Psychology 307: Psychology of Personality  
CRN: 17588  
Fall 2020  
https://canvas.uoregon.edu/courses/167018

Course Description

This course is an intensive introduction to the scientific study of human personality and is organized around three broad questions: 1) How do people differ? 2) What are the processes and mechanisms underlying these personality differences? 3) What are the implications of these differences in people’s lives? In addressing these questions, we will consider both classic and contemporary theoretical and empirical approaches to personality and focus on developing a dynamic understanding of human personality within its biological, social, and cultural contexts.

I find that most students have spent considerable time thinking and talking about personality in their everyday lives before considering it as a topic of scientific study. In fact, many early theories about personality drew heavily from fields outside of psychology, including philosophy and the arts (especially literature and theater). We will touch on some of these perspectives throughout the course, mainly in an effort to contextualize our primary focus: current and historical approaches to the scientific study of individual differences in psychological behavior (thoughts, feelings, actions, and motivations).

Course Objectives:

At the end of the course you should:

- be familiar with the major theoretical frameworks in personality, both modern and historical.
- have a broad appreciation for the major themes of modern personality research, including some of the current challenges and controversies in the field.
- be aware of the implications and applications of theories of human nature and the methods covered in the course.

Note that a new objective is being added for Fall 2020 based on current events and the remote teaching format. That is: for all students to have some appreciation of the ways that characteristic patterns of behavior might relate to current events.

Office Hours and Contact Information

Professor: David M. Condon, Ph.D.  
Email: dcondon@uoregon.edu  
Virtual Office Hours: Thursdays, 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm Pacific and Fridays, 10:30 am to 11:30 am Pacific. To join the office hours on Zoom, go to the “ZOOM LINKS” module on Canvas or use the Zoom Meetings tab and click on the appropriate time.

All office hours this term will be conducted virtually through Zoom. They will be on a “first come first serve” basis and we will be using the waiting room feature. With remote learning, I think Office Hours take on more importance than usual as it provides an opportunity for one-on-one interaction that typically happens before or after class when meeting in person. If these times don’t work for you for any reason, please send me an email to set up an alternative time.
Please note that our primary TA (Pooya Razavi) has also scheduled virtual office hours as well. As an advanced PhD student focused on personality, he is very knowledgeable about the content of this course.

**Teaching Assistant:** Pooya Razavi  
**Email:** pooyar@uoregon.edu  
**Virtual Office Hours:** Mondays 1:00 pm –2:00 pm Pacific

**Teaching Assistant:** Ashleigh Landau  
**Email:** alandau2@uoregon.edu

**Correspondence and Communication**

Much of the communication in this class will happen through “correspondence.” By that, I mean that the remote learning environment will require us to communicate electronically more than we would otherwise. I plan to send frequent communications to all students through Canvas. I will post these as announcements (with a number, starting with #1 and going up from there). I know that some people find it distracting to get lots of emails/notifications but I hope you will understand that my aim is to stay in close contact. I want you all to feel connected to this class the way you would with a typical in-person course. I would prefer to provide too much communication over too little.

You, as students, may also need to communicate with me through electronic correspondence more than usual as well, even if only to set up times to talk (through Zoom). I will do my best to respond to all messages within 24 hours (hopefully sooner). If I anticipate that I will be unavailable for some reason, I will send out an announcement to let the class know.

This is a large class (around 150 students) so it is important for each of you to make an effort throughout the course to make your needs, concerns, and questions known to me or to the teaching assistants. There won’t be time for me to reach out to all of you individually on a regular basis, but I definitely want to hear from you. Interacting with students is my favorite part of teaching so, please, don’t hesitate! I will be missing that part of our in-person class meetings.

Most importantly, I need to know if you have special needs or circumstances that impact your performance or ability to complete the coursework. I am very willing to be flexible and accommodating of special circumstances (see below for more information), but can only reasonably do so if you keep me informed.

**Goals and Expectations:**

I aim to ensure that everyone can succeed in this class despite the unusual circumstances of this term. I hope you will learn the content of the course as well as you would if we were meeting in person and that you will enjoy the process along the way. I can’t guarantee this, of course, but I will do my best. If you think there is something that could be done to help achieve this, let me know. I probably won’t be able to accommodate all suggestions (for a variety of reasons) but I will take them all under consideration.

