

Personality Psychology (Psychology 305A), Section 901 Winter 2018/2019, Term 1 (Fall)

Class Times

Thursdays 5:00-7:30 pm

Location: Civil and Mechanical Engineering (CEME) 1202

Office Hours

Instructor: Professor Tracy (jltracy@psych.ubc.ca)

Phone: 604-822-2718

Room 3515 Kenny (psychology) Building

Rather than hold an office hour that may work for only some of you, I try to meet with students at times that work for both of us – so please email me for an appointment. OR – I will almost always be able to make myself available to chat after class, so stick around and feel free to come talk then.

Teaching Assistant

Eric Mercadante (eric.mercadante@psych.ubc.ca)

Room 3605 Kenny (psychology) Building

Office Hour: Tuesdays 1-2 pm, or by appointment

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of personality. Personality refers to consistencies in people's thoughts, feelings, and behavior over time and across situations. Topics will include methods of personality research and an overview of the primary theoretical perspectives and major research findings in the field. The course will consist of one class per week, which will include lecture, full-length films and film segments, exams, and class discussions in which student participation is encouraged.

Please note that this course will cover material that some people might find uncomfortable, difficult, offensive, or possibly triggering. It's impossible to avoid these topics while covering personality psychology, which involves understanding how past events, including traumatic ones, shape current behavior. Given that everyone differs in what they find troubling, I generally won't be alerting the class to the potentially troubling nature of any particular topics before I cover them; please just be aware that, at certain times in the course, you might find yourself reading or hearing about matters that may make you uncomfortable. At such times, I respect your decision to handle this discomfort as you see fit, and I welcome any conversation about these issues (by email or in person).

Required Reading

Larsen, R. J., Buss, D. M., King, D. B., & Ensley, C. E. (2013). *Personality psychology: Domains of knowledge about human nature* (First Canadian Edition). New York: McGraw Hill. [NOTE: current and earlier U.S. editions are fine too.]

Films

We will be viewing one 2-hour film during the term, as well as shorter video clips. These films are part of the course content; we will discuss them in class, and material covered in the film and class discussions will be included on exams. If you miss a film, it is your responsibility to learn about its major themes. Please note that certain films may be difficult to find.

Course Requirements and Grading

Exams: This course will have 3 exams—2 midterms and 1 final. Each exam will cover the section of the course that immediately preceded it; in other words, the final exam will focus largely on the final third section of the course, and will be only a bit longer than the other 2 exams (each midterm will be approximately 1 hour, 30 minutes long; the final exam will be 1 hour, 45 minutes long). However, each exam will also be somewhat cumulative in that it will call for knowledge acquired across the course thus far (that’s just how psychology, and all sciences, works; you need to have knowledge of certain topics in order to write or learn thoughtfully about other topics). Exam questions (multiple choice and short essay) will be based on material from the lectures, readings, and in-class films, with greatest emphasis on the lectures.

THERE WILL BE NO MAKE-UP EXAMS WITHOUT A DOCTOR’S NOTE. If you have a medical emergency (doctor’s note required), the TA will coordinate with you to arrange for a make-up exam. If you know now that you will need to miss an exam for a non-medical reason, you should try to get into a different section of this course or sign up next year instead.

Grading: The two midterm exams will each be worth 30% of your total grade, and the final exam will be worth 40% of your total grade (adding up to 100% total).

You also may receive up to **3 extra credit points** (for a total of 103%) for participating in the Department of Psychology’s subject pool. You will receive 1 extra credit point for every hour you participate in an experiment. To receive credit for experiment participation, you will need to sign up and receive credit through the Dept. subject pool website: <https://ubc-psych.sona-systems.com/>.

Please note that final grades (and only final grades) may be scaled, according to department policy.

Web Resources: Slides from each lecture (and this syllabus) will be posted on the web after each class; you should download these files and use them as study guides. The course website can be found at <http://ubc-emotionlab.ca/psyc305a-personality/>. You will need to enter the password “personality” to access the site.

It is important to note that the slides posted on the web will not cover everything that is covered in class. If you miss class, you should download the slides **and** ask a classmate for additional notes. Please note that I will NOT respond to emails asking about the contents of lectures that were missed. If you email to find out what you missed in class, you will receive a reply along the lines of: “see lecture notes”. If you don’t know anyone in the class to get notes from, now is a good time to meet someone!

