

Current Topics in Personality Psychology

Fall, 2009

Values and Virtues: Perspectives on the “Good” in Individuals

Instructor: Connie Boudens, PhD.

Class times: Mondays 15:00 – 17:00

Class location: MW 262

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 13:00 -14:00 or by appointment

Course Description: Our values guide many of our decisions, influence what we believe is right and wrong, and help us to define who we are. As such, values constitute an important, though sometimes inaccessible, part of our personalities. In this course we will consider a variety of perspectives on human values, beginning with the frameworks and theories that you will encounter most often in this area of research, and ending with some of the new ideas that have appeared in the literature in the last few years. The course will also cover the relationship between personal and societal values, cultural influences on values, and the link between values and behaviour, among other topics. Class meetings will be in the format of discussions centred on the readings for that week.

Readings:

There is no assigned text for this course. All of the readings will be posted on Blackboard. You are required to prepare for class by reading and reflecting on the assigned articles and coming to class with your questions and thoughts written down.

Grading Summary:

Reaction papers (5 @ 5% each) 25%

Class Participation 15%

Research Brief 5%

Research Proposal 20%

Final Exam 35%

Reaction Papers (5 @ 5% each)

Reaction papers help to prepare you for class by encouraging you to think about the readings before the discussion takes place. Over the course of the term, you are expected to produce five reaction papers. You may choose the weeks in which you do reaction papers, however **at least three of them must be submitted by November 2nd**. You are welcome to hand in more than five if you so choose. If you do submit more than five reaction papers, only the top five will be used to calculate your grade. Reaction papers should be approximately 2 double-spaced pages in length and must follow APA guidelines as to format and style.

You have considerable latitude in what you talk about in the reaction papers, but you must do the following:

- BRIEFLY Summarize the readings and/or highlight the key findings
- Relate the readings to the topic for the week

Other things you can include in your reaction papers are:

- Identify connections between the readings for the week and/or readings for the related week(s)
- Critiques of the method or discussion sections of the readings
- Ideas about where this research could be taken in the future

Reaction papers are due **at the beginning of class**. Due to the nature and purpose of these papers, late submissions will not be accepted.

Class Participation

Attendance and participation are crucial for a seminar-style class. Although I will provide the basic structure for each seminar meeting, students are expected to take an active role in maintaining an environment of productive discussion. Note that the quality of participation is just as important as the quantity; distracting commentary and anecdotes should be avoided so that the focus remains on the exchange of ideas and the discussion of issues and problems relevant to the topic under consideration. *Preparation* is the key to ensuring that your participation is of high quality. Be sure to prepare in an active manner, by engaging with the material rather than simply reading it.

Take notes as you are reading, and write down ideas and questions as they occur to you. **To assist you with preparing for class, you are required to submit two questions, ideas or comments to me by email no later than midnight every Friday.** These submissions will be used as part of the Monday discussion, so make sure that they are open-ended and likely to further the discussion rather than truncating it.

Research Proposal and Research Brief

For this assignment, you will design a study to address a research question of your choice. The question must of course relate to the main theme of the course, but you are welcome to include other areas of personality psychology. Please check with me to make sure your topic is acceptable before you delve into the work. The proposal should consist of all of the sections normally found in an empirical article or lab report, up to and including the method section. You are to write the proposal as if you intend to conduct the actual study, keeping in mind any ethical and logistical restrictions that would normally impinge on you and on a study of the type that you propose. The finished proposal should be 8-10 pages, exclusive of the cover page and references, and should include a minimum of 10 original references (i.e. references that are not from the course). The research brief should be a first draft of your proposal, and should be 2-3 pages long. The format for your brief is open, as the exercise is intended to keep you on track with your progress toward the final proposal, and to give you an opportunity to get early feedback and suggestions from me. You may choose to do this assignment in groups of up to 3 people, but be aware that the grade will be the same for all 3 students, and that I will not mediate any conflicts that occur among you.

Final Exam

The final exam will be an essay exam. You will be given a choice of 6 to 8 questions and you must answer 4 of these. The overall length of each answer is at your discretion, but must be *no longer* than the equivalent of 3 typed, double-spaced pages (approx 750 words). The timing of the final exam will be provided later in the term.

Topics and Readings:

Week 1: September 14: Introduction to the course, Writing (and reading) empirical journal articles.

Reading: Bem (2009),

Week 2: September 21: Orienting frameworks

Readings: None

Week 3: September 28: Other-oriented values

Readings: Schwartz (2007); Van Lange, Bekkers, Schuyt, & Van Vught (2007).

Week 4: October 5: Personal vs. social values

Readings: Bernard, Gebauer, & Maio (2006); Brucks & Van Lange (2007).

Week 5: October 12: Thanksgiving Monday – No Class.

Week 6: October 19: The link between values and behaviour

Readings: Eyal, Sagristano, Trope, Liberman & Chaiken (2009); Torelli & Kaikati (2009).

Week 7: October 26: Cultural influences on values

Readings: Tulviste & Ahtonen (2007); Tsai, Miao, & Seppala (2007).

Week 8: November 2: Discussion of research ideas/proposals

At least 3 reaction papers are due by this date

By this week, you should be prepared to discuss some ideas you have for your research proposal. Use this class session to get feedback from the rest of the class, and from the instructor.

Week 9: November 9: Ways in which our values speak to others
Research briefs due today

Readings: Valdesolo & De Steno (2008); Pronin, Fleming & Steffel (2008).

