Psychology of Personality  
PSY 351 – Spring, 2014 (Section 2)

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Meeting Time/Place: Wednesday, 4:00-6:40 pm, Exercise and Nutrition Sciences (ENS) 280  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 3:00-4:00, after class, and by appointment.

Graduate Teaching Assistants:  
Josh Carlsen, Office Hours 10am-Noon on Mondays in LS South 151  
Adrian Shadaram, Office Hours 12-2pm Tuesdays in LS South 151

1. Course Description: Welcome to PSY 351! This course will introduce you to the many important and interesting topics related to Personality Psychology. We will cover many topics that are thought provoking, interesting, and applicable to your life. Along with covering many traditional personality psychology topics, we will discuss Personality and Dreams, Personality and E-Mail Addresses, Personality in Animals, Personality in Identical Twins, Personality and Facebook, Personality and the Lottery, Personality and Astrology, as well as Personality and Designer Babies. We will see video clips from several shows and movies including “Ellen”, “Friends”, “The Office”, and “Best in Show”.


Chapter Objectives and Practice Quizzes for each chapter can be found on the following website (http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/007803535x/student_view0/index.html). This website can be accessed directly via the course’s Blackboard site.

3. Blackboard: The course syllabus and the PowerPoint slides for each lecture will be posted on Blackboard (https://blackboard.sdsu.edu/) as will your exam scores. Important class announcements will also appear on Blackboard, so please check Blackboard at least weekly.

4. Pre-Requisite for this course: Before taking this class, you must have already completed PSY101 (Introductory Psychology) or an equivalent Introductory Psychology course from another school. This pre-requisite is designed to ensure that students have the adequate skills and experience to do well in the class and to avoid being at a disadvantage in the course relative to those who have taken Introductory Psychology.

5. Office Hours: I am very committed to helping students do well in this class and prepare for graduate school and the workplace. So, if you have any questions, please feel free to talk with me after class or during office hours. You are very welcome to come by during my office hours to talk about questions, problems, or suggestions you may have concerning the course, about career interests, or about graduate school. If you want to meet and my office hours do not work with your schedule, please feel free to schedule an appointment with me. In addition, I will always be available immediately after class for any questions you have, and many students find this is a good time to touch base with me about the course and any questions they may have. Your teaching assistants are also available to answer questions during their office hours.
6. **Course/Learning Objectives:** This class is designed to provide an introduction to the field of Personality Psychology, including major theories and research in the field. The course will focus on introducing and discussing personality approaches from 6 domains of knowledge: The Dispositional Domain, The Biological Domain, The Intrapsychic Domain, The Cognitive Domain, The Social and Cultural Domain, and The Adjustment Domain.

Additional learning objectives for this course that overlap with learning objectives identified as important across the Psychology curriculum are:

1. Identify notable individuals together with their contributions to psychology.
2. Explain the nature-nurture controversy, and describe supportive findings for each side.
3. Explain the roles of persons, situations, and person-situation interactions as causes of behavior.
4. Use the concepts, language, and major theories of the field to account for psychological phenomena.
5. Apply psychological concepts, theories, and research findings as these relate to everyday life.
6. Describe descriptive and experimental research methods.
7. Define, explain, and identify appropriate use of reliability and validity.
8. Identify how sociocultural and international contexts influence individual differences.
9. Explain how individual differences influence beliefs, values, and interactions with others.
10. Understand that research findings may not generalize to all people.
11. Distinguish between scientific findings and opinions.

7. **Class Format:** The class format will be primarily lecture, which will be supplemented with videos and class discussions. Through lectures and class discussions, I am confident that you will come away from this course with a better understanding of Personality Psychology and the various domains within the field. Active participation in class is strongly encouraged and will provide a more enjoyable learning environment for everyone. I welcome your questions and encourage you to ask them without hesitation when you need more information, a different explanation, an additional example, or clarification. Due to the technical nature of some of the course material, I suggest that you read the assigned readings before we discuss the material in class. Again, please feel free to ask questions in class when you are unsure of a particular concept or application.

8. **Attendance:** Class attendance is strongly recommended. Exam material will come from material from class lectures and the textbook. Lecture notes are not available from Professor Conte or from the teaching assistants. If you can't attend a particular class, please borrow notes from a classmate. If that is not possible, then it is best to download the PPT slides from Blackboard and carefully review them along with the corresponding chapter in the textbook.

