

*University of Oregon, Fall 2004*

**Psychology 471: PERSONALITY**

10:00 - 11:20 am, Mondays and Wednesdays

Class meets in 128 Chiles Hall (not what the UO class schedule booklet says)

**Professor:** Gerard Saucier, Ph.D.

**Office:** 312 Straub

**E-mail:** [gsaucier@darkwing.uoregon.edu](mailto:gsaucier@darkwing.uoregon.edu) Phone: 346-4927 with voice mail

**Web page:** [http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~gsaucier/psy471\\_2004.htm](http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~gsaucier/psy471_2004.htm)

**Office Hours:** Mondays 1-2:30 pm, Wednesdays 11:30 am - noon, or flexibly by appointment

**Teaching Assistant:** Tarik Bel-Bahar, office 388 Straub, 346-4075, office hours Tues. and

Thurs. 10-11 am

**Text:** Funder, D. C. (2004). The personality puzzle (3rd ed.). New York: Norton plus some materials placed on reserve via Knight Library (listed on class schedule, end of syllabus)

**Course Objectives: What's the Purpose of This Course?**

Welcome to Psychology 471: Personality. The study of personality concerns individuality in human behavior patterns, with behavior defined broadly to include thoughts, feelings, desires, intentions, and action tendencies. Personality concerns human behavioral tendencies at a rather broad level, and the purpose of this course is to help you learn ways of thinking usefully and critically (i.e., carefully) about human behavior, through the most important concepts and findings of personality psychology. The course has two interlinked goals: promoting knowledge of personality and sharpening thinking skills. Knowledge of personality psychology can aid one in thinking usefully and critically about human behavior patterns, which is useful not only in psychology and human services professions, but in many areas of human life.

Personality psychology is a "crossroads" field with links to many other disciplines. It includes both the study of individual differences and the study of the processes within a person that lead to stable behavioral patterns. This course covers both, but with more emphasis on individual differences. Biological and social antecedents of personality are emphasized about equally in this course. The course format is primarily a series of talks (i.e., lecture), with some discussion, in-class exercises, and some student presentations. This course has extensive readings, and students are expected to read everything that is assigned.

### **Assignments and Grading**

Your final course grade is based on the following (most printed on next page):

- 10% ...for an exploratory paper
- 10% ...grade on outline of your research paper
- 20% ...grade on final version of research paper
- 5% ...credit for sufficient participation in class
- 40% ...score on the two midterm exams (20% each)
- 15% ...score on cumulative (final) exam

What follows in this section is more detail on each of these components.

The two midterm exams are similar in format, primarily based on the "big questions" with which this course is concerned (see end of syllabus). Each midterm exam consists of a short multiple choice section (10-15% of the point total for the exam) concentrating on key concepts (definitions and examples of them), followed by a set of essay questions (85-90% of the point total for the exam). The essay questions are drawn from among the eight "big questions." In fact, they are the exact questions, except that each question is framed so as to encourage concise, to-the-point answers.

For the first midterm, the essay questions will be two of the first four "big questions" listed at the end of this syllabus; the short multiple-choice section will be based on readings up to the first midterm exam. For the second midterm, the essay questions will be two of the last four questions (i.e., not included on the first midterm); the short multiple-choice section will be based primarily on readings after the first midterm exam. The cumulative (final) exam will be entirely multiple-choice, with some emphasis on the big questions that were not covered on the two midterms. No dictionaries, thesauruses, calculators, or electronic devices can be used during the exams, except that translating dictionaries can be allowed for those with English fluency issues, conditional on instructor permission. What's covered in multiple-choice items? These especially emphasize material covered both in the assigned readings and in class.

The exploratory paper is intended to help you develop a more personal connection to the subject matter, by applying concepts learned in the course to your personal experience of other people. There are five choices for how to focus this paper (see end of syllabus). It should have complete sentences, good grammar, reasonable organization, and at least 3 complete double-spaced pages of text. It is due on October 18.

The research paper is designed to improve on features of traditional term papers in advancing student learning. I have found that students learn more from the writing experience when they have the opportunity to make use of feedback and to present or at least be part of a presentation to an "audience." The topic for the paper is chosen by you, within the constraints that you must choose a topic from a limited "menu," and there will be no more than approximately ten different topics done by members of the whole class. Having a limited number of topics allows us to have some student presentations at the end of the course, encouraging greater depth of exploration.

Research-paper topics will be focused on a controversy, an issue on which there are different points of view, that is discussed in one "target article" and one or more responses or rejoinders

to it. Although multiple students will be working on the same topic, there is no joint or group product and no group grade for the research paper. Because papers on one topic are evaluated simultaneously you ought to make certain that, if you are influenced by the thoughts of other students, you acknowledge that contribution accurately and openly (see note on "plagiarism" below). Originality is one of the grading criteria (see below).

