

Psychology 324: Personality Theory

Fall 2005

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Office Hours	Mondays, 5:00-7:00 p.m., or by appointment
Class Hours	Mondays, 7:20-10:00 p.m.
Room	Krug Hall 5
Text	REQUIRED: Funder, DC. (2004) The Personality Puzzle, 3 rd Ed RECOMMENDED: Funder, DC & Ozer DJ. (2004) Pieces of the Personality Puzzle, 3 rd Ed
Additional Reading	Hofstede G & McCrae RR. (2004). "Personality and Culture Revisited: Linking Traits and Dimensions of Culture." <i>Cross-Cultural Research</i> , 38(1):52-88

Course Description

This course will provide an introduction to and overview of the major theories of personality, including an analysis of their individual strengths and weaknesses as well as their interactions with one another. In addition to examining each theory we will also look at some research and applications stemming from each.

Learning Objectives

1. To become familiar with the major theories of personality and how they interrelate with one another.
2. To evaluate each theory's strengths and weaknesses.
3. To think critically about how different theories of personality apply to "real life" and help to explain human behavior.

Course Format

Given class size, the format of this course is primarily lecture, although classes will also include discussion, in-class exercises, and other materials. Class lectures will review the material in the text, clarify difficult material, answer questions, provoke discussions, and present information not covered in the text that will be on the exams.

Course Requirements

Exams (300 points). There will be four exams in this course. **The lowest exam grade will be dropped, thus a total of 3 exams will count toward your final grade in the course.** Exams will primarily cover material since the previous exam, but may ask you to make comparisons or reflect upon new information as it relates to previous course material. The final exam will be cumulative and include information covered since the beginning of the semester. Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, true-false, and short essay questions. If you are satisfied with your grades from the first three exams you may opt to skip the final.

Paper (100 points). Personality Assessment. For this paper you will conduct a personality assessment using two of the perspectives covered in class. The individual you select may be a well-known person, someone you know, or yourself. How does the person think? Feel? Act? Give specific examples. Write the paper as if the person you are talking to (i.e., me) has no knowledge of this person. Making reference to the person's attributes, development and current behavior, use your chosen theories to explain the person's personality. In addition, following the discussion of the individual from these two perspectives, compare the results of these analyses. Do they come to the same conclusion? Which theory seems more useful? Which analysis seems more plausible? Why? Be sure to reference and summarize primary source articles for the theories you choose to utilize for this assignment. The paper should be written in APA style and should be 5 – 7 pages in length (double-spaced, Times New Roman 12pt. font). (See <http://www.gmu.edu/departments/psychology/writing/advice.htm#apa> for guidance on using APA format). Your paper will be graded on the quality of your assessment, your understanding of the perspectives you have chosen, and your ability to support your arguments. Basic writing skills will also be

taken into account. Papers are due by the end of class on November 14. For each day the paper is late, 10 points will be taken off the final paper grade (including weekends). Papers more than 4 days late will not be accepted.

In-Class Assignments (50 points). There will be five (5) graded in-class assignments that will help you to think about the material in a way that will help you prepare for the exams. These in-class assignments will be conducted on a random basis. Thus, if you miss an in-class assignment, you will not be able to make it up unless you have documentation of hospitalization, jury duty, death, disability, or a car accident. There may be times when other, less severe circumstances cause you to miss or be late to class (severe traffic, cold/flu, work commitments). In these cases please use the extra credit provision to make-up the assignment.

Missed Classes and Exams

There is no requirement that you attend class. However, it is not my intention to use the class time to repeat what is in the book. Instead, I will cover themes that the book covers, but hopefully from a somewhat different perspective, and this material will be on the exams. In the unfortunate event that you should miss a class, you will have to borrow notes from another classmate. You will also be held responsible for any changes or additions to the syllabus announced in class. Please be respectful of other students when you come to class and do not engage in distracting behavior like chatting, nail clipping, or allowing a pager or cell phone to go off.

There will be no make-up exams offered in this course. Instead, you will be permitted to drop your lowest exam grade of the four exams. Therefore, if you miss an exam for any reason, or perform poorly on an exam, you may simply drop that exam in lieu of completing a make-up exam.

