application Deadline for Fall 2012
Oct 10	Mid-Term Grades Due
Oct 11-12	Semester Break
Oct 22	Spring and Summer 2013 class schedules available online
Nov 1	Graduation Application Deadline for Spring 2013 baccalaureate degrees
Nov 9	Last Day for Complete Withdrawal
Nov 12	Spring Registration open to Seniors (90+ credits)
Nov 13	Career Day (no classes before 4:00 p.m.)
Nov 13	Spring Registration open to Juniors (60+ credits)
Nov 14	Spring Registration open to Sophomores (30+ credits)
Nov 15	Spring Registration Open to All Students
Nov 21-23	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 7	Classwork Ends
Dec 10-14	Final Exams

VI. Schedule for Course Assignments (Reading for each week TBA and available on Blackboard)

Aug 21-23 – Introduction to course

Aug 28 – Sep 13: Section I – The Social Science of Morality: Culture and Learning.

Week One: 28 August to 30 August

Week Two: 4-6 September

Week Three: 11-13 September

Sep 18 – Oct 4: Section II – The Evolution of Morality: Adaptations and Innateness

Week Four: 18-20 September

Week Five: 25-27 September

Week Six: 2-4 October

Oct 9 – Final Paper Assignment Question and Answer Session (Optional: bring an outline of ideas)

Oct 11 – Fall Break

Oct 16 – Nov 1: Section III – Thinking and Feeling Morality

Week Seven: 16-18 October

Week Eight: 23-25 October

Week Nine: 30 November-1 December

Nov 6 – Nov 29: Section IV – Absence of Morality?

Week Ten: 6-8 November

Week Eleven: 13-15 November

Week Twelve: 27 Nov-29 November

Dec 4-6: Final Paper Peer Review (Bring a printed draft of your papers to class)

Dec 11: Final Papers Due at 10:00 p.m.

DISCLAIMER

Information contained in this syllabus, other than the grading scale may be subject to change with advanced notice, as deemed appropriate to the instructor.

STATEMENT ABOUT DMAIL:

While communication for this class will always be through Blackboard, you are required to frequently check your Dmail account. Important college information will be sent to your Dmail account, including DSC bills, financial aid/scholarship notices, notices of cancelled classes, reminders of important dates and deadlines, and other information critical to your success at DSC and in your courses. To access your Dmail account, visit go.dixie.edu/dmail. If you do not know your Dmail username or you have forgotten your PIN, visit go.dixie.edu/mydixie and follow the respective instructions.

STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC CONDUCT

In order to ensure that the highest standards of academic conduct are promoted and supported at the College, students must adhere to generally accepted standards of academic honesty, including but not limited to, refraining from cheating, plagiarizing, falsification, misrepresentation, and/or inappropriately colluding or collaborating. The College shall consistently hold students accountable for instances of academic dishonesty and apply appropriate consequences. Definitions for some types of academic misconduct follow:

Cheating: Includes but is not limited to the use of unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise; failing to observe the expressed procedures or instructions of an academic exercise; substituting for or impersonating someone else during a test or exam or other fraud; or receiving the content of a test or exam before it is administered.

Plagiarism: Includes but is not limited to the use of another's words or ideas as if they were one's own, including, but not limited to, representing, either with the intent to deceive or by the omission of the true source, part of or an entire work produced by someone other than the student, obtained by purchase or otherwise, as the student's original work or representing the identifiable but altered ideas, data, or writing of another person as if those ideas, data, or writing were the student's original work.

Inappropriate collaboration or collusion: Includes but is not limited to unauthorized or inappropriate collaboration between students or between a student and any other person when individual work is required.

Multiple Submissions: Includes but is not limited to the resubmission by a student of any work which has been previously submitted for credit in identical or similar form in one course to fulfill the requirements of a second course, without the informed permission/consent of the instructor of the second course; or the submission by a student of any work submitted for credit in identical or similar form in one course to fulfill the requirements of a concurrent course, without the permission/consent of the instructors of both courses.

Falsification / Fabrication / Misrepresentation: Includes but is not limited to the intentional and unauthorized invention of any data, information, or citation in an academic activity.

Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: Includes but is not limited to knowingly helping another student commit an act of academic misconduct or failing to report another student for academic misconduct.

Coercion Regarding Grading or Evaluation of Coursework: Includes but is not limited to issuing threats or offering favors or bribes toward an instructor to coerce the instructor to change a grade or otherwise evaluate the student's work by criteria not directly reflective of coursework.

Copyright Violation: Includes but is not limited to copyright and other violations of the College's policies. Such matters are adjudicated under the Student Behavioral Conduct section of this code.

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY

Instructors and students have a right to an educational environment that is supportive of the learning process. It is the responsibility of the instructor to create and maintain this environment. It is the responsibility of the student to act in a manner that is appropriate for the classroom and to adhere to established standards and expectations.

What is Disruptive Behavior?

Disruptive behavior may best be defined as any behavior that inhibits an instructor's ability to conduct class, or behavior that limits another student's ability to benefit from instruction – including conduct, speech, or activity that interferes with the learning activities of other students. Some examples of disruptive behavior may include:

- Physical violence, verbal abuse, or harassment
- Intoxication or illegal drug use
- Use of profanity
- **Failing to respect others when expressing their own viewpoints (disagree with respect)!**
- Talking while the instructor or another student is talking
- Constant questions or interruptions that interfere with classroom presentation

If I believe you are behaving disruptively I will approach you and quietly ask you to leave the classroom. You should then expect that I will talk to you in the hall or ask you to come see me in my office. Depending on how you respond I will give you a second chance. If you engage in disruptive behavior a second time, I will drop you from the class.