

Columbia University
PSYC 4630 GU: Advanced Seminar in Personality Theory and Research
Spring 2020

Time: Mondays, 10:10 am-12:00 pm

Room: TBD

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Office hours: Tuesday, 12:30-13:30

Prerequisites

Open to psychology graduate students and advanced undergraduate psychology majors with instructor's permission.

Course Description

This seminar invites you to engage in critical and creative thinking by pursuing both classic and modern views on personality. We will read the classic papers of the most prominent personality theoreticians and analyze the basic and enduring issues in personality theory and assessment: the ways in which people are different from one another, how people think (consciously and unconsciously), what people want (consciously and unconsciously) and what and why people do. Discussions and readings will cover diverse theoretical principles and methodological approaches to personality. Students will write either a literature review or a research proposal based on the theories presented during the seminar.

Course Rationale and Overview

This seminar invites you to engage in critical and creative thinking by pursuing both classic and modern views on personality. During the course we will review the main theories in Psychology of Personality and develop new ideas for research in this rapidly growing field. In addition to providing a solid knowledge base and relevant scientific research literacy, you will cultivate your oral (e.g. through leading discussions) and written (e.g. through writing a paper) communication skills in this course.

The first half of the term class sessions will center on discussions of assigned readings. We will give an opportunity for each student to lead the class in a role of discussant. There is no substitute for reading original work in a field to appreciate its content and its style. As much as I tried to represent in the reading list the most important areas of personality, no topic is truly covered in depth and it is my hope that students who become seriously interested will engage in further reading. Detailed recommendations about reading scientific articles are posted on Courseworks. You will be quizzed about the main article at the beginning of each class period.

Missed quizzes cannot be made up.

The second part of the term will be dedicated to creating an individual project - *either literature review or research proposal* - through communication both in class and during personal meetings with me. The final product of this process will be a written paper that connects theoretical constructs from personality literature into a comprehensive research idea or review. The paper should be not more 8-10 pages long and detailed requirements for it will be discussed in class and posted on Courseworks.

In order to plan and develop this project you will meet with me individually at least twice throughout the term (more as deemed necessary). As part of the assignment, you will complete a 10-15 minute PowerPoint, to present during the class meeting your ideas. This will allow us to brainstorm together and provide you with constructive group feedback. The final paper will be due the 6th of May, 2020.

Course Goals

By the end of this course you will have:

- Learned fundamental principles and theories in personality; identify, describe, and apply the major theories, including Trait, Psychoanalytic, Neopsychoanalytic, Evolution, Lifespan, Humanistic, Cognitive and Social Learning approaches.
- Improved your creative thinking by synthesizing and applying psychological material, including classic theories and current research findings, to your new ideas.
- Cultivated your personal presentation style as discussion leader through developing your skills to raise interesting questions to engage the audience in it.
- Learned to analyze and critically evaluate ideas and arguments about personality.
- Cultivated your writing of a scientific papers through writing a paper that clearly communicates theories, hypotheses, research methods, and research findings.

PSYC GU4630 will fulfill the following degree requirements:

- For the Psychology major or concentration in the College and in G.S. and for the Psychology Postbac certificate, it will meet the Group III (Social, Personality, and Abnormal) distribution requirement.
- For Psychology Postbac certificate students, and for Psychology majors who enter Columbia in Fall 2013 or later, it will fulfill the seminar requirement.
- For G.S. students it will meet one term of the social science requirement, provided that students obtain the necessary permissions and have taken the prerequisite psychology courses. Majors will have priority over students who are taking the course for social science credit.

Course Grading and Requirements

20%		Class participation
15%		Quizzes

15%	Leading discussion
50%	Individual project (10% presentation, 40% final paper)
5%	Bonus for the productive brainstorming during the second part of the term.

Class Participation

This is an upper-level, discussion-based seminar. To ensure that everyone is accountable for thoroughly engaging with the material during class discussions, your active participation in these discussions will contribute to your final grade.

