

## **PSY 208 – Theories of Personality**

### **Syllabus and Course Description – Spring 2018**

#### **Course Instructor**

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**Course description:** The course will involve an introduction to the most important theories on personality to date. The existence of a variety of viewpoints indicates that there is no clear and integrated theory that dominates the field. However, each of these theories can be evaluated according to conventional scientific criteria, because all of them claim to be scientific in nature. Therefore, besides giving you an appreciation of the ways in which theorists have conceptualized human personality, the major objective of the course is to place you in a position to evaluate these theories and to decide which ones have merit and are worthy of continuing scientific investigations. Presentation of the material will be via lectures and assigned readings, as well as online discussions.

Number of credit hours: 3

Prerequisites: PSY 100

URL for Syllabus/Course: [courses.maine.edu](http://courses.maine.edu)

#### **Instructional Materials**

Textbook: Ryckman, R. M. (2013). Theories of Personality (10th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage.

Other supporting materials: PowerPoint presentations will be posted on Blackboard.

## **Technology Information**

You will need your MaineStreet/UNET account for this class. Information about how to activate this account can be found at <http://umaineonline.umaine.edu/tech-support/getting-started/>

This course will be run through Blackboard. You will be able to access the lectures, PowerPoint presentations, discussion board, announcements, etc. on this site. You will also take exams using Blackboard.

If you need assistance with technical issues, please contact

UMaineOnline | Continuing & Distance Education (CED) Technical Support Services

Email: [dlltechhelp@maine.edu](mailto:dlltechhelp@maine.edu)

Help Line: [1.877.947.4357](tel:18779474357)(HELP) or [207.581.4591](tel:2075814591)

Technical support office hours:

8am to 4:30pm (M-F) during May Term, Summer & Breaks

8am to 6pm (M-Th) & 8am to 5pm (F) during Fall & Spring semesters

Limited Email Support Nights, Weekends, School Breaks & Holidays

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

Course Goals:

This course will introduce you to the major theories of personality, which attempt to explain behavior across the full range of life situations. You will learn about the development of these theories and the concepts used in each theory to explain behavior. You will learn about research methods in personality psychology, empirical studies that have been conducted to test the theories, and a set of scientific criteria that can be used to assess the current status of each theory. After completing PSY 208, you will be able to identify the constructs of these major personality theories, describe how they may be applied to understand behavior, and critically evaluate each theory on the basis of scientific criteria.

## Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe and identify concepts and facts for each major theoretical perspective and for the theories that constitute each perspective.
  - a. Describe the historical and cultural context of each personality theory.
  - b. Describe the contributions of heredity and environment to personality development.
  - c. Describe the bases for behavior posited by theories from each major perspective: psychoanalytic, neoanalytic, trait, cognitive, humanistic and existential, and behavioral and learning.
  
2. Describe and identify the basic research and evaluation methods used in the study of personality, including the strengths and weaknesses of each method.
  - a. Describe the role of the case study, correlational methods and experimental methods in theory development in personality psychology.
  - b. Compare and contrast the strengths and weaknesses of these basic research methods in personality psychology.
  - c. Assess the strengths and weaknesses of developmental research methods in personality psychology, that is, cross-sectional, longitudinal, and sequential research designs.
  
3. Describe and apply criteria for the evaluation of each theory.
  - a. Describe and evaluate the degree to which the theory addresses and accounts for a wide range and diversity of human experience.
  - b. Describe and evaluate the degree to which constructs in each theory are clearly defined, clearly inter-related, and are capable of being empirically tested.
  - c. Describe and evaluate the extent to which research has supported or failed to support hypotheses developed from constructs of each theory.
  - d. Describe and evaluate the degree to which the theory has stimulated further theorizing and research in psychology and in other fields.
  - e. Describe and evaluate the degree to which the theory has shown applied value, that is, the degree to which the theory has been useful in finding solutions to human problems.

## Instructional Objectives:

1. Students will gain an understanding of the role of personality theory in psychology and ways in which personality is assessed.
2. Students will gain knowledge of concepts constituting the major theories of personality and how they explain human behavior.
3. Students will be able to critically appraise research findings in personality psychology.
4. Students will be able to compare and contrast personality theories on the basis of scientific criteria.
5. Students will be able to make connections across various theoretical perspectives to see how they each can contribute to a more complete understanding of human behavior.
6. Students will be able to apply course concepts to their understanding and interpretation of real life situations.

## **Grading and Course Expectations**

Your grade will be determined by your participation in online discussions (25%) and your grades on the three exams (25% each). For each two-week block, I will post four major discussion questions relevant to the material for the upcoming two weeks. You are expected to contribute at least 2 posts to the discussion (and you can decide whether you want to focus on one topic or comment on more than one of them). You will be evaluated based on the quality and quantity of your posts and given a grade that ranges from 0 to 10 points for each two-week block.