I also recognize that academic performance this term will be affected by many factors beyond mastery of the content. All of us (myself included) may be dealing with health issues for ourselves and loved ones, different technology issues (including different access to technology), and/or other challenging circumstances at home and work. I will be taking this into account while grading this term (though it is difficult for me to state exactly how grading might differ as the term unfolds). Related to this point, I encourage all students to note that the Registrar’s office has made several important changes for grades this term. I really think these changes should be kept in mind by any of you out there who are
dealing with challenging circumstances because it seems to me that they might help to reduce academic stress. For more information, please visit this webpage:  
https://registrar.uoregon.edu/2020-temporary-changes

Specific Content Goals and Expectations:

My teaching goal for this course is to provide an informed overview of the field of personality psychology and, hopefully, to convey my enthusiasm for psychological research more generally. While very few of you will pursue formal studies of personality psychology beyond the scope of this course, I hope that you will come to appreciate the relevance of individual differences to most aspects of everyday life – in your relations with other people, your studies, and your work.

To best achieve these goals, I expect that you will deeply engage with the readings and other class material. I would like you to consider the possibility that no assumption is beyond question, that no theory should escape critical scrutiny. This is traditionally a lecture-based course, but I will also seek to create an interactive environment that allows you to learn in ways that mirror in-person coursework.

What you can expect of me:

I am committed to making this course a positive and fun educational experience. I believe that learning should be challenging but not unpleasant. I am open to comments – both positive and negative – and, while I can’t guarantee that I will be able to resolve every complaint in the way that you might hope, I can guarantee that I will listen to your concerns and make every effort to find a satisfactory resolution. If you find yourself bored or overly challenged, please set up a time to talk things over with me. If you are not comfortable talking with me directly, consider sharing your concerns confidentially with the teaching assistant.

Course Materials

I will frequently notify you about the material you are responsible for covering during this course. It is summarized here, though I expect that the amount and timing of content to be covered will vary slightly as the course progresses due to the need to adjust for the opportunities and demands of remote learning. In general, the class will be organized around the material provided in the required text, but this will be supplemented by additional material, including video lectures (as replacements for the in-class lectures). It is important to note that some material in the text will not be discussed in my video lectures. While I will focus on the material I believe is most important, do not assume that other assigned reading material will not be covered on exams.

Required Text:


Some notes about the text:

- There are many options available for this book. Any of them will work – purchasing vs renting; new vs old – as long as you can retain access until the end of the term. **BUT**
- I recommend purchasing the electronic (e-book) version from the publisher using the link provided on Canvas. It costs $65 for the book and for access to “InQuizitive”
- I typically make sure that hardcopy versions of the textbook are available for check out (for 90 minutes at a time in the library). That is not an option this term. However, the library is working
on coming up with alternatives for students in need. If you would like more information, please contact me directly as soon as possible, preferably by the end of week 1.

InQuizitive and additional content:

In addition to the text, we will be using a tool called InQuizitive that is designed to help reinforce the content in the textbook. You will see InQuizitive assignments accompanying each of the assigned textbook readings in the class. InQuizitive comes with the purchase of the e-book and with purchases of new hardcopies of the text. If you purchase a used copy of the textbook, InQuizitive can be purchased separately through the link given in Canvas.

Additional material will be posted on Canvas as needed throughout the term.

Canvas Website:

Please check the website frequently for updates, announcements and information about the course. As I have already mentioned above, much of our communication in this course will occur through Canvas. I will keep you posted through the Announcements feature. Please check Canvas frequently to keep up with assignments and other important information about the course.

Course Workload and Grading

By completing this course, you will earn 4 credits toward your degree. Four credits is the equivalent of 120 hours of work across the term, or 12 hours per week for 10 weeks. For in-class versions of this class, students would normally spend 2 hours and 40 minutes in class each week and roughly 9 hours (on average) completing assignments – mainly reading – and preparing for class, including exams. For this term, I will do my best to spread the workload similarly.

