

**Psychology 307: PERSONALITY**

*10:00 – 11:20 am, Tuesdays and Thursdays*

**Class meets in 145 Straub**

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

**Office: 425 Straub Hall E-mail:** gsaucier@uoregon.edu **Phone:** 346-4927

**Office Hours:** Mondays 1-1:30 pm, Tuesdays 11:30 am – 1 pm.

**TAs: Ruby Cuellar**, 365 Straub, rcuellar@uoregon.edu, office hours Mondays 1:30-3:30 pm;  
**Pooya Razavi**, 461 Straub, pooyar@uoregon.edu, office hours Wednesdays 1:30-2:30 pm.

**Text: Funder, D. C. (2015). *The personality puzzle* (7th ed.). New York: Norton** – obtainable at Duckstore -- *plus other readings (listed on p. 7) made available via Canvas*

**Course Purpose and Objectives, Learning Outcomes**

This is an innovative psychology course on personality, including its fundamental connections to motivation and emotion. Thus, its topic is personality understood broadly. To a very considerable degree, personality patterns are built largely on more enduring motivational and emotional patterns, and how these are self-regulated. Motivation, in turn, is a fundamental contributor to human behavior, including emotion which is a function in large part of a person's motivational situation. The course format is primarily a series of talks (i.e., lecture), with discussion and in-class exercises. The course's exercises-and-discussion component is not obtainable from the class-session slides, nor are important elaborations on the content found in the slides. So, attendance at class sessions is an important component of the experience. *The course has extensive readings; you're expected to read everything assigned.*

In addition to providing a solid scientific knowledge-base regarding the subject-matter, the course will help you learn to think more usefully and critically (i.e., carefully) about these core aspects of human behavior -- something useful in psychology and human services professions, but also in many areas of life. More specifically: You can learn to identify patterns in motivation and emotion, key sources or causes of them, their relation to each other and to personality tendencies, and the effect of all these on behavior.

*Learning Objectives and Outcomes:*

1. To examine human behavioral patterns of personality as well as emotion and motivation, including contributions of situation and of self-regulation to these patterns, extracting a knowledge-base from scientific studies on these topics, which will facilitate identification of these patterns in everyday life.
2. To explore competing theories and perspectives on personality, emotion, and motivation.
3. To develop skills in reading, evaluating, and synthesizing research on the subject matter of this course, that can be applied to other subject matters as well.
4. To apply knowledge regarding personality, emotion, and motivation not only to psychology and human services professions, but also in many areas of everyday life.
5. To communicate clearly and effectively about psychological topics, especially personality, emotion, and motivation, based on understanding strengths/limitations of empirical evidence.

## **Estimated Student Workload**

When you complete this course, you will earn 4 credits toward your degree. Four credits is the equivalent of 120 hours of work across the term, or 12 hours per week for 10 weeks. You will spend 3 hours in class each week. The other 9 hours will be spent completing assignments. There are many reading assignments for this course (about 50 hours total for the term). Other work will come from the writing assignments (about 30 hours total for the term, including 15 hours on the research paper, 10 hours on reading responses, and 5 hours on the exploration paper). There is also work (some 10 hours) preparing for the midterm and final exams.

## **Assignments and Grading**

The **final course grade** is based on the following, by proportions of 400 total 'course points':

- 9% ...credit for three reading responses (36 points, 12 per credited response)
- 5% ...grade on early-in-term exploration paper (20 points)
- 6% ...discussion-group credit (24 points, 8 for each of first three groups participated in)
- 3% ...class attendance credit (12 points, affected by extra discussion-group participation)
- 4% ...grade on the outline in advance of your research-paper essay (16 points)
- 13% ...grade on final version of your research-paper essay (52 points)
- 25% ...score on the midterm exam (100 points)
- 35% ...score on final exam (140 points)

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

The two **exams** are similar in format. Each exam consists of a multiple choice section (80% of the point total for the exam) concentrating on key concepts (definitions and examples of them) – followed by two or three open-ended three-sentence-response questions (20% of the point total for the exam). The open-ended questions come from the list at end of the syllabus.

For the **midterm**, these very short essay questions will be drawn from among the first open-ended questions at the end of this syllabus; the other sections of the exam will be based on readings and class content up to the midterm exam. For the **final exam**, the very short essay questions will be drawn from among those not included on the midterm. The other sections of the final exam will be based primarily on readings and class content after the midterm and up to the final exam, but will inevitably include occasional reference to the earlier part of the course. No dictionaries, thesauruses, calculators, or electronic devices can be used during the exams, although 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.