Week 10: November 16: Underlying and related factors

Readings: Bain, Kashima, & Haslan (2006); Pakizeh, Gebauer, & Maio (2005).

Week 11: November 23: Moral exemplars: Qualities of “good” people

Readings: Walker & Hennig (2004); Smith, Smith, & Christopher (2007).

Week 12: November 30: New horizons: Emerging values

Research proposals are due today

Readings: de Groot & Steg (2007); Hilbig & Zettler (2009).

References

1. Bem, D. J. (2009, April 29). *Writing the empirical journal article*. Retrieved from <http://dbem.ws/Writing Article.pdf>.
2. Schwartz, S. H. (2007). Universalism values and the inclusiveness of our moral universe. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 38*, 711-728.
3. Van Lange, P. A. M., Bekkers, R., Schuyt, T. N. M., & Van Vught, M. (2007). From games to giving: Social value orientation predicts donations to noble causes. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology, 29*, 375-384.
4. Bernard, M. M., Gebauer, J. E., & Maio, G. R. (2006). Cultura estrangement: The role of personal and societal value discrepancies. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 32*, 78-92.
5. Brucks, W. M., & Van Lange, P. A. M. (2007). When prosocials act like proselves in a commons dilemma. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 33*, 750-758.
6. Eyal, T., Sagristano, M. D., Trope, Y., Liberman, N., & Chaiken, S. (2009). When values matter: Expressing values in behavioural intentions for the near vs. distant future. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 45*, 35-43
7. Torelli, C. J., & Kaikati, A. M. (2009). Values as predictors of judgments and behaviours: The role of abstract and concrete mindsets. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 96*, 231-247.
8. Tulviste, T., & Ahtonen, M. (2007). Child-rearing values of Estonian and Finnish mothers and fathers. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 38*, 137-155.
9. Tsai, J. L., Miao, F. F., & Seppala, E. (2007). Good feeling sin Christianity and Buddhism: Religious differences in ideal affect. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 33*, 409-421.
10. Valdesolo, P., & DeSteno, D. (2008). The duality of virtue: Deconstructing the moral hypocrite. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 44*, 1334-1338.
11. Pronin, E., Fleming, J. J., & Steffel, M. (2008). Value revelations: Disclosure is in the eye of the beholder. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 95*, 795-809.
12. Bain, P. G., Kashima, y., & Haslan, N. (2006). Conceptual beliefs about human values and their implications: Human nature beliefs predict value importance, value trade-off, and responses to value-laden rhetoric. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 91*, 351-367.
13. Pakizeh, A., Gebauer, J. E., & Maio, G. R. (2005). Basic human values: Inter-value structure in memory. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 43*, 458-465.
14. Walker, L. J. & Hennig, K. H. (2004). Differing conceptions of moral exemplarity: Just, brave, and caring. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 86*, 629-647.
15. Smith, K. D., Smith, S. T., & Christopher, J. C. (2007). What defines the good person? Cross-cultural comparisons of experts' models with lay prototypes. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 38*, 333-360.
16. de Groot, J. I. M., & Steg, L. (2007). Value orientations and environmental beliefs in five countries: Validity of an instrument to measure egoistic, altruistic, and biospheric value orientations. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 38*, 318-332.
17. Hilbig & Zettler (2009). Pillars of cooperation: Honest-humility, social value orientations, and economic behaviour. *Journal of Research in Personality, 43*, 516-519.

Rules and Policies Pertinent to This Class:

1. Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office as soon as possible. I will work with you and AccessAbility Services to ensure you can achieve your learning goals in this course. Enquiries are confidential. The UTSC AccessAbility Services staff (located in S302) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations (416) 287-7560 or ability@utsc.utoronto.ca.
2. In accordance with the Provost's guidelines on appropriate use of information and communicative technology, and for reasons of privacy and copyright protection, you may not record class session in either audio or video format without the explicit consent of the instructor.
3. Cell phones and laptops should not be used in class unless absolutely necessary. Should you require the use of either of these, please consult with me before class.
4. Email policy: Whenever possible, please talk to me in person if you have a question or problem. Typing an email requires a great deal more time than a verbal response, and talking in person makes it easier for me to understand what you are asking and give an appropriate response. When this is not possible, please do not expect an immediate response to your email. I will respond to emails within 48 hour (exclusive of weekends).
5. Respect for all class participants is essential for a seminar, and it is something that I insist on as an instructor. When another member of the class is speaking, everyone else is expected to give that person their full attention.
6. Extensions on graded assignments *may* be granted depending on the circumstances, but you must speak to me in advance of the due date. Each case will be considered individually, so please be prepared to tell the reason you need the extension, and how much more time you think you will need to complete the work. Work that is handed in late and has not been approved for an extension will be penalized 5% for each working day that it is late.
7. Academic integrity is one of the cornerstones of the University of Toronto. It is critically important both to maintain our community which honours the values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness and responsibility and to protect you, the students within this community, and the value of the degree towards which you are all working so diligently. Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:
 - IN PAPERS AND ASSIGNMENTS: Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement. Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor. Making up sources or facts. Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.
 - ON TESTS AND EXAMS: Using or possessing unauthorized aids. Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test. Misrepresenting your identity.
 - IN ACADEMIC WORK: Falsifying institutional documents or grades. Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see <http://www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/resourcesforstudents.html>).

H1N1 STATEMENT

Students are advised to consult the university's preparedness site (<http://www.preparedness.utoronto.ca>) for information and regular updates regarding procedures relating to H1N1 planning and individual student responsibilities.