

Psychology 471: PERSONALITY*10:00 - 11:20 am, Tuesdays and Thursdays***Class meets in 146 Straub Hall****Professor: Gerard Saucier, Ph.D.****Office: 312 Straub****E-mail:** gsaucier@uoregon.edu **Phone:** 346-4927 with voice mail**Web page:** http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~gsaucier/psy471_2006.htm**Office Hours: Tuesdays 9:15-9:45 am, Thursdays 12 noon - 2 pm, or flexibly by appointment****Teaching Assistant: Seraphine Shen**, cshen@uoregon.edu, 320 Straub, 346-4990, office hours Mondays 10 - noon**Text: Funder, D. C. (2004). The personality puzzle (3rd ed.). New York: Norton** (*plus other readings listed on class schedule at end of syllabus, generally made available via blackboard*)

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

Welcome to Psychology 471: Personality. The study of personality addresses how and why *individuals differ in their behavior patterns*, with 'behavior' defined broadly to include thoughts, feelings, motives, 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 also in any work that deals with people, and in many other areas of human life including personal relationships.

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 addresses both. 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

25% ...grade on final version of research paper

5% ...credit for sufficient participation in class

20% ...score on the midterm exam

30% ...score on final exam

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

The exams – both midterm and final – consist of a short multiple choice section (28% of the point total for the exam) concentrating on key concepts (definitions and examples of them), followed by a set of essay questions (72% of the point total for the exam). The essay questions are drawn from among the “big questions” listed at the end of this syllabus. In fact, they are the exact questions, except they could be revised during the term to make them clearer to students. The essay questions on the midterm exam will be drawn from among the first 8 big questions. Those on the cumulative (final) exam will be drawn from all of the big questions that did not appear on the midterm. 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. Multiple-choice items 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 January 31.

The research paper is designed to better traditional term papers in terms of 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, or on some issue on which there are different points of view or approaches that can be compared. For each topic, one or two articles will be assigned, and additional articles are chosen by you. Multiple students will be working on the same topic, but there is no joint or group product and no group grade for the research paper. Because papers on one topic are evaluated simultaneously, be sure that, if you are influenced by

the thoughts of other students, you acknowledge that contribution accurately and openly (so as to avoid “plagiarism” – see note below). Originality is one of the grading criteria (see below).

The first step is to read the assigned article or articles. It is a good idea to develop a very carefully thought-out response to it (or them) – what you agree with and don’t, what you think is well-supported by evidence and what isn’t, what seems logical or illogical, what might be left out. In your best judgment, identify what you think is the most essential issue on which good scientists might disagree (that is, there is more than one side on this essential issue). Next, find other sources, and for each source (article) ask similar questions about each of them. 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 Gracián 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, it must be double-spaced throughout, and with a size 12 font. 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.). You can certainly include more than one additional article or source, 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 or prioritize 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 ambiguous terms, 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 approaches or two different ways of thinking about an issue
7. Addresses, for each way of thinking or approach, how good is the supporting evidence (or the rationale) and how good (relevant, reliable, large effect size, etc.) is this evidence (or rationale) 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 or print out of the first page (not just the abstract) of the single best additional article when you turn in the final version of the paper
 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 meet this requirement by a combination of the following two things:

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, relate directly to the reading assigned for an upcoming class session, and be submitted by e-mail before the beginning of the last class session on March 9. Questions pertaining to “what’s on the test” or “how to do the paper” don’t count. When you send an e-mail to the instructor as described above, the response will either be directly to you or on a “Professor Responds” webpage to which you will be referred.
2. Be part of a panel of people with your same topic talking to the class briefly about your research paper (in the last two weeks of class) – your one-minute-or-so presentation just involves identifying either (a) an essential issue on which scientists might disagree, or (b) the way in which two approaches to an issue differ, or (c) some important matter left out of articles on the topic.

Consult instructor if there is an important reason why you should be allowed to meet the sufficient participation requirement in some other way than both 1 and 2 above.

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%, **F**s 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

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|---------|---|
| Jan. 10 | Syllabus; overview of the course
<u>Reading Assignment</u> (i.e., for next session): Funder chs. 1-2 |
| Jan. 12 | Studying individuals; the basic sources of data
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder chs. 3-4 |
| Jan. 17 | Design of research; cross-situational consistency
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder ch. 5-6 |
| Jan. 19 | Tests of personality; everyday personality judgments and their accuracy
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder ch. 7; Saucier & Goldberg (2003) |
| Jan. 24 | The structure of personality dispositions
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Kasser (2002); Funder, ch. 13 pp. 385-390 |
| Jan. 26 | Individual differences in beliefs and values; materialism and well-being
<i>EXPLORATORY PAPER is due January 31!</i>
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : none |
| Jan. 31 | Other kinds of individual differences as aspects of personality
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder ch. 8; Plomin (1995) |
| Feb. 2 | Personality, physiology, and the brain; molecular genetics of personality
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder ch. 9; Bouchard (2004) |
| Feb. 7 | Genetic and environmental influences on personality |
| Feb. 9 | <i>MIDTERM EXAM</i>
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder ch. 14; Saucier (2006) |
| Feb. 14 | The unexpected relation between culture and personality
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder ch. 15 |
| Feb. 16 | Behaviorism and social learning; relation to motivation and emotion
<i>OUTLINE OF RESEARCH PAPER is February 21!</i>
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder ch. 16 |
| Feb. 21 | The cognitive system and perceptual processes
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder ch. 17 |
| Feb. 23 | Self processes and motivational processes
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : McAdams (2001); on reserve in Knight Library |
| Feb. 28 | Conceptualizing the “personality system”; measurement of implicit motives
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder ch. 10-11 |
| March 2 | Psychodynamic personality concepts
<u>Reading Assignment</u> : Funder ch. 12 |
| March 7 | Post-Freudian psychodynamic personality concepts; class presentations |

Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 13

March 9 Humanistic personality concepts; class presentations by students

Reading Assignment: Friedman et al. (1995)

March 14 Personality applied to work and health; class presentations by students

FINAL VERSION OF RESEARCH PAPER is due March 16 at beginning of class period!*

Reading Assignment: Funder, ch. 18

March 16 Personality and personal relationships; class presentations by students

March 21, Tuesday, 8 am, FINAL EXAM

** unless you present in-class March 16 on your paper topic, in which case it's due 3/17 by 10 am*

List of Psych. 471/571 additional readings in order, in general these are made available via blackboard. These references provide an example of APA style.

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.

Kasser, T. (2002). The high price of materialism. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. (pp. 5-22 only)

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.

Saucier, G. (2006). *Personality and culture: Microcosm and macrocosm*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Oregon.

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)

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

Addressing big questions: The pool of potential essay items for midterm and final exams

1. Taking into account the advantages and disadvantages of different types of data, the best kind of data for assessing personality is _____.
2. Given what we know about when judgments (ascriptions) of personality characteristics are most and least accurate, the best way to measure personality characteristics would be the following_____.

3. The best arguments in the “situationist” critique of the concept of “stable personality traits” are _____ the best arguments in response, in favor of stable dispositions are _____, and the best conclusion is that _____.
4. Out of all the characteristics on which individuals differ from one another, the most important (or the most worth measuring) are _____.
5. The most important advantages and disadvantages of the ‘Big Five’ as a model for personality attributes are as follows: _____.
6. People have often argued about the question “does personality has a genetic basis or an environmental basis?” Given how heritability is accurately defined and the way personality is best defined, the best answer to this question is _____.
7. There is good evidence that personality characteristics reflect individual differences in nervous-system function (or in specific biological variables) in the following ways: _____.
8. Differences in genes cause differences in nervous-system function in the following way: _____.
9. Culture is best defined as _____ and its relation to personality is as follows: _____.
10. The most important ways in which cognition (e.g., thinking, valuing, believing), emotion, and behavior most clearly differs between cultures are _____.
11. To put it in brief and simple terms, motivation, emotion, and individual differences in personality characteristics are affected by reward, punishment, expectancies of reward and punishment, and desire to approach pleasure and avoid pain in the following key ways: _____.
12. How one thinks, values, and believes has the following key effects on personality and on the self: _____.
13. Out of all the major motives on which people differ, the most important ones are _____ and these motives are best measured by _____.
14. Psychoanalytic, humanistic, and existential theories enhance understanding of personality in the following very important ways: _____.
15. The two most important lessons that research has given about how personality affects work, health, or personal relationships are these: _____.

Note: The essay items on the first midterm exam will be drawn from 1 through 8 above. The essay items on the final exam will be drawn from 1 through 15 above, but not including any that appeared on your midterm. These items above may be changed and revised, with class members being so informed in advance. *Essay responses should first give a single sentence completing*

blanks. Then should come a longer description (one to two paragraphs) explaining why you think that is the best exact way to complete the sentence.

SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR ONE-MINUTE PART OF THE PANEL PRESENTATION

These are suggestions, not requirements (the requirements are covered on the syllabus)

This is a summary, not a speech. Using another analogy, it is more like an abstract than a full description of a study. Do not go overtime, as this is not respectful to others in the panel, or to the audience who usually wants some time to ask questions. One minute is about right (30 seconds is fine), and over 90 seconds is too much.

Keep it simple. Use short sentences as much as possible.

Your presentation just involves identifying either (a) an essential issue on which scientists might disagree, or (b) the way in which two approaches to an issue differ, or (c) some important matter left out of articles on the topic. Stick to one of these. Do not try to summarize everything in your paper. It's nice in addition, if you have a chance, to identify something that apparently makes your paper distinct from those of others in the panel; but this is less important.

Here are some signs that you are preparing too long a panel summary: (a) when you put it on paper, it's more than 150 words or can't be fit on one side of one sheet of paper in double-spaced print, (b) you're trying to convey more than two points, (c) you will be reading from your paper in any way, (d) you have to talk fast or there's no time for pauses if you're going to squeeze what you're prepared to say into 60 seconds.

Ways of presenting something in under a minute:

- * Imagine you are raising a question at a meeting or making a brief statement in the discussion period or in the "going-around-the-table" sharing period at some meeting
- * Plan on making two points (one is enough, and you might have time for three if they are explained briefly) about the topic.
- * Don't try to summarize your whole paper, just extract a couple of things that (a) the audience might find important or interesting or (b) are core ideas in your paper.

