

PSYC 377: MORAL PSYCHOLOGY

Spring 2019

Tu/Th 9:40-11:10 pm OLRI 300

Course website: <https://moodle.macalester.edu/course/view.php?id=1326>

Instructor: Steve Guglielmo (sgugliel@macalester.edu)

Office: OLRI 327 (phone: 696-6112)

Office hours: Tue 2:30-3:30 and Wed 1:30-2:30 (and by appointment)

COURSE OVERVIEW AND GOALS

This course will explore fundamental questions of moral psychology. Which kinds of behaviors do we view as immoral? How are moral judgments shaped by intuition, emotion, and reasoning? Is climate change a moral issue? What are the developmental and evolutionary origins of moral judgments? When and why do we punish others? How do we make inferences about others' moral character? In this course, we will gain insight into these topics, considering perspectives from social, developmental, evolutionary, and political psychology.

Readings for the course will consist of primary literature (theoretical and empirical journal articles), which will be available on Moodle. The set of readings for each week will include at least two articles (and usually more), typically totaling 40-60 pages. The course will include some lecture, but will primarily be discussion-based.

I have designed the structure and assignments of this course to meet several goals:

- To build your skills in examining moral behavior — and social behavior, more generally — from a social scientific perspective. This includes identifying research hypotheses, understanding the relationship between hypotheses and empirical data, considering alternative explanations, and connecting theories to applied or real-world patterns of behavior.
- To give you a space to engage deeply with course material, to discuss and defend your ideas, and to respectfully critique and debate others' ideas.
- To help you become a more effective argumentative writer. This includes learning how to read and understand primary scientific literature, to construct arguments that relate to prior literature, and to communicate your ideas to different audiences.
- To build your skills in communicating your ideas in different modes (online forums, verbal presentations) and in different formats or degrees of formality (personal reflection, scientific writing).

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

Reading Responses and Participation (25%)

You will submit a weekly 400-500 word reading response on Sunday of each week, beginning Sunday 1/27, discuss the coming week's readings. Enter/paste your text directly into Moodle; don't upload a separate file. These responses may critique the work (e.g., regarding methodology, interpretations, claims, etc.), synthesize ideas across multiple readings, pose questions for future research, etc. Your responses must address at least two readings and they should contain little to no summary of the articles; rather, your goal is to critique and extend the articles. The reading responses will constitute 15% of your grade for the course, and in-class participation will constitute another 10%.

No reading response is required for the week you lead the discussion, and you may skip a reading response in one other week of your choosing.

Post your reading response to the coming week's Moodle forum by 10 pm every Sunday

Class Presentation and Discussion Leading (10%)

Once during the semester, you and a partner will present to the class and lead the discussion. The format for doing so is flexible. Possible options include: (a) identifying the major themes from the reading responses and organizing the discussion accordingly; (b) synthesizing the claims from the set of readings; (c) posing questions regarding interpretations of data/theory, or how data/theory might relate to other questions; (d) having the class participate in an activity or debate related to the week's topic. These options are not mutually exclusive — you will likely want to implement several of them in your presentation and discussion leading (or choose other options). In addition, your presentation must incorporate one or two additional articles beyond those on the reading list. You must meet with me at least one week in advance to discuss your articles and plans for your presentation.

Climate Change Reflection (15%) — due Monday 3/4 by 11:59 PM

For this assignment, you will record some aspect of your own climate change-relevant behavior — regarding food consumption, energy usage, transportation, etc., or some combination thereof — over the course of two weeks. Then, after we have together explored the philosophical and psychological literature on morality and climate change, you will submit a reflection paper that summarizes your behavior, considers the psychological factors motivating or hindering this behavior, and identifies possible strategies for modifying your future behavior.

Take-home Essays (10%) — due Monday 3/11 by 11:59 PM

You will complete a take-home “exam” in which you respond to several essay prompts, covering material from lectures and readings. The essays are entirely open-notes; you may consult readings, lecture slides, and your notes.

