

# **PSYD30: CURRENT TOPICS IN PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY**

**Course Instructor: Stefano I. Di Domenico**

*I have never succeeded in the long-run in not giving divergent opinions their due. Such opinions could never arise—much less secure a following—if they did not correspond to some special disposition, some special character, some fundamental psychic experience that is more or less prevalent. If we were to exclude such opinions as simply wrong and worthless, we should be rejecting this particular disposition or this particular experience as a misinterpretation—that is, we should be doing violence to our own empirical data.*

C. G. Jung

This seminar is an intensive examination of selected topics and research problems in personality psychology. The main goals of this seminar are to provide students a solid foundation in contemporary personality psychology, to encourage their critical thinking, and to provide them with opportunities to develop and practice their presentation skills.

**Instructor Office Hours:** Thursdays from 13:30 to 15:30 in SW418 (**by appointment only**)

**Seminar Times:** Thursdays from 11:00 to 13:00 in MW223

**Email:** psyd30.uts@gmail.com

**Office Hours Policy.** Office hours are by appointment only. If you wish to attend office hours on a given week, please book your attendance at least **three days in advance**.

**Course Website.** This course will use the University of Toronto Blackboard Courseware Portal. To access the course website, go to the portal weblogin page at **<https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/>** and login with your UTORid and password. Once you have logged into the portal, you should find a link to the course website. This link is only available to students registered in the course.

**Copyright.** For the protection of privacy and copyright, any unauthorized video/audio-recording of this class is strictly prohibited.

## Seminar Schedule

Week 1	May 7	Course Overview
Week 2	May 14	Introduction to Personality Science
Week 3	May 21	The Big Five Traits, Part I: Taxonomy
Week 4	May 28	The Big Five Traits, Part II: Predictive Utility
Week 5	June 4	The Big Five Traits, Part III: Stability and Change
Week 6	June 11	Intelligence
Week 7	June 18	*****Reading Week*****
Week 8	June 25	The Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS) Model
Week 9	July 2	Personal Goals and Personal Values
Week 10	July 9	Self-Determination Theory, Part I: Qualities of Motivation
Week 11	July 16	Self-Determination Theory, Part II: Integrative Processes
Week 12	July 23	Personal Narratives and the Life Story
Week 13	July 30	Conceptualizing Well-Being

## Components of Evaluation

30%	Individual Participation
30%	Group Presentation
40%	Final Exam

**Individual Participation.** Active student participation is essential to the success of a seminar course. To encourage your involvement in all aspects of this seminar, your participation will be evaluated in three different ways:

1. **Reflection Papers (10%):** You are asked to submit a one-page (double-spaced) reflection paper each week summarizing your comments and questions concerning the readings(s) assigned for that class (see **Reflection Paper Template**, page 8). Rather than formally grading your reflection papers, I will be reading your reflection papers to ensure that you have made a good faith attempt to grapple with the assigned reading. Please note that you must submit your reflection papers *in person* at the very beginning of class each week. Reflection papers submitted *in absentia* will not be accepted. You will receive 1% for each reflection paper (allowing you to miss one week without penalty).
2. **Seminar Participation (10%):** You are asked to play an active role in advancing the seminar by making constructive contributions to class discussions each week (see Guidelines for Seminar Participation on page 10). I will be evaluating the overall quality and quantity of your class involvement each week, as well as your overall contributions to the seminar throughout the summer. **Attendance on the first day of class is**

**particularly important because this is the day that you will be assigned to a group presentation. Any student that is not present on the first day will receive a 2% penalty on their seminar participation grade and will relinquish the opportunity to choose their preferred presentation topic.**

3. **Peer Review (10%):** You will be asked to provide a constructive peer evaluation of the group presentations by completing a **Peer Review Survey** (see page 9) during the last 15 minutes of class each week. You will be asked to submit the peer review survey at the very end of class. Your peer review surveys **will not** be used to evaluate the group presentation. However, I will be reading your peer review surveys to ensure that you have made a good faith attempt to intellectually engage with the presented material and to cultivate an appreciation of effective presentation skills. You will receive 1% for each peer review survey.

**Group Presentation (30%).** You will be asked to select a topic from the seminar schedule and present the reading material for that week. You will be asked to present the material with two other students (i.e., students will present in groups of three). You and your group mates should speak for approximately 15 minutes, so group presentations should run for approximately 45 minutes in length. Because the use of multimedia is now generally expected in the delivery of oral presentations, you will be asked to construct and use PowerPoint slides as part of your presentation. Although you will be presenting in a group, your presentation will be evaluated on an individual basis. I will be using the **Presentation Grading Scheme** (see page 11) to grade your presentation in terms of its organizational clarity, how well you support the group discussion and, of course, your command of the subject matter.

