

## Psychology 361: Personality

Fall 2006

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Room 231 Hurd Academic Complex

Class meets on Monday and Wednesday in Room 232: Section B (11:25am-12:35pm)

### Overview:

This course is designed to examine personality and personality theories at both the theoretical and empirical levels of analysis. We will examine both personality theorists and paradigms, noting how closely the two are often intertwined--specifically, we will review the psychodynamic, the humanistic, the trait, the cognitive-behavioral paradigms. Our discussions will be supplemented by contemporary readings from the personality literature as well as a recent trend in the field--the study of personal myth and life stories (McAdams, 1993). Our primary goals in this course will be to critically consider the role of culture and social life in the development and understanding of personality.

**Prerequisite: Psychology 211.**

### Required Texts (available in the HUB Bookstore):

Funder, D. C. (2004). *The personality puzzle*. New York: Norton.

Malcolm, J. (1982). *Psychoanalysis: The impossible profession*. New York: Vintage.

McAdams, D. P. (1993). *The stories we live by: Personal myths and the making of the self*. New York: William Morrow.

Vaillant, G. (1993). *The wisdom of the ego*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard.

## Course Requirements

1. **Exams.** There will be two exams (one mid-term and one final). The exams will be comprised of essay questions. Each exam will be worth 25% for a total of 50% of your course grade. A missed exam will be recorded as a zero (0) grade. Make-up exams will be given at the discretion of the instructor and for valid reasons only (e.g., documented medical excuse, emergency).
2. **Class participation and attendance.** Critical evaluation of the various approaches to construing personality is essential, thus you are expected to attend all classes prepared to discuss the assigned material. A portion of your final grade (15%) will reflect your contribution to our discussions.

Please note that I **will** be taking role, thus your absence from class will affect your participation grade (i.e., if you are not in class, you cannot contribute to discussion). If you miss a class, you are responsible for any material covered, notes given, announcements, etc. If you are absent, please see one of your classmates regarding that day's assignments.

3. **Myth, Self, and Identity Exercise.** Part of our goal in this course is to understand recent trends in the field of personality. Beyond reading the McAdams' (1993) text, you will have the opportunity to explore the idea of "imagoes", the characters that are said to dominate our life stories. You will keep a journal for two weeks and write about the images and roles you reflect on during that period. You will then identify your individual myth(s) and major life events, and then the imago(es) frequently called upon to make sense out of them. These imagoes will then be integrated into a life history paper that discussed their function in past and present life scripts, with special consideration given to their generative implications for the future. We will discuss this assignment in detail during class.

**A set of directions for this exercise is attached to this syllabus.** However, you **must** read chapter 10 in the McAdams text before beginning the exercise (note that this chapter is being assigned here and not in the course outline below). Your (a) myth/identity journal and (b) the finished paper are due on Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>.

4. **Trait Assessment Exercise.** You will assess you personality by completing a standard scale, and then have a few friends and/or family members rate you using the same measure. The two sets of ratings will be compared for valuative consistency. Do you see yourself as others see you? The due date for the exercise is due on Wednesday, September 27th, and it is worth 10% of your final grade.
5. **Personality Construct Paper.** Write a short, APA-style research paper (8-10 pages, including title page, Abstract page, and References) defining and

describing a personality construct you select. Sample constructs include delay of gratification, introversion-extroversion, defensive pessimism, optimism, self-esteem, and the similar. Your paper should (a) define the construct, (b) describe how the construct manifests itself behaviorally and/or cognitively, (c) provide examples of how the construct influences people's behavior in everyday settings, and (d) summarize research on the construct drawn from at least three primary sources (preferably empirical journal articles). There are two due dates for this paper: On September 25<sup>th</sup>, please submit a brief description of your construct and supply three references (one page typed). The final paper is due at the beginning of class on November 13<sup>th</sup>. **Please see—and follow—the evaluation sheet attached to the end of this syllabus when writing this paper.**

6. **Later Paper Policy.** You have three written assignments for this class. Hard copies of all paper assignments are due at the beginning of class or in advance of the dates listed in the syllabus. Papers submitted later than this time—**for any reason**—will be penalized by 20% (i.e., an paper that would have earned a 95 on time receives a 75) on the first day and 10% each day thereafter (including weekends), up to 50%. Practically speaking, a paper that is 5 days late receives a grade of 50 once it is turned in—if it is never submitted, then it receives a grade of 0. I will not accept electronic copies of papers sent via email, only hard copies. Plan accordingly by working ahead and consistently on your papers.
7. **Submitting work early.** I am happy to accept your papers before they are due.
8. **Academic honesty.** The College's policy on Academic honesty (particularly regarding plagiarism) will be strictly enforced. Please see the Psychology Department handbook for a copy or obtain one from the Academic Dean's office. Please see me if you have any questions about academic honesty (e.g., proper citation and source crediting).
9. **Grading.** Your final course grade will be based on the following percentage weights:

Two essay exams (midterm and final)	40% (20% each)
Identity paper	15%
Trait exercise	10%
Construct paper	20%
Class attendance and participation	15%

8. **Office hours.** My office hours for Fall 2006 are listed below. Appointments at other times may be scheduled.

