

1/11/2016

Psychology 210: Theories of Personality
Spring, 2016; UIC CRN 14642

Course Meetings

8:00 – 9:15 AM Tue, Thurs Lecture Center D2

Instructor

Dr. Daniel Cervone, BSB 1008, phone 413-2632, <dcervone@uic.edu>
Office hours: Tue and Thurs, 2-3, and Wed 11-12, and by appointment

NOTE: Your course instructor is on campus most days, Mon-Fri, so it is very easy to schedule a “by appointment” meeting, which you can do in person in class or via email. In general, email is a much more efficient way of reaching the instructor. BSB 1008, fyi, is on the first floor of the Behavioral Sciences Building, near the main/front office of the Department of Psychology.

Teaching Assistants

Ms. Kendal Wong, kwong31@uic.edu, BSB 2008, Office Hours: TBA
Ms. Katie Bessette, kbesse2@uic.edu, (office hour meetings TBA)

Ms. Wong is the course’s primary TA. In that role, she will be handling administrative features of the course, such as maintaining the database of course grades. When you have administrative questions, you can contact either the course instructor or Ms. Wong.

Course Description and Goals

This course has two primary goals. The first is to examine a set of theories of personality. These are psychology’s “big ideas”: the field’s broad conceptions of human nature and differences among individuals. During the semester, we will be discussing a number of different theories. Each has both strengths and limitations. Much of our time, therefore, will be spent on the intellectual task of evaluating the theories, both on conceptual grounds and in light of contemporary scientific evidence. These evaluations are relevant beyond personality psychology, per se, especially in that the personality theories have informed basic and applied research in other branches of the field, such as clinical psychology, educational psychology, and industrial/organizational psychology (e.g., personnel selection).

A second course goal is to explore the research methods and empirical findings of Personality Science, that is, the contemporary field of research on personality. This scientific database is what differentiates the psychological study of human nature from efforts in other fields (e.g., Philosophy, Religion, Literature, etc.) to understand the human individual. An overarching educational goal will be to learn how concrete scientific findings can be used to evaluate what are sometimes rather abstract theories about human nature.

Readings

The required textbook is:

Cervone, D., & Pervin, L. A. (2013). *Personality: Theory and Research* (12th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

The book exists in a number of editions, including a recently released 13th edition. Our required text, however, is the older 12th edition. You can obtain it in any way you like: new in the UIC bookstore, used in the bookstore or anywhere else, or in electronic form. The bookstore should have a “customized” edition that is a bit shorter, and I hope a bit cheaper, than the standard, longer new edition of the text. In any case, as you’ll see from a browse through the internet, there are new, used, and e-versions of the book available through multiple outlets. Older editions (11th, 10th...) will be missing some material that will be discussed in class and will appear on the exams. If you have an older edition, you would be missing perhaps 10-12% of the material that’s in the 12th edition.

Here’s a key point: The textbook is the primary “learning tool” of this class. It contains much more information, in total, than could ever be presented in lectures. Many exam questions will draw directly on material in the book, even if that material was not discussed in class. Thus, you need the textbook to do well in the course. If you’re going to pay all the tuition dollars required to be here at UIC, then you owe it to yourself to spend a few more dollars on the book. (For those of you looking to minimize costs, I note that there surely will be a market to sell the book after the semester is over. Our textbook is used on a large number of campuses in the US, as well as overseas, and is likely to be used again here at UIC.)

In addition to the textbook reading, you will need to do supplemental reading to complete the paper requirement (described below) and the optional assignment (also described below). There also may be a small set of very brief readings that consist of original writings by the personality theorists.

Requirements and Grades

There are four types of assignments for which you will earn credit in the course: (1) Exams, (2) the Paper; (3) the Brief Memos (an odd name, yes, but I’m trying to give us a terminology that will avoid our confusing assignments 2 and 3); and (4) Discussion Board participation. The Exams and Paper are weighted more heavily than the Brief Memos and Discussion Board in the determination of grades.