9. **Exams:** There will be 3 multiple-choice exams, which are designed to assess your knowledge of the lectures and the reading assignments in the textbook. Each exam is worth 1/3rd of your grade. Please bring a #2 pencil to each exam. In addition, please bring the Wide Red Par Score (#F-288-PAR-L) form to Exam 1. Please bring the Narrow Red Par Score (#F-289-PAR-L) form to Exam 2 and the Final Exam. Please arrive on time for the exams. Please also bring your RedID or other photo ID to each exam and be prepared to show it as you turn in your exam. Note that if you arrive to an exam after the first person has finished the exam and left the room, you will NOT be allowed to take the exam. Once you have started taking the exam, you may not leave the classroom for any reason (e.g., phone call, bathroom) until you have turned in the exam. Further, it is very important for you to be present for the exams. If some extreme event requires you to miss an exam, you must contact me about missing the exam before the scheduled exam date. If you do not contact me before missing the exam, no make-up exam will be allowed. The only exception will be for a medical or family emergency, and you must have documented proof of the emergency (for example, a doctor’s note). You must inform me of the emergency within 2 days of the regular exam date. All make-up exams will be essay format.
10. **Final Grading Scale:** The final grading scale based on total points for the 3 exams is as follows:

- 279-300 --> A
- 270-278 --> A-
- 264-269 --> B+
- 249-263 --> B
- 240-248 --> B-
- 234-239 --> C+
- 219-233 --> C
- 210-218 --> C-
- 204-209 --> D+
- 189-203 --> D
- 180-188 --> D-
- 000-179 --> F

You can use this final grading scale to calculate what grade you need on the final exam to receive a certain grade for the course. For example, if you have received an 80 and an 85 on Exams 1 and 2, and you are aiming for a B (249 points) in the course, then you could take the 165 points you received on the first 2 exams and subtract that total from 249 to determine that you need at least an 84 on the final to receive a B.

Regarding final course grades, please do not ask me to change your final grade at the end of the semester. I have received many such requests in the past, and they do not work. Instead, please utilize your time and energy to get the best grade you can on the exams so that you are satisfied with your grade. The appropriate time to contact professors and TAs when one is concerned about one’s grade is not after one has received a disappointing course grade, but during the semester so that one can improve grades on the subsequent exams. In sum, I do not negotiate grades; instead, each student will receive the grade that he or she has earned. Some students believe that, even if they have the same point total as other students, their particular extenuating circumstances mean that they should be bumped up to a higher grade, but this is clearly unfair to all other students who accept the grade they have earned.

In addition, in the interest of being fair to all students, special extra credit opportunities will not be offered to individual students, so please do not ask about extra work that you can do to improve your grade. Instead, attend class, stay engaged in the course material, read and review the textbook, prepare well for the exams, and contact me and/or 1 of the TAs if you have any questions.

11. **Students with Special Needs:** If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services (which is located in Calpulli Center, Suite 3101, Third Floor) as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Once they have contacted Student Disability Services, students should contact me about accommodations needed as soon as possible (and certainly before the first exam).

12. **Cell Phones:** As a courtesy to your fellow students, if you need to take a phone call during class, please configure your phone to vibrate and not ring, and then leave the room to take the call. If you need to text message, please leave the room to do so.
13. **Emergency Preparation:** To be prepared for emergencies, each student is responsible for becoming familiar with the evacuation plan specific to each classroom. The evacuation plan is posted within each classroom and should be examined during the first few class meetings.

14. **Plagiarism, Cheating, and Academic Integrity:** To minimize the possibility of plagiarism occurring, it is worth clarifying the definition of plagiarism: Stealing others’ work (for example, copying others’ test answers, projects, or assignments) and passing it off as your own is an example of plagiarism. Plagiarism and cheating in any form will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with through the appropriate university channels. If you are caught cheating on an exam or plagiarizing an assignment, you will receive a zero, and you are likely to receive an F in the course. In addition, the incident will be reported to campus authorities and may lead to probation, suspension, or even expulsion from the University. Please see me if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or other violations of the academic integrity policy.

15. **Websites Related to Personality Psychology:** Several websites (accessible through the course Blackboard site) related to Personality Psychology can be used to explore the field further. These include:

   - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personality_psychology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personality_psychology)
   - [http://www.socialpsychology.org/person.htm](http://www.socialpsychology.org/person.htm)
   - [http://personality-project.org](http://personality-project.org/)

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**TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Scheduled Topic</th>
<th>Chapter Assignment</th>
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<td>Jan. 22</td>
<td>Course Overview, Introduction to Personality Psychology</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 29</td>
<td>Personality Assessment, Measurement, &amp; Research Design</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Feb. 05</td>
<td>Traits &amp; Trait Taxonomies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 12</td>
<td>Theoretical/Measurement Issues in Trait Psychology</td>
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<td>Feb. 19</td>
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<td>Feb. 26</td>
<td>Personality Dispositions over Time: Stability, Coherence, &amp; Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 05</td>
<td>Genetics &amp; Personality</td>
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<td>Mar. 12</td>
<td>Psychoanalytic Approaches to Personality</td>
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<td>Mar. 19</td>
<td>Motives &amp; Personality</td>
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<td>Mar. 26</td>
<td>Exam #2</td>
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<td>Apr. 02</td>
<td>Spring Break – Enjoy!</td>
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<td>Apr. 09</td>
<td>Cognitive Topics in Personality</td>
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<td>Personality and Social Interaction</td>
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<td>Stress, Coping, Adjustment &amp; Health</td>
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<td>May 07</td>
<td>Final Exam (Wednesday, 4:00PM - 6:00PM)</td>
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**Note:** Dates and topics for course schedule are tentative, and students are responsible for any announcements made in class concerning schedule, exam, and reading assignment changes.