The first steps are to read the target article and responses/rejoinders. Then, analyze what you have read: In your best judgment, what is the most essential issue on which scientists are disagreeing? Identify two or more sides on this essential issue, and work on how best to summarize the most compelling argument each side is presenting (or could present). Having done this, you are ready to start working on your research-paper outline. This outline must all fit on one side of one sheet of paper. For the outline only it is acceptable to use single-spacing if you wish. In all other respects, the same grading criteria as for the final research-paper are used.

As for the final research-paper, bear in mind what Graci n wrote in 1647: "good things, when short, are twice as good." The aim is to create a paper that packs a lot of valuable thinking into a relatively brief space. It should be a minimum of three full double-spaced pages in length (not counting reference list), and at a maximum it should not exceed 8 full double-spaced pages in length, not counting reference list, and it must be double-spaced throughout, and should use a size 12 font.

In both outline and final paper, some of your references will be set by the assignment (the target article and responses/rejoinders). You should include (cite, discuss) also the single best additional journal article you could find; you are free to change what you identify as the best additional article after you turn in the outline. This must be a journal article, not a book, book chapter, or internet site or page (Why? Because you should identify a scientifically peer-reviewed source.). It is not forbidden to include more than one additional article, but especially

important for grading purposes is quality of the first, best additional one you introduce, so it pays to consult multiple articles and choose the one that does the most for your paper.

The research-paper outline and the final research-paper are graded on the following criteria:

1. Is typed, readable, free of gross spelling and typographic errors.
  2. Is well-organized and focused
  3. Defines key terms clearly, especially those that can be ambiguous, and/or identifies key assumptions
  4. Identifies what is the major issue on which there is disagreement (in your best judgment)
  5. Addresses what makes this issue important, practically and/or scientifically
  6. Sets out clearly and effectively the arguments in favor of and against at least two different ways of thinking about the issue (you can glean these arguments from the target article and responses/rejoinders)
  7. Addresses, for each of the arguments, how much supporting evidence there is and how good (relevant, reliable, large effect size, etc.) this evidence is
  8. Attempts to synthesize and (even better) actually effectively synthesizes the arguments and evidence, combining all of the discussion into a reasonable conclusion
  9. The paper is original indications are that the thinking is your own
  10. Includes use of the required single best additional journal article
  11. You should include a photocopy of the first page of the single best additional article when you turn in both the outline and the final version.
  12. The citations and reference list in APA style; for help see UO Libraries' Citation Style Guide (<http://libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/citing/>)
- on the more mundane side, do not include binders or covers on the papers when you turn them in, and no title page is necessary.

Papers (whether the exploratory paper, or the outline or final version of the research paper)

turned in late lose 10% of their points for each weekday they are not turned in (starting with the due date). In general, with some course requirements, alternative arrangements for due dates may be possible with an authoritative excuse if presented in advance of an absence.

What is sufficient participation? You can meet this requirement in any one of three ways:

1. Send the instructor via e-mail at least two course-content-related questions during the term. These must be sent in each of two different weeks, and before the beginning of the last class session on Dec. 1. Questions pertaining to "what's on the test" or "how to do the paper" do not count toward this requirement. These e-mails are the most usual way to meet the requirement.
2. Make useful and constructive contributions to the live, in-person, in-class discussions. Note: Instructor will let you know by Nov. 17 if you qualify for the credit this way, a few usually do.
3. Take up an invitation to be part of a group talking to the class about your research paper (in the last week of class). Note: Only a few are invited, and those invitations will be out by Nov. 17. Invitations are not based only on the quality of the paper, but more on what sets (e.g., pairs or triads) of papers present the best variety of views that the class may be able to learn from. There is no credit deducted if you choose, for any reason, not to accept an invitation to talk to the class.

When you send an e-mail to the instructor as described above, the response will either be directly to you or on a "The Professor Responds" webpage to which you will be referred; you can also reach it by a link from the course website and blackboard. It is recommended that you review this page when preparing for exams, as it will contain potentially useful material.

Your final grade in the course will be based on the total of your points from papers, exams, and sufficient participation. A range is 90% or better, B range is 80% to 90%, C range 70% to 80%, D range 60% to 70%, Fs are less than 60%. '+' and '-' are added to grades if they fall in the top 1/3 or bottom 1/3, respectively, of A, B, C, and D range.

#### **Special Requirements for Graduate Students (Psychology 571)**

There will be special requirements for graduate students taking the course as Psychology 571. 571 students will meet at additional times outside the class time, either in-person or electronically. 571 students are expected to attend an in-person graduate student meeting with the instructor early in the quarter (typically in about the third week of the term).

