

# UCI INTERDISCIPLINARY CENTER FOR THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF ETHICS AND MORALITY

## 2020 SUMMER INTERNSHIP PROGRAM Monday, June 29, 2020 – Friday, July 24, 2020

### Please note additional modules.

Because of the death of George Floyd and the ensuing political events, two additional modules were added.

**Module 6:** It about American equality and asks if it is fact or fiction. Discussion centers on the politics of social categories and examines American immigration policy, especially toward Latinx groups.

**Module 7:** It discusses the proper response to morally reprehensible political regimes and acts.

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### MODULE 1

**Jessica Maria Gonzalez, Graduate student in the Department of Logic and Philosophy of Science interested in the relationship between moral psychology and moral philosophy.**

**Title: What can science tell us about ethics?**

**Meetings: Mondays, Wednesdays from 1-2 p.m., Fridays from 1-2 p.m.**

How do we make moral decisions? Do we carefully weigh different options, thinking about our cultural upbringing or the laws of society? Or is it a more impulsive process? Or both? In this module, we'll research moral psychology and what contributions it has made to the field of ethics. In particular, we'll ask: *What can science tell us about ethics?* We'll investigate the limitations of science, focusing on the boundary between *morality* and *how we think about morality*. Interns will examine this boundary by compiling research from contemporary and cross-cultural studies in moral psychology and experimental philosophy.

**COVID-19 component.** For those interested in adding a COVID-19 aspect, students can also focus on the following: In the COVID-19 pandemic, we've seen that science can tell us how to save lives. It has told us what measures will be most effective and who is most at risk. What sorts of moral claims have been made over the past several months, and how do these relate to our scientific knowledge? What do you make of the fact that Dr. Fauci is receiving death threats, with people blaming him for both the virus and the economic downturn?

This module will have both synchronous and asynchronous components. We'll meet via Zoom each Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 1pm. Monday and Wednesday meetings will be one hour while Friday meetings will be two hours. In the meetings, we'll discuss: (1) the fields of moral psychology and moral philosophy, (2) research methods, and (3) research results. Additionally, we will coordinate our research asynchronously via Google Drive. Interns may be asked to team up to work on research topics together. All group-work may be completed remotely.

### MODULE 2

**Ben Hoyt, Graduate student, Department of Political Science.**

**Title: Liberal Arts in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Best Practices for Liberal and Civic Education in Uncertain Times.**

**Meetings: Times to be announced.**

Intern Tasks: Interviews, Compiling Literature Review, Data Analysis

Topics Covered: American higher education, the liberal arts education, history, philosophy, and contemporary politics.

Platforms Utilized: Google Docs, Zoom.

For those of you entering college, what will it be like? Is the entire face of higher education changing after COVID-19? Interns in this module will investigate the current situation and best practices for the liberal arts education today. Since the time of Greek and Roman antiquity, an education in the "artes liberales" (or the arts that make one worthy and capable of self-government) has been seen as the ideal for institutions of higher education. In this way, higher education and a healthy political system were seen as inextricably linked. Since their creation, American colleges and universities have

embraced a “liberal arts” curriculum that introduces students to a wide variety of topics, broadening their intellectual horizons and political perspectives, which is supposed to prepare them for effective democratic citizenship along the way. COVID is not the only factor. In recent years, widespread demographic change in the student population of America’s colleges and universities, the abject decline of declared majors in the humanities and social sciences and shifting expectations about the purpose of a college education among admitted students has threatened to undermine traditional best practices for turning students into citizens. This module will ask interns to map the current state of affairs across academia and help answer the questions of what today’s students expect from higher education and what universities can do to foster greater civic consciousness among those it needs to prepare for democratic citizenship.

