

Psychology 361: Personality

Spring 2013



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Class meets on Monday and Wednesday mornings (8:55am-10:05am)

Course 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 trait, biological, psychodynamic, humanistic, cross-cultural, and the cognitive-behavioral paradigms. Our discussions will be supplemented by short book on psychoanalysis as we as one exploring a recent trend in the field—the critical study of how personality can be decoded from people’s private spaces and personal property (Gosling, 2008). 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.

Required Texts (available in the HUB Bookstore):

Funder, D. (2012). *The personality puzzle* (6th ed.). New York, NY: Norton. ISBN: 978-0-393-12441-4 (Paper)

Gosling, S. (2008). *Snoop*. New York, NY: Basic Books. ISBN: 978-0-465-01382-1 (Paper)

Malcolm, J. (1982). *Psychoanalysis: The impossible profession*. New York, NY: Vintage (paperback). ISBN-13: 978-0394710341 (Paper)

Recommended book (optional) for PS 361:

Dunn, D. S. (2011). *A Short Guide to Writing about Psychology* (3rd ed.). New York: Pearson Longman. (paper) ISBN: 978-0-205-75281-2

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. **Snooping your personal space exercise.** Part of our goal in this course is to understand recent trends in the field of personality. Beyond reading the Gosling (2008) text, you will have the opportunity to explore how people's personalities can be predicted and interpreted from their personal spaces and some possessions. We will be reading and discussing *Snoop*, a description of psychological research finding that people's personalities can be discerned through the spaces they inhabit, as well as the things found in these spaces. You will be writing your paper on your own self-snoop project. In other words, you will do an analysis of your personality traits and write an objective description of your room. You will then connect your personality traits to the space and the things found in it in order to determine whether Gosling's theories and insights match your own experience. Your paper should be written using APA style, meaning that it will have a title page, an introduction, a Method section (describing what you did as a researcher), a Results section (where you assess your observations of your personality and your "snooped" personal space), and a Discussion (where you assess how well your experiences match the arguments made by Gosling), and a Reference section (where any citations appear in APA Style). We will discuss this assignment in detail during class.
4. **Dream interpretation exercise.** You will perform an analysis and interpretation of your dreams following Freud's method. We will discuss Freudian dream interpretation during class while reading both the Funder text and the Malcom book. Instructions for the exercise are provided later in this syllabus. The due date for the exercise is due on **Monday, March 25th** and it is worth 15% of your final grade.

5. **Personality Construct Paper.** Write a short, APA-style review 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 **Monday, February 11th**, please submit a brief description of your construct and supply three quality references (one page typed) for approval. The final paper is due at the beginning of class on **Monday, April 8th**. **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. *Disability issues.* Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, assistant director of learning services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

10. **Grading.** Your final course grade will be based on the following percentage weights:

Two essay exams (midterm and final)	40% (20% each)
Snoop paper	15%
Dream interpretation exercise	15%
Construct paper	15%
Class attendance and participation	15%

8. **Office hours.** My office hours for spring 2013 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 Jan 14	Overview of the Course
W Jan 16	Defining Personality: Studying the Person Funder chapter 1
M Jan 21	<i>Martin Luther King Day – No class meeting</i>
W Jan 23	Research Methods in Personality Funder chapters 2 and 3
M Jan 28	Traits, Situations, Behavior Funder chapter 4
W Jan 30	Assessing Traits: Testing Funder chapter 5
M Feb 4	Assessing Traits in Daily Life Funder chapter 6
W Feb 6	Traits and Behavior Funder chapter 7
M Feb 11	<i>Snoop</i> Chapters 1 – 3 Do Big Five/Ocean Traits questionnaire on page xx – Bring your results to class <i>Construct Paper topic and 3 references due (typed)</i> <i>Begin outlining and drafting Snoop paper</i>
W Feb 13	<i>Snoop</i> Chapters 4 – 6
M Feb 18	<i>Midterm Exam</i>
W Feb 20	<i>Snoop</i> Chapters 7 – 9
F Feb 22	Midterm Point of Semester
M Feb 25	Personality and Biology

Finish *Snoop* chapters 10 – 11
Funder chapter 8

W Feb 27 Inheritance, Behavior Genetics, and Evolution
Funder chapter 9

Spring Break: Sat Mar 2 – Sun Mar 10

M Mar 11 Psychoanalysis
Funder chapter 10
Begin Dream Interpretation exercise

Film: *Sigmund Freud: His Offices and Home, Vienna 1938*

W Mar 13 The Unconscious Mind
Funder chapter 11
Snoop paper due

M Mar 18 *Psychoanalysis: The Impossible Profession I*
Read Malcolm pages 3 – 78

W Mar 20 *Psychoanalysis: The Impossible Profession II*
Finish Malcolm pages 79 - 163

M Mar 18 Psychoanalysis: Beyond Freud
Funder chapter 12

W Mar 20 Humanistic Psychology I
Funder chapter 13

M Mar 25 Humanistic Psychology II
Dream exercise paper due

W Mar 27 Cultural Variation in Experience, Behavior, & Personality
Funder chapter 14

Easter Break F Mar 29 – M Apr 1

W Apr 3 Behaviorism and Social Learning Theory
Funder chapter 15

F Apr 5 Last Day to Withdrawal with a (W)

M Apr 8 Personality Processes
Funder chapter 16
Construct Paper due

W Apr 10	The Self Funder chapter 17
M Apr 15	Construct Paper Discussion <i>Construct</i> paper due in class
W Apr 17	Personality Disorders Funder chapter 18
M Apr 22	Conclusions Funder chapter 19
W Apr 24	Last Class – Wrap Up
Sa Apr 26	Last Day of Classes

M Apr 29 – F May 3 – Final Exam Period

Date and time of Final Exam will be announced

Dream Exercise

Due date: Monday, March 25th

1. Begin a dream diary immediately. When you wake up in the morning, write down as much as you can remember about each of your dreams.
2. Choose **one** of these dreams to analyze for your project.
3. Do not try to interpret it right away. Divide the dream into smaller parts (following Freud's technique) and then free associate to each one. Do this in writing, please—it will be part of what you turn in with the paper. Bear in mind that free association is not easy at first, that it requires some practice. Write down whatever comes to mind, no matter how silly, irrelevant (or irreverent), bizarre, or mundane your thoughts seem to be. Be sure to associate to all parts of the dream. As Freud notes in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, it is best to conduct your analysis over several days, not at one sitting.
4. After your free associations are complete, interpret the dream as best you can. What does it seem to mean? Are there several simultaneous interpretations, as Freud suggests there often are? *Exactly how does your dream express an unconscious wish?* Consider how your analysis relates to our readings and discussions whenever possible.
5. Please type the description of your dreams as well as your final interpretation. After interpreting the dream, answer the questions below (typing them, as well). You do not need to type up the free associations, but do attach them to the typed portion of your project.
 - A. What did you learn about yourself from this exercise? Why?
 - B. According to psychoanalytic theory and dream interpretation, what are some of the problems with self-analysis? Did you encounter any of these problems? If so, which ones? Please discuss them.
 - C. Using your dream analysis as evidence, evaluate Freud's theory of dreams. Do the results of your own analysis confirm or disconfirm his ideas? Why? Be critical.
 - D. Is dream interpretation a useful form of self-insight?

Note: There may be personal issues raised in your project paper or the free associations—please know that I will not be sharing or discussing these materials with anyone else. As always, do not submit materials to me (or anyone) that you want to keep confidential.

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 Monday, April 15th.*

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: _____