The following are the grade weights (% of total grade) for the various course components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>% of total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflections</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>InQuizitive</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the weights above, final grades will be assigned as below. There are no A+ grades given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please see the guidelines on the Psychology Department’s website for a description of the type of achievement that each grade signifies: https://psychology.uoregon.edu/courses/department-grading-standards/

What follows in this section is more detail on each of the course components.
Exams:

Your exam score will be the average of your three best scores on four exams (in other words, your worst score will be dropped). The exams will include both multiple choice and short answer questions and they will be based on all of the material covered in the class (including material covered in the text, video recordings, and supplemental content). All exams will be administered through Canvas; more details about the exams will be conveyed as the first exam approaches. **Note that the administration of exams through Canvas works a bit differently than exams in person.** I understand that this causes some students frustration so please take it under consideration before the class gets fully underway.

Reflections:

These will be writing assignments completed throughout the term. I will aim to provide several writing prompts throughout the term – at least 5 will be offered but hopefully many more. You MUST respond to a minimum of 3 prompts during the term. If you respond to 4 prompts, I will drop your lowest score.

To receive credit, Reflections must be at least 300 words and submitted within a week of being assigned. There is no limit on length (within reason), but please keep in mind that this is a large class – I will not typically be able to provide substantial written feedback on these assignments. More information about the grading rubric for these will be given in the assignment details on Canvas.

InQuizitive:

I like quizzes. Not all students feel the same way, but they are useful learning tools for several reasons. The most important is the reality that they encourage students to keep up with the assignments throughout the course. They're also less stressful than major exams and provide opportunities for intermittent feedback. Instead of quizzes, we will use the InQuizitive assignments that go with our textbook content.

The good news is that everyone should be able to get high scores on this content as it is designed to help you learn the correct responses to each question. In other words, you have an opportunity to keep going on the InQuizitive material to improve your scores. I also think highly of the InQuizitive content for this class – it is generally good at testing comprehension.

**Note that I will drop the lowest 4 InQuizitive scores.** We will talk more about this as the course goes on. I strongly encourage you to use this material to your advantage. It is a good way to boost your grade and learn the material.

Engagement:

You might have noticed that attendance is not listed under the grade weights for this course. Under the current circumstances, I think that required attendance doesn’t really make sense, and may even be unfair. That said, this is psychology… There is lots of good evidence that engaging with the material helps learning, retention, and further development of critical thinking skills. Attending the live classes is an easy way to engage more with the material and ask questions; this can be done on your own, if somewhat less easily.

Instead of attendance, a small portion of your grade will be subjectively attributed to engagement. I expect that most students will get full or nearly full credit in this area but the final score is up to my discretion.
Extra Credit:

You can receive up to 3% extra credit for participating in the Department of Psychology Human Subjects Pool. Each credit is worth 1% and you may use 1/2 credit units (for 0.5%). To learn more about the subject pool, including changes to the way it will be administered fully online this term, follow this link: https://blogs.uoregon.edu/researchwithhumanparticipants/instructions-for-participants/

If you are interested, you can sign up for studies here: https://uopsych.sona-systems.com/default.aspx?logout=Y

If you have not participated in the pool previously, you will need to request a new account. If you have previously participated, use your existing account.

You don't need to let me know that you participated – I can access this information directly and will update grades manually ONCE at the end of the term.

Important Policy Information

This section includes information about several policies that are important for this course. Please read them over carefully and let me or the TAs know if you have any questions.

Emailing the Professor and the TAs:

We are more than happy to help you work through difficult material throughout the course. However, we have other responsibilities to the university that we are attending to when in not in class or office hours. I can commit to responding to most emails within 24 hours (48 hours if you email me between 5pm on Friday and 5pm on Sunday). Please note that most questions regarding logistics of this course can be answered by reading the syllabus.

Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to comply with university regulations regarding academic integrity. If you are in doubt about what constitutes academic dishonesty, contact me before the assignment is due and/or examine the university web site. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating on an exam (e.g., copying others' answers, providing information to others, using a crib sheet) or plagiarism of a paper (e.g., taking material from readings without citation, copying another student's paper). Failure to maintain academic integrity on an assignment will result in a loss of credit for that assignment (at a minimum). Other penalties may also apply. For more information, visit: https://policies.uoregon.edu/vol-3-administration-student-affairs/ch-1-conduct/student-conduct-code

Access and Accommodations:

