

Psychology 105
Psychology of Human Adjustment
Spring 2010

Ms. Amy Holtzman Vazquies

Email: akholtzman@moravian.edu

Phone: 610-740-9805 (before 7:30pm)

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, before and after class
If these times are inconvenient, please feel free to email me to set up an appointment.

Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday from 8:55-10:05

Class Location: PPHAC 233

Course Overview and Objectives:

The basic theoretical principles of psychology provide a solid foundation for developing an understanding of adjustment and coping. In this course, we will demonstrate the applicability of these theories to your life. Students will:

- Understand and discuss the study of behavior in relation to the challenges of adjustment in today's complex world
- Develop a greater self knowledge and awareness through the understanding of psychological principles
- Gain knowledge of theories that guide the field of psychology
- Apply critical thinking skills to concepts and self

Examinations:

There will be three exams given during the term. The first two exams will be given during class time. The third exam will be given during final exam week. Questions will test your knowledge of both lecture and textbook material. Exams will be given only on the days scheduled. The only excuse for missing an exam is documented illness or death in the family. All makeup exams will be given at 7:30 AM. Any inexcusable absence from an exam will be recorded as a zero.

Critical Thinking Projects:

Critical thinking provides you an opportunity to analyze your assumptions, consider alternatives and develop deeper self-understanding. You are required to complete both critical thinking projects. Please note that late papers and journals will be dropped $\frac{1}{2}$ a letter grade for each day after a paper is due. Work that is emailed after the class period ends is considered 1 day late and will be dropped by $\frac{1}{2}$ a letter grade. Work will not be accepted after 4 days. It is your responsibility to get your work done in a timely manner and use back-ups to save your work.

1. Learning Journal: Maintain a weekly journal to stimulate self-understanding and personal growth. Explore classroom topics and their relationship to your life. You are encouraged to use the attached topical questions or the questions (Exercises or

Questions for Self-Reflection) at the end of each chapter in of your textbook. Journals will be collected on dates noted in your syllabus and will be reviewed in regard to critical thinking about classroom topics. Just turning in your journals isn't enough, I expect you to genuinely engage in the topic in a serious way. I will read your journals for ideas, content and engagement.

2. Adjustment Project: See attached information at end of syllabus.

Attendance and Class Participation:

Attendance for all classes is **expected**. Please note that missing three classes will lower **your final grade by 1/3 of a letter grade (B to a B-)**. You are responsible for the material and activities presented in class, as the lecture material is meant to supplement your readings. You are expected to read assigned texts prior to each class session. Many of our classroom topics will have reflection discussion topics. Your participation in these discussions and other classroom discussions and activities is **expected**. You will have an opportunity to assess your participation grade in the class at midterm.

Evaluation:

Your grade for this class will be comprised of exams, critical thinking journals and project, and your class participation. The breakdown is as follows:

- Exams: 60% (3 at 20%)
- Journal: 15%
- Adjustment Project: 15%
- Participation: 10%

I will use the following grade scale:

Letter Grade	Number Grade Equivalent	Range
A	100	95-100
A-	92	90-94
B+	88	87-89
B	85	83-86
B-	81	80-82
C+	78	77-79
C	75	73-76
C-	71	70-72
D+	68	67-69
D	65	63-66
D-	61	60-62
F	0	0-59

Policy on Plagiarism:

The Psychology Department has set policy on plagiarism. Plagiarism is the intentional misrepresentation of someone else's work as your own. This includes various situations such as quoting directly from a published work without properly acknowledging the author, having someone write a paper for you, "borrowing" from fraternity or sorority files, buying a paper from a professional service, etc. The policy in the department is that students must keep all note cards and rough drafts on a paper until the grade is assigned. The course instructor may request these materials at any time. Evidence of plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with the College Policy on academic honesty, I will follow the college's policy as it is written.

Required Student Research:

You will be required to participate in two research projects (totaling at least one hour of participation) being conducted by students in PS212, Experimental and Data Analysis (or by Honors/Independent Study students or faculty research projects). This experience allows you to view the research process first hand and supports student research. All the research studies will have been reviewed and approved by a Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) Committee; however, if you have objections to participating in research, you may arrange to complete an alternative, written assignment, which will involve reading a psychological article. In order to do the alternative assignment, you must meet with me to arrange it **before the 6th week of classes**. After that point, you may still have the opportunity to complete the research requirement by participating in experiment sessions, but you will not be able to do a written assignment. More information about research participation (e.g., how to sign up) will be provided later in the semester, when experiment opportunities start to become available. Failure to complete the required participation (or the alternative assignment) will result in a reduction of your grade by 1/3 a letter grade (e.g., from a B to a B-). The entire required hour needs to be completed to avoid this deduction (i.e., completing ½ hour only will still result in the full deduction).

Please be sure when you sign-up for research participation that you make note of the start time and location AND be sure to arrive on time.

Required Texts:

Duffy, K.G. & Atwater, E. (2008). Psychology for Living: Adjustment, Growth & Behavior Today. (9th ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Any additional readings will be on reserve in the library or handed out during the class.

Class Schedule

(Please note that class schedule is subject to change. Any changes will be noted in an addendum to the syllabus and explained by the instructor)

Note: Text in **Bold** means assignment or reading needs to be completed for the date listed.

Week 1: Introduction to Course

Jan 19: What is Adjustment?

