

**PSYD15H3: Current Topics in Social Psychology
Emotions, Morality & Prosocial Behaviour
Summer 2017**

Instructor: Dr. Rimma Teper

E-mail: rimma.teper@mail.utoronto.ca

Class Time and Location: Friday 9:00am – 11:00am, BV355

Website: <https://portal.utoronto.ca/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp>

Office: SY162

Office Hours: Friday 11am-12pm or by appointment

Course Description

How do people arrive at judgments of what is moral and what is immoral? What sorts of factors drive people to act prosocially? And what is the role of emotion in these processes? Philosophers have debated over the role of emotions in morality for centuries – some arguing that our emotions can only lead us astray, whereas others professed that without emotions we would have no motivation to act in any which way. Luckily, psychological science has equipped us with various tools that have allowed us to explore such questions on an empirical level. In this course, we will discuss psychological research that addresses questions related to morality, prosocial behavior, and the way in which emotions shape our behaviors and judgments in moral contexts.

The general **goals and objectives** of the course are to help students:

- a) Learn and gain mastery over basic facts, research findings, terminology, principles, and theories important in the social psychology of morality.
- b) Practice and develop critical thinking skills, written and oral communications skills.
- c) Analyze current issues and controversies in the field of social psychology.

Given the upper level and seminar format of this course, the main objective will be to expose you to new ideas, and to encourage you to develop and expand the way you think about and express your own ideas. In pursuit of these goals, a large portion of class time will be spent discussing ideas with your classmates. These discussions will be supplemented by in-class demonstrations, and activities to promote the learning and application of course material. You should read the assigned papers prior to coming to class and give the material careful thought, as doing so will facilitate our class discussions and your understanding of the material. Asking questions and making comments during class is highly encouraged.

Class Website: Blackboard will be the course website. Here, you can obtain copies of the syllabus, assigned readings, relevant articles and web links. Although any changes in the course schedule or class location will be announced in class, they will also be posted as announcements on Blackboard, and therefore I recommend you check this website frequently, especially if you must miss a class.

Assigned Reading: The readings for this class will be comprised of journal articles, book

chapters or news articles that are related to course topics. I will post these articles on the course Blackboard website.

Writing: A main goal of this course is to build on students' competency in academic writing skills and to extend those skills through the instruction of normal writing standards in the discipline of psychology. Written assignments will require coherent, logical, and carefully edited prose. In order to succeed at the writing assignment you will have to demonstrate higher-level critical thinking skills such as analysis and synthesis, rather than mere summarization. Your writing will be graded and commented upon and become part of the assigned grade. I will provide evaluation criteria for the writing assignment during class and on Blackboard later in the term. There will be ample time for questions about the evaluation criteria prior to the due date. If you have concerns about your preparedness for the writing demands of this course, please see me during office hours and I will try my best to help you and I will also point you to additional resources that can help you to build your writing skills.

Late Assignments: All discussion questions are due at 9am each Friday, before the beginning of class. The final paper is due at the start of the final class (9am Friday July 28). Late discussion questions will not be accepted. Late assignments will be accepted with a penalty of 10% for every day (after Friday morning counts as a day) that the assignment is late.

Grade Breakdown

Class Facilitation – (20%): Once during the semester, you and your group (consisting of 3-4 people) will serve as facilitators of the discussion for the week's assigned readings. Class facilitation will include three components:

- 1) Reading the "optional" reading for that week
- 2) Clearly and concisely describe the main ideas and findings from your articles with the aid of a PowerPoint presentation (10-12 minutes).
- 3) Facilitating the class discussion through discussion questions (these will be provided by your classmates).

Given the size of the groups, these two tasks should be broken down so that each group member shows that they were actively involved with their group and can demonstrate mastery of the material. The discussion leaders will come into class prepared to lead and guide the discussion so that the discussion is fluid, lively, and interesting for all the students in the class. I encourage all leaders to be creative by incorporating class activities (e.g. breaking class into small groups to discuss different perspectives of the readings) and multimedia into their discussions. Though not required, familiarity with other relevant readings will help you develop "expertise" on your topic.

Class Participation and Attendance – (10%): In a seminar-style class, attendance is expected and participation is essential. Your participation grade will depend on quality as well as quantity of participation. I will keep a record of participation throughout the term. Signs of good participation includes: Attendance, punctuality, eagerness to participate, showing respect to others' contributions, paying careful attention to classmates' presentations, and offering constructive feedback, questions, and comments.

Discussion Questions - (10%): In order to facilitate critical thinking about the readings, students are required to submit 2 discussion questions before each class to which readings are

assigned. (Prepare one question for each article). You don't need to do this for all of the classes, only the 5 classes you're most interested in (excluding the week you are leading the discussion. These discussion questions should be thoughtful responses to the readings, not requests for clarifications (you are welcome to ask clarifications questions in addition to your discussion questions). In forming your discussion questions you should consider practical implications of the findings, challenge conclusions, or relate the reading to other topics.

Debate – (20%): On July 21 & July 28, we will be holding two in-class debates based on two controversial topics in moral psychology that we will be covering. These two topics will be chosen on the first day of class, as will the groups that will be covering each topic, as well as the “side” of each of those topics. There will be approximately 12 people per topic, and 6 people arguing for either side of that topic. More information about the format of the debate, as well as the grading rubric, will be provided later in the term.

