

Department of Psychology PSY 420

Pursuing Goodness: The Science of Moral Change 4 Units

Spring, 2019

Meeting days: Tuesday & Thursday	Instructor: Dr. Ross Oakes Mueller
Meeting times: 1:30-3:15pm	Phone: (619) 849-2905
Meeting location: Evans Hall – Room 121	E-mail: RossOakesMueller@pointloma.edu
Credit Hours: 4 Units	Office hours: <u>Click Here to Schedule</u>
Final Exam: Thursday, May 2nd, at 1:30pm	Office Location: Culbertson 213

PLNU Mission To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course surveys some of the latest findings in positive and moral psychology that concern how we live a good life in the world with others. It addresses three perennial questions about psychological and relational well-being: What makes a "good life" *good*? How do persons "change" for *good*? And: What makes a "good relationship" *good*? It examines theory and research in two rapidly expanding psychological literatures: the science of a meaningful life and the science of love and virtue. Beyond that, the class is designed to provide you with the opportunity to actually practice some of the habits that can induce character growth.

The purpose of each class session is to highlight selected topics from the required readings, to supplement this material with related ideas, and to provide a chance for practical in-class application. Students are responsible for all assigned readings, whether or not discussed in class. Each student is expected to have read the assigned reading for class discussion (course Schedule below), and be prepared to think together about the reading in class.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to . . .

- Summarize various models of well-being that vie for attention in popular and religious culture;
- Describe key ingredients of a meaningful life as discussed in contemporary positive and moral psychology;
- Describe some of the principles and practices of character change as offered in contemporary psychology;
- Describe four essential virtues that facilitate mature love as understood in the new science of love and virtue;
- Describe the meaning of moral maturity in light of the Judeo-Christian concept of love, especially as envisioned in the Wesleyan theological tradition

COURSE CREDIT HOUR INFORMATION

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 4-unit class delivered over 15 weeks. Specific details about how the class meets the credit hour requirement can be provided upon request.

REQUIRED TEXTS/MATERIALS

Primary Texts

Haidt, J. (2006). The Happiness Hypothesis. New York: Basic Books.

Lewis, T., Amini, F., & Lannon, R. (2007). *A general theory of love*. New York: Vintage.

Supplemental Articles

University Reader (Purchased on-line or at PLNU Bookstore)

CANVAS (Course Management System)

We will be using Canvas this semester. Canvas can be accessed via http://canvas.pointloma.edu. You will see the welcome screen and a login button. You will need your username/password before you can proceed to log in. If you don't know your username/password, please contact the help desk for assistance. Select the login button to proceed to the login screen. At the login screen, enter your username/password.

COURSE GRADING/EVALUATION

A. Reading/Listening Quizzes (10%)

Every other week there will be a short quiz (10 pts). These quizzes are a very important portion of your grade and are designed to help you prepare for

class discussion. They also provide one record of your attendance. If you miss class (unexcused absence) you may not make-up the quiz. If you miss class (excused absence), you may make-up the quiz within *three* (3) days. **No credit will be given past three days.** Lowest quiz score will be dropped.

B. Reading Journal (10%)

For every reading assignment, you will pick out (at least) two quotations that resonate with you, or have made you think. For each quotation, you will write 4-6 sentences of reflection. These will be graded four times throughout the semester on the basis of completeness. After each due-date, late journal entries will be scored according to the late-assignment-grading criteria (below).

C. "Good Life" Project (Senior Capstone Project) (35%)

Discussed extensively in class; Rubric distributed in class.

D. Homework and Attendance (20%)

There will be several homework assignments. Additionally, several times in the semester you will receive "credit" (points) for your attendance on non-quiz days. You are encouraged NOT to miss these points as they may have a substantial impact on your final grade (approximately 5-10%).

E. **Final Exam** (25 %)

Final in-class essay (TBD).

Please Note: In order to "pass" the course, the Good Life Project and Final Exam must be completed with a passing grade. In addition, you must pass the attendance requirement as outlined below.

Grading will be in accordance with the Department of Psychology's grading procedures for upper division courses (i.e., the use of z-scores). Your grade will be based on your overall percentage or your z-score: whichever is higher.

