

Psychology 471: PERSONALITY

10:00 – 11:50 am, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays

Class meets in Straub 253

Instructors: Philippe Bou Malham (Office: STB 470, Email: philippe@uoregon.edu)
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(Office hours: W 1-3)

Text: Funder, D. C. (2012). The Personality Puzzle (6th ed.). New York: Norton

Course Objectives: What Is the Purpose of this Course?

Welcome to the course on Personality. The study of personality addresses such fundamental questions as “how and why do individuals differ in their *behavior patterns*?”, “how do these differences impact their lives and relationships?”, “how and why do people change across their lifespan?” By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Answer these and other questions about personality based on evidence
- Think critically about the strengths and limitations of each approach to studying personality and evaluate the quality of its findings about and insights into human behavior accordingly
- Articulate an opinion on core issues in the study of personality
- Use your own voice to reflect on the impact of personality in your 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 addresses both and emphasizes both the biological and social antecedents of personality about equally. *This course has extensive readings; you are expected to read everything assigned.*

Assignments and Grading

Midterm Exam 40 multiple choice items	25%
After Class Discussion Questions 7 questions	20%
Article Critiques 4 critiques, 1 per week, 2 double-spaced pages each	20%
In-Class Activities	10%
Final Exam (Optional) 40 multiple choice items	25%
TOTAL	100%

What follows is more detail on each of these components (a guide to doing well in the course).

The exams – both midterm quiz and final – consist of a multiple choice section concentrating on key concepts (definitions and examples of them). No dictionaries, thesauruses, calculators, or electronic devices can be used during the exams, except that a translating dictionary can be allowed for those with English fluency issues, if instructor approves it. Multiple-choice items especially emphasize material covered both in the assigned readings and in class. Note that the final exam is

optional. You have the option of not taking the final and receiving your class grade up to that point as your final grade on the class.

The **discussion questions** are intended to help you develop a more personal connection to the subject matter and articulate an educated opinion. Discussion questions will be displayed and discussed in class during lecture. There will generally be at least one discussion question per lecture. You are to select 7 of the discussion questions and provide short answers to them. At least 2 questions must be completed within the first two weeks, and at least 2 must be completed in the last two weeks. Your commentary must draw on course material from the readings and/or lectures. The paper should have complete sentences and good grammar. You are to turn your answers in through blackboard under the assignments tab. Make sure to include the text of the question you are responding to.

The **article critiques** are designed to stimulate deeper analysis into the overarching approaches to studying personality, the controversies, and the core issues. You are to provide a short summary of the content of an article as well as a critique. In formulating the critique, focus on what you agree with and don't, what you think is well-supported by evidence and what isn't, what seems logical or illogical, and what might be left out. One article per week will be critiqued (for a total of 4). The articles will be posted on the course blackboard site, and the critiques are to be turned in as attached word documents on blackboard as well. The critique should have complete sentences, good grammar and organization, and no more than 2 double-spaced pages. Each critique is due at 5 p.m. on Friday of the week in which it is assigned. **Late critiques** lose 20% of their points for each day they are not turned in (starting with the due date), except for the final critique, which cannot be turned in late.

The articles are the following and can all be found on blackboard:

Week 1: McAdams, D.P. (1995). What do we know when we know a person? *Journal of Personality*, 63, 365-396.

Week 2: Saucier, G. (2009). What are the most important dimensions of personality? Evidence from studies of descriptors in diverse languages. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 3, 620-637.

Week 3: Fleeson, W. (2004). Moving personality beyond the person-situation debate the challenge and the opportunity of within-person variability. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13(2), 83-87.

Week 4: Vazire, S. (2010). Who knows what about a person? The self–other knowledge asymmetry (SOKA) model. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 98(2), 281-300.

When writing your article critiques, keep in mind the following guidelines:

- Introductory paragraph (5 points):
 - o Briefly introduce the main theme or question that the article attempts to address. What big question about personality is it trying to answer?
 - o Briefly introduce the answer or conceptualization that the article provides on this issue.
 - o Briefly state some pros and cons.

- Body paragraph (15 points):
 - Present the main issue or theme addressed in the article more thoroughly.
 - Summarize the main points in the article making sure to highlight how the article conceptualizes personality and addresses the theme.
 - What is the argument provided in the article for addressing personality in this way? What evidence is provided?
 - Could the evidence that is presented be interpreted differently? If so, what is this alternative interpretation? Does it seem stronger or weaker than the interpretation presented?
 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of the article? How can the weaknesses be rectified?
- Conclusion (5 points):
 - Restate the argument made in the article.
 - Note how thorough the argument is, what parts are supported by evidence, and what parts are not convincing.
 - Provide at least one future direction on how to study or think about personality that is derived from the approach in the article.
- APA style and length (5 points):
 - Citations are not required unless you reference articles besides the article you are critiquing.
 - Follow general APA formatting guidelines. No need to include a title page or abstract.
 - No longer than 2.5 pages double-spaced.

