

CAUTION: It should not surprise you that we will be exploring some very serious and, at times, graphic material throughout this class. Although I hope that doing so will help create and sustain a high level of interest and engagement, my intent is to *educate*, not sensationalize. *Serious* and *graphic* is sometimes “the nature of the beast.”

I want you to make an informed, rational decision about your involvement in this course, as you may find the material disturbing or offensive at times. Although I will make every effort to address the issues in a responsible, respectful manner, you may not always feel comfortable in here, and your good mood and your worldview may sometimes be challenged. Again, my intent is to educate, not to give simple answers or to tell you what you think you want to hear.

If you have content-related concerns, then it is your responsibility to notify me. In any case, PLEASE have some idea of what you’re getting into, and be respectful of the viewpoints of others that will inevitably conflict with your own.

PSYCH 232 -- Psychology of Evil -- W '16 MW 4:00-5:20 P.M.

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Official Course Description:

Psychological perspectives concerning definitions, causes, and consequences of institutional and personal evil, as well as symbols and interpretations of evil in both religious and secular contexts, will be considered.

Please note that this course is recognized as a PACS Content Course that fulfills requirements in the interdisciplinary Peace and Conflict Studies plan. For information about doing a PACS concentration (Major, Minor or Option) visit:
<http://grebel.uwaterloo.ca/academic/undergrad/pacs/plans.shtml>

Course Purpose and Structure:

Attempting to understand evil is a human preoccupation. Although it has received some psychological attention, the resulting theories and data remain scattered. In this course -- through text, lecture, film, and discussion -- I hope to bring together the literature for a fuller psychological understanding of evil from the perspective of perpetrators as well as from the perspective of victims and observers.

Required Readings:

Baumeister, R. F. (1997). *Evil: Inside human cruelty and violence*. New York: W. H. Freeman.

Rempel, J. K., & Burris, C. T. (2005). Let me count the ways: An integrative theory of love and hate. *Personal Relationships*, 12, 297-313. A free pdf version of this article is downloadable by accessing the *Personal Relationships* journal through the UW Library website. Please consult a librarian if you need assistance with doing this.

Course Schedule

(chapter readings from Baumeister are in CAPS): I have attempted to make the assigned readings “fit” with what will be covered in class, and I will try to make this fit explicit when possible – but be aware that there are not always nice, neat chapter headings that point out the overlap, so you will therefore need to compare text and class carefully to see “the big picture” emerge.

04 Jan (M) – Introductions (us, you, and “It”); **PREFACE**

06 Jan (W) – What is “Evil”? 1 – (a psychological perspective); **CHAPTER 1**
 11 Jan (M) – What is “Evil”? 2; **CHAPTER 2**
 13 Jan (W) – The Origins of “Evil”
 18 Jan (M) – Possession and Exorcism 1 (film: *Exorcists*)
 20 Jan (W) – Possession and Exorcism 2
 25 Jan (M) – Hate; **REMPEL & BURRIS (2005)**
 27 Jan (W) – Sadism; **CHAPTER 7**
 01 Feb (M) – Propaganda 1 (film: *Faces of the Enemy*); **CHAPTER 3**
 03 Feb (W) – Propaganda 2
 08 Feb (M) – **TEST ONE**
 10 Feb (W) – Serial Killers; **CHAPTER 4**
 15 Feb (M) – **READING WEEK: NO CLASS**
 17 Feb (W) – **READING WEEK: NO CLASS**
 22 Feb (M) – The Functions of “Evil”
 24 Feb (W) – Self-Justification; **CHAPTER 10**
 29 Feb (M) – The “Evil” Personality 1; **CHAPTER 5**
 02 Mar (W) – The “Evil” Personality 2
 07 Mar (M) – The “Evil” Personality 3
 09 Mar (W) – Power; **CHAPTER 8**
 14 Mar (M) – **TEST TWO**
 16 Mar (W) – Corporate “Evil”; **CHAPTER 9**
 21 Mar (M) – Genocide 1 (film: *Biography - Gen. Romeo Dallaire*)
 23 Mar (W) – Genocide 2; **CHAPTER 6**
 28 Mar (M) – Responses to “Evil”; **CHAPTER 11**
 30 Mar (W) – **TEST THREE**

Tests and Marking:

TEST 1 = 40%; TEST 2 = 35%; TEST 3 = 25%. There is no final exam. All tests are multiple choice and use computer cards, so be sure to bring a couple of pencils and an eraser on test days. Also, **be prepared to present identification (your WAT card) during tests**. Tests are weighted proportionally to the material that they cover; they are not cumulative. The mark received for a test stands – it will not be dropped, re-weighted, etc. because you weren’t feeling well, had a lot on your mind, etc., nor will “extra” assignments given to students who are dissatisfied with their grades. My goal is to be fair to everyone – please don’t ask for special treatment. Marks will be posted on LEARN as soon as they are available.

Extra Credit:

Up to 4% extra credit is available via research participation in the SONA system. Detailed instructions appear in the “W16 SONA INSTRUCTIONS” handout available for download via the course website. On a personal note, as an active researcher myself, I would ask that you PLEASE TAKE ANY RESEARCH PARTICIPATION SERIOUSLY – careless completion of a study’s materials is a waste of everyone’s time and seriously undercuts the research process.