Remember that the goal of these presentations is to get the audience thinking usefully about the topic. (The goal is not to dutifully, faithfully repeat as much of your paper as possible.)

CHOICES FOR THE EXPLORATORY PAPER (due January 31)

Your paper is a basically a report of what happened when you did one of the following exercises, and what thoughts and feelings ensued. *Note:* Most of these exercises involve consulting other people; it's generally a good idea to take some notes on how they respond. These other people you personally consult for your paper should be kept anonymous in your write-up.

1. What are the recurring patterns in the partners (boyfriends, girlfriends, significant others) you have chosen up till now in your life? Identify a group of people (at least two or three) who were in the partner role for you at some point, and then identify a comparison group of people (at least two or three) who you think could have been a partner if you had wanted but who, for reasons partly or entirely having to do with your own choice, never did become a partner. Make a list of relevant characteristics – anything having to do with personality, character, temperament, emotional patterns, motivation, goals, status, income, appearance, attractiveness, values, beliefs, habits, interests, aversions, and possible psychological disorders – for each person. Then compare the partner-role group with the comparison group. How are the two groups different? What do you think the differences indicate about you?

2. (Note: This is like #1, but examines friends instead of partners) What are the recurring patterns in the friends (people you are close to but not intimate with and not related to) you have chosen up till now in your life? Identify a group of people (at least two or three) who have been close long-term friends for you, and then identify a comparison group of people (at least two or three) who you think could have been a close friend if you had wanted but who, for reasons partly or entirely having to do with your own choice, never did become a close friend. Make a list of relevant characteristics – anything having to do with personality, character, temperament, emotional patterns, motivation, goals, status, income, appearance, attractiveness, values, beliefs, habits, interests, aversions, and possible psychological disorders – for each person. Then compare the close-long-term-friend group with the comparison group. How are the two groups different? What do you think the differences indicate about you?

3. How do your relationship preferences (regarding personality and other attributes) compare with those of a parent? First, write a description of what you are looking for in a partner (boyfriend, girlfriend, significant other). This should include any relevant characteristics – anything having to do with personality, character, temperament, emotional patterns, motivation, goals, status, income, appearance, attractiveness, values, beliefs, habits, interests, aversions, and possible psychological disorders. Put this list aside and do not change it once you're done. Next, interview one of your parents, and ask about how they chose the one partner in their life with

whom they had the longest close relationship (this might be your other parent, or it might be someone else): Specifically, find out either what characteristics they were looking for at the time they met this person, or what characteristics this person had that your parent liked. (Again, characteristics includes anything having to do with personality, character, temperament, emotional patterns, motivation, goals, status, income, appearance, attractiveness, values, beliefs, habits, interests, aversions, and possible psychological disorders.) Compare the list you made for yourself at the beginning with the list you made from interviewing your parent. How are they different and the same, and what do you think the differences and similarities indicate about you?

4. Describe how you would define "virtue" and "moral character." Then describe what kinds of traits might be related to having virtue or moral character, and give a real-life example of how a person who had these traits (or had virtue and moral character) actually develop them. Next, find two other people and ask each of them the same questions: "What is virtue and what is moral character?" "What traits are related to having virtue and moral character?" "What is a real-life example of how a person developed these traits, or developed virtue and moral character?" Report briefly on their responses, and compare their responses with yours. What do you make of the similarities and differences? How can you relate your experience to any one thing you have encountered in this course? (Note: Dictionaries give rather vague, definitions of the terms like these, and you are advised to not rely on them for this assignment.)

5. Abraham Maslow defined a "peak experience" as the best moments of the human being, moments in which one feels especially whole, integrated, and aware of both self and world, thinks more clearly, is more accepting and loving, has less anxiety, and is more able to put energies to constructive use. Write a brief description of the three to five events or experiences you've had in your life that best qualify as peak experiences. On a separate sheet, make a note of whatever themes that you see running through the 3-5 events/experiences, in terms of what brought it on or what the effect was. Then find another person, show him/her your brief descriptions and ask him/her what themes seem to run through these events/experiences. Compare this to what you wrote on the separate sheet. Next, read the section on flow on page 395-396 in the text (*The Personality Puzzle*) and note whatever seems similar between your experience and what Csikszentmihalyi is describing. Describe in writing (as your paper) the results of the whole process, and comment on what you think any of this suggests about your personality, your life, or peak experiences for people in general.

6. Alfred Adler believed that which of one's many early childhood experiences become one's earliest memories is no accident, but reveals something about the emphases within a personality. Write a brief description of the five events/experiences you can remember that were the earliest in your life (it may help you to give yourself a week or so to gradually accumulate these recollections, and/or to write descriptions of them when you are alone). On a separate sheet,

make a note of whatever themes you see running through the five events/experiences. Then find two other people, show each of them your brief description and ask each what themes seem to run through these events/experiences. Compare their responses to what you wrote on the separate sheet. Comment on what you think any of this suggests about your personality.