

GIS EDPSYCH 4186-5186 Studies in Forgiveness

His heart was as great as the world, but there was no room in it to hold the memory of a wrong.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Only the brave know how to forgive; it is the most refined and generous pitch of virtue human nature can arrive at.

Laurence Sterne

Instructor Contact Information

Instructor	Suzanne Freedman, Ph.D. Associate Professor of Educational Psychology (Human Development)
Phone	(319) 273-2483
Office hours and location	by appointment
Email Address	Freedman@uni.edu
Class Delivery	Online / Blackboard Learn
Preferred Communication	I will primarily communicate with students via email.

Course Information

Welcome to Studies in Psychology of Interpersonal Forgiveness!

This course is being conducted online using eLearning, the Blackboard Learning Management System supported by the University of Northern Iowa. An ideal distance learning environment is one in which the instructor and students actively interact and learn from each other.

This "START HERE!" link in the course menu contains the Course Syllabus and the "Getting Started" activities.

Specific instructions for on-line classes:

According to experts in on-line education, "It is really easy to get behind in an online class because there is no specific meeting time". So, you might want to set individual course goals or make up a schedule for yourself in terms of when you plan to turn in assignments. Please contact me anytime with questions, comments or concerns. And lastly, read through this introduction several times before beginning your work, so you know exactly what to do.

Course Description:

This course will consist of a psychological and philosophical examination of forgiveness. Traditionally associated with religion and philosophy, the psychological study of interpersonal forgiveness on college campuses is fairly new, having emerged for the first time in the mid 1980's. Since then, the topic has become extremely popular as illustrated in the numerous self-help books, journal articles, doctoral dissertations and popular press articles that have focused on forgiveness.

This course will focus primarily on interpersonal forgiveness; the gift an injured person gives to the one who hurt him or her. Interpersonal forgiveness does not focus on divine-to-human forgiveness emphasized in the monotheistic world religions. It does not include intrapersonal forgiveness, or the forgiveness of self. However, we will spend time discussing the topics of self-forgiveness, group and cultural perspectives of forgiveness and community and national issues related to forgiveness. Topics including, what forgiveness is and is not, forgiveness in philosophy, the process of forgiveness, applications and benefits of forgiveness, forgiveness in education and forgiveness and bullying will all be discussed in this course.

By the end of this course, you will have gained a greater understanding and knowledge of the psychology of forgiveness. The course will additionally help students improve their writing and critical thinking skills. Most of the required assignments are written assignments and students will be asked to think critically about readings and issues related to forgiveness.

Purpose/Rationale

The purpose of this course is to explore the topic of interpersonal forgiveness from a psychological perspective. Because there are so many misconceptions regarding what forgiveness is and is not, contexts appropriate for forgiveness, and how to go about forgiving, the more education individuals receive about forgiveness, the more likely it will be put into practice. Education and School Psychology students will find this course helpful as they can apply their knowledge about forgiveness to students who have experienced deep hurts, such as from bullying and hurt from family members. Counseling and clinical students will find this course useful and helpful as they prepare to work with clients as helping professionals. Many therapists are not aware of the process of forgiveness and how forgiveness can be healing for individuals who have experienced deep, personal and unfair hurts. In addition, this course is an appropriate elective for general studies majors, or students in other majors, who want to expand their knowledge and understanding about the interpersonal process of forgiveness from a psychological perspective.

Course Overview

This course follows a sequence of four units that build upon one another. Specifically, we begin by addressing the question, "**How do we define forgiveness?**" in **Unit 1**. This examination will include discussions on what

forgiveness is and is not, as well as exploring forgiveness from a philosophical perspective and examining the connection between forgiveness and justice. Students will be asked to share their own personal definition of forgiveness and background in learning about forgiveness *before* reading what the experts have to say about forgiveness.

In **Unit 2** we will explore the “**Psychological Development of Forgiveness**” including the development of various models of interpersonal forgiveness and real-life applications of forgiveness. Within this second unit, we will examine in detail Enright’s 20-unit process model of forgiveness as well as read about and view real-life examples of forgiveness.

The third unit focuses on “**Innovations in Therapy and Counseling and Forgiveness Interventions and Education,**” (**Unit 3**) which will include an examination of various forgiveness interventions. We will discuss information regarding how forgiveness can be used in therapy as well as analyze criticisms and skeptical views of forgiveness therapy and education.

Finally, the issues of “**Family and Children and Forgiveness Education**” is addressed in **Unit 4**. We will focus on how to help children and adolescents forgive and read studies conducted with forgiveness and children in Ireland and China. Students will complete interviews with two people and write up their responses in an interview reflection and analysis. This interview analysis will allow students to obtain a snapshot of how lay people in the general population forgive, and to make a comparison to what we have read about forgiveness.

