

Psychology of Forgiveness (Psyc 185)
January Term 2019
Happy New Year!!!

Instructors	Loren Toussaint & Guest Lecturer Rev. Dr. Michael Barry
Office	Valders 340 F
Office Hours	12:00 – 1:00 MTWRF
Telephone	1647
Email	touslo01@luther.edu
Time	MTWRF 11:00 – 12:30; 1:30 – 3:00
Place	Valders 345
Required Reading:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Posted on Katie✓ <i>Moving Forward: Six Steps to Forgiving Yourself and Breaking Free from the Past</i> (Waterbrook) Everett Worthington✓ <i>Forgive for Good: A Proven Prescription for Health and Happiness</i> (Harper) Fred Luskin

Course Description

This course will examine the topic of forgiveness from a psychological perspective. We will discuss the meaning of forgiveness and how it differs from concepts such as justice and reconciliation. The course will emphasize the scientific method and the unique perspectives that psychological science can offer on an age-old topic. This is an experiential course where you will assess your own levels of forgiveness, participate in forgiveness exercises, and evaluate current forgiveness research. The connection between forgiveness and the following topics will likely be included: personality, family, culture, gender, and mental and physical health and well-being. Strategies for personal growth will also be considered. In general, we will work together to make this a successful and enjoyable opportunity to learn and grow.

Course Objectives

1. Understand why, based on your beliefs (e.g., religious, secular) forgiveness is important to you.
2. Understand why some people (e.g., friends, family) find it unimportant or too hard to forgive.
3. Articulate the benefits and consequences of forgiveness.
4. Identify common barriers (e.g., personal, social, religious) to finding forgiveness.
5. Develop some capacity to help others become more forgiving (e.g., church groups, sororities).

Evaluation

Evaluation in this course will consist of three parts. Each of these is discussed in greater detail below:

Participation (40%): Your participation grade will be based upon four components. First, you are **required** to participate in each class. Participation includes reading the articles before coming to class, attending class, and sharing ideas. Missing class, or attending but not participating in discussion, more than two times across the term is not acceptable and will result in a lower participation grade. Second, you will prepare at least one group discussion question for each class period and submit it by _____ p.m. each day on the Katie course site. A good discussion question begins with an observation or point of reflection, then offers at least two ways of thinking about an issue, and draws on materials outside of the required reading itself. Personal reflection and experience may be the starting point for developing these questions, but should ***not*** be the sole source from which your question arises. I will keep a record of the discussion questions submitted and monitor them for conceptual clarity and quality of writing. If you fail to submit your questions, write poor quality questions (as evaluated by the instructor), or submit questions late more than two times, then you will receive a lower participation grade. Third, you will lead part of each discussion. Student led discussions will begin the second day of class. Fourth, you will provide a summary of at least one reading.

Social Media Posts (5%): As we proceed through the term you will undoubtedly learn and grow in your understanding of forgiveness. You will probably be more attuned to it in your life and pay more attention to stories in the news and other sources about forgiveness. Share with the group your increased consciousness about forgiveness on social media. You will be required to make 6 social media posts with no more than two per week.

Restore: The Journey Toward Self-Forgiveness (5%): You will complete the self-forgiveness online program. You will be asked to complete some questionnaires before and after and complete an evaluation of the program.

Blog Post (5%): You will write a 200-300 word blog post for the website: www.wedoforgiveness.com. The topic is of your choosing and you can decide if you would like the post published with or without your name.

Projects (45%): There will be three different projects. The first week will be a conceptual study of forgiveness and its meaning aimed at understanding forgiveness motivations. There will be a variety of assignments that will contribute to the project portfolio. The second will require you to better understand what motivates people to forgive or not forgive and then develop a short YouTube-like video that encourages people to forgive. You will play the video for the class. The third will focus on forgiveness education. You will identify one aspect of forgiveness teaching from the curriculums developed by Michael Barry, Fred Luskin, or Everett Worthington and adapt it for use with elementary, middle-school, or high school aged kids. You will formulate the forgiveness lesson plan, develop the materials, and present the lesson to the class.

Grading

Final grades will be computed and assigned as follows:

Final grade = Final % = (.40(participation)) + (.05(social media)) + (.05(Restore))+ (.50(research project))

		93-100%	A	90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+	83-86%	B	80-82%	B-
77-79%	C+	73-76%	C	70-72%	C-
67-69%	D+	63-66%	D	60-62%	D-
Below 60%	F				

Exceptions (USUALLY THERE ARE NONE!):

Late Work: **No late work of any type will be accepted.** If you are going to be absent the day that something is due, then you must turn in your work early.

Note: I reserve the right to make changes to any and all of the above policies as necessary and to make reasonable accommodations when appropriate.

Honor Code: You are reminded that at your enrollment at Luther College you acknowledged an understanding of the Honor System under which this course is being administered. If you are aware of dishonest work, you are expected to contact the Honor Council, through SPO "Honor Council."

Examples of dishonest work include:

1. giving assistance to or receiving assistance from others on any tests, quizzes, projects, or assignments
2. any form of academic dishonesty, such as plagiarism, copying or allowing another to copy your work
3. in any way presenting work that is not wholly your own as your own
4. failing to give credit for ideas, statement of facts, or conclusions derived from another author. Failing to use quotation marks when quoting directly, whether it is a paragraph, sentence, or part thereof.