The *in-class activities* will vary in format throughout the term and will serve as an alternative to an attendance/participation grade. All that is required for full credit is that you turn in class work based on the activity.

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.

SCHEDULE: What's Happening When?

Date	Topic	Readings (before class)	Due
M 7/20	Syllabus; Introduction	Funder ch. 1	
T 7/21	Types and Quality of Data	Funder ch. 2 - 3	
W 7/22	Measurement, the Big Five, and Alternatives	Funder ch. 5 & 7 (243-256)	
R 7/23	The Big Five Taxonomy	John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008	First article critique by Friday at 5 pm
M 7/27	Culture and personality	Funder ch. 14	
T 7/28	Psychoanalytic approach, Neo-Freudians & Humanistic theories	Funder ch. 10 (346 – 353) & 11 & 12 (418-422, 426-431) & 13 (443-452, 462-468)	
W 7/29	Personality Disorders and Psychopathology	Funder ch. 18	
R 7/30	MIDTERM EXAM		Second article critique and at least 2 discussion questions by Friday at 5 pm
M 8/03	Person-situation debate I: Accuracy & Stability vs. Bias & Variability/change	Funder ch. 4, 6, & 7 (236-240)	
T 8/04	Person-situation debate II: Social Learning & CAPS	Funder ch. 15	
W 8/05	Person-situation debate III: Personality Processes & CAPS	Funder ch. 16	
R 8/06	Person-situation debate IV: Density Distribution Approach	Fleeson (2001)* Fleeson (2004)	Third article critique by Friday at 5 pm
M 8/10	Evolutionary & genetic influences on personality	Funder ch. 9	
T 8/11	Anatomy & Physiology of Personality	Funder ch. 8	
W 8/12	The Self	Funder ch. 17	Fourth article critique and 7 discussion questions by Friday at 5 pm
R 8/13	Final Exam 8-10		

Academic Integrity

The University Student Conduct Code (available at conduct.uoregon.edu) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the student's obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students. **If you have any questions about academic integrity, I will be happy to discuss them with you. Please, email me or come to my office hours.**

Accessibility

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me within the first two weeks of class if there are any aspects of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. For more information on assistance, you are also encouraged to contact the following campus services:

- Accessible Education Center, 164 Oregon Hall, 346-1155, aec.uoregon.edu
- University Counseling and Testing Center, Health Center, 2nd Floor, 346-3227, counseling.uoregon.edu/dnn/
- Teaching and Learning Center, 68 Prince Lucien Campbell, 346-3226, tlc.uoregon.edu

Diversity

The University of Oregon is dedicated to the principles of equal opportunity and freedom from unfair discrimination for all members of the university community and an acceptance of true diversity as an affirmation of individual identity within a welcoming community. Freedom of thought and expression is the bedrock principle on which university activity is based. This course is committed to upholding these principles by encouraging the exploration, engagement, and expression of distinct perspectives and diverse identities. please notify me if your feel aspects of the course undermine these principles in any way. You may also notify the Department of Psychology at 346-4921. For additional assistance and resources, you are also encouraged to contact the following campus services:

- Office of institutional Equity and Diversity, 1 Johnson Hall, 346-3175, oied.uoregon.edu
- Center on Diversity and Community, 54, Susan Campbell Hall, 346-3212, codac.uoregon.edu
- Bias response Team, 164 Oregon Hall, 346-1134, brt@uoregon.edu, bias.uoregon.edu

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, the UO home webpage (www.uoregon.edu) will include a banner

at the top of the page displaying information about delay or closure decisions for the Eugene campus. Local television, radio, and print media will be notified as well. In the event of a class cancellation, for any reason, I will contact the Department of Psychology as the first point of contact and also send an email via Blackboard to all students.

Exam Make-Ups

Given that the final exam is optional, no make-ups will be scheduled for the final exam. If you have to miss the final exam, you will receive your grade up to that point as your final grade on the class. A make-up midterm will be scheduled only if a student has a legitimate, university-sanctioned reason for missing the exam (see Student Handbook, which can be located through the University of Oregon website). If you can anticipate that you must miss the midterm, contact us via email as soon as possible. Do not ask for a make-up an exam after the date unless there were EXTREME circumstances contributing to your absence (i.e. death of an immediate family member, hospitalization, etc). Please note that, in such cases, if you do not have documentation of such extreme circumstances, you will NOT be allowed to take the make-up exam and you will receive a 0 on the exam. Be prepared to take the make-up exam at the earliest possible date. When you come to take the make-up, you will need to bring a completed Explanatory Statement of Absence from Class Form and any relevant documentation.

Miscellaneous

You are expected to keep copies of all your work for this course until the end of the term. Please turn off your phones when you enter the classroom. You are welcome to take notes on your laptop provided it does not become a barrier to your active listening and participation in the class.