Generally speaking, effective class preparation and participation could include:

- Asking insightful or clarifying questions.
- Connecting the reading to other reading we've done in the course or reading you've done on your own or in other classes, drawing parallels and/or contrasts among findings.
- Actively listening to fellow classmates and responding to their ideas.
- Offering thoughtful critiques of the research methodology and providing suggestions for how it might be improved.
- Bringing in outside sources—potentially from the news media, your own experience, or other sources—that shed light on these research questions

As attendance and participation are essential not just to your own experience but to that of the rest of the class, inadequate preparation and/or unexcused absences (see Course Policies) will lead to losing Class participation points in the Course Grading - one point for each unexcused absence. As the major focus of each class meeting is discussion, I encourage you to come to me with any concerns ahead of time.

While assigned discussion leaders are expected to lead the class, they are certainly not the only ones responsible for a productive class session. Effective participation involves helping your peers by giving required materials a thorough and thoughtful read while preparing to engage in various points of discussion.

Weekly Quizzes

Each quiz will be comprised of several multiple choice and/or short answer questions and will occur on the day in which the article is assigned to be discussed in class. At the end of the semester, I will allow you to drop your lowest quiz score. ***Missed quizzes cannot be made up.***

Leading Discussions

You are responsible for leading the class discussion once during the course. Each class will have two discussants and two main articles to work on (see the list below). Your role as discussion leader is to provide a succinct overview of the chosen article, *and you* are in charge of initiating and sustaining a healthy class discussion on this material. We will talk more about what that means in class, and I will help to lead the first discussion to help you to get the idea. Leaders are also required to meet with me at least 2 days before their class to go over a discussion map.

Many of you will find using PowerPoint to aid your discussion to be particularly helpful in this regard, but note that I will *not* be grading your PowerPoint or other presentation tools. I will be grading the quality of the discussion your presentation inspires and your ability to raise interesting questions to engage the audience in it.

The individual project (research proposal or review paper)

The research proposal *or* review paper should be no more than 8-10 pages, double-spaced, not including references. The topic of the paper will be determined by each student and should be discussed with me at the individual meetings during the first part of the course, **no later than 04.03.20.**

The research proposal involves developing an idea and design for an original research study on personality. It will be comprised of Introduction, Method, Predicted Results and Discussion. Your proposal should be inspired by theoretical and empirical findings covered in the course and based on additional literature you will find on your own (use at least **six** academic sources; one good way to do this would be to research recent papers that cited the main articles we read for class).

The literature review requires analyzing two (or more) classical psychology theories, relating them to contemporary research. You would introduce a recent research article (published in 2016-2019) and explain how the ideas in this article relate to these two (or more) classical psychology theories. In order to do it, specific concepts, constructs, and principles from these theories must be identified, defined, and critically applied to the research ideas of the article. Reviews earning a strong grade must adhere to APA format, have excellent organization with a clear thesis statement, provide a strong conclusion, and effectively use at least **six** new academic sources.

In order to help you to fully formulate your idea, we will schedule 10-15 minutes Power point presentations in class during the second part of the term, and individual meetings with me. At least one week before the in-class presentation of the personal project, each student will confirm with me and submit on Courseworks one reading that is relevant to their presentation for the whole class to read ahead of time. E.g., a study that uses a similar method, or an article that addresses the same topic but in a different way. Two days before the presentation, s/he will send the one page summary of the project to the whole class to read as well. These steps help ensure that the other students can make helpful and informed suggestions about the personal project. During the second part of the term, I will monitor the class participation in brainstorming of proposed ideas. Up to 5 points bonus will be added to your final grade for particularly helpful suggestions during these sessions.

Class Attendance

Excused absences are granted only if proper documentation (i.e. a letter from your doctor or advising dean) is provided. An unexcused absence will lead to losing Class participation points in the Course Grading - one point for each unexcused absence -- and to receiving a grade of zero on each missed quiz. Note that you are still responsible for the work that is due for that particular class session.

Mobile phones *are not permitted* during class. Laptops may be used for anything course-related, but please refrain from unrelated activities as it distracts you and others.

