

Psychology 207
Theories of Personality
Winter Semester

Professor: Tim Kasser
Office: SMAC E-119; x7283; tkasser@knox.edu
Meets: 5th hour MWF in CFA 209

Goals of course:

My primary goal for this course is to introduce students to the ways that psychologists think about and study personality. To this end, we will discuss classic and contemporary theoretical and empirical work from seven different schools of thought. By the end of the course, students should be able to think like theorists who use these perspectives.

To help students reach this overarching goal, they will be presented with basic information via lectures and readings, as well as be given opportunities to explore and apply these concepts. For example, we will regularly use the theories we have been studying to analyze the personality of a character in a movie. Students will also complete a survey packet that includes questionnaires designed to measure constructs from each of the theories; students will be given feedback about their scores on these surveys, and we will also discuss statistical relationships between some of the variables. The assignments listed below will also give students further opportunities to engage the material in the course and better understand theory and research in the field of personality.

Departmental Goals

Psychology 207 works towards the following goals of the Psychology Department. The particular assignments that are especially relevant to each goal are noted with “(G#).”

- 1) Effectively and ethically apply the scientific method to studying the mind, the brain, and behavior.
- 3) Understand the basic theoretical approaches and classic empirical findings of psychology.
- 5) Effectively communicate with clear, grammatically correct writing that conforms to APA style.
- 7) Demonstrate an empathetic understanding of people of diverse abilities, experiences, backgrounds, and perspectives.

Assignments:

- 1) **Exams - 100 points (Gs #3 & 7).** Four exams worth **25** points each will be given. Each exam will be composed of multiple-choice, fill in the blank, and essay questions. Because it is important to understand the similarities and differences between theories, exams may ask about (but will not focus on) material tested earlier in the term. Exams will cover information presented in the lectures, textbook, and reserve readings (including the article assignments, see below).

2) **Article Assignments - 30 points** (Gs # 1, 3 & 5). In order to improve students' understanding of primary source material published in scientific journals, they will read three recently published psychology journal articles. As a take home assignment, students, working alone or in pairs, will answer three questions about each article. In addition, they will identify one of the key insights of the study, describe it in regular prose, and then express the key insight in a non-scientific fashion (e.g., a haiku or limerick). After each assignment has been turned in, students will have the opportunity to present their creative expressions to the whole class; a vote will be taken on the best expression, and the winning students will receive 1 extra credit point. Each article assignment is worth **10** points and should be emailed to the professor; hard copies will **not** be accepted. Once the questions for an article have been distributed to the class, students may **only** discuss the article with the professor or with a partner; **no one else** may be consulted after that point.

3) **Application Papers – 30 points** (Gs # 3, 5 & 7). Students will complete three papers in which they apply an idea from the personality theories we discuss to something in the “real world.” Specifically, in each paper students will use **one** construct from one of the personality theories we are studying (e.g., extraversion; independent self-concept; anal retentiveness) and show how it expresses itself in their own lives, in the life of someone they know, in a social or political situation, in dynamics at Knox, etc. Almost anything in the “real world” is fair game, but you may **not** apply the theory to a fictional character from movies, TV, novels, etc. I do **not** expect you to cover the whole theory in these papers, although you may mention other constructs. Instead, the primary aim is for students to demonstrate their understanding of the single theoretical concept they have chosen by appropriately applying the concept and using concrete supporting evidence. One paper should be turned in about either Trait or Self-concept theory; one paper should be turned in about either Psychodynamic or Attachment theory; and one paper should be turned in about either Identity or Humanistic theory. **No application paper will be accepted for Existentialism.** Papers are due up to two class periods after I have completed lecturing on a particular theoretical perspective. For example, if I finish speaking about Trait theory on 1/16, an application paper on this theory is due at the start of class on 1/21. Each application paper is worth **10** points, should be **no longer than 300 words**, and should be emailed to the professor; hard copies will **not** be accepted.

4) **Extra Credit.** Up to **5** extra credit points can be earned in this class by participating in approved research projects conducted by members of the Psychology Department; alternative opportunities to earn extra credit will also be announced.

5) **Participation.** Participation will **not** be explicitly graded in this class. However, I will take note of those students who ask excellent questions and contribute to productive class discussions, as well as those students who are consistently late or disruptive. Those observations may inform me as I assign final grades in the class.

Final Grades: There are 160 points available in this class. I will take the number of points you earn on your assignments (plus extra credit you earn) and divide it by 160 to determine your final grade. For example, if you earn 152 points in the term, you will receive a 95%, or an A.

Grading Scale:

A+	97-100	A	93-96	A-	90-92	B+	87-89
B	83-86	B-	80-82	C+	77-79	C	73-76
C-	70-72	D+	67-69	D	63-66	D-	60-62
F	lower than 60						

Readings:

Ryckman, R. M. (2013). *Theories of personality (10th Ed.)*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Baumeister, R. F. (1997). Identity, self-concept, and self-esteem: The self lost and found. In R. Hogan, J. Johnson, & S. Briggs (Eds.), *Handbook of personality psychology* (pp. 681-710). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Horowitz, A. (2017). Smelling themselves: Dogs investigate their own odours longer when modified in an “olfactory mirror” test. *Behavioural Processes, 143*, 17-24.

Leone, L., Giacomantonio, M., Williams, R., & Michetti, D. (2018). Avoidant attachment style and conspiracy ideation. *Personality & Individual Differences, 134*, 329-336.

