

## Psychology 210: Theories of Personality Fall, 2008

### Course Meetings and Course #

11:00-12:15 AM      Tue, Thurs      Lecture Center D2      Course # 14643

### Instructor

Dr. Daniel Cervone, BSB 1008, phone 413-2632, <dcervone@uic.edu>  
Office hours: Tue., 1-2; Wed., 11-12, and by appointment

NOTE: Your course instructor generally is on campus every day 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

Primary Course TA: Mr. Brady Nelson <[bnelso7@uic.edu](mailto:bnelso7@uic.edu)>  
Office: BSB 3019, Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-1:30PM, and by appointment  
Additional Course TA: Ms. Jenna Robison, <[jrobison@uic.edu](mailto:jrobison@uic.edu)>  
Office: BSB 2080, Office Hours: TBA

NOTE: Both of our Teaching Assistants, along with the Instructor, will participate in educational support activities (consulting with students on class material, helping students to prepare for exams, working with students on papers assignment, etc.) throughout the semester. However, Mr. Nelson is the main contact person for administrative information (e.g., class enrollment, alerting us if you miss an exam, questions about how to submit a paper, checking that we have the paper that you submitted, etc.). Mr. Nelson will be doing much of the “record-keeping” for the class, so is the person to contact first regarding administrative questions. Also note that, like Dr. Cervone, Mr. Nelson is on campus very frequently so you can rely on the “by appointment” option for meeting times at your convenience.

Course Description and Goals. This course has two primary goals. The first is to examine a set of theories of personality. Personality Theory has a relatively long intellectual history. Developments in the field have influenced both the academic discipline of Psychology and society at large. The study of Personality Theory, then, has relevance both to the student of psychology and to students in general. Note that we will be discussing a number of different theories, each of which offers interesting insights into human nature. However, each also has limitations and shortcomings. We thus will devote a significant part of our time to the critical evaluation of theories of human nature. Our coverage also will include discussion of the sociohistorical contexts in which the given theory was first developed, and of the people who developed the theories. As we will see, the personalities of the theorists and the contexts in which they worked frequently influenced the personality theories they created.

A second course goal is to explore the contemporary scientific field of Personality Psychology. A feature that differentiates Personality Psychology from other efforts (in

Philosophy, Religion, Literature, etc.) to understand human nature is that the personality psychologist attempts to develop theories that are grounded in established scientific knowledge and that can be tested empirically, in other words, that can be tested through scientific observation and experimentation. Recent decades have seen many significant advances in scientific research on human personality. These advances often provide objective evidence with which one can compare and evaluate the classic personality theories. We will examine research findings that bear on each of the theories we discuss, and that shape the continuing evolution of Personality Psychology. As we do so, a primary educational goal will be to learn how specific, concrete research 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. (2008). *Personality: Theory and Research* (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

All of the required readings that will be discussed in class and that will be relevant to the exam come from this textbook. Indeed, the textbook could be seen as 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. Note also that you need *this* textbook (Cervone & Pervin) in its *most recent edition* (2008 copyright, 10<sup>th</sup> edition); the book has been substantially updated from previous editions.

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 three types of graded assignments: (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). The Exams and Paper are weighted more heavily than the Brief Memos 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, Feb. 14 (in class, regular class time).

Exam 2 will take place on Thursday, March 20 (in class, regular class time).

Exam 3, the final exam, will be held on the regularly scheduled, university-assigned exam

day and time; at the time of this writing, this day/time is Thursday, May 8, 10:30-12:30.

If you miss Exam 1 or Exam 2, you can take a make-up on the next exam day. In other words, if you miss Exam 1 on Feb. 14 you can take it on March 20. 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 Thursday, April 17. If you submit your paper on time, the paper will be graded and returned to you by the day of the last class meeting prior to exam week, which is Thursday, May 1. If you submit your paper late (there are late penalties; see below), it may not be returned until 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 website on the internet. (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 in class on Thursday, April 17. Late penalties are as follows. If you turn in your paper later than class time on the 17th, but prior to 5 p.m. on the 18th, there is a 2-point penalty. If you submit it any time after 5 pm on the 18<sup>th</sup> through 5 pm Friday, the 24th, there is a 6-point penalty. Papers submitted any time after 5 pm on the 24th but before the end of the business day on Friday, May 2, the last day of instruction at UIC in the Spring Semester, will receive a 10-point penalty. You must submit a paper by this last day of UIC instruction for the semester to get credit for the course.

**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 six of the past eight 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 Pervin, Cervone, & John, your paper would read: *Freud believed there are three aspects to human personality, the id, ego, and superego (Cervone & Pervin, 2008)*. 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 *can not* accept it for class credit, i.e., course instructors can not 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. 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, in other words, 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 and some interesting personality characteristic that they display. The characteristic could be either good, bad, or some mix of the two. (B) Pick one of the personality theories. (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.) (C) Think of how the theory would explain the interesting personality characteristic. (D) Write a brief memo explaining this; that is, the memo should (a) describe the personality characteristic; (b) describe the way in which the theory – or some *part of* the theory, that is, a selected variable from the overall theory – would explain the characteristic; and (c) briefly evaluate the explanation; you can express your opinion about whether this theory-based explanation actually provided insight into the individual.

You will be submitting the memos one at a time, at times of your own choosing (up until 4/15; see below). The Brief Memos are to be submitted electronically only; there is no need to submit hard copies on paper. The Brief Memos will be submitted via the Blackboard website; details to be provided in class.

Because the Brief Memos are meant to give you an opportunity to write about the theories prior to writing our main paper, they are due earlier than the main paper. The memos – i.e., all 3 of them – are due by Tue., April 15. Other than this final deadline, there is no set, fixed date for turning in memo #1, 2, and 3. You can do this at any time through April 15; this is a self-paced independent activity. However, as a suggestion, it might be easier to write a memo about a given personality theory *while we're discussing that theory in class*. It will be easier to recall the relevant information, and the memo writing may give you deeper knowledge of the theory, which will be useful when taking the exams.

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. Also, the three theories you write about have to be theories of personality discussed in our class.

### Grading

Your grade will be based on your sum total of points on the three exams, the paper, and the memos. 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.

<u>Lecture Topic</u>	<u>Textbook Reading</u>
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
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, Biology, and Social Context	
Biological Foundations of Personality	Chapter 9
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 Mr. Brady 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.).