**Psychology 210: Theories of Personality**

**Fall, 2013**

**CRN 12074**

# Course Meeting

11:00 – 12:15 AM Tue, Thurs Lecture Center D1

Instructor

Dr. Daniel Cervone, BSB 1008, phone 413-2632, <dcervone@uic.edu>

Office hours: Tue., 12:30-2:00; Wed., 11:00-12:00, and by appointment

NOTE: Your course instructor is on campus and in BSB 108 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.

*Teaching Assistants*

Ms. Nicole Mayer, [nmayer5@uic.edu](mailto:nmayer5@uic.edu), BSB 2008, Office Hours: TBA

Ms. Brittany Hanson, [bhanso5@uic.edu](mailto:bhanso5@uic.edu), BSB \_\_\_\_, Office Hours: TBA

Ms. Mayer 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. Ms. Mayer also may deliver a guest lecture during the course of the semester. When you have administrative questions, then, you should contact either the course instructor or Ms. Mayer. Both Ms. Mayer and Ms. Hanson will, of course, be involved in instructional activities and the grading of assignments. Like Dr. Cervone, they are on campus at many times beyond their posted office hours, should you not be able to make those.

*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 broad conceptions of human nature and differences among individuals that can be seen as a conceptual pinnacle of theorizing in psychological science. We will be discussing a number of different theories – the most influential ones in the history of the field -- each of which has both strengths and limitations. Given the latter, we will devote much time to a critical evaluation of theories. Our purpose is not merely to critique personality theories, per se, but to exercise the critical thinking skills needed to analyze explanations of human behavior, or the sort that are found throughout psychology and related fields.

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 specific, 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.

Most, if not all, of the required readings that will be discussed in class and that will be relevant to the exam come from this textbook. (There may be a very small number of outside readings assigned during the semester.) The textbook, then, 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 directly relate to material in the book, even if that material was not discussed in class. Thus, you ***need the textbook*** to do well in the course.

There are various ways to get the textbook. If you purchase it (that is, a printed version of the book) new, there surely will be a market to sell the book after the semester is over; it is a relatively new publication and is used widely. Alternatively, the book is available in electronic format. Finally, it has been used previously at UIC, so used copies likely are available.

The lectures will make reference to the new, 12th edition of the book, and the exams similarly will presume that you have the 12th edition. Older editions of the book differ; for example, roughly 10% of the material in the 12th edition is not in previous edition. The implication is that if you have an older edition, you will be disadvantaged when it comes to course coverage, including the exams.

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).

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.

**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 Thursday, Sept. 26 (in class, regular class time).

Exam 2 will take place on Thursday, Oct. 31 (in class, regular class time).

Exam 3, the final exam, will be held on the regularly scheduled, university-assigned exam day and time during Final Exam week; at the time of this writing, this day/time is 10:30-12:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 9. For your convenience, the UIC final exam schedule is reprinted at the end of this syllabus.

If you miss Exam 1 or Exam 2, you can take a make-up on the day of the next exam. In other words, if you miss Exam 1 on Sept. 26, you can take it on Oct. 31. If you miss Exam 2, you can take it on the day of the final 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 will 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.

**Paper.** There is a paper assignment: a 5-7 page paper due in class on Tuesday, November 26. We will make all efforts to return your graded paper to you by the time of the last class meeting, December 5. [If you submit your paper late (there are late penalties; see below), it may not be returned until at least the time of the final exam.] 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 is due at the time of class on November 26. Late penalties are as follows. If you turn in your paper later than class time on the 26th, but prior to 5 p.m. on the 27th, there is a 3-point penalty. You cannot submit a paper on the 28th-Dec 1; that is the Thanksgiving holiday. Papers submitted on December 2 – 6 will receive a 6-point late penalty. Your paper has to be submitted by December 6, the last day of instruction at UIC in the Fall Semester, in order to get credit in the course. Note that, no matter what your scores on the exams, you must submit a paper to get credit for the course (because this is a UIC “gen ed” course; see <http://www.uic.edu/ucat/catalog/GE.shtml#c>)

How to Submit Papers. Papers must be submitted *both as* hard copies on paper and as electronic files in .doc or .rtf wordprocessing format. Papers will be submitted electronically through the UIC Blackboard 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. SAD-BUT-TRUE STORY: In two recent semesters in which I have taught this course, one or more students has “written” his or her paper either by downloading material from the web, formatting it in a wordprocessor, and submitting it as their paper, or by submitting work that a different student submitted to this course in an earlier semester. These cases were submitted to the UIC Office of Student Judicial Affairs. In all submitted cases this UIC office took action against the student who had plagiarized the paper. Let’s try to avoid such occurrences this semester!

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 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.

**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 Sept 24, one by Oct 29, and one by December 5. 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 you 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.

Discussion Board

Throughout 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 1-5, 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 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. Mayer 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.).