Overall, this course is designed to provide students with an opportunity to explore the topic of interpersonal forgiveness from a psychological perspective, a topic that is gaining more attention in both society and in academia. This course will also give students the opportunity to further develop their critical thinking and writing skills.

I hope you find this course interesting, challenging and informative. You will have a variety of ways to illustrate your understanding of forgiveness from a psychological perspective and your mastery of certain academic skills. Please contact me at Freedman@uni.edu or (319) 273-2483 if you have any questions, concerns or need clarification on a certain topic or assignment. I look forward to reading all of your coursework.

Learning Objectives

University Level Outcomes

- **Critical Thinking**

Students will demonstrate critical thinking through the ability to evaluate, analyze, and integrate information from a variety of sources in order to develop reasoned positions and solutions to problems.

- **Communication**

Students will display competence in oral, written, and visual communication, as appropriate for their discipline.

- **Program Content Knowledge**

Students will demonstrate discipline-specific knowledge and skills in their major fields of study.

Program Level Objectives

This course is sponsored by the Department of Educational Psychology, Foundations and Leadership Studies but is not connected to any of the degree programs offered by this department and thus, there are no PLOs to list here.

Course Level Objectives

- Students will explore what forgiveness means and how forgiveness is understood and practiced from multiple perspectives, theoretical orientations, cultures and backgrounds.
- Students will explore the relationship between forgiveness and justice, including how justice and forgiveness can both occur after a crime has occurred.
- Students will analyze the role of anger in the forgiveness process.
- Students will illustrate their ability to identify the 20 units and four phases in Enright's model and describe the importance of all units in the model as they relate to individuals' ability to forgive and forgiveness education and intervention.
- Students will explore how laypeople in the general population understand, define, and view forgiveness. Students will also compare and contrast various contexts and applications of forgiveness illustrated recently in society.
- Students will identify and analyze the criticisms aimed at the use of forgiveness as a way to heal as well as the benefits of forgiving for individuals and society.
- Students will explore the use of forgiveness education and intervention as a form of bullying prevention and intervention with children and adolescents.

Graduate students only:

- Students will recognize and discuss factors related to the measurement of forgiveness.

Course Requirements and Evaluation Methods

Required Materials

You will need to obtain the following textbooks for this course. All other readings will be available online or through Rod Library Course Reserves.

Enright, R. D. (2001). *Forgiveness is a choice: A step-by-step process for resolving anger and restoring hope*. Washington DC: APA Books.

Smedes, L. (1996). *The art of forgiving: When you need to forgive and don't know how*. New York: NY: Ballantine Books.

Supplemental Readings

- See Resource List for details under Start HERE at Blackboard course site.

Instructional Methods/Activities/Assessments

This course consists of the following activities and assessments to assist you in achieving the course and instructional unit objectives. You will have the opportunity to reflect and work on various combinations of written assignments and readings throughout the course to illustrate your mastery of the material.

Interactive Discussion Board Assignments - 15 points each

The Interactive Discussion Board Assignments are related to the chapter and article readings and external resources, such as videos. Upon completion or near completion of the assigned resources and activities, you are to submit a post reflecting your thoughts on the resources. Specifically, your post should include **one question** you have about **any one** of the resources for that lesson **along with an explanation** of why you are asking that specific question. I also want you to answer one of the following questions for one of the assigned resources (does not have to be the same resource you asked a question about): **1. How did this resource add to your existing knowledge on this topic? Or 2. How did this resource change your previously held thoughts on this topic?** Please be specific with either question you choose to address. For one or two Discussion Board Assignments, there will be a specific question for you to respond to, rather than the above questions (10 points).

For all of these Interactive Discussion Board Assignments you will also need to respond to my comments on your assignment. Thus, I will grade your Assignment and give you some feedback regarding your post and you need to respond to my feedback with a response. You will receive up to five points for your response to my feedback. Your post and response to my feedback will be graded for quality, NOT quantity; writing; and ability to apply new knowledge in your responses. Thus, your responses should be a reflection of what you learned from the readings as well as your opinions and perspectives related to past experiences. **Total Points = 75**

All postings should demonstrate thoughtful reflection about the resources by including new insights, referencing the resources (using authors or authors' last name(s) and year of publication), making connections between class resources, and explaining your thoughts and perspectives.

Commentaries

There are a total of nine commentaries in the course content. Eight commentaries

are worth 25 points and the one interactive commentary (Commentary 3) is worth 30 points. Undergraduates choose eight out of the nine commentaries to complete and graduate students will complete all nine. All students need to complete Commentary 3, which is the interactive commentary. For the Interactive Commentary, I will give you feedback on your commentary, and you need to respond to my feedback. Your response is worth up to five points.