Monday	10:15-11:15am
Wednesday	2-3pm
Friday	8:30-10:30am

## Course Schedule

M Aug 28	Overview of the Course
W Aug 30	Defining Personality Funder chapter 1
M Sept 4	<i>Labor Day – No class meeting</i>
W Sept 6	Research Methods in Personality Funder chapters 2 and 3
M Sept 11	Traits Funder chapter 4 - begin <i>Trait Exercise</i>
W Sept 13	Assessing Traits: Testing Funder chapter 5
M Sept 18	Assessing Traits in Daily Life Funder chapter 6
W Sept 20	Traits and Behavior Funder chapter 7 - <i>Trait Exercise</i> paper due
M Sept 25	Personality and Biology Funder chapter 8 <i>Construct Paper topic and 3 references due (typed)</i>
W Sept 27	Inheritance, Behavior Genetics, and Evolution Funder chapter 9
M Oct 2	<i>Midterm Exam</i>
W Oct 4	Personality: Narrative and Story Telling McAdams Preface, pp. 11-15, and chapters 1 and 2 Begin <i>Myth, Self, and Identity Project</i>
F Oct 6	Midterm Point of Semester  <i>Fall Recess: Sat Oct 7 – Tu Oct 10</i>
M Oct 9	Fall Recess – No Class Meeting
W Oct 11	Myths and Narrative continued McAdams chapters 3 - 6

- M Oct 16 Myths and Narrative complete  
McAdams chapters 7 to 9 and Epilogue
- W Oct 18 Psychoanalysis  
Funder chapter 10  
  
Film: *Sigmund Freud: His Offices and Home, Vienna 1938*
- M Oct 23 The Unconscious Mind  
Funder chapter 11
- W Oct 25 Psychoanalysis: Beyond Freud  
*Myth, Self, and Identity Project Paper due*
- M Oct 30 Personality, Self, and Culture I  
Malcolm *Psychoanalysis: The Impossible Profession pp. 3-78.*
- W Nov 1 Personality, Self, and Culture II  
Malcolm *Psychoanalysis: The Impossible Profession 79-163.*
- M Nov 6 Humanistic Psychology I  
Funder chapter 13
- W Nov 8 Humanistic Psychology II
- M Nov 13 Cross-cultural Issues  
Funder chapter 14  
*Construct Paper due*
- W Nov 15 Social Learning Theory  
Funder chapter 15
- M Nov 20 Cognitive Approaches  
Funder chapter 16
- T Nov 21 Thanksgiving Recess Begins 10pm
- W Nov 22 *No Class Meeting – Thanksgiving Break*
- M Nov 27 Cognition and Personality Across Life's Arc  
Funder chapter 17 and Valliant's *Wisdom of the Ego Chs. 1-3*
- W Nov 29 Personality Across Life's Arc II  
Valliant's *Wisdom of the Ego II Chs. 4-8*
- M Dec 4 Personality Across Life's Arc III

Finish Valliant's *Wisdom of the Ego*

W Dec 6                      Conclusions  
                                    Funder chapter 18

M Dec 11                    Last Class Meeting

W Dec 13 – Sat Dec 16; M Dec 18 and Tu Dec 19 – Final Exam Period

*Date and time of Final Exam will be announced*

## Personality Construct Paper Evaluation Sheet

Your paper should be formatted following APA-style and no more than 8 to 10 pages in length. It should include a title page, an Abstract (75 words or so), a body of 6 to 8 pages, and a References section (the contents of which must adhere to APA-style). I will use the following guidelines to evaluate your paper. *I recommend that once you have a good draft of your paper, use these guidelines to evaluate and revise your work before submitting it to me on November 15<sup>th</sup>.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*Content and Style (1 = poor to 5 = excellent)*

Construct clearly defined with behavioral and/or cognitive descriptions	1	2	3	4	5
Description of how/when the construct manifests itself	1	2	3	4	5
Example(s) of the construct in everyday life provided	1	2	3	4	5
Research summaries from 3 or more quality references	1	2	3	4	5
Smooth transitions from topic to topic	1	2	3	4	5
Writing style is clear and concise	1	2	3	4	5

*Technical Issues (1 = poor to 5 = excellent)*

Title page adheres to APA-style	1	2	3	4	5
Abstract is appropriate length and highlights main ideas	1	2	3	4	5
Organization (logical, good transitions, links among main ideas)	1	2	3	4	5
Grammar, punctuation, and spelling	1	2	3	4	5
Paper is free of typographical errors	1	2	3	4	5
Paper is appropriate length	1	2	3	4	5
Overall use of APA format	1	2	3	4	5

*Final Grade on paper:* \_\_\_\_\_