Extra Credit

You will have an opportunity to earn extra credit points for participating in a psychology or related discipline research project if you are willing to provide me with a write-up regarding your participation. The write-up should be 2-3 paragraphs in length and should include the hypothesis of the research project and a brief statement of what your participation entailed. You can locate studies through the Experimentrix web page on the GMU website (www.experimentrix.com/gmu). Additionally, you may earn extra credit points for attending relevant psychology-related seminars or lectures if you provide me with a short (2-3 paragraphs) write-up summarizing the lecture and your providing your own personal insight into the information provided. Up to a maximum of 10 points—2 for each hour of research participation or for each seminar attended—can be earned.

Grading

Total Points. (**REMEMBER-there is a 4th exam that will be DROPPED)

Exam 1	100 points
Exam 2	100 points
Exam 3	100 points
Paper	100 points
<u>In-class Assignments</u>	<u>50 points</u>
	450 points (+ Extra Credit)

Grading Scale

A+ = 97% or more	B+ = 87 - 89%	C+ = 77 - 79%	D = 60 - 69%
A = 93 - 96%	B = 83 - 86%	C = 73 - 76%	F = below 60%
A- = 90 - 92%	B- = 80 - 82%	C- = 70 - 72%	

One additional note regarding grading: Please do not request that I modify your grades. As noted above, student evaluations are based OBJECTIVELY on a variety of measures and you will have ample opportunities throughout the semester to take measures to improve unsatisfactory grades. SUBJECTIVE pleas to alter that evaluation will not be granted.

Honor Code

All students must follow the guidelines of the GMU Honor Code as described by the GMU catalog (<http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/index.html#Anchor13>). Exam performances and all assignments must be each student's own work, but students may use any means they prefer when learning the material. Studying in

groups is encouraged. No written material may be used during exams. If you have any questions about the honor code or permissible use of materials or collaboration, please see me.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

It is the policy of the University to make reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Such requests will be accommodated within the reasonable constraints of fairness and timeliness with regard to the instructor and the other students enrolled in the course.

Policies, Requests and Friendly Suggestions

I want this class to be a productive and enjoyable experience for all of us. Here are some important things to keep in mind:

- If you want to avoid stress and do well, don't miss class. Read before coming to class and make sure to ask clarifying questions if there is something you don't understand.
- My office hours are for you, so stop by! Or e-mail me any questions, concerns or comments that you may have.
- I won't reply to e-mails with exam-related questions received after 5:00 p.m. the night before exams, so be sure to ask early.
- We'll be discussing a wide range of topics and some may be controversial. Let's maintain a friendly and respectful environment where we all feel comfortable sharing our ideas and opinions. If there are topics with which you are particularly concerned, please come see me.

Reading Assignments

Note that what follows is a *tentative* schedule of the semester's topics. A specific week's or day's topic may change, and it is the student's responsibility to become informed of any changes, as well as any other announcements or information disseminated in class. Unless otherwise specified, reading assigned for a given week should be completed prior to that week's class.

Class Dates	Lecture Topics	Reading Due
Aug. 29	Introduction and Syllabus Overview Introduction to Personality	Chapter 1
Sept. 5	LABOR DAY- NO CLASS	
Sept. 12	Research Methods Personality Assessment	Chapters 2-3 Chapters 5-6
LAST DAY TO ADD CLASSES- SEPT 13		
Sept. 19	Psychoanalytic Approach: Freudian Theory	Chapters 10 & 11
Sept. 26	Psychoanalytic Approach: Neo-Freudian Theory	Chapter 12
LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES- SEPT 30		
Oct. 3	Trait Theory	Chapters 4 & 7
Oct. 10 (Columbus Day Holiday- CLASS WILL MEET ON TUESDAY, OCT 11)	EXAM #1 Biological Approaches	Chapter 8
Oct. 17	Biological Approaches (cont'd)	Chapter 9
Oct. 24	Humanistic Psychology	Chapter 13
Oct. 31	Cultural Influences on Personality	Hofstede G & McCrae RR. (2004). "Personality and Culture Revisited: Linking Traits and

		Dimensions of Culture." Cross-Cultural Research, 38(1):52-88
Nov. 7	EXAM #2	
	Behavioral/Social Learning Perspective	Chapter 15
Nov. 14	Behavioral/Social Learning Perspective	Chapter 16
	PAPER DUE	
Nov. 21	Cognitive Approach	Chapter 17
Nov. 28	EXAM #3	
	Personality Disorders	TBA
Dec. 5	Current Topics in Personality Psychology	TBA
Dec. 12	** FINAL EXAM ** At our regular time in our regular classroom (7:20-10pm in Krug Hall 5)	