

Syllabus



PSYC UN2610: Introduction to Personality

Fall 2026

Course Information

Instructor:	Usha Barahmand
Class Hours:	Tuesday-Thursday 10:10 am to 11:25 am
Class Location:	TBA
Semester Start:	Tuesday 09/08/2026
Semester End:	Monday 12/14/2026 Credit Hours: 3
Office Hours:	By appointment
E-mail:	ub2142@columbia.edu

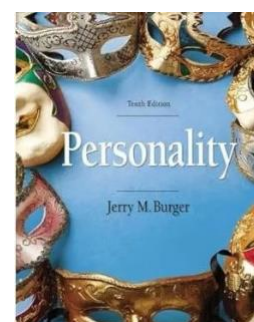
I will respond to any student email within 48 hours during the work week. Please do not wait until the evening before an assignment is due to contact me; I will likely not respond to questions or concerns until the next day.

Pre-Requisite

PSYC 1001 Introduction to Psychology

Required Textbook

Personality, 10th Edition by Jerry M. Burger
ISBN-13 978-1071879368 published by Cengage



Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of personality. We will examine various theoretical perspectives on understanding of personality. We will also discuss current research on personality and individual differences. Furthermore, you will get the opportunity to examine various aspects of your own personality.

Course Objectives

1. Compare and contrast various theories of personality development.
2. Apply theories of personality to case examples in work situations and everyday life.
3. Analyze how personality is assessed within various theories and models.
4. Discuss how behavior problems are understood and modified according to the major theories.

Course Evaluation

Course grades are based on the following five components, weighted as noted.

1. Mid-Term Exam #1 (20% of grade)
2. Mid-Term Exam #2 (25% of grade)
3. Final Exam (25% of grade)
4. Personality description (20%)
5. Article Presentation (10%)

Exams (70%):

Exams will be based on multiple choice and essay questions. They will be held on the days listed in the class schedule, which is subject to modification by the professor. Check your email regularly for revisions in the class schedule. Absence on the day of a test will result in a grade of zero. There will be a total of two midterms (each 20% of your grade) and a final exam (20% of your grade). Content of exams will come from lecture and the required textbook. Please be sure that you are able to attend on exam dates listed below. In fairness to the other students, I will not give make-up exams, so that you will all have the same examination.

Personality Description (20%)

Describe your personality or the personality of someone you know very well. Administer the Ten Item Personality Inventory (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003), the positive and negative affect scale, an academic motivation scale and a self-esteem scale. Describe the person's main traits, current emotional state, motivation and self-esteem. Choose two theories presented in your textbook and apply them to explain what factors may have contributed to the person's personality.

Article Presentation (10%):

Each student will prepare and make a presentation of any one empirical article relevant to personality. The presentation serves two functions. First, they are a means of exposing the class to recent research on aspects of personality. Second, they are a means of learning an important skill -- how to present an empirical paper in a limited amount of time. *In 15 minutes*, you will *summarize* the (a) theory and hypotheses, (b) method, (c) results, and (d) broader relevance of an article. Making appropriate use of visual media, covering only what absolutely needs to be covered, and presenting clearly what you have to say in no more than 15 minutes (the typical time allotted at a conference) are essential components of an effective academic presentation. Details such as what journals the articles must be taken from will be provided in class. Since it is difficult to have all students present live in class, students will have to make recordings of their presentations with accompanying PowerPoint slides, write a one-page summary of the article, and make their submissions via Canvas. Every week only a specific number of students will be able to submit presentations. A sign-up sheet will be made available for you to indicate your preferred week for the submission.

Grading Scale

97-100 = A+

87-89 = B+

77-79 = C+

60-69 = D

94-96 = A

84-86 = B

74-76 = C

<60 = F

90-93 = A-

80-83 = B-

70-73 = C-

Class Policies

Academic Integrity

As members of this academic community, we are expected to maintain the highest level of personal and academic integrity. Consider this excerpt from the Columbia University Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity: “[E]ach one of us bears the responsibility to participate in scholarly discourse and research in a manner characterized by intellectual honesty and scholarly integrity. The exchange of ideas relies upon a mutual trust that sources, opinions, facts, and insights will be properly noted and carefully credited. 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... [and] you must always submit your own work and not that of another student, scholar, or internet agent.” More information about Columbia University