Each of the three exams will consist of 70% multiple choice questions and 30% essay questions. More specifically, there will be 35 multiple choice questions (worth 2 points each), and you will have a choice with the essay questions, such that you will be given 5 essay questions, and you will respond to 3 of them (worth 10 points each). The material covered in each exam will be approximately 70% from lecture material and 30% from textbook material. Note that the third exam is not a cumulative exam. Each exam will be available on Blackboard for a 55-hour period, as specified on the course schedule. You will have one attempt to complete the exam. Once you begin the exam, you will have 80 minutes to work on it. An extra credit opportunity is available, and this is described below.

## Grading Distribution

Weekly Discussion/Participation Average	25%
Exams (3 at 25% each)	75%
Total	100%

## Extra Credit Opportunity

If you would like to earn extra credit points for this course, you can do so by completing an extra credit project. This project involves locating a recently published (2012 to 2018) article that is relevant to best (e.g., Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Journal of Personality, etc.). Articles from other journals or even popular magazines may be OK but check the article with me first. Articles that appear online are appropriate. Please summarize the major points of the article. Then, discuss how the content of the article fits in with material contained in class lectures and/or your textbook. Is the information in the article consistent with what we have covered in class or not? What new information have you learned? Do you agree with the approach of the article (e.g., is appropriate research cited, does the article seem to be objective or subjective in nature)?

Your paper should be 2-3 pages, typed. Also, **please submit a copy of the article** (or a link to the article, if it is available online) along with your summary/critique. This assignment is worth up to 10 points. These points will be added to the TOTAL number of points you earn in the course. Final grades are determined by this equation (Participation Percentage Points + Exam 1 score + Exam 2 score + Exam 3 score + extra credit points)/4. All extra credit papers are **due on Thursday May 10, 2018**. This assignment should be submitted to me electronically via email (robbins@maine.edu).

## Assignment of Final Grades

Final grades will be based on the total number of points earned on the three exams, participation points, and the extra credit paper. The basic distribution for the final grades will be:

93% to 100%	= A
90% to 92.9%	= A-
87% to 89.9%	= B+
82% to 86.9%	= B
79% to 81.9%	= B-
76% to 78.9%	= C+
72% to 75.9%	= C
69% to 71.9%	= C-
66% to 68.9%	= D+
62% to 65.9%	= D
58% to 61.9%	= D-
57.9% or lower	= F

**Incomplete grades** will be given only under special circumstances and must be discussed with the instructor prior to the last week of class (i.e., **by April 30, 2018**).

## Class Participation/Discussion

Although this course gives you some flexibility in completing the requirements, you are expected to adhere to the schedule, set up primarily in 2-week blocks. It is important that you view the lectures during the weeks in which they are scheduled. To encourage more active engagement with the course material, you are required to contribute at least two posts in response to the four major discussion questions I will post at the beginning of each two-week block. You may respond to my question and/or to comments/questions posed by others. You should also feel free to pose your own questions. These posts should be substantive and two to three paragraphs in length. It is critical to be civil in your comments and to be respectful of others' comments. Please realize that I will remove any inappropriate or disrespectful posts. Such postings will not count toward your participation. Also, within your comments, please do NOT reveal the identity of specific individuals. Please remember that participation in the discussion is a class assignment, and I expect that you will carefully proofread your writing. All contributions for a specific two-week block must be made by Sunday at 11PM on the date stipulated in

the syllabus. **Class participation for a particular week can be made up at a later time but only with a lateness penalty (minimum 10%, additional 10% per week).**

### **Make-up exams**

Arrangements for an alternative time to take the exam will be considered **only** if you notify the instructor **before** the scheduled time of the exam.

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is very important. It is dishonest to cheat on the exams by consulting your notes, textbook, or other materials. It is also dishonest to copy papers or submit papers written by another person.

Students committing or aiding any of these violations may be given failing grades for the assignment or for the entire course, at the discretion of the instructor. In addition to any academic action taken by an instructor, these violations are subject to action under the University of Maine student Conduct Code. The maximum possible sanction under the student conduct code is dismissal from the University.

### **Students with Disabilities**

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact the Director of Disabilities Services, 121 East Annex, 581-2319, as early as possible in the term.

### **Course Schedule**

In the event of an extended disruption of normal classroom activities, the format for this course may be modified to enable its completion within its programmed time frame. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to the syllabus that will supersede this version.

