

Personality Psychology 501

Course Overview: “She’s got a great personality”, “He’s got no personality”, “Our personalities didn’t match”... What do these statements mean? This course is designed to introduce students to what psychologists mean when they use the term personality – how they define personality, what they think it consists of, what the most important forces that shape it are, etc. You will learn that there are a number of very different ideas about what personality consists of and what the best approaches to understanding it are. In this course we will explore the most significant personality theories of the 20th century. Most of the theorists we will discuss attempt to answer the age-old question of “why are people the way that they are?” In examining the theories we will be looking at the theorists themselves and the socio-historic context in which they worked; how and if the theoretical constructs might be meaningfully applied today; and implicit and explicit points of agreement/disagreement amongst the theories. In looking at the various theories, we will also focus on to what extent they pass muster as *scientific* theories and what evidence exists to support or refute the theory.. The theories discussed will differ along a number of fundamental dimensions, such as:

- To what extent are our actions determined by free will versus forces outside of ourselves?
- How much of our behavior is determined by our biological/genetic make-up as opposed to our environment?
- How much of our personalities are unique as opposed to being comprised of universal characteristics?
- To what extent is our personality changeable versus relatively stable or set at an early age?
- Do we have reliable sets of personality traits, and if so, what are they?
- To what extent are we controlled by conscious or rational forces as opposed to unconscious or animalistic forces?
- What motivates us to do what we do?

Prerequisites: Psyc 101

Goals: By the end of this course each student should be able to display an in-depth knowledge of the major personality theories, be able to discuss, in-depth, the relative strengths and weaknesses of each theory, and be able to apply this knowledge to case examples. This knowledge will be evaluated in 3 ways: multiple –choice exams focusing on mastery of basic facts, terminology and constructs; papers requiring you to apply the constructs to understanding your own personality development; and group projects asking you to compare, contrast and integrate the various theories we cover.

General Expectations: While we will be using a textbook as our primary reference source, I will not be following the same organizational format as the text, and I will present material in class that is not covered at all in the text. Coming to class all the time and taking good notes will be important if you want to get a good grade in this course. I will use PowerPoint slides as an adjunct to lectures and discussions, but not everything you need to know will be put on slides or posted on Sakai. I will not attempt to cover everything I want you to know in class. There will be assigned readings on topics we won’t discuss in class. If you want to get a good grade in the course, you will also have to do all the assigned reading.

I like to teach my students things that they actually want to know about, so I will always welcome questions, comments, and observations from students and will generally go out of my way to make sure I answer any questions you might have. Some students really like hearing about things outside of what’s in the text and on the syllabus, other students feel it is a waste of time. My personal belief is that class is more interesting and

enjoyable when the time is not solely devoted to teaching the material that is going to be on the exams. I have confidence that all Carolina students are capable of reading and understanding the text and my expectation is that you WILL read the assigned material and ask me any questions you have and ask for clarification and elaboration as needed.

Be polite. This means things like making every effort to arrive in class on time almost all the time, and staying until the lecture is over. (I know I'm going to).

TURN OFF CELL PHONES BEFORE ENTERING CLASS. Please don't read the paper, text your friends, check e-mail, use your laptop to read about last night's game, cruise Facebook, Twit, Tweet, Twang, or do other things that may be a distraction to those around you. Also, please try and word any comments you wish to share in a way that is respectful to all.

Important Note: The schedule listed below is my best approximation of how the semester will unfold. There is a good chance that I will need to alter the schedule. Any such changes will be announced in class—**it is your responsibility to be aware of these announcements.**

Required Text: Personality Theories, Barbara Engler, 9th edition, 2014, Wadsworth Cengage

All course documents will be posted on Sakai.

Schedule:

Dates	Topics	Readings
August 19-26	Section I – Introduction, Overview, Evaluation, Assessment and Measurement	Chapter 1
August 28-Sept 4	Section II – Trait Theories/ Self Allport, Murray, Cattell, Big 5, Eysenck, et.al.	Chapters 10,11,12; Reading posted on Sakai
September 9-18	Section IIIa – Psychodynamic Theories Freud	Chapter 2, Readings posted on Sakai
September 21	Exam 1	
September 23	Group 1 Jung	
September 25-30	Jung, Adler	Chapter 3, Chapter 4 pgs 84-97
October 2	Integration Groups	
October 5	Group 2 Attachment Theory	
October 5	Paper 1 due	
October 7-14	Section IV- Interpersonal Theories Attachment Theories, Object-Relations Theories, Stone Center Group	Chapter 7
October 12	No Class University Day	
October 16	No Class Fall Break	