Interns will collect/transcribe interviews with prospective and current college students, and university faculty/administrators working to keep civic education alive in American universities today. These interviews will be conducted remotely via Skype, Zoom, or FaceTime; transcription will be done by students remotely. Interns will also have the option of helping to develop a comprehensive literature review on the state of American liberal arts education today. Students working within this component of the module will read and summarize books as well as academic and journalistic articles on three topics: (a) the history and philosophic underpinnings of the liberal arts education, (b) the current state of affairs in American higher education (including its demographic shift to include more students of color as well as students from disadvantaged backgrounds), and (c) strategies employed by stakeholders to keep liberal education alive. The group leader will assign readings, curate a Google Doc which will serve as an annotated bibliography of the group’s progress, and lead discussions on Zoom about our findings. Time permitting, students will learn how to conduct data analysis on original data collected which measures the impact of civic education classes on various indices of civic engagement among students at UCI. Meeting times to be announced.

### **MODULE 3**

**Monica DeRoche, Graduate student, Department of Political Science**

**Title: Sexual violence, women’s liberation and the importance of leadership in giving license to prejudice, hate and violence against “the other.”**

**Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-12 p.m.**

On October 15, 2017, actress Alyssa Milano posted a tweet: “*If all the women who have been sexually harassed or assaulted wrote ‘Me too.’ as a status, we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem.*” Within days, millions of such posts, from women all over the world, publicly proclaimed they too had been sexually harassed or assaulted in their lifetime. This provided a match to the kindling #MeToo movement, and within the following year, over a dozen high profile Hollywood producers, actors, and other industry personnel who were accused of sexual misconduct were fired, publicly ostracized and/or faced legal ramifications. The resultant increased public profile for sexual misconduct was deemed empowering for women the world over, and even more women were expected to report sexual abuses as a result of what many perceived would be an inevitable change to the predominant cultural narrative about appropriate and allowable treatment for women.

According to annual statistics compiled by the Department of Justice, the percentage of rapes or sexual assaults reported to police *did* in fact rise from 23% in 2016 (the year that Trump was elected President) to 40% in 2017 during the height of the #MeToo movement (Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) 2017). However, the same cannot be said for reporting between 2017 and 2018. Not only did the percentage of reported sexual assaults decrease from 40% (2017) to 25% (2018) but the rate of actual rape or sexual assaults *more than doubled* from 2016 to 2018 (BJS, 2018).

What should we make of the reversal of reported sexual assaults from 2017 to 2018 (with 75% of women not reporting their assaults to the police) and the large increase in assaults experienced by women in the #MeToo era? Were women not empowered, as predicted, to report their assaults to the police? Were men not *disempowered* from assaulting women as a result of the perceived increase in accountability and public shaming exhibited by the #MeToo movement? And what is the role of political leadership in harnessing and legitimizing sexual violence, in this case toward women but toward those deemed different in general? (Immigrants, the elderly, those with darker skins or different ethnic and religious practices?)

During this Summer Internship, we will look at the discrepancies between expected and exhibited outcomes through the lens of how the tweets from President Trump, in his role as the highest authority in the land, may have counteracted the effects of the #MeToo movement in sending contradictory messages to both women and men about appropriate and allowable conduct, in both speech and action. Students will work both independently and in conjunction with their mentor on two projects, including how to do a literature review. (1) We will examine an exhaustive list of data from President Trump's social media accounts, such as Twitter. Students will be taught how to analyze – code and evaluate -- these texts using textual and content analysis. Students will be taught these statistical skills and how to analyze quantitative data. (2) Students will do a similar analysis based on a snowball survey sent to female academics and students via the national Women's Caucus for Political Science. (3) Finally, students will get practice conducting a literature review to compare our findings with what we expect the long-term implications to be from what we know in the literature about how normative behavior is socially constructed and reinforced.

#### MODULE 4

**Kristen Renwick Monroe, Chancellor's Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Director, UCI Interdisciplinary Center for the Scientific Study of Ethics and Morality**

**Title: When Conscience Calls: Moral courage in times of confusion and despair.**

**Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1-3 p.m.**

What is moral courage? Why is it important? Why do we care about it? How can we best examine it and distinguish it from other types of courage? Students will be given a book manuscript to read as background. They then will read the findings of moral courage among those whose values most of us share. (Groups 1-3 below). But what about people whose moral values we may but may not share? Can't moral courage exist among people whose moral values we reject? After reading the analysis of interview and textual data from people who demonstrated moral courage we probably share (Week 1), we analyze documents from Groups 4-7, including whistleblowers (often charged with disloyalty), politicians who break with their political party (again, often viewed as traitors to party), those from moral systems we reject or find morally repugnant. The two loosely-differentiated major groups include:

