Psychology 351: Psychology of Personality
Spring 2015, Online
Schedule Number: 60061
3 units

Instructor: Elizabeth D. Cordero, Ph.D.
E-mail: ecordero@mail.sdsu.edu (best way to contact me; please allow for a 24-hour response time, not including weekends and holidays)
Office Phone: (760) 768-5610
Class time/location: Tuesdays 4:00PM – 6:00PM through Blackboard Collaborate
Student Hours: Tuesdays 2:00PM – 4:00PM through Blackboard Collaborate or by appointment

Course Material (available online and at the SDSU-IV bookstore):


Course Description

From the SDSU Course Catalog, p 399:
“Major theoretical approaches to individual differences and the study of the person. Techniques of personality assessment. Selected research findings.”

We each have a personality...or do we? What exactly constitutes “personality?” If we do each have one, how do our personalities develop? How do we change our personalities? This course is designed to provide a general overview of the psychology of human personality, including theories about personality development, personality assessment, gender and personality, and cultural contributions to personality. These topics are essential to understanding each other and ourselves. By the end of the semester, you will be able to:
1. Discuss the several ways in which personality has been defined and conceptualized
2. Identify methods used in personality research and assessment
3. Describe personality traits and the concept of the self
4. Understand how genetics and neuroscience underlie personality as well as the intrapsychic and cognitive foundations of personality
5. Consider gender similarities and differences in personality
6. Apply personality psychology in discussions of sexual orientation and resilience

Prerequisites (from the SDSU Course Catalog, p 399): “Psychology 101; completion of the General Education requirement in Foundations of Learning II.B., Social and Behavioral Sciences.”

Psychology 351 is designed to foster your ability to accomplish the following objectives that the Department of Psychology has for our psychology majors:

1.1 Identify notable individuals together with their contributions to psychology.
1.2 Explain the nature-nurture controversy, and describe supportive findings from different areas of psychology for each side.

1.3 Explain the roles of persons, situations, and person-situation interactions as causes of behavior.

1.4 Identify different parts of the brain and demonstrate knowledge of their function as they relate to the areas which have been of most interest to psychologists and why.

1.7 Characterize the nature of psychology as a scientific discipline and identify its primary objectives: to describe, understand, predict, and control behavior and mental processes.

2.1 Use the concepts, language, and major theories of the field to account for psychological phenomena.

2.2 Identify appropriate applications of psychology in solving problems such as the pursuit and effect of healthy lifestyles, origin and treatment of abnormal behavior, psychological tests and measurements, psychology-based interventions, and the resolution of interpersonal and intercultural conflicts.

2.4 Apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings as these relate to everyday life.

3.1 Describe, explain, and identify appropriate use of reliability and validity.

3.6 Define, explain, and identify appropriate use of reliability and validity.

4.1 Describe descriptive and experimental research methods.

4.2 Explain the similarities and differences among the research methods used by psychologists.

4.3 Evaluate the appropriateness of conclusions derived from psychological research and the parameters of particular research methods.

5.1 Recognize the necessity of and identify specific ethical behavior in all aspects of the science and practice of psychology.

5.2 Be familiar with the rights of human research participants and therapy clients.

5.4 Describe the concept of informed consent to research and treatment.

5.5 Explain the advantages and disadvantages to research that involves deception.

5.6 Identify the role that an institutional review board plays in psychological research.

6.3 Identify how sociocultural and international contexts influence individual differences.

6.4 Explain how individual differences influence beliefs, values, and interactions with others and vice versa.

6.7 Understand that research findings may not generalize to all people.

7.1 Demonstrate understanding of the internal and external validity of the information obtained.

7.2 Distinguish between scientific findings and opinions.

**Course Design**

This course will be completely online! It is organized into 12 modules. For each module, you will read 1-2 chapters in your textbook and study corresponding lectures that I will hold “live” via Blackboard’s Collaborate web-conferencing software. These lectures will be recorded and archived, so you can view them if you can’t attend them in real time or if you’d like to brush up on what we talked about. Modules will have additional videos that I will post for you to enhance your learning. There is a practice test for course credit in each module, too. The modules all have their own learning guides that present the learning objectives of the module (what you need to know), the resources for each module (tools to help you learn), and assignments (what you need to do). The learning guides also have the deadlines for each assignment. Each module will take 5 - 7 hours to complete.
Course Preparation

