PSY 5101 – Personality Psychology

Spring, 2012; University of Minnesota, Twin Cities; 3 Credits

Instructor: Colin DeYoung
Office: Elliott Hall N422 (office hours by appointment)
Email: cdeyoung@umn.edu (email is the best way to reach me)
Phone: 612-624-1619

Location & Time: Elliott Hall N227, Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:15am-12:30pm

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
This course will provide a survey of current theory and research in the field of personality psychology. The subfield of personality occupies a unique position in psychology because of its mandate to study the whole person. Bill Revelle, past president of the Association for Research in Personality, has called personality psychology “the last refuge of the generalist in psychology.” Any topic or method relevant to the understanding of individuals is fair game, and personality psychology addresses some of the most central, broad, and interesting questions in psychology: Why do people think, feel, and act in the ways they do? What makes people different from each other? What are the essential components of an individual’s personality? The goal of this course is to cover a variety of topics in personality psychology, in some depth, attempting to bring them together in a reasonably coherent depiction of what personality is and how it functions.

The course will be in seminar format. We will have some flexibility in the topics covered in this course, and the syllabus can be adjusted based on input from the class about your interests. I want to ensure that, in addition to providing a thorough overview of the field of personality psychology, the course is as interesting as possible for students.

EVALUATION and DUE DATES:
10 Response Papers: 50% Response papers are due by email on Mondays at 5pm (skip 4).
2 Presentations: 30% Dates to be arranged.
Class Participation: 20%
## COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic and Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 17, 19</td>
<td><strong>What is Personality Psychology?</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Optional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 24</td>
<td><strong>Personality in Situations</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Optional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 26</td>
<td><strong>No Class</strong> (Society for Personality and Social Psychology annual meeting)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 31, Feb. 2</td>
<td><strong>Personality Traits and Trait Taxonomies</strong></td>
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<td>Optional</td>
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Personality Stability and Change Over Time


Optional


Cybernetic Models of Personality


Optional


Biology of Personality Traits


- Depue, R. A. & Morrone-Strupinsky, J. V. (2005). A neurobehavioral model of affiliative bonding: Implications for conceptualizing a human trait of affiliation. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 28*, 313–350. (Read pp. 347-350 carefully; skim the rest, not including all the commentaries after the main article, unless you really want to...)


Feb. 28

**Evolutionary Perspectives on Personality**


Mar. 1

**Sex Differences in Personality**


Baumeister, R. F. (2007). What’s good about men? Invited address to the APA.

Mar. 6, 8

**Intelligence and Creativity**


Optional


Mar. 13, 15

**No Class – Spring Break**

Mar. 20, 22

**Social Desirability, Self-Esteem, and Self-Deception**


Optional


→ **Meet with me to discuss your research proposal topic by March 23** ←

Mar. 27, 29

**The Self and Narrative Approaches to Personality**


Optional


Apr. 3, 5

**Implicit Motives and the Dynamic Unconscious**


**Sociopolitical Orientation and Religion**


**First Draft of Research Proposal Due, Apr. 13**

(Optional for grad students)

**Personality and Culture**


**Temperament and Attachment**


**Self-Regulation and Impulsivity**


**Optional**


**May 1, 3**

**Personality, Psychopathology, and Health**


**Optional**


→ **Final Research Proposal Due, Friday, May 11, by 5:00 PM ←**

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**SYLLABUS CHANGES:** I will make changes to this course syllabus as necessary, including changing readings or dates. You will be notified about any changes that take place. New versions of the syllabus will be posted on the course website and announced in class.

**CLASS PARTICIPATION:** Your class participation grade will be based on your contributions to class discussions. Please join in, even if you’re an introvert. If you don’t have observations to make, ask questions. Everyone has questions, at least once in a while, and there are no stupid questions. If you have a question, chances are other people want to know the answer too. Also, please bring up points that you made in your response paper for the week. The fact that I may already have read your paper should not deter you. Your peers will not have read it, and you should be talking to them as much as to me.

**PRESENTATIONS:** In two class meetings, you will give a presentation on that day’s topic. By the second week of class, we will decide on the dates when you will present. On each day, you may present one or more of the optional readings or other readings of your choice – you must receive my approval on what you will present. Presentations should include a 15–20 minute slide presentation. Please let me know ahead of time if you will not be using your own laptop for the presentation. If you choose
readings that are not on the syllabus, I will try to post them in the optional section on the course website, but I will probably not add them to the syllabus.

**RESPONSE PAPERS:** You must submit by email a 4-5 page, double-spaced response paper on 10 of the 14 Mondays in the semester (by 5pm). Do not use cover pages. Just write your name at the top of the first page. Each paper will receive a check, check-plus, or check-minus. Each paper should include two parts. (1) The first 1-2 pages of the paper should give a separate synopsis for each of the required readings for the week. Do not go over 2 pages for this part (this is a good exercise in economy of language). (2) The rest of the paper (2–3 pages) should be a thoughtful commentary on one or more of the week’s readings (not the previous week’s readings). It should include original thought, not simply a more in depth summary. The purposes of these response papers are to make sure you’re thinking about the readings and to help ensure that we have good discussions in class. (If you turn in more than 10 response papers, I will simply average across all of them – in other words, you cannot simply replace a lower grade with a higher grade from an extra paper, but a higher grade on an extra paper will raise your average for the response papers as a group.)

**GRADING:** Grade cut-offs follow the standard percentages: A = 93-100%, A- = 90-92%, B+ = 87-89%, B = 83-86%, etc. Below 60% is failing.

**DISABILITIES:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office (612-626-1333) and speak with the instructor as soon as possible.