

## Personality

Department of Psychology  
85-251, Fall 2021, 9 Units

**Class Schedule:** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:05 – 4:25 pm, Room: DH 2302

**Instructor:** Crista Crittenden, PhD, MPH (You can call me Dr. Crista)  
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Phone: 412-268-5689  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:30 am – 11:30 am and 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm (In-person and Zoom)  
Thursdays 10:30 am – 11:30 am and 5:00 pm – 6:30 pm (In-person and Zoom)  
By Appointment

**Course Website:** See Canvas

**Textbook (Required):** Carver, C. S., & Scheier, M. F. (2017). *Perspectives on personality* (8<sup>th</sup> Edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson. Available in both eBook and printed format.

**WEIRD TIMES WARNING:** As we all know, these are weird times that we live in. How we plan for the semester to go may not be how it actual goes. With that in mind, know that things in this syllabus may change, we may have to alter how this class is delivered, or something else may have to change that we haven't even thought of. We must all be flexible, and we will work together to make this class as rewarding of an experience as possible – no matter what may come our way!

### **About this course**

The primary purpose of personality psychology is to understand human uniqueness--how and why it is that one person differs from others, in terms of the way he or she thinks, feels, and acts. Personality psychology also seeks to understand the underlying processes that support these individual differences. Students in the course will learn about several broad theoretical perspectives, each of which attempts to capture and understand the origins and consequences of individual distinctiveness from a slightly different vantage point. Included among these approaches are the trait, motivational, biological, psychoanalytic, psychosocial, learning, phenomenological, and cognitive self-regulation perspectives. The course will also consider how personality factors and processes can influence physical health and mental well-being.

### **Course Objectives**

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Define personality

- Describe how psychologists think about personality, measure it, and conduct personality research
- Identify and explain the major theories of personality
- Understand the origins of personality theory, research, and application
- Evaluate evidence that links personality characteristics to physical health and mental well-being
- Apply knowledge and theories of personality to inform a more complete understanding of human behavior
- Gain insight into your own personality characteristics and how those characteristics influence your experience of the world

### **Course Format**

As this is a general education survey course, consisting of students from all class years, the course will mostly consist of lectures. Interspersed within these lectures will be class discussions, videos, and other activities.

### **Canvas Format**

I tried my best to set up our Canvas course so it is as self-explanatory as possible. You will be able to get to most of the course information through the links on the **Home** page. Besides the Home page, the most important section is **Modules**. Modules is set up to mirror the class schedule located on pages 6 and 7 of this syllabus.

### **Student Evaluation**

Your grade in this course will be determined by 2 areas of evaluation: 1) Class Attendance and 2) Exams. There will be 4 non-cumulative exams in this course, and the 4<sup>th</sup> exam will take place during finals week. Class attendance is worth 15% of your grade, and exams are worth 85% (21.25% each).

Understanding that life doesn't always go as planned, and that sometimes you have a bad test-taking day, you will be able to miss several classes without penalty and there will be 4 exam extra credit assignments by which you can add up to 5 points to the corresponding exam grade. More details on this are described below.

#### **1) Class Attendance**

For this course, attendance **IS** required. Required attendance is my way of helping you manage your time more effectively. I swear - I really am trying to help you by requiring you to come to class! You are going to have to devote your time to the material at some point, so why not use lecture as a way to manage your time and actively engage in the material in a meaningful way? Plus, I think I give some pretty funny and memorable examples that will help you consolidate new material more easily. So why not give class a chance?

Attendance will be assessed by a Canvas quiz that will be given out during the first 5 minutes of class and the last five 5 minutes of class. Each quiz will be worth 2 points (2 points at the beginning of class and 2 points at the end). Each quiz will consist of two questions.

Attendance Quizzes will be closed exactly 5 minutes after class starts (3:10). If you do not submit your quiz within this time, you will receive a 0. So do not be late to class!

*I know attendance quizzes everyday seems like a lot – but I guarantee they will not be too difficult and that they will actually help improve your performance on exams. During lecture, I will show you the research that backs me up!*

**Important: You will be able to use your notes and classmates (and the professor!) for the daily quizzes!**

I will not be taking attendance during the first week, and you will be **able to miss 6 classes without penalty**. That is 3 weeks! Excluding days that we have exams, this means you are responsible to be here for 15 classes.