Students with Disabilities

If you require particular classroom accommodations or support services, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS—<http://health.columbia.edu/services/ods>) to make the necessary arrangements.

Academic Integrity

"The intellectual venture in which we are all engaged requires of faculty and students alike the highest level of personal and academic integrity. As members of an academic community, each one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity...In practical terms, this means that, as students, you must be responsible for the full citations of others' ideas in all of your research papers and projects; you must be scrupulously honest when taking your examinations; you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent."

From the Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity

(www.college.columbia.edu/academics/integrity-statement)

Last but not least, cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated. Any student found guilty of either will receive a zero for that assignment and be referred to the Dean's Disciplinary Process, described here (www.college.columbia.edu/academics/disciplinaryprocess). For more information on what constitutes a violation of academic integrity, consult the Columbia University Guide to Academic Integrity (<http://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/integrity>). Although an exhaustive review of Columbia's policies and the numerous forms that plagiarism can take is not possible here, keep in mind that the following are unacceptable:

- Submitting essays (or portions of essays) written by others as one's own
- Failing to acknowledge—through proper bibliographic and in-text citations—the sources of one's work. This can range from:
- Direct quotations and paraphrases to expressions and *ideas* reflected in others' work. References (and quotation marks where appropriate) are required in all cases, including for website material.
- Intentional to accidental plagiarism—neither is tolerated. It is your responsibility to remain knowledgeable and careful regarding inadvertent plagiarism.
- Collaborating on an assignment without specific permission from the instructor

It is your responsibility to ensure that your work maintains expected standards. Remember that when it comes to issues of academic integrity, it is better to err on the side of caution. That said, if you have any questions about how to appropriately cite existing work or build upon someone else's ideas, please feel free to contact me and I will be happy to help.

Tentative Reading List

The following is the preliminary reading list, which is subject to revision during the semester.

Class	Date	Discussion topics	Required readings: page numbers
1	01.27.20	Introduction	Syllabus, personality test
2	02.03.20	Research Methods in Personality	1. Lee J. Cronbach & Paul E. Meehl 2. Peter Borkenau et al
3	02.10.20	Traits Approaches	1. Gordon W. Allport 2. Robert R. McCrae & Paul T. Costa Jr.
4	02.17.20	Evolution and Gender Approaches	1. Mons Bendixen, Leif Kennair & David Buss
5	02.24.20	Psychoanalytic Approaches	1. Sigmund Freud
6	03.02.20	Psychoanalytic Approaches	1. Carl Jung 2. Karen Horney
7	03.09.20	Neo-psychoanalytic Approaches	1. Erik Erikson 2. Alfred Adler
Spring break			
8	03.23.20	Humanistic Approaches	1. Abraham H. Maslow 2. Carl R. Rogers
9	03.30.20	Cognitive and Social Learning Approaches	1. Albert Bandura 2. Walter Mischel & Yuichi Shoda
04.03.20 Deadline for the topic of the project			
10	04.06.20	Presentation 1	In the second half of the semester, readings for each class will consist of three student proposals and three articles, assigned in advance by that day's presenters following discussion with me and my confirmation
11	04.13.20	Presentation 2	
12	04.20.20	Presentation 3	
13	04.27.20	Presentation 4	
14	05.04.20	Summary	
Final submission of the paper is due on the 6 th of May, 2020			

Bibliography of Required & Supplemental Readings

All papers are available on Courseworks. Readings in *italics* are supplemental readings (recommended for discussion leaders).

Class 1. Introduction.

There are no assigned readings for this class. Please, go over the syllabus and take the personality test in your email (anonymously and voluntarily).

Class 2. Research Methods in Personality

1. Cronbach, L.J. & Meehl, P. E. (1955). Construct Validity in Psychological Tests. *Psychological Bulletin*, 52, 281-302.

- Vazire, S. & Meehl, M.R. (2008). *Knowing Me, Knowing You: The Accuracy and Unique Predictive Validity of Self-Rating and Other-Rating of Daily Behavior*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, 1202-1216.