In compliance with University of Oregon policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Request for academic accommodations need to be made during the first two weeks of the quarter (except for unusual circumstances) so arrangements can be made. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition should request that a counselor at the Accessible Education Center send a letter verifying your disability and needed accommodations. They can be reached at uoaec@uoregon.edu (telephone: 541-346-1155). All information will remain confidential. For a list of resources provided by the Accessible Education Center, please see: https://aec.uoregon.edu/
Diversity:

It is the policy of the University of Oregon to support and value diversity. To do so requires that we:

- Respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals.
- Promote a culture of respect throughout the university community.
- Respect the privacy, property, and freedom of others.
- Reject bigotry, discrimination, violence, or intimidation of any kind.
- Practice personal and academic integrity and expect it of others.
- Promote the diversity of opinions, ideas and backgrounds which is the lifeblood of the university.

English as a Second Language:

If you are a non-native English speaker and think you may have trouble in this course due to language difficulties, please see me as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. If you need to use a dictionary for in-class exams, you must ask to have your dictionary checked by me or one of the TAs prior to the exam. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect:

UO employees (including faculty, staff, and TAs) are mandatory reporters of child abuse. This statement is to advise you that your disclosure of information about child abuse to a UO employee may trigger the UO employee’s duty to report that information to the designated authorities. Please refer to the following links for detailed information about mandatory reporting: [https://hr.uoregon.edu/policies-leaves/general-information/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect](https://hr.uoregon.edu/policies-leaves/general-information/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect)
Course Schedule

Note: Readings from The Personality Puzzle are indicated by “Personality Puzzle.” Additional readings are posted on Canvas (https://canvas.uoregon.edu/courses/158696).

Module 1  Course Introduction

Before Class: Nothing! It’s the first day! 😊

During Class: 1.1 - Background and Course Goals
1.2 - Reviewing the Syllabus and Course Requirements

After Class:  Survey: Background about You
InQuizitive: How to Use InQuizitive
(see Module “GETTING STARTED AND SUPPORT” for InQuizitive help)

Module 2  Defining Personality

Before: 2.1 - Critical Consumption of Course Content

During: Online: TED Talk by Heidi Grant
Critical Consumption Discussion
2.2 - Popular Definitions vs Scientific Definitions

After: 2.3 - Personality Defined
Reading: Personality Puzzle, Ch.1, The Study of the Person
InQuizitive: Ch.1

Module 3  Open Science & Transparency

Before: Reading: Vazire (2017) [3 pages]
Reading: Condon, Graham & Mroczek (2017) [3 pages]

During: Online: Is Most Published Research Wrong?
3.1 - Open Science & Transparency

After: Reflection: #1 - What does it mean to be a “good” scientist?

Module 4  Overview of Methodology in Personality Science

Before: Reading: Personality Puzzle, Ch. 2, Personality Research Methods
InQuizitive: Ch. 2

During: 4.1 – Forms of Personality Data
Online: Why Might the Myers-Briggs be Harmful

After: 4.2 – Data Quality Issues
Cronbach & Meehl (1955) [8 pages]
Reflection: #2 – Reflecting on the Popularity of the MBTI and Enneagram
Module 5
Assessment in Personality

Before:
Reading: Personality Puzzle, Ch. 3, Assessment, Effect Size and Ethics
InQuizitive: Ch. 3
Vazire & Carlson (2011) [4 pages]

During:
5.1 – The Nature of Personality Assessment
Online: Open Psychometrics Test

After:
5.2 – Integrating Methods & Assessment (and Effect Sizes!)
Reflection: #3 – Evaluate the Open Psychometrics Character Test

EXAM #1 – October 15th

Module 5
History: Putting Modern Personality in Context

Module 7
Traits and Situations

Module 8
Personality Judgment

Module 9
Trait Theory: Traits & Behavior

Module 10
More Trait Theory: Stability, Development, and Change

EXAM #2 – November 5th

Module 11
Biological Approaches to Personality – Part I

Module 12
Biological Approaches to Personality – Part II

Module 13
Humanistic and Positive Psychology

Module 14
Cross-Cultural Personality Psychology

EXAM #3 – November 24th

Module 15
Personality Processes

Module 16
Identity and the Self

Module 17
Personality at Work

Module 18
Personality & Health

Module 19
Conclusion and Integration

EXAM #4 -- December 8th