- Please take the ‘readiness survey’ at https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/pls/webapp/survey.hybrid_learning.main to determine if this is the right course for you.
- Get speakers or a headset.
- Make sure you have access to a computer that is connected to the internet via a landline, i.e. a physical connection/cable between the computer and internet router. Do not use Wi-Fi or any other type of wireless connection to the internet, especially while taking tests for this class.
- Download the latest versions of the following software on your computer: Adobe’s Acrobat Reader and Flash Player, Java, RealPlayer SP, QuickTime Player, and Microsoft Word or Word Viewer. You can find information about these programs and links to install them under the “Technical Support” button on our Blackboard site.
- Download Firefox. Blackboard is best navigated through Firefox. I recommend that you DO NOT use Internet Explorer when you complete work for our class. You can download the latest version of Firefox at http://www.mozilla.com/en-US/firefox/ie.html.
- Download screen-capture software. In the event that there is a problem while you are taking a test (e.g., Blackboard freezes), send me a screen shot of your computer that includes an image of your entire screen.
- Download Respondus LockDown Browser. All exams need to be taken using this program. Information about this program, including where to get it, appears at the end of this syllabus.
- Form a back-up plan to complete the course requirements in case (goodness forbid!) something unexpected happens with your computer. For example, learn about the computer labs on the SDSU/SDSU-IV campuses or at your local library, or make arrangements with loved ones to use their resources.

Getting Started

When you enter our course Blackboard site for the first time, click on the “Go here first, please” link on the Course Menu (vertical bar on the left of the screen). You’ll find this syllabus and an instructional video for how to enter Blackboard Collaborate.

Course Resources

Textbook: I chose Personality Psychology: Foundations and Findings by Dr. Marianne Miserandino because it is a well-written textbook that focuses on information about the current science and research behind personality. Additionally, the textbook has helpful features such as “See for Yourself” questions that facilitate your consideration of how what you’re learning applies to yourself. The textbook is an integral part of this course; you will not pass this course unless you read and study the textbook.

Blackboard: Most of our class experience will be through Blackboard. Modules will be posted in Blackboard, and I’ll either send an email through Blackboard or post an announcement on our site when I need to communicate with the class. You’ll turn in assignments using Blackboard as well, and will be able to check your scores in its Grade Center. Additionally, please go to the Discussion Boards often to post your questions or comments about the course material and
exchange ideas with your fellow students. To learn how to use Blackboard, please visit
http://its.sdsu.edu/blackboard/student/.

Blackboard Collaborate: We will have our online class meetings using the Blackboard
Collaborate web-conferencing software. Before your first session visit the Blackboard
Collaborate Support Center for First-Time Users

- See First Time Users: Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing
- Complete Step 1: Checking System Requirements & Step 2: Configuring Your
  System
- View a 7-minute Participant Orientation

In-Session
- Be sure to join the session 5 – 10 minutes prior to the start.
- Set your Connection Speed to the Internet.
- Use the Audio Setup Wizard to test your microphone and speakers.
- Participate in the session by responding to polls and providing feedback.
- Raise your hand when you have a question or a comment.
- Use Chat to send text messages during the session.
- Remember that running other applications on your computer can slow your
  connection to the session.

Remember: Attendance at these lectures is not mandatory. Lectures will be recorded and
archived in Blackboard for you to study within 24 hours of their occurrence.

