

830:421

Advanced Topics in Social Psychology

Spring 2013

Dr. David Wilder 603 Tillett Hall dawilder@rci.rutgers.edu

Office hours: Tuesday 12-1 and by appointment

Text: Schermer, Michael (2004). The Science of Good and Evil. New York: Holt

ISBN: 0-8050-7769-3

This class will explore theory and research related to moral beliefs and behaviors. The goal of the course is to (a) survey moral belief systems across time and culture, (b) review classic philosophical explanations of morality, (c) examine past and present psychological theories of moral behavior, and (d) consider how moral beliefs impact behavior, particularly when people confront moral dilemmas. Readings from online sources and material posted at sakai supplement the text chapters.

Evaluation: Course grade will be based on the following:

Class attendance:	20 (1 point for every class you attend beginning with 1/29)
Abstracts of readings:	30 (1 paragraph abstract of 15 supplementary readings marked with *)
Class exercises:	15
Class presentation:	15
Paper:	30
Total:	110 points

Class attendance: Classes will focus on discussion of the weekly readings. I will supplement that with other material, but this is not a lecture class. The topic of moral beliefs is intrinsically interesting and certainly important to our sense of self-identity and how we behave. For the class to function well, you must attend regularly and be prepared to participate. Attendance will be taken, and you will earn 1 point, up to a maximum of 20, for every class you attend from 1/29 to 5/3. (That gives you some wiggle room to miss up to 6 classes after the first week without penalty.)

Readings abstracts: To ensure that everyone is current with readings, a brief abstract (1/2 page) of each supplementary reading (**marked with a ***) is due by **6 p.m. of the day before the class at which that reading is discussed**. (Abstracts are not required for the textbook chapters.) Abstracts are to be submitted by email. (For example, abstract of reading 15 is due by 6 p.m. on 2/7.)

Class exercises: There will be a few homework exercises to complete over the course of the semester. These exercises are thought problems and brief questionnaires. Your anonymous responses

will be used in class to illustrate some of the issues we discuss in the course. These assignments will be announced in class and posted at sakai. Each will be worth a couple of points.

Class Presentation and Paper: We will be covering a fairly wide range of material. Your assignment is to select some area of moral beliefs and explore it in more detail than we have time to do in class. Then prepare a 10-15 minute presentation for the class to be given during the final 2 weeks of the course. (You may do a group project with 1 or 2 other class members if several of you share the same interest.) A paper based on your topic is due at the final class (5/3). This paper should be roughly 10-15 pages in length including references. Your paper and presentation can be an in depth review of a psychological theory of morality; it can be a review of research; it can be a proposal for research (e.g., planning an experiment). I want to give you as much latitude as possible to pursue your interests. **Please discuss your topic with me by no later than Spring break.**

Grades: Based on 110 points, 99 and above A, 96-98 B+, 88-95 B, 85-87 C+, 77-84 C, 66-76 D

Date	Topics	Text and Readings
1/29	Overview	
2/1	Moral beliefs: universal, relative	1, 2, 3, 4,
2/5	Moral beliefs: religion	5, (pick 2* of the following: 6-13)
2/8	Philosophical positions I	14, 15*, 16
2/12	Philosophical positions II	17, 18, 19*
2/19-22	Genesis of Moral Beliefs	chapters 1 and 2, 20*, 21*
2/26	Problem of Evil	chapter 3
3/1-5	Problem of Free Will	chapter 4, 22, 23*
3/8	Maintenance of Morality	chapter 5, 24*
3/12-15	Morality and Immorality	chapters 6 and 7, 25*
3/26	Psychology of Moral Development	26*, 27, 28, 29
3/29	Rising above	chapter 8, 30*
4/2	Animals and Humans	31, 32, 33, 34, 35*
4/5	Intuitionist Theory of Morality	36, 37*, 38
4/9-12	Resolving Moral Dilemmas	39, 40, 41, 42
4/16	Application to political beliefs	43, 44*
4/19	Influence on Campus	45, 46*
4/23-26	Guests	
4/30-5/3	Class Presentations	

Readings:

1. <http://www.debate.org/opinions/is-there-a-universal-moral-code>
2. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/137357/four-moral-issues-sharply-divide-americans.aspx>
3. <http://personal.tcu.edu/pwitt/Universal%20Values.pdf>
4. The Problem of Moral Disagreement (sakai resources)
5. http://www.jewishgateway.com/community/issues/articles/f_lib_article_cp_moralcodes.html
6. <http://www.islam101.com/sociology/moralSystem.htm>
7. <http://www.aynrand.org/site/News2?id=11127&page=NewsArticle>
8. <http://www.hinduismtoday.com/modules/smartsection/item.php?itemid=1659>
9. <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/5minbud.htm>
10. http://www.allsands.com/history/people/shintoreligion_wxv_gn.htm
11. <http://www.chineseonthego.com/culture/confucius1.html>
12. <http://www.commonlaw.com/Hammurabi.html>
13. <http://wicca.com/celtic/wicca/wicca.htm>
14. Virtue ethics (sakai resources)
15. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/kant-hume-morality>
16. <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/utilitarianism-history>
17. <http://pubs.aeaweb.org/doi/pdfplus/10.1257/089533005774357806>
18. Nietzsche cheat sheet (sakai resources)
19. <http://www.sevenoaksphilosophy.org/ethics/existentialist-ethics.html>
20. http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl201/modules/Philosophers/Plato/plato_dialogue_the_ring_of_gyges.html
21. <http://www.str.org/site/News2?id=5236>
22. <http://people.virginia.edu/~tdw/nisbett&wilson.pdf>
23. <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/hinckley/hinckleyinsanity.htm>
24. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aS-Lxxy5Q-k>

25. http://psych.colorado.edu/~vanboven/teaching/p7536_heurbias/p7536_readings/tversky_kahn_1973.pdf
26. <http://tigger.uic.edu/~lnucci/MoralEd/overview.html>
27. http://www.girlscouts.org/research/pdf/beliefs_moral_values_americas_children.pdf
28. <http://www.haverford.edu/psych/ddavis/p109g/kohlberg.dilemmas.html>
29. [http://facweb.northseattle.edu/karchibald/PSYC200/Articles/Gilligan\(1977\)_In%20A%20Different%20Voice.pdf](http://facweb.northseattle.edu/karchibald/PSYC200/Articles/Gilligan(1977)_In%20A%20Different%20Voice.pdf)
30. <http://www.business.illinois.edu/responsibility/docs/ethical-fading-2004.pdf>
31. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-20973753>
32. http://www.yerkes.emory.edu/about/news/chimps_play_ultimatum_game.html
33. http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/347602/description/Claims_of_fairness_in_apes_have_critics_crying_foul
34. <http://www.scientificamerican.com/blog/post.cfm?id=do-animals-feel-empathy>
35. Gallup animal empathy (sakai resources)
36. five foundations (sakai resources)
37. haidt psych review 2001 - emotional dog (sakai resources)
38. rozin, haidt – disgust (sakai resources)
39. <http://www.friesian.com/dilemma.htm>
40. <http://healthland.time.com/2011/12/05/would-you-kill-one-person-to-save-five-new-research-on-a-classic-debate>
41. Trolley problem (sakai resources)
42. Ten Moral Dilemmas (sakai resources)
43. haidt-psych inq 2009-above and below (sakai resources)
44. graham-j pers soc 2009-ideological differences (sakai resources)
45. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/04/opinion/sunday/college-doesnt-make-you-liberal.html?_r=2&scp=1&sq=liberal%20professors&st=cse&
46. Political Views of American Professors (sakai resources)