October 19	Group 3 Erikson	
October 21-23	Section V – Psychosocial Theories Erikson, Horney	Chapter 6 pgs 138-150 Chapter 5 pgs 110-121
October 26	Exam 2	
October 28	Group 4 Existentialism	
October 30-November 2	Section VI – Existential/Phenomenological/Humanistic Theories Maslow, Rogers, May, Fromm	Chapter 5 pgs 122-132 Chapters 13 and 14
November 4	Integration Groups	
November 6	Group 5 Learning Theories	
November 9-11	Section VII – Learning and Cognitive Theories- Skinner, Bandura, Ellis, et. al.	Chapter 8 Chapter 9 pgs 210-225 Chapter 16 Chapter 15
November 13	Group 6 Evolutionary Theories	
November 16-18	Section VIII – Evolutionary Theories.	Chapter 11 pgs 271-285 Readings posted on Sakai
November 20	Paper 2 due	
November 20	Integration groups	
November 23-Dec 2	Section IX- Non Western Theories	Chapter 17
Friday December 4 12 pm	Final Exam	

Grading

Exams 1 and 2	100 points each
Final Exam	200 points
Papers	150 points each
Group Presentation	150 points
Attendance/Participation/Integrations	150 points

Group Presentation (150 points)

The class will be divided into 6 groups of students. Each group will give an in-class presentation of their assigned topic. The presentation should **go well beyond presenting material in your textbook and include references to outside source materials.** The presentation should be 50 minutes long. Each presentation should include references to some research that either supports or discredits the theory. It is often helpful to include an experiential component in your presentation and to discuss how aspect of the theory might be applicable to current students' lives. Most groups use PowerPoint to guide their presentation—please email me your slides prior to the beginning of class, so that they may be posted on Sakai. The materials from the group presentations will be considered part of the class and you may be tested on them.

The entire class will grade the group presentations. Each class member will assign the group a grade and include a very brief explanation of their grade. The grade for each member of the presenting group will be the average of all grades that were given. The professor (me) reserves the right to revise upwards any grade given by the class that he feels was too low (with the permission of the group). He will never lower a grade given by the class.

Attendance/participation/group integrations (150 points total)

The attendance part should be fairly self-explanatory. Missing more than 2 classes without presenting a **documented** medical or university-sanctioned excuse will lower your grade. Show up and stay awake for full credit here.

For the participation portion of your grade, speaking regularly is the key. This is an upper-level course and I expect you to actively engage with the material. Having done the readings before class and coming in with thoughts, questions, comments will be very helpful in this regard. My hope is that you will interact with your classmates and me on a regular basis. Please note that paying attention, actively listening, and taking good notes are all desirable qualities, but do **not count** as participating. For those of you who have great difficulty speaking in class, there will be a discussion forum open on Sakai that will allow you to post questions and comments about the material in a potentially less threatening medium. Forum posts will be counted as class participation.

Integration groups: The class will be divided into 6 groups (these groups will be different than your group presentation groups) that will collaborate 3 times over the course of the semester, discussing how the theories covered are compatible and/or incompatible, as well as how they might be fruitfully integrated. Each group will briefly present their ideas to the rest of the class. The thoughtfulness, thoroughness, and clarity of presentation will count toward this portion of your grade.

Papers (150 points each-300 points total)

Twice during the semester you will be asked to write a paper in response to a prompt that will ask you to apply the concepts that we have been covering in class to yourself (it's possible to choose to write about someone you know well other than yourself, although this generally poses additional challenges). These papers are intended to allow you to demonstrate your knowledge of the concepts being covered in class, and to push you toward applying those concepts to current real-life situations.

The papers will be graded using the following scale and criteria:

145-150 points	Outstanding	Very thorough, accurate, insightful, creative, and clearly expressed
135-142 point	Very Good	Thorough, accurate, clearly expressed
120-134 points	Good	Some minor omissions or inaccuracies, or lack of clarity in expression
97-119 points	Poor	Many omissions and or inaccuracies
0 points		no paper submitted

Late papers will be accepted with a deduction of 10 points per day (Saturday and Sunday will count as a single day)

Exams (100,100,200points)

There will be 2 exams during the semester, each worth 100 points. They will be all multiple-choice and possibly some short answer/essay questions. They will require a scantron. Each exam will cover the material since the previous exam. The exams will emphasize material (concepts and terminology) covered in the textbook as well as material covered in class.

The final exam will be worth 200 points. Its format may include both multiple choice and essay questions. It will focus on material covered since exam 2, but will also include some cumulative questions. **No make-up exams will be given without proper written documentation of a University approved reason for absence.**