#### ***Moral courage reflecting the humanistic values of liberal democracy***

1. Individual protests against wrong-doings (e.g., Steve Zimmer, former head of the LA Schools who protected undocumented students; Heather Booth, social activist in the abortion movement, the civil rights summer of 1964 and the Affordable Care Act).
2. Moral courage in the family (a schoolteacher who gave up 13 years caring for her mother; a Chinese woman, sold into slavery as a child, who refused to sell any of her own children later)
3. Consummate professionals, whose commitment to ethical standards of their profession drives their moral courage (e.g., Loretta Lynch, who as Chair of the California Public Utilities Commission withstood tremendous pressure not to have public hearings after the Enron scandal; an Indian civil servant who sued the government over caste violations)

***Moral courage reflecting a wider range of moral values.*** Most analyses of moral courage analyze people whose acts the analysts find morally admirable. What about people whose values you find unacceptable yet who nonetheless act bravely out of *their* moral values?

4. ***Whistle blowers***, e.g., Richard Ceballos (who sued the LA DA's office over corruption), Edgar Snowden (who leaked documents on human rights violations), and Rick Bright (doctor who is suing the Trump administration after he was demoted because of challenging Trump over the response to the COVID pandemic). This group is interesting to examine since whistleblowers are often charged with disloyalty.
5. ***Principle above party***, e.g., Senators Romney and Flake (who spoke out publicly against their party's president) and prominent Republicans and Democrats who broke ranks to criticize their president, e.g., Senator Gene McCarthy (Democrat who challenged President Johnson) and Bill Kristol, George Conway III and Sarah Longwell (who are challenging President Trump via the Republicans for the Rule of Law and Republican voters against Trump)
6. ***Moral values of distant times, when authoritarianism, the divine rights of kings, dominance of one religion, and slavery and the subjugation of women was allowed.*** We will examine texts, legal archives, archival sources, etc. to analyze people like Martin Luther (an anti-Semitic bigot but whose courage in seeking reform within the Roman Catholic Church led to the Reformation); Sir Thomas Moore, (respected Renaissance

humanist and Catholic saint who burned many heretics at the stake but whose principles led to his death for failing to sign the Oath of Supremacy, making Henry VIII head of the Church and allowing Henry to marry Anne Boleyn).

7. **Moral courage in morally repugnant regimes.** Nazis Albert Speer and Wilhelm Stuckart both claimed they worked within the system to delay, mitigate or prevent worse abuses yet Speer's efficiency is estimated to have prolonged WWII by six months and Stuckart was a key player in writing the Nuremberg Laws. Does their moral courage correspond to the same moral courage of other groups? Is what drove it different? This should lend insight into moral relativism, an important topic in ethics.

**Tasks.** Students will analyze moral courage among people in Groups 4 through 7 (Whistleblowers through the Nazis.) Some of these people will hold moral values you admire and others will not. Is moral courage the same for each group? Students will (a) search for texts, legal testimony, archival letters or journals, and even social media texts, (b) find additional exemplars and (c) be taught how to analyze texts using narrative interpretive analysis and computerized textual analysis programs such as THEME or Latent Semantic Analysis. This module in moral psychology instructs students on how the way we think about moral issues influences and determines our treatment of others. We will meet on zoom for 2 hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1 pm, as one group. Smaller groups will elect leaders and meet individually at their convenience.

**Pre-internship readings:** Students are encouraged to read parts of a book manuscript explaining the research project in more detail. This will be emailed to members of Module 4 one week before the internship begins. It is not required reading but will definitely explain the project in advance.

## MODULE 5

Prince Heto, Graduate student, International Relations

Title: Negotiations, Regional Integration and Domestic Politics in International Relations.

Meetings Tuesdays and Fridays, 1-4 p.m.