(1) *Exams*. There will be three exams. Because of the anticipated large enrollment in the course, the exams will consist of machine-scorable multiple-choice questions; thus, you must bring #2 pencils to the exams. Each exam will have 40-50 questions each.

The exams will cover material discussed in the lectures and textbook readings. Note that the lectures and readings will not be redundant. Thus, you cannot expect to do well on the exams unless you know the material from both the lectures and the text. The third exam, to be held during UIC’s Exam Week, will not be a comprehensive exam; it will focus on material covered during the last third of the course. (It will be assumed, on Exams 2 and 3, that you will have

some memory of the earlier material so that you can, for example, compare theories discussed in the latter parts of the course to those covered at the beginning.)

Exam 1 will take place on **Tuesday, Feb 16** (in class, regular class time).

Exam 2 will take place on **Thursday, March 17** (in class, regular class time).

Exam 3 (the Final Exam), will take place on **Thursday, May 5**, 8am – 10 am (this is the UIC-assigned exam day and time, and therefore the only day and time on which the final exam can be given). Note that the UIC Final Exam Schedule, and associated exam policies, can be found here: https://registrar.uic.edu/current_students/calendars/final_exam_schedule.html

If you miss Exam 1 or Exam 2, you can take a make-up on the day of the next exam. The make-up exams will be slightly more difficult than the exams administered at the regularly scheduled exam time, to avoid inadvertently disadvantaging people who take the exam at the appropriate time. There will be no alternative exam days. There will be no make-up day for the final exam; grades have to be submitted very soon after the final exam, so if you want a grade, you need to be present for the final exam.

Also, please note that the instructor's and TA's regularly scheduled office hours pertain to the regular 15 weeks of instruction, not to Spring Break week or Final Exam week.

(2) *Paper Assignment*. There is a paper assignment: a 5-7 page paper due in class on Tuesday, April 19. We will make all efforts to return your graded paper to you by the time of the last class meeting, Thursday, April 28. The paper will be graded on a 60-point basis. Note that this is a larger number of points than any one exam. So the paper is “worth more,” in the total point system of the course, than is any one exam. It also is worth far more than the Brief Memos combined.

The paper assignment is to compare the manner in which two personality theories address a particular topic, and to do so by drawing upon a specific piece of research that enables you to evaluate and compare the theories. Details on paper topics, additional paper information, and a sample paper will be made available on the class's Blackboard website. (This info will not all be available as of week 1, but will be posted far in advance of the assignment.) You should read this material carefully before beginning your paper, as it contains detailed guidelines and suggestions for the paper assignment. In addition, we will discuss the paper assignment in class.

Late Papers. Papers that are turned in late will be accepted for credit; however, grading penalties will be assigned to them. The late-paper penalties consist of point reductions on your paper grade. These penalties will be assigned no matter what your reason for failing to submit the paper on time (barring sudden, and documented, medical emergencies, of course). You thus should plan ahead for eventualities such as “my computer crashed,” “my dog ate my computer,” etc. The paper, as noted, is due at the time of class on Tuesday, April 19. If you turn in your paper later than class time, but prior to midnight (via e-submission) on the 19th, there is a 3-point penalty. If you turn it in after the 19th but by midnight on Friday, the 22nd, there is a 6-point penalty. Papers submitted after the 22nd will be assigned a 10-point late penalty. Your paper has to be submitted by Friday, April 29, the last day of instruction at UIC in the Fall Semester, in order to get credit in the course. No matter what your scores on the exams, you must submit a paper to get credit for the course (by rule for this UIC general education course).

How to Submit Papers. Papers must be submitted both as hard copies on paper and as electronic files through the UIC Blackboard system and its SafeAssignment paper collection system. Details on this process will be discussed in class and in class announcements made available on our class's Blackboard web site.

On Plagiarism. If you include in your own paper material that is copied from another source, and you fail to put that material in quotation marks and properly to cite the original source, then you have plagiarized material. If you include material that appears in another student's paper, that, too, is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. It is a violation of University guidelines regarding academic integrity. (These guidelines, for your information, are stated in the Undergraduate Course Catalogue.) Any amount of plagiarized material will cause you to receive no credit for your paper and result in your paper being submitted to the UIC Office of Student Judicial Affairs. It is your responsibility to avoid writing a paper in which you include, without quotation marks and references as described above, material that originally appeared in another source.