**Important:** Class Attendance/Daily Quizzes are through Canvas. In order to take the quizzes, you must download the Canvas student app onto your smartphone. You can find the Canvas Student App in in the app stores for both Android and iOS devices. If you do not have a smart phone, please see the professor to make alternative arrangements.

## **2) Exams**

There will be 4 non-cumulative, in-person exams in this course. Exam 1 will cover Chapters 1-4 in the textbook, along with lecture materials, Exam 2 is Chapters 5-7 and lecture materials, Exam 3 is Chapters 8-10 and course materials, and Exam 4 is Chapters 11-14 and course materials. Please note that Exam 4 will take place during finals week, though it is not considered a “final” since it is non-cumulative. Each exam will be worth 100 points. Exams will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions, as well as short-answer questions. The lecture prior to the exam will always be a review lecture, and review sheets will be provided.

**Please note:** if scheduling conflicts arise regarding exams, you can take the exam PRIOR to the exam date, but not after the exam has been given to the entire class. If an emergency arises at the last moment, the circumstances underlying the conflict must be documented in some fashion. In the rare circumstance that an emergency make-up exam is allowed after the entire class has taken the exam, only the objective portion of the exam will be administered (multiple choice/TF). A score on the short answer portion will be extrapolated for those doing a make-up from the performance of others taking the entire test and whose objective score falls within  $\pm 3$  points of the person doing the make-up.

**Exam Extra Credit:** For each exam, there is an associated extra credit assignment. The extra credit assignments align with the lessons/concepts for that particular exam. As such, doing the extra credit assignment is a good way of studying for the exam! Extra credit assignments will be due at 11:59 pm on the night of the exam (LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED). You can earn up to 5 points extra credit to be added to the exam that the extra credit assignment is associated with. Important caveat: You cannot earn more than 100 points on an exam, so the extra credit points will only be added until you reach 100, regardless of how many points you earn (that is, if you get a 98 on the exam and earn 4 points extra credit,

you will be boosted up to 100 on the exam, NOT 102). Exam extra credit assignments can be found on Canvas.

### **Research Participation Requirement:**

In addition to class attendance, exams, and exam extra credit, there is one further requirement that will only affect your grade if you fail to meet it (assuming you have not satisfied the requirement in previous courses). The additional requirement is designed to help you better understand the material in the text and concerns participation in psychological research. This will be explained more fully during one of the early classes.

### **Grades**

Final letter grades will be assigned based on these cumulative weighted point cutoffs:

- 90.0% and higher = A
- 80.0-89.99% = B
- 70.0-79.99% = C
- 60.0-69.99% = D
- 59.99% and lower = R

### **CHEATING**

Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated. Please see the CMU Student Handbook for definitions of cheating and plagiarism and the severe consequences of such behaviors.

### **LAPTOPS AND OTHER ELECTRONICS**

Please note that in order to encourage full participation and to reduce distractions, ***the use of laptops/tablets will only be permitted for those in the back two rows of the classroom.*** While the jury is still out on whether taking notes is better by hand or laptop, what is clear is that laptop use can be distracting to others in the classroom (including the professor!). To reduce distracting classmates, if you wish to use your laptop during class, please sit in the back of the room. Cellphone use will be permitted regardless of where you sit, as they are needed to take attendance.

**On the fence about whether or not to use your laptop for taking notes? Check out the course reading section on Canvas to review the evidence yourself.**

### **TAPING / RECORDING POLICY**

Course materials and lectures may not be copied, recorded, distributed, published, or otherwise used for any other purpose without the express written consent of Dr. Crista.