In what ways do current approaches to International negotiation enable or hinder the ability of states to effectively implement international commitments? Like humans, countries work together on different projects. They negotiate and sign agreements that impose certain obligations on them. We will investigate whether the way international agreements are negotiated affects governments' ability to follow through on them. At the end of our time together, we will each come up with different testable hypotheses on the relationship between regional legislative process and treaty implementation. That is okay. The goal is not to find "the" answer. Instead, our objective is to learn how to generate research puzzles, examine what others have written about a problem, and develop an informed position on the issue.

**Topics:** Interns will learn about regional integration, international negotiations, regional organizations, and domestic politics.

**Learning objectives:** At the end of the project, students will be able to analyze scholarly articles, identify ethical issues in social science research, and write a well-argued literature review that can be published as a blog post.

**Tasks:** Interns will design a project, collect relevant secondary materials and synthesize them, and write a blog post or research paper based on their findings.

**Meetings:** We will use Zoom for our project meetings. During our meetings, we will learn through games, group discussions, individual presentations, and short videos. Some of the games will use kahoot!

## MODULE 6

**Andrada Costoiu, Tobis Fellow, Center of Ethics and Morality.**

**Title: American Equality: Fact or Fiction?**

**Meetings: To be announced.**

“All men are created equal,” the U.S. Declaration of Independence boldly asserts. Penned in 1776 by Thomas Jefferson, modified by John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, the Declaration of Independence enshrined the belief in American exceptionalism based on equality for all; that belief is honored as one of the sacred cornerstones of the American republic. Of course, equality would be ideal. But in reality some people are more equal than others. Back then, *all men* meant white men with property. Despite Abigail Adams’ plea to “remember the ladies,” the founding fathers omitted all women, who lacked even the right to vote until August 1920. The founding fathers also excluded native Americans, poor people, and enslaved African-Americans. Even after achieving legal equality, most of these groups continued to be treated as second-class citizens. Further, as new groups came to the land of the free, many hyphenated-Americans have also been subjugated to the sting of prejudice, discrimination and inequality, with signs like “No dogs, no Irish” or “Whites only” on drinking fountains. Why?

Public policy is the instrument that creates social categories and attaches them to rights and benefits or burdens and obligations. In this module you will learn about how what social scientists call social categories – black Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans, and so on – are created and used to excuse discrimination against our fellow American citizens. How does public policy treat social categories and what makes some categories more deserving than others? Do these categories change, and if so, how?

**Pre-internship viewings:** Before the course, students are encouraged to view two of the following four movies about discrimination: *To Kill a Mockingbird* (on prejudice against blacks), *South Pacific* (against Asians), *Gentleman’s Agreement* (anti-Semitism), and *Crash* (on how we all have some prejudice, and some good as well as some bad). We will discuss those the first meeting of the course.

**Week 1** we will focus on the scholarly literature on social categories to discuss the concept and ask how it relates to everyday prejudice.

**Week 2** we will begin empirical examination of one of the most important discriminated group, especially in this geographic area: Mexican immigrants and the way they were treated in the USA immigration policy since 1920. Students will be divided into two -four teams, depending on the number of students in this module. One team will examine how Mexican immigrants were portrayed in the early years when they emerged as temporary laborers in the United States (1920-1950). A second team will consider Mexican immigrants in the context of immigration policy under Obama and Trump. Each team will write a literature review on their time frame (a simple summary of the sources and a synthesis of their main findings) and then we will compare the results.

**Week 3** we will collect data using the Library of the Congress and look at the way political elites (both Democrats and Republicans) talk about Mexican immigrants in Congressional Debates. Our goal will be to understand patterns that emerge and differences between the political parties on this particular immigrant category.

**Week 4** we will conclude by students bringing comparisons between the Mexican immigrant groups and other important hyphenated-American groups, such as African-Americans, Asian-Americans, etc.

Meetings will begin the week of June 29<sup>th</sup>. Hours to be determined, via Zoom meetings and Google Drive to keep track of our research. These meetings will be for 2-3 hours two days a week.

