**WHAT’S NEW IN THE SCIENCE OF MORALITY?**

**PSYCHOLOGY 592-DL1**

FALL 2021

**Class Schedule**: Thursdays 1:30-4:10pm (zoom link will be emailed to registered students prior to class)

**Professor:** June Tangney, Ph.D.

[jtangney@gmu.edu](mailto:jtangney@gmu.edu)

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 12-1pm and 4:30-5:30pm, and by appointment (please email some times that will work for you)

Course Description: This is a course about *the science of morality*, with a special emphasis on moral emotions. The course is designed for graduate students as well as advanced undergraduates with a strong foundation in psychological science. The goals of this course are to acquire knowledge of current theory and research pertaining to (1) moral emotions, (2) moral cognitions, and (3) moral behavior. Additional superordinate goals are to develop skills in thinking critically and integratively about theories, evidence, and experience, and to enhance verbal, graphic and written communication skills.

**Reading List -- A Living Idiographic Syllabus:** Each week, I have assigned one review chapter or article as a “common core” for all to read. In addition, for 10 of the 14 weeks, your task is to identify, read, and summarize an empirically-based journal article relating to some aspect of the week’s topic. You may select articles that relate to specifically to your own research interests. (Do this whenever you can!) Also welcome are updates, rebuttals, recent meta-analyses, and alternative conceptualizations. Each week, add your personally selected reading to the actual syllabus. Your completed idiographic syllabus is the final requirement of the course and your record of your personalized version of Psych 592-DL.

**Weekly Essays and Presentations**:

For 5 of the 14 weeks you will write a brief essay (no more than 2 pages not counting references, double spaced, 1 inch margins all around, no smaller than the equivalent of 11pt Arial or Helvetica, proof read, carefully edited for conciseness and clarity, APA style citations). The essay should focus on your personally selected, empirically-based journal article. For example, what was the overarching question of the article? Which question or subquestion is of greatest interest to you? Briefly what were the relevant portions of the design? What were the primary findings? What was most useful to the development of your research plans (e.g., a theory, a method, a finding, a glaring omission). Or how does the article support, refute, or extend the material presented in the assigned review chapters?

For 5 of the 14 weeks, please prepare and present your weekly reading as a “mini ppt presentation” (about 5 minutes) to an open and welcoming class.

(You have 3 df – 3 weeks to choose no essay or presentation – plus no essay or presentation for Class 1.)

**Class Participation**: This course is a seminar in which *active* participation is expected of everyone. In order to be an active participant, you need to *read* the assigned and personally selected material, *understand* most of what you have read, and *be prepared* with comments and questions, including questions about aspects of the reading that you may not have understood. Understanding that some people are more comfortable than others speaking up in group settings, I will do my best to make the class a safe place for asking questions and offering opinions.

**Final Group Paper:** Students enrolled in 592 will work together with the instructor to prepare a publishable theoretical contribution to the literature. The group will identify a topic and target journal by 10/21, and develop individual measurable assignments by 10/29. We will devote some time each class thereafter to monitor progress and brainstorm with input from our undergraduate colleagues. Final draft is due Friday December 10 at 5pm.

**Grading**: No exams will be given in this course. You will be graded on the following:

Attendance 5%

Essays (best 5\*10pts) 35%

PPT presentations (best 5\*10pts) 35%

Contribution to Final Group Paper 20%

Final Individualized Syllabus 5%

The final course grades will be determined by using the scale below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A+ 98-100 | A 93-97 | A- 90-92 | B+ 87-89 |
| B 83-86 | B- 80-82 | C+ 77-79 | C 73-76 |
| C- 70-72 | D 60-69 | F 0-59 |  |

**Two Ways to Improve Your Grade:**

* **Prepare Ahead of Time:** Read target article; give yourself time to find your personal addition
* **Come see me:** I don’t bite. I’m here to help. In addition to regular office hours, I’m flexible and can meet many other times to work with your busy schedules.

DROPPING/ADDING THE COURSE:The last day to add the course is August 30. The last day to drop the course with no tuition penalty is September 7. The final day to drop the course is September 27.

CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY: In the unlikely event that I need to cancel class for non-weather related reasons (e.g., illness), I will alert you by email, including information on how we will make up for missed time.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND THE HONOR CODE:George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. It is every student’s responsibility to become familiar with the Honor Code, which is available at: http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/ All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. Another aspect of academic integrity is the free play of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all discussion will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions.

OFFICIAL COMMUNICATIONS VIA GMU E-MAIL: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason e-mail account and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY**:** If you need academic accommodations, please let me know at your earliest convenience and also contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All accommodations must be arranged through that office.

OTHER USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES:

* **Writing Center:** A114 Robinson Hall; (703) 993-1200; http://writingcenter.gmu.edu
* **University Libraries:** “Ask a Librarian” http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html
* **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):** (703) 993-2380; http://caps.gmu.edu
* **University Policies:** The University Catalog, http://catalog.gmu.edu, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS**

NO REQUIRED TEXT – ASSIGNED READINGS ON BLACKBOARD

Please read assigned material **BEFORE** class

**8/26 Introductions, interests & goals – Review syllabus – A Tentative Moral Model**

**9/2 The Moral Emotions I: Some History -- Where we’ve been**

Class Reading:

Tangney, J. P., Stuewig, J., & Mashek, D. J. (2007). Moral emotions and moral behavior. *Annual Review of Psychology, 58*, 345-372. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.56.091103.070145

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**9/9 The Moral Emotions II: What’s New?**

Class Reading:

Tangney, J. P., & Tracy, J. (2012). Self-conscious emotions. In M. Leary, & J. P. Tangney (Eds.) *Handbook of self and identity, second edition* (pp. 446-478). New York: Guilford Press.

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**9/16 The Moral Emotions III: Is Shame Guilt’s Evil Twin?**

Class Reading:

Leach, C. W., & Cidam, A. (2015). When is shame linked to constructive approach orientation? A meta-analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *109*(6), 983-1002.

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**9/23 The Moral Emotions IV: To be identified by class**

Class Reading:

To be identified by class

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**9/30 The Moral Emotions V: Is there a dark side to guilt?**

Class Reading:

TBA

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**10/7 The Moral Emotions VI: The Interpersonal Realm: Guilt-tripping and Shaming**

Class Reading:

TBA

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**10/14 The Moral Emotions VII: Enhancing Adaptive Moral Emotions – Parenting and Treatment**

Class Reading:

Tangney, J. P., & Dearing, R. L. (2011). Working with shame in the therapy hour: Summary and integration. In R. L. Dearing & J. P. Tangney, (Eds.) *Shame in the therapy hour* (pp. 375-404). Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**10/21 Moral Emotions Behind Bars; Integrate and Wrap up**

**“Free” Week –** No Readings (focus on your mid-terms)

**10/28 Moral Cognition I: Moral Reasoning a la Kohlberg and Beyond**

Class Reading:

Krebs, D. L., & Denton, K. (2005). Toward a More Pragmatic Approach to Morality: A Critical Evaluation of Kohlberg’s Model. *Psychological Review*, *112*(3), 629-649.

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**11/4 Moral Cognition II: Moral Reasoning and Behavior (Verbal IQ and Gender?)**

Class Reading:

Villegas de Posada, C., & Vargas-Trujillo, E. (2015). Moral reasoning and personal behavior: A meta-analytical review. *Review of General Psychology*, *19*(4), 408-424.

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**11/11 Moral Cognition III: Criminogenic Thinking**

Class Reading:

Tangney, J. P., Stuewig, J., \*Furukawa, E., \*\*Kopelovich, S., \*Meyer, P., & Cosby, B. (2012). Reliability, validity, and predictive utility of the 25-item Criminogenic Cognitions Scale (CCS). *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 39,* 1340-1360. doi: 10.1177/0093854812451092

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**11/18** **Dimensions of Morality (and Moral Behavior)**

Class Reading:

Haidt, J. (2013). Moral psychology for the twenty-first century. *Journal of Moral Education*, *42*(3), 281-297.

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**11/25 No Class! Happy Thanksgiving**

**12/2 Moral Models Revisited**

Class Reading:

TBA

Individual Reading:

[Please insert cite]

**12/8 Final Group Paper Due 5pm**

**Enjoy Winter Break!**