2. Borkenau, P, Riemann, R, Angleitner, A & Spinath, F.M. (2001). Genetic and Environmental

Influences on Observed Personality: Evidence from the German Observational Study of Adult Twins. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 655-668.

- Gosling, S.D. (2008). *Personality in Non-human Animals. Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2, 985-1001.
- Bleidorn, W, Hopwood, C.J. & Write, A. (2017). *Using Big Data to Advance Personality Theory. Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences*, 18, 79-82.

Class 3. Traits Approaches. Person-Situation Debate.

1. Allport, G. (1931). What is Trait of Personality? *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 25, 368-372

- Mischel, W. (1968). *Consistency and Specificity in Behavior. From Personality and Assessment (New York: Wiley, 13-39.*

2. McCrae, R. R., & Costa Jr, P. T. (1999). A Five-Factor Theory of Personality. *Handbook of personality: Theory and research*, 2(1999), 139-153.

- Roberts, B. W., & Mroczek, D. (2008). *Personality trait change in adulthood. Current directions in psychological science*, 17(1), 31-35.
- Oishi, S. (2004). *Personality in culture: A neo-Allportian view. Journal of Research in Personality*, 38(1), 68-74.

Class 4. Evolution and Gender Approach.

1. Bendixen, M, Kennair, L, & Buss, D.M. (2015). Jealousy: Evidence of Strong Sex Differences Using both Forth Choice and Continuous Measure Paradigms. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 86, 212-216.

- Eagly, A.H. & Wood, W. (1999). *The Origins of Sex Differences in Human Behavior. American Psychologist*, 54(6), 408-423.

Class 5. Psychoanalytic Approaches.

1. Freud, S. (1933/1965). Lecture XXXI: The Dissection of the Psychical Personality. From *New Introductory Lectures on Psycho- Analysis*, by Sigmund Freud, in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, edited and translated by James Strachey (New York: Norton, 1966), 51-71.

Class 6. Psychoanalytic Approaches.

1. Yung, C. (1971). Psychological Types. From *Psychological Types*, translated by R. Hull and H. Baynes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 510-523.

2. Horney, K. (1967). The Distrust between the Sexes. From *Feminine Psychology* (New York: Norton), 104-116.

- Steinem, G. (1994). *Womb envy, testyria, and breast castration anxiety. Revista "MS"*, 4(5).

Class 7. Neo-psychoanalytic Approaches.

1. Erikson, E. (1950). Eight Stages of Man. From *Childhood and Society* (New York: Norton), 219-234
2. Adler, A. (1982). The fundamental views of Individual Psychology. *Individual Psychology: Journal of Adlerian Theory, Research & Practice*, 38(1), 3-6.
{Online book: *Understanding life*}.

Class 8. Humanistic Approach.

1. Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological review*, 50(4), 370.
 - Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1999). *If we are so rich, why aren't we happy?* *American psychologist*, 54(10), 821.
 - Taylor, S. E., Welch, W. T., Kim, H. S., & Sherman, D. K. (2007). *Cultural differences in the Impact of social support on psychological and biological stress responses.* *Psychological Science*, 18(9), 831-837.
2. Rogers, C. R. (1947). Some observations on the organization of personality. *American Psychologist*, 2(9), 358-368

Class 9. Cognitive and Social Learning Approaches. Person-Situation Debate.

1. Bandura, A. (1978). The self-system in reciprocal determinism. *American psychologist*, 33(4), 344.
 - Bandura, A. (1999). *Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective.* *Asian journal of social psychology*, 2(1), 21-41.
2. Mischel, W., & Shoda, Y. (1995). A cognitive-affective system theory of personality: reconceptualizing situations, dispositions, dynamics, and invariance in personality structure. *Psychological review*, 102(2), 246.
 - Mischel, W. (2004). *Toward an integrative science of the person.* *Annual Review of Psychology*, 55, 1-22

—Syllabus is subject to revision. Updates will be posted on Courseworks.—