Here is a guideline for references and for avoiding plagiarism. The appropriate style of references (which, by the way, is illustrated throughout your course textbook) is that, in the body of your paper, you should include the name of the author and the year of publication of papers or books from which you gather information. Thus, if you read a book by Freud written in 1923 that describes his structural model of personality, your text might read: Freud believed there are three aspects to human personality, the id, ego, and superego (Freud, 1923). If you never read a book by Freud, but you learned about Freud from our textbook, written by Cervone and Pervin, your paper would read: Freud believed there are three aspects to human personality, the id, ego, and superego (Cervone & Pervin, 2013). Occasionally, you may want to quote directly from another source. If even only a few words of text come directly from another source, then that text must be in quotation marks (otherwise it's plagiarism) and you should list the page number on which the material can be found. For example, if you have read the 1923 book by Freud, you might write: Freud believed that the ego "is not sharply separated from the id" (Freud, 1923, p. 14). Similarly, if you are quoting (i.e., taking any word-for-word material) from our textbook, you must put the material from the textbook in quotes, and reference the textbook the page number on which the information appeared originally. Note that you rarely should quote material directly. The notion here is that the basic ideas about psychology are important, but the particular way in which an author phrased those ideas is not. As a rule-of-thumb, less than 10% of your paper should consist of direct quotes from other sources. Having no direct quotes at all is perfectly acceptable – indeed, in many cases, preferable. You will earn only partial credit if you turn in a paper that consists substantially (i.e., more than 10%) of direct quotes. Extra note on plagiarism: UIC has instituted a system, linked to Blackboard website submissions, that *automatically* scans papers for plagiarism (i.e., that compares a given paper both to available information on the internet and to other papers submitted by students at UIC). This, of course, is all the more reason for avoiding the inclusion of plagiarized material, if it's inadvertent. If the University's automatic system for detecting plagiarism tells us that your paper contains a substantial amount of plagiarized material, then we cannot accept it for class credit, i.e., course instructors cannot give students credit for material that is plagiarized.

(3) *The Brief Memos.* During the course of the semester, we will be learning about approximately a half-dozen theories of personality. The purpose of the "Brief Memos"

assignment is to give you an opportunity to think (and write) actively about 3 of those theories *prior to* our paper assignment. A second, simultaneous purpose is to give you an opportunity to relate the ideas in the personality theories to “concrete cases,” specifically, to people you know (including yourself, if you’d like).

The Brief Memos are brief writing assignments of 275-325 words in length. The assignment is to write three of these during the semester: one by Friday, Feb. 5, one by Friday, March 11, and one by Monday, April 11. They can be submitted electronically as late as the end of the end on those days, 11:59 pm.) There won’t be any “late memos.” If you miss a deadline then you’re missed that memo. Each Brief Memo will be graded on a 10-point basis; there are, then, 30 total “Brief Memo Points” that will go into grading. The Memos, then, are small assignments that in total are lesser credit than an Exam or than the main Paper.

In terms of substance, the assignment is as follows. For each memo you should: (A) Think of someone you know well (either personally or because the person is a well-known public figure); (B) Identify either something the person did, or some personality characteristic that the individual tends to display. (C) Pick one of the personality theories that we discuss in this course. (You’ll be writing 3 of these memos during the semester; pick a different theory for each Brief Memo. In the long run, then, you’ll be writing Brief Memos on 3 of the 6 theories. Suggestion: Pick one of the theories we’re discussing, or recently were discussing, at the time at which you’re writing the given memo.) (D) Write the Brief Memo. Here’s what it should accomplish. In the memo, you should (a) briefly describe the person and describe the behavior or personality characteristic you are writing about; (b) explain how one of the theories in the class would explain that behavior or personality characteristic; (c) briefly evaluate the explanation; you can express your opinion about the degree to which the theory-based explanation provided insight into the individual you’re discussing. Your evaluation – if you really want to show off your personality science skills – could include some discussion of the type of scientific evidence that might test whether the explanation provided by the personality theory is a good one.