**Final Exam (40%).** You will be asked to write a two-hour exam. Exam details will be discussed in class.

**Academic Integrity.** The University of Toronto treats academic offenses very seriously. Offenders are caught and sanctions can be severe (a grade of zero, suspension, expulsion). Students are expected both to know and to follow the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. Additional information can be found at

**<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>**

**The Writing Centre.** Your performance in this class will depend in large part upon your ability to communicate clearly and effectively. The Writing Centre supports student learning at any stage in the writing process, from planning an outline to polishing a final draft. Their services include online resources, drop-in hours, one-on-one consultations, and writing workshops. Additional information can be found at

**<http://ctl.utsc.utoronto.ca/twc/main>**

**AccessAbility Services.** The principal function of AccessAbility Services is to ensure that the policies, practices, procedures, and programs at UTSC are inclusive to ensure the equal access to students with disabilities. The office thus provides accommodations to students with a documented learning, physical, sensory, or mental health disability or medical condition. Additional information can be found at <http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~ability/>

## **Seminar Readings**

**Week 1. Course Overview** *Carefully read the syllabus.*

### **Week 2. Introduction to Personality Science**

Campbell, D. and Fiske, D. (1959). Convergent and discriminant validation by the multitrait-multimethod matrix. *Psychological Bulletin*, 56, 2, 81-105.

*This reading is difficult but worth the effort. The ideas that these authors cover will form an important part of the foundation for all the material in this course. Do your best and we'll be sure to have an interesting class discussion.*

### **Week 3. The Big Five Traits, Part I: Taxonomy**

DeYoung, C. G. (2010). Personality neuroscience and the biology of traits. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 4, 1165–1180.

McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T. Jr. (2008). The Five-Factor Theory of Personality. In O. P. John, R. W. Robins, & L. A. Pervin (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 159-181). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

### **Week 4. The Big Five Traits, Part II: Predictive Utility**

Ozer, D. J., & Benet-Martínez, V. (2006). Personality and the prediction of consequential outcomes. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 57, 401-421.

Roberts, B. W., Kuncel, N. R., Shiner, R., Caspi, A., & Goldberg, L. R. (2007). The power of personality: The comparative validity of personality traits, socio-economic status, and cognitive ability for predicting important life outcomes. *Perspectives in Psychological Science*, 2, 313-345.

### **Week 5. The Big Five Traits, Part III: Stability and Change**

Edmonds, G., Jackson, J. J., Fayard, J. V., & Roberts, B.W. (2008). Is character fate, or is there hope to change my personality yet? *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2, 399-413.

Roberts, B.W., Wood, D., & Caspi, A. (2008). The development of personality traits in adulthood. In O.P. John, R.W. Robins, & L. A. Pervin (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (3rd edition, Ch 14, pp. 375-398). New York, NY: Guilford.

## **Week 6. Intelligence**

Deary, I.J., Penke, L., Johnson, W. (2010). The neuroscience of human intelligence differences. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, 11, 201–211.

DeYoung, C. G. (2011). Intelligence and personality. In R. J. Sternberg & S. B. Kaufman (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of intelligence* (pp. 711–737). New York: Cambridge University Press.

## **Week 7. Reading Week**

*Be conscientious and get a head-start on the readings for future weeks.*

## **Week 8. The Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS) Model**

Fournier, M. A., Moskowitz, D. S., & Zuroff, D. C. (2008). Integrating dispositions, signatures, and the interpersonal domain. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 94, 531–545.

Mischel, W., & Shoda, Y. (1995). A cognitive–affective system theory of personality: Reconceptualizing situations, dispositions, dynamics, and invariance in personality structure. *Psychological Review*, 102, 246–268.

## **Week 9. Personal Goals and Personal Values**

Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (1982). Control theory: A useful conceptual framework for personality-social, clinical, and health psychology. *Psychological Bulletin*, 92, 111-135.

Hirsh, J. B., Mar, R. A., & Peterson, J. B. (2012). Psychological entropy: A framework for understanding uncertainty-related anxiety. *Psychological Review*, 119, 304-320.