**Reading responses** are responses to assigned readings. The purpose is to stimulate students to actively engage with readings and thus also be earlier and better prepared for class (and exams). To get full credit, you must complete three of these satisfactorily during the term. The length for a reading response is exactly or just slightly less than one (full, can be single- or double-spaced) page of text in a word-processing document for each response.

Responses should have complete sentences, good grammar, reasonable organization, and at least two paragraphs. Each reading response must be based on the assigned readings corresponding to a due date that has not already passed. For each reading response, you must refer to the content in the assigned reading for that due date (citing specifically one or more pages in the reading). *You're free to choose what to write about*, but here are suggestions of things that work well for this assignment – any of these might work well for structuring one reading response:

- a. Describe an idea or finding that you think is very important and explain why you think it is important.
- b. Describe an idea or finding that you think is questionable and explain why it's questionable.
- c. Think about how content in readings can be applied to understanding the motivational, emotional, or personality patterns of significant others in your life (boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse, partner, etc.) both in present and in past.
- d. Think about how content in readings can be applied to understanding the motivational, emotional, or personality patterns of the person you know best (who may be a friend, parent, or sibling).
- e. Think about times, moments, or situations in which you misjudged somebody – their personality, motivation, or emotion -- or cases where someone else misjudged you: Describe how something in the reading sheds light on what was going on.

Basically, for reading responses it's good to ask: "How does this apply to my life experience, the experience of those I know well, or my experience in human relationships; or how does it relate to what I already know?" Obviously, personal anecdotes are OK in reading responses.

You are assigned to turn in three (3) reading responses. They should be submitted on canvas sent by 9:30 am on the due date. The due dates for these are provided in the syllabus. There are *18* due dates arranged into three [(a), (b), (c)] sections -- you need only get a reading response in on time to the course TA (via Canvas) for *three* of these dates, with one reading response falling within each one of the three sections [(a), (b), (c)]. These responses are graded on a "pass versus no-pass" basis. Late reading responses are absolutely not accepted for credit, since a late response would defeat part of the purpose of a reading response as defined above. If you miss the deadline for one reading response, you can usually just get the same credit by simply preparing a reading response for the next deadline (due date) instead – unless it's the last date within a section. You are advised NOT to wait till the last date in a section [(a), (b), (c)], because then you will have no remedy if your reading response fails to get credit; it's up to you, but it's better to submit for one of the first two or three dates within a section, so you allow yourself "second-chance points."

The **exploration paper** is intended to help you develop a more personal connection to the subject matter, applying concepts learned in the course to your personal experience as relevant to the topic of the course. Instructions for this paper will be posted within a week from the start of the course. The paper should have complete sentences, good grammar, reasonable organization, and two to three (2-3) complete double-spaced pages of text.

The *research-paper essay* is designed to improve on features of traditional term papers in advancing student learning, but in a brief and fairly structured format. Students learn more from the writing experience when they have the opportunity to make use of feedback. Topics for research papers come from a menu of approximately 10 distinct topics each with an assigned article, and you will have a choice of which topic to focus your paper on. In the paper you can, if relevant, describe a vignette from your own experience and observations of people, but the main substance will be identifying the most important contribution of the article, the rationale and evidence for its conclusions, and reasons for why those conclusions should remain tentative or be regarded as questionable.

The essay should have the following five subheadings:

1. Why, in advance, I believed this article could be important (or interesting)
  2. With respect to the topic question, what does the article conclude?
  3. What forms of evidence or rationales are invoked to support these conclusions?
  4. Why might we need to question or be cautious about these conclusions?
  5. My overall evaluation of the contribution of this article
- (Note: subheadings 1, 2, and 5 certainly need only one paragraph in your essay. Subheadings 3 and 4 might need multiple paragraphs.)

The first step in preparing your essay during the term is to generate an *outline*. This is really just an outline of your initial points: Since this outline will be turned in a few weeks before the actual research-paper essay, the minimum requirement is only that you address the first two subheadings above, although if you address more than just those two it helps you to get you more useful feedback (likely to make your eventual paper better).