DEPARTMENT FACULTY NORMAL CURVE GUIDES

		Z Score		
A	1.33	0.0918	9.2%	
A-	1	0.1587	6.7%	15.9%
B+	0.67	0.2514	9.3%	
В	0.33	0.3707	11.9%	
B-	0	0.5	12.9%	34.1%
C+	-0.33	0.6293	12.9%	
С	-1	0.8413	21.2%	
C-	-1.33	0.9082	6.7%	40.8%
D+	-1.67	0.9525	4.4%	

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Percentage Score

	ge score
A =	93-100%
A -	90-92%
B +	88-89%
В	84-87%
В -	80-83%
C +	77-79%
C	70-76%
C -	65-69%
D +	62-64%

D	-2	0.9772	2.5%	
D-	-2.33	0.9901	1.3%	
F	<-2.33	1	1.0%	9.2%

D	55-61%
D -	50-54%
F	49% or below

A minimum of 50 % is needed to pass the course.

ATTENDANCE/MAKE-UPS/OTHER POLICIES

Please come to class. When you are not present and participating, the class dynamic changes. More than that, this course is based on the research finding that much of who we are and what we do is habitual, ingrained by habit. Indeed, much of what we will do in class involves learning and practicing these habits. As such, *the in-class exercises constitute a critical component of your learning in this class*. That is why the PLNU attendance policy will be strictly followed. This attendance policy is specified in the University Catalog. Please note the following key points and elaborations of the attendance policy.

- PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy: "Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings (2 classes or more), the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (3 classes), the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See Academic Policies in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog."
- "There are no allowed or excused absences except when absences are necessitated by certain University-sponsored activities and are approved in writing by the Provost."
 - You are not excused for being ill. Illness does not comprise an excused absence. You are not excused from class if you have a Doctor's appointment. You are not excused from class if you have a Doctor's excuse. The University allows you four absences for these (and other) situations outside your control.
 - University-sponsored activities that are approved in writing by the Provost usually are for NAIA events for student athletes and occasionally field trips for other PLNU courses.
- When you are <u>absent</u> in this class <u>three times</u> (for any cause), a Notice of Deenrollment will be sent to the Vice Provost for Academic Administration. Your <u>fourth</u> absence will result in deenrollment.
- Save your absences for situations that are outside of your control. Do not consider
 your allowable absences as the number of times that you can miss class without
 being deenrolled. If you become ill after you used your allowable absences you will
 be deenrolled from the course.
- If you need to miss a test for any reason, you will need to notify the professor **prior**to the examination for consideration to be administered a make-up test (if you fail

to do so you may receive a 0% on the test). If a make-up test is administered there will be a 10% penalty (unless the absence is associated with a University-sponsored activity that is approved in writing by the Academic Provost)

- Part of good paper-writing is effective time-management strategies. We could all write better papers if we had unlimited time to do so. However, there are certainly life situations that may prevent you from turning in your paper on time. How to balance these two conflicting issues? In order to provide you with some flexibility, and nevertheless to ensure that all of your papers are evaluated on an "even playing field," I have created a tiered grading system for late work. If you miss a deadline to turn in a paper, for any reason, you will have until midnight on the next day to turn in the paper for a 5% deduction. After midnight, you then have up to midnight on the following day to turn it in for a 10% deduction. Following that, you will receive a 20% deduction. No papers will be accepted after the date on which the professor sends grades/feedback to the class for that paper.
- Some of the best learning opportunities occur during in-class discussions. Participating in these discussions can be immensely valuable to your learning. To acknowledge this importance, I will give some weight in your final grade to your classroom participation. In the event a student's final grade is within one percentage point of the next highest grade, classroom participation will be considered in assigning the final grade.

PLNU FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the <u>Class Schedules</u> site and is listed at the bottom of this syllabus. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic <u>dis</u>honesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See <u>Academic Policies</u> for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS POLICY

"All students are expected to meet the standards for this course as set by the instructor.

However, students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should discuss options with the Academic Support Center (ASC) during the first two weeks of class. The ASC will contact professors with suggestions related to classroom needs and accommodations. Approved documentation must be on file in the ASC prior to the start of the semester."

If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at DRC@pointloma.edu. See Disability Resource Center for additional information.

FERPA POLICY

In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number should be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by (Note: each faculty member should choose one strategy to use: distributing all grades and papers individually; requesting and filing written student permission; or assigning each student a unique class ID number not identifiable on the alphabetic roster.). Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the "Information Release" section of the student portal. See Policy Statements in the (undergrad/ graduate as appropriate) academic catalog.