Jan 21: Critical Thinking Activity

Week 2: Self-Direction in a Changing World

Jan 26: **Chapter 1**

Jan 28: Adjustment Project Planning/ **Journal**

Week 3: The Journey Begins – Childhood

Feb 2: **Chapter 2**

Feb 4: Reflection Discussion/ **Journal**

Week 4: Affirmative Aging—Adulthood

Feb 9: **Chapter 3**

Feb 11: Reflection Discussion/ **Journal/ Submit Journal**

Week 5: Seeking Selfhood

Feb 16: **Chapter 4**

Feb 18: Reflection Discussion/ **Journal**

Week 6: Exam I & Group Exercise

Feb 23: **Exam I**

Feb 25: Group Exercise and Adjustment Project Meetings/ **Journal**

Week 7: Leader or Follower

March 2: **Chapter 9**

March 4: Reflection Discussion/ **Journal/ Submit Adjustment Project Plan/Submit Journal**

Week 8: Spring Break

March 9: Spring Break

March 11: Spring Break

Week 9: Making and Keeping Friends

March 16: **Chapter 8**

March 18: Reflection Discussion/ **Journal**

Week 10: Stress!

March 23: **Chapter 13**

March 25: Reflection Discussion/ Guided Relaxation/ **Journal**

Week 11: Exam II & Career Development Presentation

March 30: **Exam II**

April 1: Career Development Presentation/**Journal**

Week 12: At Work and Play

April 6: **Chapter 10/ Career Assessment**

April 8: Reflection Discussion/ **Journal/ Submit Journal**

Week 13: Adjustment Project Presentations

April 13: **Adjustment Project Presentations/Submit Papers**

April 15: **Adjustment Project Presentations**

Week 14: Love and Commitment

April 20: **Chapter 12**

April 22: Reflection Discussion

Week 15: If You Go For Help

April 27: **Chapter 15**

April 29: Closure: Critical Thinking About Self

Final Exam: Tuesday, May 4 @ 8:30AM

Journal Questions

(Remember: There are many questions at the end of each chapter in your text to choose from for you weekly journal)

- This course has a focus on gaining insight into your own patterns of adjustment. How do you feel about what lies ahead for you in this course? What kinds of life experiences may have influenced your attitude—whether excited or guarded—about exploring aspects of your being?
- Construct a list of 5 or 6 characteristics that you think are an enduring part of your make-up as a person. As you look at this list, consider the following about your self-reflection: Do you always behave in ways that are consistent with these traits? Would your closest friends agree with your characterization? Were your descriptions realistic or idealistic?
- To what degree do physiological concerns contribute to the stress you perceive in managing all that you must in order to succeed in college? Which biological systems tend to fall victim to the strains in your life?
- Have you developed reasonable ways to vent your frustration and solve problems early in their development? If so, what are your mechanisms for coping? If not, what do you think you could do to help cope with life stressors?
- Who have been your role models? In what ways have they influenced your identity? Are your role models very similar to you? How did they become your role models?
- What is your style of leadership? Are there certain situations or circumstances in which your flair for leadership emerges? Or are you still waiting to discover situations in which you could exercise true leadership?
- As a child, how did you respond to the question “What do you want to be when you grow up?” Is there a pattern of values and interests present in your early career fantasies that still exists in your current goals?

Adjustment Project:

Step 1: Select your Activity.

As a group, you need to develop a two-week program to improve some aspect of handling stress. Think about how you can best improve your adjustment. Select an activity that you can all do that you feel will help your relax/handle stress in your life. You may choose one of the following examples or you may come up with your own idea.

Examples:

Breathing and relaxation techniques

Participate in a hobby or activity

Exercise

Step 2: Create your program.

Write a program overview and be specific. Be sure to answer the following questions: What are you going to do? How often will you do the activity and for how long?

While your group should follow the same program, you may do a variation of the activity. For example, if you chose to do an aerobic exercise, you do not have to do the same type of exercise.

Step 3: Select a method of assessment.

With your group, select a method to assess the effectiveness of your stress relieving technique. Be sure to use the assessment before and after implementing your program. This will allow you to have a baseline to measure your adjustment against. Examples of assessments can be daily mood logs, sleep logs, or a questionnaire. If you are looking for some questionnaires, take a look at:

Step 4: Submit Adjustment Project Plan.

Write a project plan as a group. You will need to submit your group's plan on March 4th for review and approval.

Once your program has been approved, you can complete the following steps:

Step 5: Implement your program.

Be sure to keep a log of what you do and when you do it, and measure your improvement during and/or after your program (your outcome measure).

Step 6: Write individual paper.

Write your individual paper which is due on April 13th. Your paper should be 3-5 pages and contain the following (please use these subheadings in your paper):

1. Rationale for the program.
2. Design of the program.
3. Effect of the program on the group and on you individually.
4. Discuss the effects of the program and how your experience compared with your group members. Would you choose to repeat your program or select something else? Why?

5. Future plan. Will you continue in the program? Why or Why not?

Step 7: Group Presentations.

Present the results of your program to the class. Your group will have 20 minutes which should be equally shared by all members. Presentations will be held on April 13th and 15th. You may structure your presentation any way you wish, but your presentations should clearly communicate:

1. A description of your program and why chose it.
2. What was it like to do your program? Easier or harder than you thought? More or less fun?
3. The effects of the program on your group's adjustment. Did it work? Why or why not?
4. Discuss whether you would recommend this program to others. If not, why not?