Faculty Statement on Academic Integrity can be found [here](#)

<https://www.college.columbia.edu/academics/academicintegrity>

Plagiarism

Plagiarism – whether intentional or inadvertent – is a serious violation of academic integrity and will thus not be tolerated. You are required to submit exclusively original work that you wrote, composed, or ideated on your own. If you are uncertain or have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, I encourage you to read the information provided on Columbia’s website about the various forms of plagiarism and ways to avoid it. Here is the link to a relevant webpage on plagiarism: <https://www.arch.columbia.edu/plagiarism-policy>

I am obligated to report any incident of plagiarism to the appropriate channels at the university, which may result in significant penalties that may impact your academic career at Columbia. If you feel overwhelmed, confused, or that you are likely to resort to plagiarism, please talk to me. It is better to inform me beforehand so we can try and remediate the issue, whatever it might be, than to deal with such a serious offense after the fact.

Attendance

Attendance is necessary in order to maintain a good grade in this course. Students are responsible for all material presented in class, which includes material that is not found in the textbook. The professor cannot supply notes to students who miss class; you are responsible for asking another student to provide you with notes. Students will participate in a number of in-class exercises designed to help you apply the material learned in the course. These exercises cannot be replicated outside of class, so it is very important to be present in order to participate and fully learn the material. Attendance will be taken every session and students with 100% attendance will get 1 extra credit point which will be added to their overall grade. Those with not more than 2 absences will receive 0.5 extra credit point. Those with more than 2 absences will not receive any extra credit.

Late Assignments

In general, late assignments will not be accepted and graded. Under very certain circumstances, you will be allowed to submit your assignment within 24 hours of the due date. Such circumstances may include a sudden or unplanned event that significantly impacts your ability to submit your assignment on time.

Class Etiquette

If you typically use your laptop for note taking, accessing the assigned readings or response papers, you are welcome to use your laptop for these purposes. In general, as a show of respect to your fellow classmates and instructor, please refrain from using electronic devices during class, including cell phones and laptops for unrelated reasons.

Students with Disabilities/Exceptionalities

Students with any disability or exceptionality that may require any accommodations are requested to contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in Lerner Hall before the start of the course to register for these accommodations. The procedures for registering with ODS can be found at <https://www.health.columbia.edu/content/disability-services> or by calling (212) 854-2388. I also ask that you speak with me after the first class to inform me

of any required accommodations, and I would be more than happy to be of service and assistance to address them.

Class Schedule

Class # / Date	Topic	Required Reading
1. 09/08	Syllabus	
2. 09/10	What is Personality	Chapter 1
3. 09/15	Personality Research Methods	Chapter 2
4. 09/17	Class activity 1	
5. 09/22	The Psychoanalytic approach	Chapter 3
6. 09/24	Freudian Approach: Relevant Research	Chapter 4
7. 09/29	Neo-Freudian Approach	Chapter 5
8. 10/01	Neo-Freudian Theories: Relevant Research	Chapter 6
9. 10/06	Class Activity 2	
10.10/08	Mid-Term Exam #1	Chapters 1-6
11. 10/13	The Trait Approach	Chapter 7
12. 10/15	The Trait Approach: Relevant Research	Chapter 8
13. 10/20	Class Activity 3	
14. 10/22	The Biological Approach	Chapter 9
15. 10/27	The Biological Approach: Relevant Research	Chapter 10
16. 10/29	The Humanistic Approach: Rogers	Chapter 11
17. 10/28	The Humanistic Approach: Maslow	
11/03	University Holiday	
18. 11/05	The Humanistic Approach: Relevant Research	Chapter 12
19. 11/10	Class Activity 4	
20. 11/12	Mid-Term Exam #2	Chapters 7-12
21. 11/17	Behavioral/Social Learning Approach	Chapter 13
22. 11/19	Behavioral/Social Learning Approach: Relevant Research	Chapter 14
23. 11/24	The Cognitive Approach	Chapter 15
11/27	Thanksgiving	
24. 12/01	The Cognitive Approach: Relevant Research	Chapter 16
25. 12/03	Class Activity 5	
26. 12/08	Review for Final Exam	