Course Requirements

Examinations – There will be three examinations in this course. The dates of the tests are listed
in the schedule below. All examinations will consist of multiple-choice and/or matching
questions, and material covered in the textbook, class lectures, and posted videos will be tested.
You are required to take each exam using a landline internet connection and Respondus
LockDown Browser (read more information about Respondus LockDown Browser and how to
install it at the end of this syllabus). Each exam will have 50 questions worth one point each and
will not be cumulative. Please see the course outline below for the material that each of the
exams covers. All exams are online through Blackboard. You may use your textbook and the
notes you take from the assigned course materials (e.g., lectures, videos, and textbook).
However, you are required to take the tests without any other kind of help (e.g., no internet, no
classmates) and you are not allowed to write down or copy any of the material from the exam
while you are taking the exam. Consultation of unauthorized sources during any of the exams or
copying any parts of the exam is cheating! Additionally, sharing any information about the
content of the exams in any way is cheating. Each exam will be available on Blackboard for the
timeframe listed in the schedule that appears later in the syllabus. Once you choose to begin the
exam, you will have 60 minutes to complete it. If for some reason Blackboard does not
automatically submit your test after the 60 minutes have passed, you will lose one point from
your exam score for each minute and/or fraction thereof that you go over the time limit while
taking an exam. There will be no make-up exams unless you cannot take an exam because of a
religious holiday or a medical emergency for which you will be required to provide
documentation. If you cannot take the exams on the scheduled dates for any other reason, you
should not enroll in this course. Please let me know if exams fall on religious holidays by the end of the second week of the semester. (150 points)

Assessment Reflection – You will be provided with several opportunities to take personality tests throughout the semester. You are encouraged to take all of these tests to 1) learn about yourself, and 2) see how personality and the concepts we are studying are measured. To encourage your thoughtfulness about the results of these tests, you will write a reflection about two of these tests that summarizes the results of the tests, describes examples from your life that supports the results of each test (e.g., how you act in certain situations, your response to a particular life event), and what you think is missing or “off” about the results of the tests. Your reflection will be at least 500 words which is approximately two pages. Please double-space your reflection and use 12-pt Times New Roman font. Grammar and spelling will count. More details about scoring will be provided in a separate document. (26 points)

Module Practice Tests – As part of your learning experience, you will complete one practice test for each module. Each practice test is worth 2 points and will be completed in Blackboard. You will earn points upon completion of the practice tests by the deadlines listed in the learning guides, regardless of how many items you get correct. The purpose of these practice tests is to help you master the chapter vocabulary and prepare for the course exams. You are allowed to use your notes from lecture and the textbook on the practice tests, and to document the practice tests’ content (e.g., take notes, write down items). However, sharing any of the content of the practice tests in any way with other people constitutes cheating. There is no time limit for practice tests. (24 points)

Student Homepage – Introduce yourself to our class community by creating a student homepage for our Blackboard site. Please provide basic information about yourself with which you are comfortable and would enjoy posting, such as your name, your hobbies, and the three words that you think would best describe your personality. The link to complete this assignment is called “Student Homepages.” The purpose of this assignment is to help foster a sense of community among you and your fellow students. (10 points)

Please let me know if you encounter any difficulties with completion of the course requirements or if there is something in particular you’d like to learn about that pertains to this course. I’d like to facilitate you having as much of a positive experience as possible. If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Norma Aguilar at (760) 768-5637 or Student Affairs at (760) 768-5502. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Norma Aguilar in Student Affairs at SDSU-IV as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.
Course Grading

There are 210 points possible for this course. The grading system below is based on a total of 200 points which means that you have 10 points worth of “wiggle room.” The class will not be curved; thus you are not in competition with your fellow students.

- 185-200 points: A
- 180-184 points: A –
- 175-179 points: B+
- 165-174 points: B
- 160-164 points: B -

- 155-159 points: C+
- 145-154 points: C
- 140-144 points: C-
- 135-139 points: D+
- 125-134 points: D

- 120-124 points: D -
- 119 points or less: F

In order to preserve academic integrity and encourage students to make responsible choices, all students found cheating or plagiarizing will receive an automatic fail for the course and will be sent to the appropriate administrative body for review for the aforementioned consequences. Please review the university’s definitions of cheating and plagiarism in the SDSU General Catalog.