### **Academic Integrity**

This instructor takes academic integrity seriously. Insuring the "validity" of grades requires seeing that they reflect honest work and learning rather than cheating. Cheating is defined as providing or accepting information on an exam, plagiarism or copying anyone's written work. Students caught cheating will be given an "F" for the course, and UO's student conduct coordinator will be informed. The instructor retains the right to assign seats for tests, to change individual's seating for test security purposes, to require and check ID for admission to tests. "Plagiarism" is basically a form of theft: putting your name on work that is (in any part) not yours, where you have not fully identified the source from which you borrowed. Even taking someone else's ideas or paraphrasing their expression, without acknowledgment, is plagiarism. Be aware that the instructor is knowledgeable about computer-age plagiarizing techniques and how to diagnose their use. "Your responsibility, when you put your name on a piece of work, is simply to distinguish between what is yours and what is not, and to credit those who in any way have contributed" (quote is from Nancy Cotton of Wake Forest U.).

---

### **PSYCHOLOGY 471 SCHEDULE: What's Happening When**

Sept. 27 Syllabus; overview of the course

Reading Assignment (i.e., for next session): Funder chs. 1-2

Sept. 29 Studying individuals, the basic sources of data

Reading Assignment: Funder chs. 3-4

Oct. 4 Design of research; cross-situational consistency

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 6

Oct. 6 Everyday personality judgments and their accuracy; assessment exercises

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 5, Saucier & Goldberg (2003)

Oct. 11 Tests of personality and other individual differences

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 7, Furnham & Heaven (1999)

Oct. 13 The structure of personality dispositions (and other kinds of individual differences)

*EXPLORATORY PAPER is due October 18!*

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 9

Oct. 18 More on structure; genetic and environmental influences on personality

Reading Assignment: Bouchard (2004)

Oct. 20 More on genetic and environmental influences on personality

Oct. 25 FIRST MIDTERM EXAM

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 8; Plomin (1995)

Oct. 27 Molecular genetics of personality; personality, physiology, and the brain

Reading Assignment: Dabbs et al. (1996); Bernhardt (1997)

Nov. 1 More on personality, physiology, and the brain

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 15 and ch. 16 pp. 475-501.

*ELECTION DAY is Nov. 2: Do VOTE!*

Nov. 3 Behaviorism, social learning, cognitive system

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 16 pp. 502-507, Funder ch. 17 pp. 508-520

Nov. 8 The cognitive system, perceptual processes, and self

*OUTLINE OF RESEARCH PAPER is due November 10!*

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 17 pp. 520-539; McAdams pp. 451-483

Nov. 10 Motives and goals; measurement of implicit motives



Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 10-11

Nov. 15 Psychodynamic personality concepts

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 12-13

Nov. 17 Humanistic and post-Freudian psychodynamic personality concepts

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 14

Nov. 22 Cultural variation related to personality

Nov. 24 SECOND MIDTERM EXAM

Reading Assignment: Westen pp. 367-385

Nov. 29 Culture, worldview, and personality: interdisciplinary perspectives

*FINAL VERSION OF RESEARCH PAPER is due Dec. 1 at beginning of class period!*

Reading Assignment: Friedman et al. (1995)

Dec. 1 Personality applied to work, health, and relationships

December 8, Wednesday, 10:15 am ....CUMULATIVE (FINAL) EXAM

**List of Psych. 471/571 readings placed on reserve (via Knight Library), in order of assignment:**

Saucier, G., & Goldberg, L. R. (2003). The structure of personality attributes. In M. R.

Barrick & A. M. Ryan (Eds.), *Personality and work: Reconsidering the role of personality in organizations* (pp. 1-29). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Furnham, A., & Heaven, P. (1999). *Personality and social behaviour*. London: Arnold.

(Chapter 4 only: Personality and ideology)

Bouchard, T. J. (2004). Genetic influence on human psychological traits. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13, 148-151.

Plomin, R. (1995). Molecular genetics and psychology. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 4, 114-117.

Bernhardt, P. C. (1997). Influences of serotonin and testosterone in aggression and dominance: Convergence with social psychology. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 6, 44-48.

Dabbs, J. M., Hargrove, M. F., & Heusel, C. (1996). Testosterone differences among college fraternities: Well-behaved vs. rambunctious. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 20, 157-161.

(Abridged)

McAdams, D. P. (2001). *The person: An integrated introduction to personality psychology* (3rd ed.). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt. (Parts of ch. 8, pp. 451-483)

Westen, D. (1985). Self and society: Narcissism, collectivism, and the development of morals. Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press. (pp. 367-385)

Friedman, H. S., et al. (1995). Psychosocial and behavioral predictors of longevity: The aging and death of the "Termites." *American Psychologist*, 50, 69-78.