Research Proposal: - (40%) The research proposal will involve researching a topic of the students' own interest related to the social psychology of emotions, morality and prosocial behaviour. Specifically, this assignment will entail writing a detailed description of a specific model, theory, or hypothesis, reviewing the literature, and writing a research proposal to further examine that model, theory, or hypothesis. Detailed instructions for the research proposal will be provided in class and a grading rubric will be provided later in the term.

Final Grade:

Class Facilitation	20%
Participation	10%
Discussion Questions	10%
Debate	20%
<u>Research Proposal</u>	<u>40%</u>
Total	100%

Grade	Percentage	Definition
A+	90-100	Excellent
A	85-89	
A-	80-84	
B+	77-79	Good
B	73-76	
B-	70-72	
C+	67-69	Adequate
C	63-66	
C-	60-62	
D+	57-59	Marginal
D	53-56	
D-	50-52	
F	0-49	Inadequate

Classroom Expectations

Class Participation: As a special topics seminar, this class is structured primarily around class discussion. Thus, it is imperative that students actively participate in class discussions, activities, and exercises. This will greatly enhance the classroom experience. It will make learning more interactive, more fun, and more personally relevant.

Use of Electronics: Turn off cell phones, digital assistants, mp3 players, and/or any device that makes noise during class. Answering a phone call, text messaging, or sending e-mail during class is inappropriate. Also, if you are bringing a laptop to class, only use it for appropriate activities (e.g. taking notes).

Classroom Civility: We hope to create an environment where open discussion can happen about topics in psychology. By virtue of this, there are going to be discussions about sensitive topics that individuals will hold differing opinions on. Please respect the opinions and perspectives of your classmates.

Emails: All emails you send should include PSYD15 in their title. I will try my best to respond to all emails within 24 hours (Monday-Friday).

Disabilities: 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 as soon as possible. AccessAbility Services staff (located in Rm SW302, Science Wing) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations [416-287-7560](tel:416-287-7560) or email ability@utsc.utoronto.ca. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Academic Integrity: 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/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PD/F/ppjun011995.pdf>) 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; and
- When you knew or ought to have known you were doing it.

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; and
- When you knew or ought to have known you were doing so.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If students have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, they are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from their instructors or from other institutional resources.

Note:

You may see advertisements for services offering grammar help, essay editing and proof-reading. Be very careful. If these services take a draft of your work and significantly change the content and/or language, you may be committing an academic offence (unauthorized assistance) under the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*.

It is much better and safer to take your draft to the Writing Centre as early as you can. They will give you guidance you can trust. Students for whom English is not their first language should go to the English Language Development Centre.

If you decide to use these services in spite of this caution, you must keep a draft of your work and any notes you made before you got help and be prepared to give it to your instructor on request.

Turnitin: Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Missed Term Work due to Medical Illness or Emergency Policy: All students citing a documented reason for missed term work (this includes assignments and midterm exams) must bring their documentation to the Undergraduate Course Coordinator, Ainsley Lawson, within three (3) business days of the term test / assignment due date.

All documentation must be accompanied by the departmental [Request for Missed Term Work form](http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW) (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MTW>). In the case of missed term work due to illness, only an original copy of the [official UTSC Verification of Illness Form](http://uoft.me/PSY-MED) (<http://uoft.me/PSY-MED>) will be accepted. Forms are to be completed in full, clearly indicating the start date, anticipated end date, and severity of illness. The physician's registration number and business stamp are required. In the case of other emergency, a record of visitation to a hospital emergency room or copy of a death certificate may be considered. Forms should be dropped off in SW427C between 9 AM - 4 PM, Monday through Friday. The Course Instructor reserves the right to decide what accommodations (if any) will be made for the missed work. Note that this policy applies only to missed term work (assignments and midterms). Missed final exams are dealt with by the Registrar's Office (<http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/registrar/missing-examination>). Failure to adhere to any aspect of this policy may result in a denial of your request for accommodation.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Readings
May 5	Introduction	Teper, Zhong, & Inzlicht, 2015
May 12	Do Emotions Drive Our Decisions & Behaviours?	Zeelenberg, Nelissen, Breugelmans, & Pieters, 2008
		Baumeister, Vohs, DeWall, & Zhang, 2007
		Optional: Frank, 2011
May 19	The Biological Basis of Moral Behaviour	Blair, 2007
		Gu, Zhong, & Page-Gould, 2012
		Optional: Blair, 2011
May 26	Emotions & Moral Judgments	Haidt, 2001
		Pizarro & Bloom, 2003
		Optional: Monin, Pizarro, & Beer, 2007
June 2	Dual-Process Theories of Moral Judgment	Greene et al., 2004
		Miller, Hannikainen, & Cushman, 2014
		Optional: Greene et al., 2009
June 9	Does True Altruism Exist?	Cialdini et al., 1997
		Batson & Shaw, 1991
		Optional: de Waal, 2008
June 16	Reading week – NO CLASS	
June 23	Moral Mispredictions	Epley & Dunning, 2000
		Teper, Inzlicht, & Page-Gould, 2011
		Optional: Valdesolo & DeSteno, 2008
June 30	Why Do We Behave Badly?	Mazar, Amir, & Ariely, 2008
		Batson & Thompson, 2001
		Optional: Batson, 2011
July 7	Writing Workshop	
July 14	Does Moral Behaviour Require Self-Control?	Mead et al., 2009
		Rand, Greene, & Nowak, 2012
		Optional: Zaki & Mitchell, 2013
July 21 & July 28	Debates	