Courtesy Note: Students are asked to be respectful of all ideas and information presented; disrespect or intolerance will not be tolerated.
The following schedule includes **mandatory exam days** and a schedule for modules. Please note: The deadlines for each module’s practice tests are NOT on this schedule. See the learning guides for these deadlines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Welcome to the World of Personality Psychology: Syllabus and Course Overview</td>
<td>Module 1: Who am I? Understanding the Building Blocks of Personality</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Module 2: Personality Traits: A Good Theory and Practical Matters</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Module 3: Personality Assessment</td>
<td><strong>MANDATORY: STUDENT HOMEPAGE DUE BY 02/10/15 11:59PM PST</strong></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Module 4: Self and Identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Exam 1 (Modules 1 - 4)</td>
<td><strong>Available on Blackboard site 02/24/15 12PM – 8PM PST</strong></td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Module 5: Genetics</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Module 6: The Neuroscience of Personality</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Module 7: Intrapsychic Foundations of Personality</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Module 8: Regulation and Motivation: Self-Determination Theory</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
<td></td>
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<td>11</td>
<td><strong>MANDATORY: Exam 2 (Modules 5 - 8)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Available on Blackboard site 04/07/15 12PM – 8PM PST</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Module 9: Cognitive Foundations of Personality</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Module 10: Gender and Personality</td>
<td><strong>MANDATORY: ASSESSMENT REFLECTION DUE 04/21/15 11:59PM PST</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Module 11: Sexual Orientation</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Module 12: Resilience</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td><strong>MANDATORY: Exam 3 (Modules 9 - 12)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Available on Blackboard site 05/12/15 12PM – 8PM PST</strong></td>
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Respondus LockDown Browser

What is Respondus LockDown Browser? The Respondus LockDown Browser is a specialized web browser built for online test-taking. While the browser is open, you will not have access to other programs, documents, or keyboard functions on that computer. If an instructor requires the use of the Lockdown Browser for a test or quiz, it cannot be taken using any other web browser. Administering exams through this program discourages dishonest conduct and greatly reduces test crashes.

Installing Respondus LockDown Browser: To download and install Respondus LockDown Browser, follow these steps:

Windows computers:
- Go to the following website to download the browser: http://www.respondus.com/lockdown/information.pl?ID=469641291
- During the installation, select Yes if prompted to accept programs from Macrovision and Respondus.
- Follow the onscreen instructions to complete the install.

Macintosh computers:
- Be sure that OSX 10.3.9 or higher is being used (512K RAM minimum).
- Go to the following website to download the browser: http://www.respondus.com/lockdown/information.pl?ID=469641291
- During the installation, select Yes when prompted to run the Java application.
- Follow the onscreen instructions to complete the install.

When taking an exam:
- Close all programs, unless one is used to connect you to the Internet.
- Locate the “LockDown Browser” shortcut on the desktop and double-click it. (For Macintosh users, launch “LockDown Browser” from the Applications folder.)
- If prompted to close a blocked program (e.g. screen capture, instant messaging) choose Yes when prompted.
- Login to your Blackboard course.
- Navigate to the test and select it.
- A pop-up window will ask whether the instructor has required a password for the test. If the instructor did not set up the test with a password, the No option should be selected. Click the Continue button.
- Regardless of the selection made in the previous step, Respondus LockDown Browser will automatically fill in a special password on the next screen. It’s important that this password field isn’t modified. Click the Submit button.

Download this free Student Guide to Respondus LockDown Browser with further details about downloading, installing, and using.
Students may also seek support from the lab assistants in installing the browser on their personal computers. The SCC website is http://library.sdsu.edu/computing/blackboard. Their contact information is 619-594-3189 or email scc@rohan.sdsu.edu.

The Student Computing Center at the SDSU Love Library has Respondus LockDown Browser installed and ready for student use on Windows and Macintosh computers. They are located on the second floor of the Love Library. The library at SDSU-IV also has Respondus LockDown Browser on the computers available for students; all Windows computers in COBL-111 (student computer lab) at SDSU-IV have Respondus LockDown Browser, as well. For more information on how to implement Respondus LockDown Browser, contact the Blackboard Help Desk at (619) 594-3485 or bbhelp@sdsu.edu.