

PSYD30
CURRENT TOPICS
IN PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY
Prof. Marc A. Fournier

Class Times: Mondays from 10am to 12pm in MW223.
Office Hours: Mondays from 1pm to 2pm or by appointment.
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Overview

The goal of the PSYD30 seminar is to revisit several of the issues and controversies introduced to you in PSYB30, but to do so in a context that gives you the sense of what a grad school seminar would be like. Consequently, this seminar will rely heavily on the concept of *self-directed learning*. I do not plan to stand up each week and lecture to you for two hours. The goal here is not, through Socratic or didactic methods, to guide you to my own personal opinions on these topics; rather, it is to provide you with the opportunity to exercise *judgment under supervision*. As such, the success or failure of this seminar will rely heavily upon your individual (and collective) investment.

What do I expect from you? I expect you to come to class each week having thought critically about—and so prepared to discuss—the assigned reading. I expect you to display your critical thinking through both your regular submission of thought papers from home and your participation in class.

Here is a breakdown of the evaluation scheme:

Participation & Thought Papers	10%
In-Class Presentation	20%
Midterm Exam	35%
Final Exam	35%

Participation & Thought Papers

I expect you to regularly participate in class. Seminars are probably the only opportunity you will have as undergraduates to actually voice an opinion—please use it. My hope is that each of you offers at least one thoughtful comment per class; do so and I will give you 5/5 for your participation.

I also expect you to regularly submit thought papers expressing your reactions to the readings. These should be written using a 12-pt Times New Roman font, and should not exceed one double-spaced page. Please submit your thought papers to me at the start of class; late thought papers will not be accepted. The chapter, your name, and your student number should be clearly indicated at the top of the page. Please do not summarize the assigned reading; rather, react to it—e.g., where do you stand with respect to the issue at hand, and why? I expect you to submit at least five thought papers over the course of the term; do so and I will give you 5/5 for your thought papers.

I understand that some students feel more comfortable with writing their thoughts down than with saying them aloud; so for every additional thought paper you submit, you will receive an extra half-point that I will deduct from your expected in-class participation. Consequently, if you are uncomfortable with speaking in front of the class and choose to submit ten thought papers instead of five, then I will weigh your in-class participation out of 2.5% instead of 5%.

On an additional page, I offer you the opportunity to write down one (or more) potential exam questions. These questions should go beyond soliciting the simple recall of facts from the readings; rather, they should require an analysis of the ideas. Provide me with good questions and I will use them on the exams. As you are free to share questions amongst yourselves, you could in theory know all the exam questions beforehand.

In-Class Presentation

I expect students to make in-class presentations (using transparencies, StarOffice, or PowerPoint) that summarize the assigned readings. Students will present in groups of 2 or 3; each student should speak for 10-15 minutes, so group presentations should run 30-45 minutes in length. Students are encouraged (but not required) to supplement the chapter they have chosen with 1-3 outside sources (journal articles); students can find outside sources by searching their topic on the U of T Libraries *PsycInfo* database (<http://www.library.utoronto.ca/resources/index.html>). Although students must collaborate to determine who will present what, I will grade your presentations individually. I will be looking for answers to the following questions in the effort to determine your grade:

- Did the student clearly understand all of the relevant issues?
 - *Comprehension*
- Did the student discuss with appropriate emphasis all of the relevant issues?
 - *Organization*
- Did the student use interesting examples / exercises to illustrate the relevant issues?
 - *Clarity*
- Did the student devise clear and effective PowerPoint slides to illustrate the relevant issues?
 - *Style*

Midterm Exam

The midterm will be held in class and will consist of short answer and essay questions.

Final Exam

The final will be scheduled during the exam period and will consist of short answer and essay questions. The final will be non-cumulative.

Text

We will be reading the 3rd edition of Pervin's *Current Controversies and Issues in Personality*.

<u>Seminar #</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Chapter #</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Seminar 1	Sep 13	—	Introduction
Seminar 2	Sep 20	1	Science & the Person
Seminar 3	Sep 27	2	Traits vs. Motives vs. Cognitions
Seminar 4	Oct 4	3	The Person vs. Situation Controversy
Seminar 5	Oct 18	4	The Longitudinal Consistency of Personality
Seminar 6	Oct 25	—	In-Class Midterm
Seminar 7	Nov 1	5	The Genome vs. Environment Controversy
Seminar 8	Nov 8	6	The Evolution vs. Culture Controversy
Seminar 9	Nov 15	7	The Self
Seminar 10	Nov 22	8	The Unconscious
Seminar 11	Nov 29	9	Human Change Processes
Seminar 12	Dec 2	10	Psychological vs. Biological Levels of Explanation