The Brief Memos are to be submitted electronically only; there is no need to submit hard copies. They will be submitted via the Blackboard website; details to be provided in class. The memos do not have to be written in the structure of a formal paper, with a title page and a page of references. They can be written literally as memos; an example will be provided in class. However, other stylistic features described in the paper assignment apply to the memos. For example, you need to avoid plagiarism in the memos, and you should write in formal scientific style.

(4) Discussion Board. Throughout the semester (subsequent to the first week of the semester), we will have on-line discussions of material covered in class. The discussions will be conducted through the “Discussion Board” facility at the Blackboard website. Your instructor (and/or TA’s) will post discussion questions, and you will have the opportunity to respond either to the original questions or to comments by other class members, as part of discussion “threads” that presumably will develop.

You can earn points for participating in the on-line discussions. Specifically, you can earn 5 points at each of three times during the semester: weeks 2-5, 6-10, and 11-15. Credit – that is, the 5 points – will be given for any substantive comments of >50 words that add constructively to the discussion.

Note that you can contribute to the Discussion Board as frequently as you would like. It's your opportunity, throughout the semester, to make comments and raise questions about course material (in addition to the opportunity to do that in class). Your instructor and TA's occasionally may "chime in" on these discussions. But you'll earn the 5 points credit (max 15 points during the semester) the first time you contribute to discussions during each third of the semester.

More details about the Discussion Boards will be presented in class.

Grading

Your grade will be based on your sum total of points on the three exams, the paper, the memos, and the Discussion Boards. Letter grades will not be formally assigned to each assignment. However, there will be information about the distribution of mid-term exam and paper scores and the likely grades associated with those scores.

The course grading system will be one in which earning 90% of the total points will guarantee you an A, 80% will guarantee a B, 70% a C, and 60% (90 points) a D. However, these percentages may be "curved" if that proves warranted based on the distribution of exam and paper scores. No matter what the curve, half of the total number of available points will be required to pass the course; failing to earn more than half the credit on the exams and paper is equivalent to failing the course.

Topics and Reading Assignments

We will cover the topics in this order; the scheduling and associated readings will be announced in class.

Lecture Topic	Textbook Reading
I. Introduction: Theories (& Methods) (the parenthetical reference to Methods and Chapter 2 will be explained in class)	Chapters 1 (& 2)
II. Psychodynamic Theories	Chapters 3 & 4
III. Trait & Biological Theories	
Personality Trait Theories: Allport, Eysenck, Cattell	Chapter 7
Personality Trait Theories: Five-Factor Model	Chapter 8
Biological Foundations of Personality	Chapter 9
IV. Behaviorism	Chapter 10
V. Kelly's Personal Construct Theory	Chapter 11
VI. Social-Cognitive Theory	
Bandura and Mischel	Chapter 12
Social-Cognitive Theory: Extensions/Applications	Chapter 13

VI. Rogers' Phenomenological/Self Theory

Chapters 5 & 6

VII. Personality in Social Context
Personality in Social Context

Chapter 14

General UIC Policies

Students may drop courses without penalty during the first ten days of the semester (through Friday of week 2) using UIC Express. Between week 3 and Friday of week 9, undergraduates are entitled to a total of two optional date drops for the duration of their enrollment in LAS. Optional late drops require an appointment with an LAS advisor (996-3366). LAS advisors (third floor UH) are also available on walk-in days (8:30-3:30 on Tuesdays and on Friday of week 9). Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access and participation in this course should register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Please contact ODS at 312/413-2103 (voice) or 312/413-0123 (TTY).

Communication with the Instructor and TA's

Because of the very large size of this class, at the busy times of the semester it sometimes may be impossible for your course instructor personally to return phone calls or respond to emails in a timely manner. Thus, if you need information quickly, you should rely not just on the course instructor but the TA's. Note that Ms. Wong is the primary contact for administrative issues (e.g., you find you are not on the class list; there's an error in a grade you receive; etc.).