Your commentaries should be about two-three pages and reflect your thoughts and opinions on the resources, as well as prior knowledge and experience. As appropriate, try to integrate your thoughts on several of the resources in a meaningful response. There is no correct answer to the commentaries. Responses will be evaluated on thoughtfulness, reference to the resources, the use of statements to support your ideas and remarks (need to show as well as tell), whether the response is consistent with the question and topic and writing. Commentaries are listed below and are included in each unit description and assignments.

Total points for undergraduates - 205 (7 X 25 and 1 X 30= 205)

Total points for graduate students - 230 (8 X 25 and 1 X 30 = 230).

Interview Analysis- 50 points (See Course Content Unit 4, Lesson B)

In this class you will be reading a lot of research and theory about interpersonal forgiveness. Some of the theory and research is based on actual people's experiences, and some is not. I would like you to interview two people to explore the layperson's understanding of forgiveness. Included in the course content is a sample interview protocol and you can choose which questions to ask based on your interviewees and what they tell you. Questions will focus on definition and understanding of forgiveness, experience of forgiving and being forgiven. It would be great if you could get at least one person who has actually struggled with forgiveness, whether or not they have forgiven. It would also be interesting to get individuals of different ages, genders, and/or ethnicities. You can interview individuals in high school and older. Through these interviews, we are going to try and understand how real people actually forgive, what that looks like, how that compares to what we have read about forgiveness, as well as the reasons people give for forgiving or not forgiving. You will turn in a report of your interviews and an analysis of the responses you received. The interview analysis is worth 50 points. It is best to complete the interview analysis toward the end of the course so you can use the information in the readings to support your statements and your analysis can be an informed one.

Extra Assignment for Graduate Students

If you are a graduate student taking this class for graduate credits, you need to complete the extra unit after the Interview Analysis, which focuses on measurement of forgiveness and includes Interactive Discussion Board Assignment 6.

Evaluation Methods

Undergraduate students:

Grades will be based on the number of points earned on all assignments. The Introductory message and Practice Assignment are worth a total of **10 points**. There are a total of five Interactive Discussion Board Assignments worth 15 points each for a total of **75 points**. Seven commentaries are worth 25 points each and the Interactive commentary is worth 30 points and you need to complete all eight, totaling 205 points. The Interview Analysis is worth **50 points**. Thus, there is a total of **340 total points** for the course.

Graduate students:

Grades will be based on the number of points earned on all assignments. The Introductory message and Practice Assignment are worth a total of **10 points**. You have to complete six Interactive Discussion Board Assignments worth 15 points each for a total of 90 points. You need to complete eight commentaries worth 25 points and the Interactive Commentary worth 30 points for a total of 230 points. The Interview Analysis is worth **50 points**. Thus, there is a total of **380 total points** for the course.

Determination of Grades for Undergraduate students

Final grades will be reported using the following scale (example):

Grading scale	Letter grade with points system				
93-100%	A (316-340)	80-82%	B- (279-288)	63-69%	D+ (228-237)
90-92%	A- (306-315)	77-79%	C+ (262-278)	56-62%	D (214-227)
87-89%	B+ (296-305)	73-76%	C (248-261)	50-55%	D- (204-213)
83-86%	B (289-295)	70-72%	C- (238-247)	< 50%	F (203 and lower)

Determination of Grades for Graduate students

Final grades will be reported using the following scale (example):

Grading scale	Letter grade with points system				
93-100%	A (353-380)	80-82%	B- (304-314)	63-69%	D+ (255-265)
90-92%	A- (342-352)	77-79%	C+ (293-303)	56-62%	D (239-254)
87-89%	B+ (331-341)	73-76%	C (277-292)	50-55%	D- (228-238)
83-86%	B (315-330)	70-72%	C- (266-276)	< 50%	F (227 and lower)

SPECIAL NEEDS

I wish to fully include persons with disabilities in this course. Please let me know if you need any special accommodations in the curriculum, instruction, or assessments of this course to enable you to fully participate. I will respect the confidentiality of the information you share with me.

Non-Discrimination Based on Disabilities "The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act, and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. To request accommodations please contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS), located at ITTC 007, for more information either at (319) 273- 2677 or Email accessibilityservices@uni.edu. Visit Student Accessibility Services (<https://sas.uni.edu/>) for additional information."

Technology Requirements:

Technology required for this course includes Internet access/connection (high speed, not dial up), email access, and access to a Word Processing program, such as Microsoft Word.

Contacting Me:

The best way to contact me is through my email - **Freedman@uni.edu** or call me at my office at (319) 273-2483. If I am unavailable, please leave your name, phone number, and a detailed message. I will return your call as soon as possible. E-mail is the most immediate way to contact me as I might not be checking voicemails everyday. You can also use the Message tool to e-mail me but I don't check that every day.