Morality in Everyday Life (5%) — due Saturday 4/27 by 11:59 PM

I want you to pay attention to everyday instances of morality (moral dilemmas, disagreements, reasoning, behavior, etc.). In this informal, brief assignment, you will describe three such instances; each description can be just one or two paragraphs. You can discuss instances from your own life, from current events, or even from movies, shows, or podcasts that you watch or listen to. Your task is to attend to the moral implications of events in everyday life, and apply course themes to them. Submit your descriptions as text in Moodle (like your reading responses). The full set of three descriptions is due Sat 4/27 by 11:59 PM, though you can add each description as you think of it.

Research Paper, Peer Review, and Presentation (35%)

You will write a 10-12 page research paper on a topic of your choice within the field of moral psychology. The paper should be formatted in APA style (with 1” margins and 12-point double-spaced font; title page and references are excluded from page count). Your paper may take one of two approaches: (1) a Research Review, in which you review and synthesize research and defend a thesis based on this research; (2) a Research Proposal, in which you propose a study (or studies) that would extend the research on your topic, and you describe your predicted results and their implications. Additional details regarding this assignment will be provided in class.

As part of this assignment, you will also engage in a peer review process, providing feedback to two of your peers (consequently, you will receive feedback from two peers). This serves to improve your own and your peers' writing and to familiarize you with the peer-review process, which is a central part of scientific writing.

On Tue 4/30 or Thu 5/2, you will give a brief (5-7 minute) presentation of your research project, plus by a 5-minute Q&A. This is an opportunity to practice your presentation skills, to share the insights from your project, and to get additional feedback to incorporate into your final paper. We will discuss this assignment in more detail in class.

Together, your research paper, peer review feedback, and presentation will constitute 35% of your grade for the course (25% for your final paper, 5% for the peer review feedback, and 5% for your presentation).

Due dates: Draft (Sat 4/13), Peer review (Sat 4/20), Final paper (Mon 5/6)
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TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Potential TBD topics: Free will, Empathy, Power & morality, Forgiveness, Negative vs. positive morality, Religion, ??

Week of 1/21 (week 1): Introduction

Week of 1/28 (week 2): Moral Domains and Politics

- Graham, J., Haidt, J., & Nosek, B. A. (2009). Liberals and conservatives rely on different sets of moral foundations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 96*, 1029-1046.
- Schein, C. & Gray, K. (2015). The unifying moral dyad: Liberals and conservatives share the same harm-based moral template. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 41*, 1147-1163.
- Skitka, L. J. (2010). The psychology of moral conviction. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 4*, 267-281.
- Wright, J. C. & Baril, G. (2011). The role of cognitive resources in determining our moral intuitions: Are we all liberals at heart? *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 47*, 1007-1012.

Week of 2/4 (week 3): Intuitionism and Emotion

- Ask, K. & Pina, A. (2011). On being angry and punitive: How anger alters perception of criminal intent. *Social Psychological and Personality Science, 2*, 494-499.
- Guglielmo, S. (2018). Unfounded dumbfounding: How harm and purity undermine evidence for moral dumbfounding. *Cognition, 170*, 334-337.
- Haidt, J. (2001). The emotional dog and its rational tail: A social intuitionist approach to moral judgment. *Psychological Review, 108*, 814-834.
- Landy, J. F. & Goodwin, G. P. (2015). Does incidental disgust amplify moral judgment? A meta-analytic review of experimental evidence. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 10*, 518-536.

Week of 2/11 (week 4): Dual Processes

- Gleichgerrcht, E., & Young, L. (2013). Low levels of empathic concern predict utilitarian moral judgment. *PLoS One, 8*, e60418.
- Greene, J. D., Sommerville, R. B., Nystrom, L. E., Darley, J. M., & Cohen, J. D. (2001). An fMRI investigation of emotional engagement in moral judgment. *Science, 293*, 2105-2108.
- Hannikainen, I. R., Machery, E., & Cushman, F. A. (2018). Is utilitarian sacrifice becoming more morally permissible? *Cognition, 170*, 95-101.
- Koenigs, M., Young, L., Adolphs, R., Tranel, D., Cushman, F., Hauser, M., & Damasio, A. (2007). Damage to the prefrontal cortex increases utilitarian moral judgements. *Nature, 446*, 908-911.