## MODULE 7

**Kristen Monroe, Chancellor’s Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Director, UCI Interdisciplinary Center for the Scientific Study of Ethics and Morality and Samuel Shih, Sorbonne.**

**Title: Civility and protest in the fact of morally repugnant politics**

**Meetings: To be announced.**

How do decent human beings respond with integrity, grace and dignity when confronted with the polarization, confusion and anger that surrounds inhumane, morally repugnant political policies? Current political events, as unprincipled, ruthless politicians here and in Europe threaten independent courts, an impartial media, and fair electoral systems – all critical democratic political institutions– make this an especially relevant question. We address it via an extended analysis of political opposition during the Nazi period and its aftermath, drawing on extensive interviews with Konstanza, Princess of Loewenstein, whose parents were among the earliest opponents to Hitler and who was raised in the remnants of the German Resistance movement. Konstanza's parents, Prince Hubertus zu Loewenstein-Wertheim-Freudenberg and his wife Helga, were forced to leave Germany shortly after Hitler took power. In that brief time period, however, Konstanza's parents had already been "questioned" by the Gestapo. Indeed, Konstanza's mother lost a baby as a result of this "interrogation," surviving only because of the Nazis' initial reluctance to torture royalty. But Konstanza's father had co-founded the first anti-fascist party and was a key opponent of the Nazis. The local policeman warned him that when the Gestapo arrested the party's non-royal co-founder, the man was blinded, castrated and beaten to death. Now, the policeman said, they are coming back for you. Thankful for the policeman's warning, the family fled in April 1933. Hubertus and his wife eventually landed in the USA where they formed the German American cultural organization with Thomas Mann and Sigmund Freud, arguing that the Nazis were not only killing Jews and would trigger a world war but also were threatening to destroy the German culture so loved by Konstanza's parents. Raised among survivors of the German resistance, Konstanza relates family experiences spanning the decades from her parents' emigration to the US to her current efforts to dislodge her niece from the contemporary neo-Nazi movement in Germany. Her family's story illustrates how one combats morally repugnant politics without losing one's own decency, dignity or integrity.

**Pre-internship films.** Students are encouraged to watch these movies before the class begins. *Gentleman's Agreement*, a 1948 Academy Award winning film about Anti-Semitism and how it – and other forms of prejudice – endure because good people are too polite to say anything. *Crash* another Academy Award winning film of contemporary Los Angeles that shows we all have both good and bad in us and challenges us to ask what draws forth the different parts of our personalities. Note the cop, so angry and racist and yet so tender as he cares for his father and brave as he risks his life to save the black woman he earlier mistreated. Also recommended, although not so on topic, are *Antwone Fisher* (portrays the transformation of an angry young man into someone ready to extend a newfound love and sensitivity to those around him), *As Good As It Gets* (a reminder never to write anyone off, because even the weirdest and most irritating people are full of surprises), *The Blind Side* (a feel-good fact-based sports story about the gifts of nurturing love that refine character and how those who help end up being the ones helped). All are fun to watch during the COVID quarantine. Module will meet twice a week. Times and days to be determined.

**Week 1.** We discuss the impetus for this project. This project provides new historical information and offers unique insight into a fascinating world of exiled royalty and German Resistance workers; but it also touches on a deeper, eternal question: How does an individual create a personal space of dignity, compassion, and integrity in a world gone slightly mad, as unscrupulous politicians, including authoritarian parties such as the neo-Nazis, threaten critical democratic institutions and give license to intolerance, hate and inhumane and morally repugnant political policies, both in Europe and the United States.

**Week 2** reviews the literature on civility and protest. Students will divide into groups and search literature justifying protest and arguing against it. For example, we will read Martin Luther King Jr's Letter from the Birmingham Jail. Students also will search the field for literature arguing for and against violence in protests, such as the Black Panther's versus King's arguments in the American civil rights context.

**Week 3.** Students will divide into groups and prepare debates, arguing both sides in this argument. Students will use recent instances from a wide variety of examples, from the Nazi movement under Konstanza to the debates of Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation to the recent situation concerning protests over George Alexander's death.

**Week 4.** Students will prepare a summary sheet of arguments for and against civility and peaceful protests. This will be posted online on the Ethics Center website.