## Course Calendar

Date	Topics	Reading Assignment	Work due
<b>SECTION 1</b> Weeks 1 & 2  January 22 – February 4	Introduction, Psychoanalytic and Neoanalytic Theories: Freud, Jung	Introduction, Chapters 1,2,3	<b>Discussion 1</b> February 4 – at least 2 posts to class discussion
<b>SECTION 1</b> Weeks 3 & 4  February 5 – February 18	Psychoanalytic and Neoanalytic Theories: Adler, Horney, Erikson	Chapters 4, 5, 6	<b>Discussion 2</b> February 18 – at least 2 posts to class discussion
<b>SECTION 1</b> Week 5  February 19 – February 25			<b>Exam 1</b> - from 9AM February 21 to 4PM February 23, on material relating to Chapt. 1 - 6
<b>SECTION 2</b> Weeks 6 & 7  February 26 – March 11	Psychoanalytic and Neoanalytic Theories: Kohut  Trait Theories: Allport, Cattell	Chapters 7, 8, 9	<b>Discussion 3</b>  March 11 – at least 2 posts to class discussion
<b>SECTION 2</b> Weeks 8 & 9  March 19 – April 1	Trait Theories: Eysenck  Cognitive Theory: Kelly  Humanistic Theories: Maslow	Chapters 10, 11, 12	<b>Discussion 4</b>  April 1 – at least 2 posts to class discussion
<b>SECTION 2</b> Week 10  April 2 – April 8			<b>Exam 2</b> - from 9AM April 4 to 4PM April 6, on material relating to Chapt. 7 - 12



<p><b>SECTION 3</b> Weeks 11 &amp; 12  April 9- April 22</p>	<p>Humanistic Theories: Rogers  Existential Theory: May  Behavioral/ Learning Theories: Skinner</p>	<p>Chapters 13, 14, 15</p>	<p><b>Discussion 5</b>  April 22 – at least 2 posts to class discussion</p>
<p><b>SECTION 3</b>  Weeks 13 &amp; 14  April 23- May 6</p>	<p>Behavioral/ Learning Theories: Rotter, Bandura  Current Status and Future Directions in Personality Psychology</p>	<p>Chapters 16, 17, 18</p>	<p><b>Discussion 6</b>  May 6 – at least 2 posts to class discussion</p>
<p><b>SECTION 3</b> Weeks 15 May 7 – May 11</p>			<p>May 10 – <b>extra credit paper</b> due  <b>Exam 3</b> - from 9 AM May 9 to 4PM May 11, on material relating to Chapt. 13 - 18</p>

**NOTE: Spring Break March 12 to March 18**

Final date for all work to be in, unless other arrangements have been made with instructor:

**May 11, 2018**

## **Sexual Discrimination Reporting**

The University of Maine is committed to making campus a safe place for students. Because of this commitment, if you tell any of your teachers about sexual discrimination involving members of the campus, **your teacher is required to report** this information to the campus Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

Behaviors that can be “sexual discrimination” include sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship abuse (dating violence and domestic violence), sexual misconduct, and gender discrimination. Therefore, all of these behaviors must be reported.

### **Why do teachers have to report sexual discrimination?**

The university can better support students in trouble if we know about what is happening. Reporting also helps us to identify patterns that might arise – for example, if more than one victim reports having been assaulted or harassed by the same individual.

### **What will happen to a student if a teacher reports?**

An employee from the Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention or the Office of Equal Opportunity will reach out to you and offer support, resources, and information. You will be invited to meet with the employee to discuss the situation and the various options available to you.

If you have requested confidentiality, the University will weigh your request that no action be taken against the institution’s obligation to provide a safe, nondiscriminatory environment for all students. If the University determines that it can maintain confidentiality, you must understand that the institution’s ability to meaningfully investigate the incident and pursue disciplinary action, if warranted, may be limited. There are times when the University may not be able to honor a request for confidentiality because doing so would pose a risk to its ability to provide a safe, nondiscriminatory environment for everyone. If the University determines that it cannot maintain confidentiality, the University will advise you, prior to starting an investigation and, to the extent possible, will share information only with those responsible for handling the institution’s response

The University is committed to the well-being of all students and will take steps to protect all involved from retaliation or harm.

**If you want to talk in confidence** to someone about an experience of sexual discrimination, please contact these resources:

For *confidential resources on campus*: **Counseling Center: 207-581-1392** or **Cutler Health Center: at 207-581-4000**.  
For *confidential resources off campus*: **Rape Response Services: 1-800-310-0000** or **Spruce Run: 1-800-863-9909**.

**Other resources:** The resources listed below can offer support but may have to report the incident to others who can help:

For *support services on campus*: **Office of Sexual Assault & Violence Prevention: 207-581-1406**, **Office of Community Standards: 207-581-1409**, **University of Maine Police: 207-581-4040 or 911**. Or see the OSVP website for a complete list of services at <http://www.umaine.edu/osavp/>