UW Policy regarding Illness and Missed Tests:

UW Examination Regulations (www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/ExamRegs.pdf) state that: 1) A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the “University of Waterloo Verification of Illness” form or it will not be accepted. This form can be obtained from Health Services or at www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/Health_Services/verification.html. 2) If a student has a test/examination deferred due to acceptable medical evidence, he/she normally will write the test/examination at a mutually convenient time, to be determined by the course instructor. 3) The University acknowledges that, due to the pluralistic nature of the University community, some students may on religious grounds require alternative times to write tests and examinations. 4) Elective arrangements (such as travel plans) are not considered acceptable grounds for granting an alternative examination time.

Thus, you are entitled to test rescheduling for *legitimate* medical, compassionate, or religious grounds. Alternate test dates/times will not be granted because you forgot, overslept, were in a bad mood, had a plane to catch, didn’t come to class

or read the course outline, had a bird poop on your head, etc. Whenever possible, please inform me PRIOR to the scheduled test to arrange an alternate writing time. A make-up test should be written as quickly as possible upon your return to classes, with the obvious provision of access to missed material (see Class Attendance below). When arriving to write a make-up test, please have the appropriate documentation in hand to support a medical, compassionate, or religious claim. Make-up exams may differ in format from the original.

Class Attendance:

This is not a web-based or distance education course. Thus, although whether or not you choose to attend class is entirely up to you, you are responsible for all material covered. Should you miss class, for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to find a classmate who would be willing to provide you with the notes you missed. If your absence is *legitimate*, then I will be happy to answer questions about the missed material once you have consulted with a fellow student. To make the most of consultation time outside of class, come prepared with specific questions regarding whatever material you may be having trouble with, and be prepared to discuss what you know (or think you know) about a topic -- that can speed up and simplify the clarification process tremendously.

Special Needs:

The AccessAbility Services (AS) Office, located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS Office at the beginning of each academic term. If you require an adapted learning or testing environment, please provide us with AS documentation *at the beginning of the term*.

For the Ethically Challenged:

I think cheating is lazy, disrespectful, and immoral, and I find it very sad that some people may try to get a course mark without having earned it honestly. I hope you're not one of them.

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo and its Federated University and Affiliated Colleges are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline:

A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under St. Jerome’s University Academic Discipline Policy and UW Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#).

Grievance:

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. For students who decide to file a grievance, students should refer to [Policy 70 – Student Petitions and Grievances](#). In such a case, contact Dr. Scott Kline (scott.kline@uwaterloo.ca), Associate Dean of St. Jerome’s University.

Appeals:

A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 71 – Student Discipline or Policy 70 – Student Petitions and Grievances if a ground for an appeal can be established. In such a case, contact Dr. John Rempel (jrempel@uwaterloo.ca), Appeals Officer of St. Jerome’s University.

Academic Integrity website (Arts): http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html
Academic Integrity website (Math): <https://math.uwaterloo.ca/math/current-undergraduates/regulations-and-procedures/cheating-and-student-academic-discipline>
Academic Integrity Office (UW): <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>

How to Do Your Best:

0) Make the decision to do your best! I have often wondered how much the class average would improve *if every student decided to work to his/her full potential*. Are you willing to make this commitment to yourself?

1) Come to class! Be alert, ask questions – either in class or later. Do more than mindlessly write down whatever appears on an overhead: *Think* about the material – try to come up with your own examples and illustrations by applying the material to people you know, media happenings, etc.

2) Do the readings! Ideally, read them at least once before the relevant week’s lecture, and at least once after that lecture. Don’t mindlessly run a highlighter over the words: *Think* about the material – write down questions, observations, possible examples, etc. as you read.

3) Look for connections! We will deal with a lot of specific phenomena, but there some big themes will keep recurring throughout the term. Look for them. Look also for connections between lecture and assigned readings. Think about what *this* theorist might say about *that* topic, etc. – even if we’ve never addressed this in class.

4) Test yourself! Don’t assume that certain concepts are “easy” or “common sense” – often, they are not. Can you explain an idea to someone, without reciting your notes, in a way that that person will understand? If given a blank page, could you reproduce the structure of ideas I use to organize my lectures? Can you create a structure of ideas that accurately summarizes a reading’s main points? Can you recognize sets of information in lectures or readings that might make good multiple choice options, and can you explain how members of a set are similar or different?

These may sound difficult, especially if you have gotten by with plain old memorization in the past. Having said that, I strongly suspect that you WILL do better in this class if you put the above suggestions into practice. *I have also prepared the “MC Survival Guide” (downloadable through LEARN) that offers you specific tips for preparing for my tests*. Remember: I am happy to see you succeed, but YOU have to do the work!

Classroom Etiquette: Please TURN OFF cell phones, etc. when in class. Please do your social media, gaming, etc. elsewhere. Thanks.

Final Words: Good luck! I hope that this course is a worthwhile experience.