As for the *final research-paper essay*, 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, and at a maximum it should not exceed five full double-spaced pages in length, not counting reference list, it must be double-spaced throughout, and with a size 12 font. Keep focus on the topic, rather than dedicating much space to contents of the article that do not relate much to the topic question. The final research-paper essay is graded on the following criteria:

1. Is typed, readable, free of gross spelling and typographic errors
2. Is well-organized and focused (not rambling, or with irrelevant passages)
3. Addresses what makes the issue or paper topic important, practically and/or personally as well as scientifically
4. (Where that would be helpful to a reader:) Defines key terms clearly, especially potentially ambiguous terms that will be used frequently in the paper, and/or identifies key assumptions
5. Follows the recommended structure by including all five subheadings, and having relevant content under the subheadings
6. Effectively identifies main features of the article that are relevant to the topic question
7. Applies critical thinking to the research approaches described. This might include: how good is the supporting evidence (or the rationale), how good is this evidence (or rationale) is,

whether some other reasonable interpretation of findings is plausible but has not been ruled out, and other issues.

8. Effectively synthesizes evidence and rationales in the article, leading the essay to have a reasonable conclusion that “follows from” the earlier parts of the paper

9. Originality – indications are that (at least) the thinking is your own and (at best) it goes beyond and even challenges the “conventional wisdom” or “commonsense view” on aspects of the topic

10. Provides at the bottom an accurate citation of the article analyzed in the paper (preferably in APA style, but for this course this style is not required)

Don't include binders or covers on the papers when you turn them in; no title page necessary.

**Late Policy:** Papers (exploration, outline, or final 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.

There is some credit (6% of course grade, 24 course points) for participation in discussion groups during class sessions. Said discussion groups will be convened five times during the course, each involve about 15-20 minutes of small-group discussion. You get 8 course-points for each one you participate in fully, as evidenced by signing your name to the discussion-groups results sheet. You could afford to miss two of these without penalty – credit for only three of five are necessary to get full credit. If you participate in more than three discussion-groups, your credit rolls over instead into helping ensure you get full attendance credit.

As just mentioned, there is a bit of credit for attendance (3% of course grade, 12 course points). You get all this credit automatically, unless the instructor experiences repeated (that is, on three or more occasions) difficulties finding you in class sessions, or you are observed (again, repeatedly) to disrupt class sessions with late entries or early exits. If you happen to be one of those who participates in more than three discussion groups (see paragraph above), this is tracked, and contributes toward getting all the attendance credit. Nonetheless, missing two discussion groups does not necessarily mean you won't get all the attendance credit, because of the large role of other criteria mentioned above.

Your **final grade** in the course will be based on the total of your points as defined above. **A** range is 90.00% or better, **B** range is 80.00% to 89.99%, **C** range 70.00% to 79.99%, **D** range 60.00% to 69.99%, **Fs** are less than 60%. '+' and '-' are added to grades if they fall in the top 1/3 or bottom 1/3 (defined exactly), respectively, of A, B, C, and D range.

Please see psychology department guidelines for a description of the type of achievement that each grade signifies: <http://psychology.uoregon.edu/courses/departments-grading-standards/>

### **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 307 SCHEDULE: What's Happening When**

- April 2        Syllabus; overview of the course  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment (i.e., for session listed on next line): Funder chs. 1-2
- April 4 (a)   Studying individuals; the crucial, basic sources of data  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder chs. 3-4
- April 9 (a)   Design of research; cross-situational consistency; *discussion groups*  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Vazire & Carlson (2011); Funder ch. 5 (all) and ch.6 (pp. 178-198)
- April 11 (a)   Everyday personality judgments and their accuracy  
                  ***EXPLORATORY PAPER*** (hard-copy) *is due April 16!*  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 6 (pp. 199-219); Saucier (2009)
- April 16 (a)   Language of personality; structure of personality dispositions  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 17; Schwartz (2012) (pp. 1-20)
- April 18 (a)   Personality structure related to disorders, interests, values/morality, work, health  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 7; Roberts & Mroczek (2008)
- April 23 (a)   Personality dispositions: stability/change over time, sources of change  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 9; Bouchard (2004); Turkheimer (2000)
- April 25 (b)   Genetic and environmental influences on personality; *discussion groups*  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 8
- April 30 (b)   Molecular genetics, personality, biology, physiology, and brain  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 10
- May 2 (b)     Early psychodynamic (Freud) theory, contrasted with earlier views
- May 7        ***MIDTERM QUIZ***  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 11; Funder ch. 12 (pp. 420-444)
- May 9 (b)     Later psychodynamic, and the humanistic/existential theories; *discussion groups*  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Reeve ch. 5-6 (pp. 108-169)
- May 14 (b)   Needs: autonomy, competence, relatedness, meaning, intrinsic/extrinsic motives  
                  ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 14; Neal, Wood, & Quinn (2006)
- OUTLINE OF RESEARCH-PAPER ESSAY*** (hard-copy) *is due May 16!*
- May 16 (b)   Habit acquisition and maintenance; behaviorism, social learning; approach and avoidance motivation