OFFICE HOURS

To schedule an appointment with me, <u>please click here and then click on an available appointment time that works for you</u>. It will take you to my electronic calendar, where you can sign up for an appointment slot (and it will automatically reserve the time on my schedule). Just click on any of the gray boxes, enter any additional information about the meeting, and then click "save." (be sure that your Google calendar is set to Pacific Standard Time (PST) in order for our times to match up). *Making an appointment* will ensure that you have the uninterrupted amount of time for which you wish to speak with me.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

"All students are expected to meet the standards for this course as set by the instructor. However, students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should discuss options with the Academic Support Center (ASC) during the first two weeks of class. The ASC will contact professors with suggestions related to classroom needs and accommodations. Approved documentation must be on file in the ASC prior to the start of the semester."

Note: This syllabus is not a contract. The Professor reserves the right to modify the syllabus to accomplish the learning objectives of the course.

A Bit of Grace...in Exchange for Works...

Some of the best learning opportunities occur during in-class discussions. Participating in these discussions can be immensely valuable to your learning. To acknowledge this importance, I will give some weight in your final grade to your classroom participation.

In the event a student's final grade is within <u>one percentage point</u> of the next highest grade, classroom participation will be considered in assigning the final grade.

Course Synopsis

PURSUING GOODNESS The Science of Moral Change

"If anything is going to answer to the name moral psychology, it ought to be an inquiry into how the formations (and transformations) of the psyche help one to lead a good life in a world with others."

-J. Lear, moral philosopher, Radical Hope, p. 104

A Course for the Rest of Your Life . . .

The recent collection of books and articles in the social sciences reflecting on the question of "evil" might make one forget that the question of what constitutes *goodness* is no less cogent or perplexing. Nearly everyone aspires to be a good person and to "lead a Good Life in the world with others" (above). But, what does a good life look like? Are there multiple, competing possibilities for what counts as a good life? Is there a transcendent conception of "the good" that should guide and order the various goods that make up a good life? And, how do persons change for good? Further, what makes a good relationship good? Does science have anything to say about the nature of and process of becoming good? These questions are the focus of *Pursuing Goodness*.

In this second decade of the 21st century we are witnessing a revolution in the scientific understanding of human nature and moral change. In the last twenty years, the psychological sciences have joined other disciplines – moral philosophy, religious ethics, and cognitive neuroscience – in the pursuit of what constitutes a good life in a world with others. Where once science and (some) religious traditions depicted human beings as mostly selfish and violent, today thinkers of many disciplines are uncovering the deep neurobiological roots of human goodness and the capacity for compassion and generosity. While this new science certainly does not deny the existence of the selfishness we sometimes see in ourselves and in the world around us, it does offer new evidence that another kind of human being is possible. This course introduces you to three new sciences: the science of a flourishing life; the science of personal transformation; the science of love and virtue. These emerging sciences promise to offer valuable insights about how persons who aspire to goodness *live*, *change*, and *love*.

Course-at-a-Glance

Pursuing Goodness The Science of Moral Change

Envisioning Goodness

Why Destination Makes All the Difference *Question 1: What is "good" (and why)?*

Craft of Life

The Science of a Meaningful Life Question 2: What makes a "good life" good?

Changing for "Good"

The New Science of Love and Virtue Question 3: *How do we change for good?*

Psychology 420 Reading and Exam Schedule

Week	<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	Assigned Reading (Due)	<u>Title</u>	Topic	
Introduction -						

Introduction Envisioning Goodness Why Destination Makes All the Difference

"How shall we live?" is, for Socrates, the fundamental question of human existence — and the attempt to answer that question is, for him, what makes human life worthwhile. And it is Plato and Shakespeare, Proust, Nietzsche, and most recently, Freud, who complicated the issue by insisting that there are deep currents of meaning, ofter cross-currents, running through the human soul which can at best be glimpsed through a glass darkly. This if anything, is the Western tradition: not a specific set of values, but a belief that the human soul is too deep for there to be any easy answer to the question of how to live.

-J. Lear, moral philosopher, Open Minded: Working Out the Logic of the Soul

Unit Description: In this Introduction Unit we look at contrasting conceptions of a Good Life that vie for attention in contemporary culture: happiness (subjective well-being style), psychological maturity, and the more ancient concept of flourishing or eudaimonic well-being. We'll consider how these maps and models of well-being are not exactly the same things, and why your conception of goodness makes all the difference in how you practice the art of living.