Email Policy: In general, I will provide only 1-sentence responses via email. If you have a question that cannot be answered in a single sentence or less, please see me after class, or make an appointment to come to office hours and I will be happy to discuss it with you. Except in special circumstances, emails requiring responses longer than 1-sentence will NOT be answered. For all email responses, please permit more than 24 hours before expecting a response (e.g., you are unlikely to receive a response the night before an exam). Emails will generally not be answered over the weekend.

In-class Laptop Policy

Unless necessary, laptop computers are not allowed in class. There is good evidence to suggest that laptops create a less ideal environment for the entire class (see here: http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2014/09/25/why-a-leading-professor-of-new-media-just-banned-technology-use-in-class/?tid=pm_local_pop) and even for the learning of each student who uses one (i.e., you'll learn and remember material better if you take notes by hand; see here: http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=npr&utm_term=nprnews&utm_content=20170819). Or see the class website for easier access to both of these articles.

If you have concerns with this policy, feel free to come talk to me about it. If there are reasons to make exceptions, I'm happy to do that (and ask you to sit in the back row so as not to disturb others), but please come discuss this with me.

Course Calendar

Week 1

Thurs., Sept. 6th Review of syllabus
Overview of Personality
Begin Research Methods

Week 2

Thurs., Sept. 13th Research Methods in Personality
Freud & The Psychoanalytic Approach to Personality
Reading: Larsen & Buss, Chapters 1, 2, & 9

Week 3

Thurs., Sept. 20th Contemporary Psychoanalytic Approach
Motives and Personality
Phenomenological/ Humanistic Approach
Reading: Larsen & Buss, Chapters 10 & 11

Week 4

Thurs., Sept. 27th Self & Self-Esteem
Overview of Traits and Trait Taxonomies
Reading: Larsen & Buss, Chapters 14 & 3

- Week 5**
Thurs., Oct. 4th Trait Taxonomies [Eric guest lecture]
Personality Change and Stability [Eric guest lecture]
Theoretical Issues in Trait Research
Review for Exam
Reading: Larsen & Buss, Chapters 4 & 5
- Week 6**
Thurs., Oct. 11th 5:00-6:30: MIDTERM EXAM 1
- Week 7**
Thurs., Oct. 18th Genetic Approach to Personality
Physiological Approach to Personality
Begin Evolutionary Approach to Personality
Reading: Larsen & Buss, Chapters 6 & 7
- Week 8**
Thurs., Oct. 25th Wrap up Evolutionary Approach to Personality
Learning and Behaviorism
Begin Modern Cognitive Approach
Reading: Larsen & Buss, Chapters 8 & 12
- Week 9**
Thurs., Nov. 1st Wrap up Cognitive Approach Overview
Begin Emotions & Personality
Review for Exam
Reading: Larsen & Buss, Chapter 13
- Week 10**
Thurs., Nov. 8th MIDTERM EXAM 2
- Week 11**
Thurs., Nov. 15th Wrap up Emotions
Relationships and Social Interactions
Sex, Gender, & Personality
Reading: Larsen & Buss, Chapters 15 & 16
- Week 12**
Thurs., Nov. 22nd **FILM: *Shattered Glass***
Reading for AFTER THE FILM (or else you'll get spoilers!):
Hanna Rosin, "Hello, My Name is Stephen Glass, and I'm Sorry",
New Republic, Nov. 10, 2014 [will be available for download on
course website]

Week 13Thurs, Nov. 29th

Discuss the film
Wrap up Gender
Culture and Personality
Course overview
Reading: Larsen & Buss, Chapters 17 & 20

Psychology Department's Position on Academic Misconduct

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Department of Psychology has taken steps to alleviate them. In the first place, the Department has implemented software that can reliably detect cheating on multiple-choice exams by analyzing the patterns of students' responses. In all cases of suspected academic misconduct, the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Strong evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in a zero credit for the work in question. According to the University Act (section 61), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to a student's transcript.

All graded work in this course, unless otherwise specified, is to be original work done independently by individuals. If you have any questions as to whether or not what you are doing is even a borderline case of academic misconduct, please consult with your instructor. For details on pertinent University policies and procedures, please see Chapter 5 in the UBC Calendar (<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar>) and read the University's Policy 69 (available at <http://www.universitycounsel.ubc.ca/policies/policy69.html>).