- ✓ Reading Assignment: Reeve ch. 11 (pp. 297-328) and ch. 12 (pp. 344-364)
- May 21 (c) Causes of emotion; basic categories, dimensions, and functions of emotion and mood; biological, cultural, and cognitive aspects of emotion
- ✓ Reading Assignment: Larsen & Buss ch. 13 (pp. 396-432); Funder ch. 15
- May 23 (c) Emotion and affect, related to motivation and to personality; *discussion groups*
- ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 13
- May 28 (c) Culture and personality, with extensions to politics and religion
- ✓ Reading Assignment: Leary (2003)
- May 30 (c) Self-esteem, individualism, worldview, and other cultural variables of personality
- ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder ch. 16
- June 4 (c) The self, self-regulation and socialization; *discussion groups*

***FINAL VERSION OF RESEARCH-PAPER ESSAY is due June 6 at beginning of class!***

- ✓ Reading Assignment: Funder Epilogue (pp. 652-664)
- June 6 (c) Integration of course, and of empirical findings with theory in personality

**June 12 (Wednesday), 8:00 am, FINAL EXAM**

What do letters after dates mean? If (a) you could turn in an 'a' reading response on reading for this day; (b) could turn in a 'b' reading response; (c) could turn in a 'c' reading response.

**Readings beyond the textbook** (all posted on Canvas) **are from these sources:**

- Bouchard, T. J. (2004). Genetic influence on human psychological traits. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 13, 148-151.
- Larsen, R. J., & Buss, D. M. (2010). *Personality psychology: Domains of knowledge about human nature* (3rd ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Leary, M. (2003). Commentary on self-esteem as an interpersonal monitor: The sociometer hypothesis (1995). *Psychological Inquiry*, 14, 270-274.
- Neal, D. T., Wood, W., & Quinn, J. M. (2006). Habits – a repeat performance. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 15, 198-202.
- Reeve, J. (2009). *Understanding motivation and emotion* (5th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley
- Roberts, B. W., & Mroczek, D. (2008). Personality trait change in adulthood. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 17, 31-35.
- Saucier, G. (2009). What are the most important dimensions of personality? Evidence from studies of descriptors in diverse languages. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 3/4, 620-637.
- Schwartz, S. H. (2012). An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2 (1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1116>
- Turkheimer, E. (2000). Three laws of behavioral genetics and what they mean. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9, 160-164.
- Vazire, S., & Carlson, E. N. (2011). Others sometimes know us better than we know ourselves. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 20, 104-108.

## **POTENTIAL 'THREE-SENTENCE-RESPONSE' QUESTIONS for midterm and final exam**

1. What is a good scientific way to define personality?
2. What are the most important relative advantages of self-report data and of data from "informant" or acquaintances?
3. What is the very best argument (or two) in favor of a "situationist" view (that behavior is driven mainly by situations, not dispositions)?
4. What is the very best argument (or two) in favor of stable dispositions (that behavior is driven mainly by tendencies intrinsic to individuals)?
5. Which is more important for explaining behavior: situations or dispositions?
6. When are personality judgments most and least accurate?
7. What is the "lexical hypothesis" or lexical rationale, and why is it important?
8. What basic dimensions of personality variation replicate well across cultures?
9. How stable is personality over time?
10. As far as we know, why does personality *change* occur (what leads to change)?
11. Based on evidence to date, what are the most important ways in which personality characteristics reflect individual differences in physiology or the brain?
12. What has the evidence from genetics most importantly contributed to our understanding of personality?
13. For purposes of understanding personality, what has been the important contribution from psycho-dynamic (psychoanalytic) theory?
14. For purposes of understanding personality, what has been the important contribution from humanistic or existential theory?
15. How are extrinsic motivation and intrinsic motivation fundamentally different?
16. How is motivation related to positive and to negative reinforcement?
17. How many basic emotions (or, types of mood state) are there, and what differentiates them?
18. How do motives and cognitions impact 'affect' (i.e., emotions and moods)?
19. How are basic dimensions of personality variation related to moods or emotions?
20. What is the best way to define "culture"?
21. What generally is the relation of personality to culture?

*Note: Questions 1-12 are eligible to appear on the midterm, with any questions not appearing on midterm eligible to appear on final exam.* For each three-sentence-response question, you will need to respond in three sentences or less. It helps to have an answer that is brief and direct, but it also helps to have an answer that addresses multiple important points in dealing with the question (does not oversimplify). The best responses balance these two 'desiderata.' Be aware that there'll be more than one good way to answer open-ended questions like these.