Week				"May I Ask You a	A Course for the
1	1/10/2019	Th	Syllabus	(Good) Question?"	Rest of Your Life
			Read Before Class: (Text)		
			Haidt, The Happiness Hypothesis,		
			Introduction (pp. ix-xiii) AND Ch.		
			1 (pp. 1-5; 13-17) AND (Handout)		
Week			Frattaroli, <i>The Swimming Pool</i>		Life as Swimming
2	1/15/2019	Т	and the Quest	the Beginning"	Pool or Quest
			Read before class: (Text)		
			Haidt, The Happiness Hypothesis,	Searching for	
			Ch. 5 (pp. 81-90) AND (Handout)	"the End" of	Aristotle's Advice:
			O'Toole, J., Creating the Good	Existence	Don't Leave College
	1/17/2019	Th	Life (Ch. 2)		Without It -
			Distribution of Good Life		
			Paper Rubric		
			"Good Life" Paper Due:		
			Monday, February 18th, 2019		
		<u> </u>			

Part 1
Craft of Life
The Science of a Meaningful
Life

Let us return once again to the good we are looking for, and consider just what it could be, since it is apparently one thing in one action or craft, and another thing in another; for it is one thing in medicine, another in generalship, and so on for the rest.

What, then, is the good in each of these cases? Surely, it is that for the sake of which the other things are done; and in medicine this is health, in generalship victory, in house-building a house, in another case something else, but in every action and decision it is the end, since it is for the of the end that everyone does the other things.

And so, if there is some end of everything that is pursued in action, this will be the [highest] good. What, then, is the highest good of the craft of life?

-Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, 1. 51

Unit Description: When it comes to understanding how human beings grow and thrive, it turns out that people are a lot like plants: If you get the conditions right, they will usually flourish. So what are those conditions? Having considered a preliminary conception of human goodness (eudaimonia), here's our second big question: What makes a "good life" good? In this Unit we will explore recent research in positive and moral psychology concerning the optimal conditions of a good life. We'll look at an ancient, new formula for flourishing that commends five essential "goods" of a well-lived life: positive emotionality, social connection and love, virtues of care, vital engagement (meaningful activities), and transcendent meaning (spirituality). Our goal is a state-of-the-art ancient, new guide to the Good Life that we can use as a blueprint for "crafting" a good life in the world with others.

Week 3	1/22/2019	Т	Read: (Text) <i>The Happiness Hypothesis</i> , Ch. 5 (90-106)	Five 'Goods' of a Good Life	Ancient, New Guide to a Flourishing Life
	1/24/2019	Th	Read: (Text) <i>The Happiness Hypothesis</i> , Ch. 2	"Know Thy" Elephant	More About the Happiness Factor ("H") in the Formula for Flourishing
			In-class discussion of the Good Life Capstone Project		
Week 4	1/29/2019	T	Read: (Text) Haidt, <i>Happiness Hypothesis</i> , Ch. 6	What Makes a "Good Relationship" Good?	The Relationship Factor ("R") in the Formula for Flourishing
	1/31/2019	Th	Read: (Text) <i>The Happiness Hypothesis</i> , Ch. 8	Why We Can't Flourish Without Arete	The Arete Factor ("A") in the Formula for Flourishing
Week 5	2/5/2019	T	Read: (Text) <i>The Happiness Hypothesis</i> , Ch. 10	"Love Made Visible"	The Vital Engagement Factor ("VE") in the Formula for Flourishing

	2/7/2019	Th	Read: (Text) <i>The Happiness Hypothesis</i> , Ch. 9, 181-211; Smith, <i>You Are What You Love</i> , Ch. 1, "You Are What You Love: To Worship is Human"	Spirituality for Goodness Sake (Part 1)	The Spirituality Factor ("S") in the Formula for Flourishing
Week 6	2/12/2019	T	Read: Smith, You Are What You Love, Ch. 2, "You Might Not Love What You Think: Learning to Read "Secular" Liturgies"	Spirituality for Goodness Sake (Part 2)	The Moral Emotions of Awe and Elevation, and Resisting the Liturgies of "Secular" Spirituality
			Psychology Major Senior		
	2/14/2019	Th	<u>Assessment</u>		
			Reminder: "Good Life" Paper		
			Due Next Week: Mon,		
			February 18th, 2019		

Part 2 Changing for "Good" The New Science of Love and Virtue

For one human being to love another, that is perhaps the most difficult of our tasks; the ultimate, the last test and proof, the work for which all other work is but preparation.

