

PSYD30

CURRENT TOPICS IN PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY

Prof. Marc A. Fournier

An intensive examination of selected issues and research problems in personality psychology.
The specific content will vary from year to year.

Class Times: Mondays from 15:00 to 17:00 in MW223

Office Hrs: Mondays from 17:00 to 18:00 in SW513

E-mail: fournier@utsc.utoronto.ca

TEXTBOOK:

This year, we will be reading *Optimal Human Being: An Integrated Multi-Level Perspective* (2004) by Kennon M. Sheldon. Sheldon elaborates upon the three-tiered framework introduced in PSYB30 (traits—adaptations—life stories). Sheldon first provides a integrative framework in which to locate all of the human sciences. He then introduces a new way of viewing personality as a four-tiered "functional hierarchy" comprising traits, goals/intentions, selves/self-concepts, and species-typical characteristics. Finally, Sheldon portrays how these levels of analysis combine and interact inside the individual, and in so doing invites us to reconsider our understanding of optimal human functioning.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Sept 11	Introduction
Sept 18	Chapter 1 Discussion
Sept 25	Chapter 2 Presentation & Discussion
Oct 2	Chapter 3 Presentation & Discussion
Oct 16	Chapter 4 Presentation & Discussion
Oct 23	*Two-Hour In-Class Midterm Exam*
Oct 30	Chapter 5 Presentation & Discussion
Nov 6	Chapter 6 Presentation & Discussion
Nov 13	Chapter 7 Presentation & Discussion
Nov 20	Chapter 8 Presentation & Discussion
Nov 27	Chapter 9 Presentation & Discussion
Dec 4	Chapter 10 Discussion & Term Paper Submission

METHOD OF EVALUATION:

Midterm Test—20%. A two-hour midterm will be held in class.*
The midterm will test your understanding of chapters 1–4 and will consist of short essay questions.

End-of-Term Paper—50%. A 2,000-word paper due on the last day of class.
The term paper will test your understanding of chapters 5–10 and will involve a critical analysis of your own personality functioning (see [appendix](#)).

In-Class Oral Presentation—30%. I expect you to make one in-class oral presentation that summarizes and elaborates upon the assigned chapter. You will present in groups of three; each student should speak for 15 minutes, so group presentations should run 45 minutes in length. I expect you to use StarOffice or PowerPoint as part of the presentation. You will be required to go beyond summarizing the chapter and to provide the class with an expanded perspective and critical analysis of the assigned reading; you can do so by supplementing the chapter you have selected with relevant readings (i.e., journal articles, book chapters, etc.). Your presentations will be evaluated individually in terms of your i) clarity of presentation, ii) comprehension/organization, and iii) effective use of supplementary readings.

* **There will be no make-up exams.** For procedural information concerning medical absences from term tests, please consult my [policy](#).

NOTE: The schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.