### **The "Big Eight" questions: The pool of potential essay questions**

#### **for the two midterms**

1. Taking into account the advantages and disadvantages of different types of data, which do you believe to be the best kind of data for assessing personality? Given what we know about when judgments (ascriptions) of personality characteristics are most and least accurate, what are the best ways to measure personality characteristics?

2. What are the most important arguments in the "situationist" critique of the concept of "stable personality traits"? What are the most important arguments in response, in favor of stable dispositions? What are some ways in which situations and dispositions can be integrated?

3. Out of all the characteristics on which individuals differ from one another, which are the most important (or the most worth measuring), and why are they the most important? What are advantages and disadvantages of the 'Big Five' as a model for personality attributes, and what alternative model (if any) might be better, and why?
4. Does personality have a genetic basis or an environmental basis? Does the answer to this question depend on what kinds of individual differences are included within the definition of "personality"? What is heritability, and in what ways can differences that appear to be environmentally caused actually be due to the influence of genes?
5. For which specific biological variables is there the best evidence for an influence on personality characteristics? In what ways do personality characteristics reflect individual differences in nervous-system function? By what mechanisms would differences in genes cause differences in nervous-system function?
6. How do differences in reward, punishment, expectancies of reward and punishment, and in other cognitive variables influence individual differences in personality characteristics (and how personality might change)? In other words, how is personality related to how one thinks, values, and believes?
7. Out of all the major motives on which people differ, which are the most important? Are these conscious or unconscious motives, and how can they best be measured? How do psychoanalytic (Freud and post-Freud), humanistic, existential, and social learning theories contribute to answering usefully these questions about motives?
8. What is culture, and why are cross-cultural differences important for understanding personality differences? In what kinds of ways does cognition (e.g., thinking, valuing, believing), emotion, and behavior most clearly differ between cultures?

Note: The two essay questions on the first midterm exam will be from 1 through 4 above. The two essays on the second midterm exam will be from 5 through 8 above. The questions above that do not appear on the midterms will have disproportionate emphasis on the cumulative (final) exam. The questions above are subject to change and revision, with the class being informed immediately of any changes or revisions.

### **CHOICES FOR THE EXPLORATORY PAPER (due October 18)**

This paper is a basically a report of what happened when you did one of the following exercises, and especially what thoughts and feelings ensued for you. Note: If you consult other people for any topic, you should keep those people anonymous in your write-up, and don't give names (initials are OK) to any of the people you describe. Each of these exercises involves the following nine steps:

1. Select a small set of persons whose personality or character (as it appears to you and/or others you consult) you will compare. You must select one of the sets of persons set out below.
2. Just off the top of your head -- without thinking directly about any trait variables, dimensions, or factors talked about in class sessions or readings up to October 13 -- compare the personality or character of the persons, that is, how they seem to be alike or different. You might call this the "informal" analysis.
3. Next, a "formal" analysis: Consult text or class notes to come up with between eight and 20 trait variables (or dimensions or factors) on which you will compare the persons. (Describe what these are and where you got them.)
4. Describe how the persons seem to be alike or different using these 8-20 variables, commenting on which inferences you are most sure of (have the best evidence, citing anecdotes for this is useful) or least sure of (have the least evidence).
5. Describe any impressions you have about whether some of the person's traits that you have discussed actually change with the situation (e.g., according to whether the person is at home or at school/work, is

with friends or family or strangers, is feeling bad or good, is under stress or not)

6. Describe any impressions you have with regard to the following: Which of the statements you have made about each person would be person be most and least likely to agree with, or be most or least aware of?

7. Compare what you concluded from your "formal" analysis with what you got initially from your "informal" analysis which trait variables did you either ignore or emphasize relatively more when you did the "informal" analysis? What kinds of traits are important to you, in other people?

8. Add any pertinent comments about how the traits you have described in these people have affected your relationship with any of them.

9. Add any further comments about what you learned or noticed from doing this exercise.

Choose one (and only one) of the following sets of people to describe:

a. Three or four different people you have dated (now or in the past)

b. Your mother and your father and at least one sibling who shares the same mother and father with you (if there is one; feel free to include also your own personality/character in the discussion to whatever degree you like)

c. Two or more bosses (supervisors of you) whom you have gotten to know rather well

d. The person you know whom you like the most, the person you know (well) who you like the least, and some third person about whom you have mixed feelings (both like and dislike)

e. George W. Bush, John Kerry, John Edwards, and Dick Cheney (Note: it might help to watch debates and take notes about what you observe about personality/character)