-R. Maria Rilke

Unit Description: Here's our next question: *How do we change for good?* In this section of our course we will explore the relationship between love and virtue, especially as it relates to those people closest to you. An emerging new psychological science of virtue suggests that in order to craft good relationships, we must cultivate "excellences" (arete) of character, especially those that motivate and enable the capacity to love (aka: generative care). Specifically, the virtues of gratitude, trust, compassion, and forgiveness, once believed – by (some) religious traditions – to be aberrations from "real" human nature, are now being revealed as innate neurological "goods" of the human being. These virtues are psychological resources believed to be necessary for loving and flourishing relationships. Virtue science is beginning to show us not only the benefits of virtue, but also how to mindfully practice these virtues in order to enlarge our capacity to love. Our goal in this Unit, as before, is an *ancient, new guide* to love and virtue that could assist us in our pursuit of good relationships – a model of virtuous caring.

Week			Read: (Reader) Fromm, The Art	"The Giving	You Call That
7	2/19/2019	Т	of Loving, pp. 1-6	Tree"	Love?
	2/21/2019	Th	Read: (Reader) Fromm, <i>The Art</i> of Loving, pp. 19-30	Love as "Capacity" for Mature Giving	Fromm's Virtue Model of Love-ing
			*Moral Sprouts Handout for		
			next class		

Week 8	2/26/2019	Т	Read: (Reading Handout) "Moral Sprouts"	Virtues and the "Michelangelo Project"	A New Model of Virtuous Caring
	2/28/2019	Th	Read: (ARTICLE BY NARVAEZ) AND/OR (Text) A General Theory of Love, Ch. 2, "Kits, Cats, Sacks, and Uncertainty: How the Brian's Basic Structure Poses Problems for Love"	Reptile be Still.	Triune Ethics Theory

Spring Break!!! No Classes!!!

Week 9	3/12/2019	Т	Read: (Reader) Germer, Ch. 4, What's Self-Compassion?	"Stop Beating Yourself Up!"	Why the Virtue of Self-Compassion Makes You 'More Loving, Less Selfish'
	3/14/2019	Th	Read: To Be Determind	Shadows in the Dark.	Questing Through the Dark Night of the Soul.
Week	3/19/2019	T	Read: (Reader) Siegel, Siegel (2010) <i>Mindsight</i> , Ch 5 - A roller-coaster mind - Strengthening the hub of awareness	"Please Mind the Gap"	Mindsight: Focusing the Brain
	3/21/2019	Th	Read: (Reader) Nouwen, McNeill, & Morrison, Compassion, Ch. 7, "Patience"	Mindfulness and Empathy	Attuning to the Self and to the Other
Week	3/26/2019	T	Read: (Text) A General Theory of Love, Ch. 3, "Archimedes Principle: How We Sense the Inner World of Other Hearts"	Empathy	Limbic Resonance and the Cognitive Leap of Empathy
	3/28/2019	Th	Read: (Reader) Keltner, "Compassion"	Don't Just Feel My Pain, Do Something About It!	The Movement from "Mere Empathy" to Empathic Compassion
	0, 20, 2013				Compassion
Week 12	4/2/2019	Т	Read: (Reading Handout) "Moral Sprouts"; (Text) <i>General Theory of</i> Love, Ch. 4, "A Fiercer Sea: How Relationships Permeate the Human Body, mind, and Soul"	Trust and Attachment Security	Trusting Compassion vs. Defensive Morality
	4/4/2019	Th	Read: TBD	How we Learn to Trust and Mistrust	Navigating the Symphony of Limbic Attractors

Week	4/9/2019	Т	Read: (Reader) Emmons & Crumpler, <i>Gratitude as a Human Strength</i>	Gratitude	Recognizing Debt without Becoming Indebted
	4/11/2019	Th	Read: Sood, The Mayo Clinic Guide to Stress-Free Living, "Gratitude" (online, Canvas)	Grateful Hearts Look Down- Stream	How Gratitude Promotes Love
Week	4/16/2019	Т	Read: (Reader) Post & Neimark, "The Way of Forgivness: Set Yourself Free"	What Do I Do, Now that I've Turned My Other Cheek?	How Forgiveness Can Heal Wounds without Burying Them
	4/18/2019	Th	No Class!!! Easter Break!!!		
Week	4/23/2019	Т	Read: (Text) A General Theory of Love, Ch. 8, "Between Stone and Sky: What Can be Done to Heal Hearts Gone Astray"	So, What Can I Do to Spread the Love?	Being the Change
	4/25/2019	Th	NO CLASS!!!		
Final Exam	5/2/2019	Т	Final Written Examination at 1:30pm		
			NOTE: THIS IS THE THURSDAYOF FINALS WEEK DO NOT PURCHASE A TICKET HOME BEFORE THIS DATE. THIS IS THE ONLY TIME YOU CAN TAKE THIS EXAM.		