

**St. Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**PSYCH 357**  
**Psychology of Good**  
**Winter 2019**  
**6:30pm-9:20pm Tuesday, SJ2 2003**

**Instructor and T.A. Information**

<b>Instructors</b>	Dr. Christopher Burriss	Dr. John Rempel	<b>Course TA:</b> Marina Vrebac
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**Course Description**

What does it mean to "be good"? How does one "do good"? What makes "doing good" easier or harder? This course examines (1) the biological and psychosocial foundations of prosocial behaviour and (2) associated facilitators and obstacles at both interpersonal and organizational levels. Topics may include empathy, social responsibility, volunteerism, community intervention, activism, and heroism.

**Course Goals and Learning Outcomes**

This course is designed to guide you toward a psychological understanding of: (1) *what* good is (definitions); (2) *why* good is (origins); (3) *where* good is (contexts); (4) *when* good is (priorities and challenges); (5) *how* good is (mechanisms and facilitators); and (6) *who* is good (personality factors). The format will be primarily lecture and reading-based, with an emphasis on research and case studies. In collaboration with fellow students, you will be expected to present your own "good" case study in poster form as well (see **Course Requirements and Assessment** below).

**Required Readings and Course Schedule**

Readings are available as e-reserves through the UW Library or the LEARN coursepage. The schedule is:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Broad Topics &amp; Tasks</b>	<b>Reading by Author(s) – [Topic]</b>
Jan 8	Introduction to the course <i>What</i> is 'good'? 1	Burriss & Rempel (2012) – [Morality]
Jan 15	<i>What</i> is 'good'? 2 <i>Why</i> is 'good'? 1	Davis (2015) – [Empathy]
Jan 22	<i>Why</i> is 'good'? 2	Clark et al. (2015) – [Relational Context]
Jan 29	<i>Where</i> is 'good'?	Nolan & Schultz (2015) – [Environment]
Feb 5	<b>Test 1</b> (25%) <i>When</i> is 'good'? 1	Tyler (2015) – [Justice]
Feb 12	<i>When</i> is 'good'? 2	Pryor & Bos (2015) – [Stigma]
Feb 19	<b>Reading Week</b>	
Feb 26	<i>How</i> is 'good'? 1	Janoff-Bulman (2012) – [Conscience]

Mar 5	<i>How</i> is ‘good’? 2	Stukas et al. (2015) – [Volunteerism]
Mar 12	<b>Test 2</b> (30%) <i>How</i> is ‘good’? 3	Christie & Montiel (2015) – [Peacemaking]
Mar 19	<i>How</i> is ‘good’? 4 <i>Who</i> is ‘good’? 1	Tsang et al. (2015) [Religion]
Mar 26	<i>Who</i> is ‘good’? 2 <b>Posters Due</b>	Graziano et al. (2015) – [Personality]
Apr 2	<b>Test 3</b> (15%) <b>Poster Session</b> (30%)	

## Course Requirements and Assessment

**Tests.** There are three multiple-choice tests (see schedule and weighting above). Bring pencils/erasers on test days. Be prepared to present identification (your WAT card) during tests. Test weights are based on how much material each test covers, and they are not cumulative. All material covered in class and in the assigned readings is testable. Class will resume after a break following each test. Test marks will be posted on LEARN as soon as possible. In order to be fair to everyone, *the mark received for a test stands* – it will not be dropped or re-weighted. There is no final exam.

**Case Study Poster.** The goal of this group assignment is for you to identify, analyze, and present a real-world example of doing “good” based on the principles that we develop in class. This assignment is worth 30% of your grade. Posters will be presented on the last day of class. Your fellow students will evaluate the posters and we will consider these evaluations when we grade this assignment.

1. *Working in groups of 3-4*, you are to choose a case study based on an organization that is engaged in the process of “doing good”. This may be based on personal connections and interviews with local organization representatives and/or relevant materials discovered via online research.

2. The next step is for you to analyze the information that you have obtained. In particular, you should address six issues *as informed by class content*:

(1) What is the desired “good” outcome that the group is trying to achieve, and why would you consider it to be “good”?

(2) Why is this outcome a priority – i.e., given the wide range of options available, why did the founders/organizers choose *this* form of “doing good”?

(3) What procedures are being utilized to achieve this outcome, and on what principles are these procedures based?

(4) What challenges, obstacles, or dilemmas are being encountered, and how are they being dealt with?

(5) Based on your analysis, evaluate how well the group is doing in achieving their desired outcome. Explain the basis (that is, the evidence) on which you are making this assessment.

(6) Provide and justify one or two key recommendations concerning what can they do better.

3. Prepare a poster that addresses each of the 6 issues above in a clear, concise, and engaging manner. Creativity is welcomed, but your primary focus should be sound analysis and a thorough yet accessible visual presentation of it. You will have a space of approximately 1 by 2 meters for your poster. All submissions will be part of a poster session to be held during class time after Test 3 has been written. One or more group members will be expected to be present at the poster to give a short verbal summary and answer questions. Additional details regarding logistics (e.g., poster printing procedures, peer evaluations, etc.) will be posted on LEARN well in advance of the due date.

**Extra Credit:** Up to 4% extra credit is available via SONA research participation. Detailed instructions appear in the SONA instructions available for download on LEARN. As active researchers ourselves, we 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 undercuts the research process.

### **UW Policy regarding Illness and Missed Tests:** UW Examination Regulations

([www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/ExamRegs.pdf](http://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](http://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. Whenever possible, please inform us 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.

### **Attendance Policy**

Whether or not you choose to attend class is entirely up to you, but 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 we 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.

### **Electronic Device Policy**

In-class use of any electronic devices for non-class-related purposes is discouraged, as it distracts other students and interferes with your own ability to absorb the material.

### **Other Important Information**

**Academic Integrity:** To maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo and its Affiliated and Federated Institutions of Waterloo (AFIW) are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. See the [UWaterloo Academic Integrity](#) webpage for more information.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for their 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 the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline](#). For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to [University of Waterloo Policy 71 - Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of their university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances](#).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or the St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes they have a ground for an appeal should refer to the [St. Jerome's University Policy on Student Appeals](#).

**Note for Students with Disabilities:** The [AccessAbility Services](#) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), 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.

## How to Do Your Best

0) Make the decision to do your best! We 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! Ask questions! Do more than mindlessly write down whatever appears on a slide: *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! Read them more than once. 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.

4) Test yourself! Don't simply assume that certain concepts are "easy" or "common sense" – often, they are not. Can you explain an idea to someone else, without reciting your notes, in a way that that person will understand? If given a blank page, could you reproduce the structure of ideas used to organize 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 in what ways the members of a set are similar or different?

These may sound difficult, especially if you have gotten by with just memorization in the past. Having said that, we believe that you WILL do better in this class if you put the above suggestions into practice.