

Personality
Psychology 501 001 Fall 18
M W F 12:20-1:10
301 Davie Hall

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Office Hours 251 Davie Hall: Wednesday 9-10; and by appointment

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 some of 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 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 do conscious or rational forces as opposed to unconscious or “instinctual” forces control us?
- 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.

General Expectations: 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 sometimes 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 readings 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.

Be polite. This means things like making every effort to arrive in class on time almost all the time, and staying awake until the lecture is over (I know I’m going to);and most importantly, respecting the diversity of opinions, beliefs, backgrounds, and choices found here at Carolina and around the globe.

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 nights’ game, cruise Facebook, Twitter, Tinder, 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.**

Not all assignments appear on the syllabus. There will be assignments announced in class, knowing the content and due dates is your responsibility.

All required readings and course materials will be posted on Sakai. (There is no required textbook)

Schedule

Dates	Topics
August 22-31	Section I – Introduction, Overview, Evaluation, Assessment and Measurement
September 5-14	Section II – Trait Theories/ Self Allport, Murray, Cattell, Big 5, Eysenck, et.al.
September 10	Reading Group 1
September 17- October 3	Section IIIa – Psychodynamic Theories Freud
September 21	Reading Group 2
October 5-12	Section IIIb Jung, Adler
October 8	Reading Group 3
October 12	University Day Debate prep and exam questions
October 15	Debate 1
October 17	MIDTERM EXAM
October 22-31	Section IV- Interpersonal/Psychosocial Theories Attachment Theories, Object-Relations Theories, Erikson, Horney, Stone Center Group
October 29	Reading Group 4
November 2	Debate 2
November 5- 12	Section V – Existential/Phenomenological/Humanistic Theories

	Maslow, Rogers, May, Fromm
November 9	Reading Group 5
November 14-19	Section VI – Learning and Cognitive Theories- Skinner, Bandura, Ellis, et. al. ; Zen
November 26	Debate 3
November 28-December 5	Section VII – Evolutionary and Biological Theories, Wrap-up
November 30	Reading Group 6
Friday December 14 12 pm	Final Exam

Grading

Midterm Exam	160 points
Final Exam	200 points
Short Papers (3)	60 points
Long Paper	200 points
Assessment Exercise	80 points
Debates	100 points
Attendance/Participation	100 points
Online assignments (Reading groups, application assignments)	100 points

Attendance/participation (100 points total)

The attendance part should be fairly self-explanatory. Missing 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.

Papers (60 +200 points)

You will be asked to write 3 short (1.5-2.5 pgs.) papers over the course of the semester. The first paper should address the questions “What are the most important features of personality?” and “What factors are most influential in their development?” This paper will be due on September 5th. The prompts and due dates for the other 2 short papers will be announced in class. The longer paper (5-7 pgs. double-spaced) will be due on November 30th and reflect an integration of the 3 shorter papers and a reflection of a revised theory of personality based on what you’ve learned in the course.

Exams (160,200 points)

There will be 2 exams during the semester, a Midterm and a Final. They will be multiple-choice and include a mix of student-generated and professor-generated questions. They will require a scantron. The exams will emphasize material (concepts and terminology) covered in the readings, group presentations, as well as material covered in class.

Assessment Exercise (80 points)

Early in the semester, the class will be divided into 6 groups, with each group designing and carrying out a measure (assessment) of a personality variable(s) of their choosing. Each group will then report back to the class as a whole, describing what measure they came up with and what they found when they administered it.

Debates (100 points)

Three times during the semester 2 teams will debate an assigned issue, in class (each student will participate in one debate). Your grade here will be a combination of professor and peer evaluation. Your team and topic will be assigned in class.

Online Assignments (100 points)

This portion of your grade will be based upon your submission of reading role assignments (see below) as well as other brief online assignments given in class (for example, you will be periodically asked to observe examples of the constructs discussed in class, either in real life or tv/movie character, and post what you noticed).

Reading groups

The class will be divided into 6 groups (these groups will be different than your debate groups, and will be assigned based on alphabetical order of last names). Six times during the semester the class will work together discussing specific articles picked out by their peers. Once during the semester, each group will be responsible for picking an article for the entire class to read and discuss. Within each group there will specific roles and assignments for each group member related to each article selected (see below). Each student should do each role at least once during the semester. This assignment will be discussed in greater detail in class. The grade for this portion of the class will be based upon the students' level of participation in their group and the quality of the written assignments submitted.

Reading Roles

Discussion Leader. Develop at least **four possible discussion questions** that can help everyone understand the main points of the assigned reading. Don't worry about the small details. Your task is to help people talk over the big ideas in the reading and to share reactions to the text. Be prepared with your own brief answers to your questions. You will also be responsible for facilitating the group discussion. You will need to turn in at least three discussion questions with your own brief answers. If there is more than one reading, you will need to include at least two discussion questions per reading.

Passage Master. Locate a **few special passages that are important** in the reading assignment. These may give key information, back up the information given, or summarize the author's key points. They might also be passages that strike your fancy for some reason, are particularly well written, or might be controversial or contradictory with other passages or other information learned in class. You will need to turn in at least two important passages per reading, including a summary of the passage in everyday terminology (in other words, how you would explain the passage to your roommate), and an explanation of why you think the passage is important.

Creative Connector. Help everyone **make connections to other important ideas**, both to ideas from this class and also to other cultural, social, political, and economic ideas. You may make connections to other reading assignments, lectures, TV shows, movies, or other experiences. You will need to turn in at least two connections, including a summary of the connections and discussion questions to help others make the connections themselves.

Devil's Advocate. Challenge the ideas in the article by developing a list of critical, **thoughtful questions and arguments that might be raised by critics** of the authors or by those with different points of view. You will need to turn in at least two challenging questions or arguments, including a brief explanation of why you are making this critique. If there is more than one reading, you should have at least one challenging question per reading.

Reporter. The reporter is the only role that will be prepared during and after class. Your job is twofold. First, during the discussion, you will **take notes on the discussion and will summarize its main points**. Be certain to also participate in the discussion! You are not tasked with acting as a scribe who tries to furiously write down what everyone says. Rather, you will act as a meta-discussion observer, looking for any areas of confusion or disagreement, which you can bring up for discussion. Second, after the discussion you will need to write a **brief**

summary of the group discussion. Address such questions as: What did you discuss? What did you agree/disagree on? What readings or ideas did the group find most interesting or controversial? In general, how did the discussion go? Was it beneficial? You will need to turn in your report of the group discussion (described above). This will be due at the following class meeting.

"The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-led honor system for over 100 years. Academic integrity is at the heart of Carolina and we all are responsible for upholding the ideals of honor and integrity. The student-led Honor System is responsible for adjudicating any suspected violations of the Honor Code and all suspected instances of academic dishonesty would be reported to the honor system. Information, including your responsibilities as a student is outlined in the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. Your full participation and observance of the Honor Code is expected."