## **Week 10. Self-Determination Theory, Part I: Qualities of Motivation**

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The 'what' and 'why' of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11, 227-268.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Facilitating optimal motivation and psychological well-being across life's domains. *Canadian Psychology*, 49, 14-23.

### **Week 11. Self-Determination Theory, Part II: Integrative Processes**

Ryan, R. M. (1995). Psychological needs and the facilitation of integrative processes. *Journal of Personality*, *63*, 397-427.

Vansteenkiste, M., & Ryan, R. M. (2013). On psychological growth and vulnerability: Basic psychological need satisfaction and need frustration as a unifying principle. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, *23*, 263–280.

Weinstein, N., Przybylski, A. K., & Ryan, R. M. (2013). The integrative process: New research and future directions. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *22*, 69-74.

### **Week 12. Personal Narratives and the Life Story**

Bauer, J. J., McAdams, D. P., & Pals, J. L. (2006). Narrative identity and eudaimonic well-being. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *9*, 81-104.

McAdams, D. P. (2013). The psychological self as actor, agent, and author. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, *8*, 272-295.

### **Week 13. Conceptualizing Well-Being**

Busseri, M. A., & Sadava, S. W. (2011). A review of the tripartite structure of subjective well-being: Implications for conceptualization, operationalization, analysis, and synthesis. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *15*, 290-314.

Cramer, A. O. J., Waldorp, L. J., van der Maas, H., & Borsboom, D. (2010). Comorbidity: A network perspective. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *33*, 137-193.

**Reflection Paper**

**Week \_\_\_\_\_, Topic: \_\_\_\_\_**

Begin summarizing your reflections here...

Suggested format:

Paragraph 1: Briefly describe the content of the readings.  
(Two or three sentences)

Paragraph 2: Briefly describe the content that you found interesting. Why did you find this content interesting?  
(Four or five sentences)

Paragraph 3: Briefly describe what you think you did not understand.  
(Four or five sentences)



Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student #: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Peer Review Survey**

Week \_\_\_\_\_, Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

**Did the presentation cover the most important content of the assigned readings?**

<b>Content Coverage Low</b>					<b>Content Coverage High</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	

**Was the content material clearly presented?**

<b>Unclear</b>					<b>Clear</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	

**Briefly describe one aspect of this presentation that you particularly liked.**

**Briefly describe one way that your classmates could improve this presentation.**

### Guidelines for Seminar Participation<sup>1</sup>

**Prepare to contribute** by carefully reviewing the syllabus and locating the current readings and topics in relation to the course as a whole. Know why you are discussing this particular topic at this juncture in the course. Use the syllabus and lecture material to generate questions and comments in advance.

**Explicitly relate or link** your observations and comments to course objectives, central themes and main topics.

**Ask a question** that encourages someone to clarify or elaborate on a comment.

Make a comment to **link two people's contributions**.

**Explain that you found another person's ideas interesting** or useful, and describe why.

**Build on what someone else has said.** Be explicit about the way you are extending the other person's thought.

**Paraphrase a point** someone has already made and build on it.

**Summarize several people's contributions**, taking into account a recurring theme in the discussion. "It seems we have heard variations on two main points of view; on the one hand..."

**Ask a question that relates to that week's course topic**--for example, "Can you explain how this example illustrates the concept (course topic) of ...?"

Find a way to **express appreciation for the insights you have gained** from the discussion. Be specific about what it was that helped you understand something better.

**Disagree with someone in a respectful and constructive way.** You might reflect the comment back to the speaker to indicate that you have listened well. If possible, point out what is interesting or compelling in someone's comment before explaining why and how you disagree.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from: <http://www.princeton.edu/mcgraw/library/for-students/class-participation-contr/>

**Presentation Grading Scheme<sup>2</sup>**

**Percentage Grade Definition**

90-100	Excellent: Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base; <u>advanced the group discussion by preparing well-constructed questions</u> ; elaborated on the topics and problems of previous weeks.
85-89	Excellent
80-84	Excellent
77-79	Good: Evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature; <u>provided enough content material for a worthwhile group discussion.</u>
73-76	Good
70-72	Good
67-69	Adequate: Student who is profiting from his/her seminar experience; understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.
63-66	Adequate
60-62	Adequate
57-59	Marginal: Some evidence of familiarity with subject matter and some evidence that critical and analytic skills have been developed.
53-56	Marginal
50-52	Marginal
0-49	Inadequate: Little evidence of even superficial understanding of subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; with limited or irrelevant use of literature.

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from: <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/newstudents/transition/academic/grading>