Week of 2/18 (week 5): Outcomes, Mental States, and Blame

- Cushman, F., Dreber, A., Wang, Y., & Costa, J. (2009). Accidental outcomes guide punishment in a "trembling hand" game. *PLoS One, 4*, e6699.
- Malle, B. F., Guglielmo, S., & Monroe, A. E. (2014). A theory of blame. *Psychological Inquiry, 25*, 147-186.

Week of 2/25 (week 6): Climate Change

- Gardiner, S. M. (2010). Ethics and climate change: an introduction. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Climate Change, 1*, 54-66.
- Gifford, R. (2011). The dragons of inaction: Psychological barriers that limit climate change mitigation and adaptation. *American Psychologist, 66*, 290-302.
- Markowitz, E. M. & Shariff, A. F. (2012). Climate change and moral judgement. *Nature Climate Change, 2*, 243-247.

Zaval, L., Markowitz, E. M., & Weber, E. U. (2015). How will I be remembered? Conserving the environment for the sake of one's legacy. *Psychological Science, 26*, 231-236.

**** Climate Change Reflection due Monday 3/4 by 11:59 PM****

Upload .docx to Moodle. Please name file: Lastname_Reflection.docx

Week of 3/4 (week 7): Moral Hypocrisy

- Cascio, J., & Plant, E. A. (2015). Prospective moral licensing: Does anticipating doing good later allow you to be bad now? *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 56*, 110-116.
- Kreps, T. A., Laurin, K., & Merritt, A. C. (2017). Hypocritical flip-flop, or courageous evolution? When leaders change their moral minds. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 113*, 730-752.
- Merritt, A. C., Effron, D. A., & Monin, B. (2010). Moral self-licensing: When being good frees us to be bad. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass, 4/5*, 344-357.
- Tiefenbeck, V., Staake, T., Roth, K., & Sachs, O. (2013). For better or for worse? Empirical evidence of moral licensing in a behavioral energy conservation campaign. *Energy Policy, 57*, 160-171.

**** Take-home Essays due Monday 3/11 by 11:59 PM****

Upload .docx to Moodle. Please name file: Lastname_Essays.docx

Week of 3/11 (week 8): Moral Character and Identity

- Inbar, Y., Pizarro, D. A., & Cushman, F. (2012). Benefiting from misfortune: When harmless actions are judged to be morally blameworthy. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 38*, 52-62.
- Strohinger, N. & Nichols, S. (2015). Neurodegeneration and identity. *Psychological Science, 26*, 1469-1479.
- Tannenbaum, D., Uhlmann, E. L., & Diermeier, D. (2011). Moral signals, public outrage, and immaterial harms. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 47*, 1249-1254.
- Uhlmann, E. L., Zhu, L., & Diermeier, D. (2014). When actions speak volumes: The role of inferences about moral character in outrage over racial bigotry. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 44*, 23-29.

Spring Break!

Week of 3/25 (week 9): Development & Altruism

- Aknin, L. B., Hamlin, J. K., & Dunn, E. W. (2012). Giving leads to happiness in young children. *PLoS One, 7*, e39211.
- Fehr, E., Bernhard, H., & Rockenbach, B. (2008). Egalitarianism in young children. *Nature, 454*, 1079-1083.
- Hamlin, J. K., Wynn, K., & Bloom, P. (2007). Social evaluation by preverbal infants. *Nature, 405*, 557-560.
- Hepach, R., Vaish, A., & Tomasello, M. (2012). Young children are intrinsically motivated to see others helped. *Psychological Science, 23*, 967-972.
- Olson, K. R., & Spelke, E. S. (2008). Foundations of cooperation in young children. *Cognition, 108*, 222-231.
- Schäfer, M., Haun, B. M., & Tomasello, M. (2015). Fair is not fair everywhere. *Psychological Science, 26*, 1252-1260.
- Warneken, F., & Tomasello, M. (2006). Altruistic helping in human infants and young chimpanzees. *Science, 311*, 1301-1303.