Mission Statements

Theme for the Practitioner Preparation Conceptual Framework

The Educator as a Reflective, Responsible Decision Maker in a Global and Diverse Democratic Society.

University of Northern Iowa Mission Statement SEP The University of Northern Iowa, a public institution of higher learning, embraces a tripartite mission of teaching, research, and professional service.

To fulfill this mission and attain greater educational distinction, the University is committed to maintaining its historical emphasis on instructional excellence and faculty/student interaction; on promoting faculty development through research, creative activities, and continuing scholarship; and on serving the citizens of Iowa and the nation through appropriate professional activities. In seeking to create, preserve, and disseminate knowledge, the University is committed to providing an optimum level of learning opportunities for the intellectual development of its students, faculty, and staff.

The University of Northern Iowa offers a broad range of degree programs and educational opportunities at the undergraduate and master's levels, and advanced study in selected practitioner-oriented doctoral programs. These academic degree programs are complemented by a range of continuing and non-traditional educational opportunities, both on and off campus.

Above all, the pursuit of excellence and distinction in all University programs and activities is critical to fulfilling the University's public responsibilities for the development of an educated and productive Iowa citizenry and for providing leadership and service to the nation and the world.

College of Education Mission Statement SEP The mission of the University of Northern Iowa College of Education is threefold. First, the College exists to prepare educational and human service professionals for a variety of direct service and leadership roles in school and non-school settings. Second, faculty members in the college conduct applied and basic research in the areas of teaching and learning, human behavior, human growth and development, and educational policy. Third, the college of Education provides service on the local, state, regional, and national levels. By doing so, the College of Education effectively serves in a leadership role for the improvement of education and human services at state and national levels.

Approved Statements for Non-discrimination and Accessibility

Office of Compliance and Equity Management

The University of Northern Iowa does not discriminate in employment or education. Visit [13.03 Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination Statement](#) for additional information.

Student Accessibility Services

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act, and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. To request accommodations please contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS), located at ITTC 007, for more information either at (319) 273-2677 or send an email to accessibilityservices@uni.edu. Visit [Student Accessibility Services](#) for additional information.

Academic Integrity

To ensure academic integrity and to follow [UNI policies on Student Academic Ethics](#) (see: IV. Academic Ethics Violations), students will not plagiarize, misrepresent, fabricate, or cheat. Unless otherwise instructed and approved by the instructor, students will take quizzes and exams **individually**, without collaboration with other parties and/or using notes or other texts. Similarly, students will submit work (papers, presentations, and other assessments) that is their own work (in regard to violations of these ethics policies, see: V. Academic Ethics Sanctions).

Course Communication and Technology

Online Component

This course is completely an online utilizing Blackboard for instruction, materials, and communication. This online component can be accessed through the [UNI Blackboard Learn website](#)

All of the handouts and information for this course will be available in Blackboard. Students are advised to check the website and their email for communication. Any changes to the course syllabus or schedule will be announced through Blackboard. Assignments are due as specified in the course schedule and on the course Blackboard page in Blackboard. Students are responsible for learning how to use Blackboard for on-time submission of assignments. Blackboard tutorials are also available on the [Blackboard Learn Help website](#).

Attendance, Late Work, and Makeup Work

See UNI [Policy on Class Attendance and Makeup Work](#)

Online Netiquette and Classroom Civility

Because this is a fully online class, you will mostly be communicating with me and others through email, discussion forums, and other online communication. It is important to think of this communication as a formal dialogue. Be sure that in all communication you create an appropriate subject line, identify yourself, and craft professionally worded content. For example, shorthand messages from your cell phone are generally inappropriate. Always submit assignments through Blackboard and never via email.

Finally, read [Albion's Core Netiquette Rules](#) and always remember to address your professor and other students in a respectful manner.

Technology Requirements

The following information has been provided to assist you in preparing to use technology successfully in this course. You are required to have access to and ability to use:

- UNI Gmail account
- Microsoft Office
- High speed internet connection
- Blackboard Learn is supported on Firefox and Chrome (Internet Explorer and Safari do not support Blackboard and users can experience difficulty opening files)

If required in this course

- Adobe Connect (see Adobe Connect Systems Requirements in START HERE for more information)
- YouTube, setting videos to "unlisted" in order to share links
- Panopto
- Google Drive and Google Apps (these are free with your UNI email account)
- Reliable equipment for video recording and storing recorded videos

Technical Support

If you experience any technical problems, contact the **Office of Continuing and Distance Education** at 319-273-7740 (local), 800-772-1746 (toll-free) or cesp-consult@uni.edu.

Please note: Instructors are not the first line of support for technical problems.

For web conferencing coverage, M-Th, from 8 a.m. - 9 p.m., and Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

For course support, M-F, from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.