Shaver, P., Hazan, C., & Bradshaw, D. (1988). Love as attachment: The integration of three behavioral systems. In R. J. Sternberg & M. L. Barnes (Eds.), *The psychology of love* (pp. 68-99). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Yang, Y., Zhang, Y., & Sheldon, K. M. (2018). Self-determined motivation for studying abroad predicts lower culture shock and greater well-being among international students: The mediating role of basic psychological needs satisfaction. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 63*, 95-104.

Note on naming files. It is important that every file emailed to the professor be named appropriately. For all of the written assignments, please name your files using the following formula. First, begin the file name with your last name followed by the first initial of your first name (e.g., kassert). Then place an underscore (i.e., _). Then, for article assignments, use the abbreviation “art”, and for application papers, use the abbreviation “appl”. Then, use a number that reflects whether it is the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd article assignment or whether it is the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc., **theory** we have covered (**NOT** the first, second, or third application paper you have turned in). Finally, make sure the file has either a .doc or .docx suffix. Using this formula, my second abstract paper would be named “kassert_art2.doc” and my application paper using identity theory would be “kassert_appl5.doc”. If your file is named incorrectly, I will take 5% off your grade for that assignment. Please email the file to me as a .doc or .docx attachment; I will **NOT** accept pdfs or papers turned in via Drive. If you turn in an assignment that is not in .doc or .docx format, I will take 5% off your grade for that assignment.

Note on word length. All expressed word lengths are firm, i.e., if you are even one word

above the limit, you will receive 10% off that assignment. Word lengths occur in the real world and they also improve the quality of students' writing, as they typically encourage substantial editing.

Note on late papers. Assignments are due on the assigned date at the beginning of class, unless otherwise announced. If an assignment is handed in later that day (i.e., before midnight), 5% of the total possible points will be deducted from your grade. If it is handed in the next day, 10% of the total points available will be deducted, with an additional 10% for every additional day late. Absences and late assignments can be excused by the Dean or Health Services, or, under certain circumstances, by the professor.

Notes on plagiarism and writing quality. Please visit the following websites in order to obtain information on my plagiarism policy and the Writing Policy that will apply to your article and application papers. The APA format section of the writing policy will **NOT** apply to these papers.

<http://faculty.knox.edu/tkasser/teaching.html#plagiarismpolicy>
http://departments.knox.edu/psychdept/Psych_Writing_Policy.html

Note on group work: Students may work together on the article assignments. Both students within a pair will generally receive the same grade on the assignment. If a member of the pair is identified by the other group member as having contributed less than his or her fair share, separate grades may be given on that assignment. Beginning work together on one assignment commits that student pair to turn in that assignment together, but in no way commits the pair to work together on later assignments. Naming of the file should follow the rules described above, using one or the other of the students' names; please ensure that **both** students' names are listed within the file itself, however.

Note on accommodations for assignments. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Stephanie Grimes in the Center for Teaching and Learning as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. No accommodations can be given until the CTL has contacted the professor and approved the accommodation.

Note on class preparation: Please make sure to have completed the assigned readings by the day of the lecture. My lectures will assume that you have read the materials.

In-class Expectations. I expect that all students a) will be seated and ready to begin class at 1:20 p.m.; b) will use their computers or other personal devices only for purposes relevant to what we are working on at that moment; c) will turn off their cell-phones; and d) will not eat food in class (although it is fine with me if they drink). All of these expectations are aimed at minimizing distractions so that we can focus on the task at hand, which is learning about personality psychology.

Daily Schedule for Theories of Personality

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
1/4	Course Business		
1/7	Theories	Chapter 1	
1/9	Theories	Chapter 1	
1/11	Theory 1: Traits	pp. 188-191; 213-214	
1/14	Theory 1: Traits	pp. 241-255; 454-461	
1/16	Theory 1: Traits	pp. 255-269	
1/18	Exam # 1 – Theories & Traits		Exam # 1
1/21	Theory 2: Self-Concept	Baumeister (1997)	
1/23	Theory 2: Self-Concept	Baumeister (1997)	
1/25	Theory 2: Self-Concept	pp. 445-454	
1/28	Theory 3: Psychodynamic	Chapter 2	
1/30	Class Cancelled - Weather		Article # 1 – Horowitz (due on 1/31)
2/1	Theory 3: Psychodynamic	Chapter 2	
2/4	Theory 3: Psychodynamic	Chapter 2	
2/6	Exam # 2 – Self-concept & Psychodynamic		Exam # 2
2/8	Theory 4: Attachment	Shaver et al. (1988)	
2/11	Theory 4: Attachment	Shaver et al. (1988)	
2/13	Theory 5: Identity	Chapter 6	
2/15	Theory 5: Identity	Chapter 6	Article # 2 - Leone
2/18	Theory 5: Identity	Chapter 6	
2/20	Exam # 3 – Attachment & Identity		Exam # 3
2/22	Theory 6: Humanism	Chapter 12	
2/25	Theory 6: Humanism	Chapters 12 & 13	
2/27	Theory 6: Humanism	Chapter 13	
3/1	Theory 7: Existentialism	Chapter 14	
3/4	Theory 7: Existentialism	Chapter 14	Article # 3 – Yang
3/6	Theory 7: Existentialism	Chapter 14	
Finals	Exam # 4 – Humanism & Existentialism		Exam # 4

Unless otherwise noted, all readings are from Ryckman's text.