Week of 4/1 (week 10): Topic TBD

Week of 4/8 (week 11): Cooperation and Punishment

- Bone, J. E., Wallace, B., Bshary, R., & Raihani, N. J. (2015). The effect of power asymmetries on cooperation and punishment in a prisoner's dilemma game. *PLoS One, 10*, e0117183.
- Dreber, A., Rand, D. G., Fudenberg, D., & Nowak, M. A. (2008). Winners don't punish. *Nature, 452*, 348-351.
- Fehr, E. & Gächter, S. (2002). Altruistic punishment in humans. *Nature, 415*, 137-140.
- Henrich, J., McElreath, R., Barr, A., Ensminger, J., Barrett, C., Bolyanatz, A., ... & Ziker, J. (2006). Costly punishment across human societies. *Science, 312*, 1767-1770.
- Herrmann, B., Thöni, C., & Gächter, S. (2008). Antisocial punishment across societies. *Science, 319*, 1362-1367.
- Hilbe, C., Traulsen, A., Röhl, T., & Milinski, M. (2014). Democratic decisions establish stable authorities that overcome the paradox of second-order punishment. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 111*, 752-756.
- Rand, D. G., Greene, J. D., & Nowak, M. A. (2012). Spontaneous giving and calculated greed. *Nature, 289*, 427-430.

**** Draft of Research Paper due Saturday 4/13 by 11:59 PM ****

Upload .docx to Moodle. Please name file: Lastname_Draft.docx

Week of 4/15 (week 12): Topic TBD

**** Peer Review Feedback due Saturday 4/20 by 11:59 PM ****

Upload .docx to Moodle. Please name files: Lastname_Comments1.docx and Lastname_Comments2.docx

Week of 4/22 (week 13): Artificial Intelligence

- Bonnefon, J. F., Shariff, A., & Rahwan, I. (2016). The social dilemma of autonomous vehicles. *Science, 352*, 1573-1576.
- Coekelbergh, M. (2010). Moral appearances: Emotions, robots, and human morality. *Ethics and Information Technology, 12*, 235-241.
- Lin, P., Bekey, G., & Abney, K. (2009). Robots in war: Issues of risk and ethics. *Ethics and Robotics, 49-67*.
- Sharkey, A. & Sharkey, N. (2012). Granny and the robots: Ethical issues in robot care for the elderly. *Ethics and Information Technology, 14*, 27-40.
- Waytz, A., Heafner, J., & Epley, N. (2014). The mind in the machine: Anthropomorphism increases trust in an autonomous vehicle. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 52*, 113-117.

**** Morality in Everyday Life Assignment due Saturday 4/27 by 11:59 PM ****

Enter your three descriptions as text on Moodle

Week of 4/29 (week 14): Presentations

No readings or reading response required for this week.

**** Final, Revised Research Paper due Monday 5/6 by 11:59 PM ****

Upload .docx to Moodle. Please name file: Lastname_Research.docx

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Computers or tablets may be used in class for note-taking only. They may not be used for any other purposes. Cell phones may not be used in class. If you must make a call or send a text, please leave the classroom to do so.

COURSE ACCOMMODATIONS

I am committed to ensuring access to course content for students. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Contact the Disability Services office by emailing disabilityservices@macalester.edu, or calling 651-696-6974 to schedule an appointment to discuss your individual needs. It is important to meet as early in the semester as possible; this will ensure that your accommodations can be implemented early on. Further information about disability services and accommodations can be found at: <http://www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. See the Student Handbook (www.macalester.edu/internal/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/03academicpolicies/03-05academicintegrity.html) for guidelines about what constitutes plagiarism, cheating, and forgery and how to avoid these serious offenses. Please talk to me if you are unclear how these guidelines apply to this course. Academic dishonesty will be reported to the Director of Academic Programs and will result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially for the course.

LATE WORK

It is essential to turn in your work on time. Any assignments submitted after the listed deadline will be penalized 20%, plus an additional 20% for each additional day they are late.

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

I encourage you to make your well-being a priority throughout this semester and your career at Macalester. Investing time into taking care of yourself will help you more fully engage in and benefit from your academic experience. Beyond being a student, you are a human being carrying your own experiences, thoughts, emotions, and identities with you. It is important to acknowledge any stressors you may be facing, which can be mental, emotional, physical, cultural, financial, etc., and how they can have an impact on your academic experience. I encourage you to remember that sleeping, moving your body, and connecting with others can be strategies to help you increase your well-being and remain resilient. If you are having difficulties maintaining your well-being, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or to find support from reach out to one of the resources listed in the [Health and Wellness Resource guide](#) on Moodle.