

# 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.

### **Focus for 2019: *Life-Span Personality Development***

**Instructor Office Hours:** Fridays from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm in SW418 (**by appointment**)

**Seminar Times:** Fridays from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm in SW316

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**Textbook.** McAdams, D. P. (2015). *The art and science of personality development*. New York: Guilford. (Available from the UTSC Bookstore and on reserve in the UTSC Library.)

### **Seminar Schedule**

Week 1	January 11	Introduction & Overview
Week 2	January 18	Chapter 1. In the Beginning...
Week 3	January 25	Chapter 2. The Actor Takes the Stage
Week 4	February 1	Chapter 3. The Problem of Self-Regulation
Week 5	February 8	Chapter 4. The Actor Grows Up
Week 6	February 15	Chapter 5. The Age 5-7 Shift
Week 7	March 1	Chapter 6. The Motivational Agenda
Week 8	March 8	Chapter 7. How Values Shape Agency
Week 9	March 15	Chapter 8. The Stories We Live By
Week 10	March 22	Chapter 9. Generative Lives, Redemptive Life Stories
Week 11	March 29	Chapter 10. The Sense of an Ending
Week 12	April 5	Summary & Conclusion

### **Components of Evaluation**

20%	Individual Participation
30%	Group Presentation
50%	Final Paper

### **The Importance of the First Class**

To a much greater extent than lecture-based courses, seminars depend upon students' attendance. The first class of the term is of particular importance, because we will use this class to organize the student presentation schedule for the term. Students who miss the first class without just cause will receive a **2% penalty** that will apply against their final grade.

**Individual Participation.** I expect you to come to class each week having completed the assigned reading, to pay careful attention to the comments and questions of your classmates, and to contribute regularly and thoughtfully to the class discussion. You will receive course credit for each of these activities. First, I expect you to come to class each week ready to contribute to the discussion. You should submit a **1-page reaction paper** each week using the template provided, summarizing your comments and questions concerning the chapter that we will be discussing. Please note that I will not be formally grading your reaction papers; rather, I will be skimming them to ensure that you have made a good faith attempt to grapple with the assigned reading. You must submit your reaction papers to me *in person*; reaction papers submitted *in absentia* will not be accepted. You will receive 1% for each reaction paper you submit up to 10%. Second, I expect you to pay attention to your classmates as they present. Laptops will not be permitted during students' presentations, and all students who are not presenting will be expected to complete a **peer review survey** using the template provided. Please note that your peer reviews will not be used to evaluate the group presentation, but rather 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 you submit up to 10%. Finally, I expect you each to contribute regularly to the class discussion. Your comments should demonstrate that you have read and reflected upon the assigned material. My evaluation of your comments will contribute **0 to 3 bonus points** to your final grade.

**Group Presentation.** I expect you to make one presentation that elaborates upon the issues discussed in the chapter you have selected. You will present in groups of three; each student should speak for approx. 15 minutes, so group presentations should run for approx. 45 minutes in length. I expect you to use PowerPoint as part of your presentation. You will be required to go beyond simply summarizing the chapter. I expect you to provide the class with an expanded perspective and critical analysis of the assigned reading; you can do so by consulting supplementary readings such as journal articles and book chapters. I will expect all presentation groups to schedule an appointment to speak with me about their supplementary materials at least one week before the scheduled date of their presentation. Although all students will present in groups, each student will be evaluated individually in terms of his/her clarity of presentation, his/her comprehension/organization, and his/her use of supplementary readings.

**Final Paper.** I expect you to submit a 2,000-word final paper on both Quercus and turnitin.com by **5:00 pm on Friday, April 5**. Late submissions will receive a penalty of 10% per day, or 5% off of your final grade for each day that your paper is overdue. Students may choose between one of two topics for their paper. The first option asks students review the literature relevant to a *specific personality construct* (e.g., self-control or empathy) to address the following questions: What is the structure of this construct; i.e., what are its parts, and how do they hang together? What are the dynamics to this construct; i.e., what are its constituent processes and mechanisms? How does this construct develop over time, and is it amenable to intervention? What are the established correlates of this construct, and what important questions remain as yet unanswered? The second option asks students to consider, across all the levels and domains of personality, what personality factors contribute most to *optimal personality development*. In either case, students should conclude their paper by introducing a new line of research or a new hypothesis that builds upon and integrates the ideas and findings they have reviewed.

**Academic Integrity.** The University of Toronto treats academic offenses very seriously. Offenders are caught and sanctions can be severe (i.e., a grade of zero, suspension, expulsion). Students are expected both to know and to follow the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. For more information: <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. For more information: <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. For more information: <http://www.utsc.utoronto.ca/~ability/>