### **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

If you have a disability and are registered with the Office of Disability Resources, we encourage you to use their online system to notify us of your accommodations and discuss your needs with us as early in the

semester as possible. We will work with you to ensure that accommodations are provided as appropriate. If you suspect that you may have a disability and would benefit from accommodations but are not yet registered with the Office of Disability Resources, we encourage you to contact them at [access@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:access@andrew.cmu.edu)

### **RESPECT IN THE CLASSROOM**

It is our intent to present materials and activities that are respectful to the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of students in the classroom. You may feel free to let us know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. If you feel uncomfortable discussing this with your instructor or TA, you may voice your concerns to the Chair of the Department of Psychology Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Committee, Jessica Cantlon ([jcantlon@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:jcantlon@andrew.cmu.edu)). Dr. Cantlon and the D&I Committee are available to hear your concerns related to respect for diversity for any class you are taking in the Department of Psychology.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY ACCOMODATIONS**

If you have a disability that requires special accommodations or other classroom modifications, please notify me as well as the staff at the Disabilities Resources office as early as possible. You will be asked to provide documentation of your disability to determine the appropriateness of accommodations. Contact Disability Resources at [access@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:access@andrew.cmu.edu).

### **HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

Take care of yourself. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle via good nutrition, exercise, rest, and relaxation will help you achieve your goals and cope with stress. All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. There are many helpful resources available, so please reach out to us if you need help connecting with them on campus or virtually. Asking for support sooner rather than later is almost always helpful. If you or anyone you know experiences academic stress, difficult life events, or feelings of anxiety or depression, please seek support. Counseling and Psychological Services (CaPS) is available at 412-268-2922 or via <http://www.cmu.edu/counseling/>. Consider reaching out to a friend, faculty member, or family member you trust for assistance with getting connected to the support that can help.

If you or someone you know is feeling suicidal or in danger of self-harm, call someone immediately, day or night:

- **CaPS: 412-268-2922**
- **Re:solve Crisis Network: 888-796-8226**
- **If the situation is life threatening, call the police**
  - **On campus: CMU Police: 412-268-2323**
  - **Off campus: 911**

Course schedule can be found on the next page . . .

Date	Readings	Exams/Assignments
<b>WEEK 1 – Introduction to Course and What is Personality?</b>		
Tues, Aug 31 <sup>st</sup>	Review Canvas Page	
Thurs, Sep 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Textbook Chapter 1	
<b>WEEK 2 – Research and Assessment</b>		
Tues, Sep 7 <sup>th</sup>	Textbook Chapter 2	
Thurs, Sep 9 <sup>th</sup>	Textbook Chapter 3	
<b>WEEK 3 – Traits</b>		
Tues, Sep 14 <sup>th</sup>	Textbook Chapter 4	
Thurs, Sep 16 <sup>th</sup>		
<b>WEEK 4 – Exam Week</b>		
Tues, Sep 21 <sup>st</sup>	Exam Review Chapters 1-4	
Thurs, Sep 23 <sup>rd</sup>		<b>EXAM 1 (Chapters 1-4)</b> Exam 1 Extra Credit Due at 11:59 pm on Canvas
<b>WEEK 5 – Motivation</b>		
Tues, Sep 28 <sup>th</sup>	Textbook Chapter 5	
Thurs, Sep 30 <sup>th</sup>		
<b>WEEK 6 – Genetics and Biology</b>		
Tues, Oct 5 <sup>th</sup>	Textbook Chapter 6	
Thurs, Oct 7 <sup>th</sup>	Textbook Chapter 7	
<b>WEEK 7 – Exam Review and Midsemester Break</b>		
Tues, Oct 12 <sup>th</sup>	Exam Review Chapters 5-7	
Thurs, Oct 14 <sup>th</sup>	<b>NO CLASS – MIDSEMESTER BREAK</b>	
<b>WEEK 8 – Exam and Freud</b>		
Tues, Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>		<b>EXAM 2 (Chapters 5-7)</b> Exam 2 Extra Credit Due at 11:59 pm on Canvas
Thurs, Oct 21 <sup>st</sup>	Chapter 8	
<b>WEEK 9 – More Freud and Ego</b>		
Tues, Oct 26 <sup>th</sup>	Chapter 9	
Thurs, Oct 28 <sup>th</sup>		
<b>WEEK 10 – Learning</b>		
Tues, Nov 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Chapter 10	
Thurs, Nov 4 <sup>th</sup>	Exam Review	
<b>WEEK 11 – Exam and the Self</b>		
Tues, Nov 9 <sup>th</sup>	EXAM 3	<b>EXAM 3 (Chapters 8-10)</b> Exam 3 Extra Credit Due at 11:59 pm on Canvas
Thurs, Nov 11 <sup>th</sup>	Textbook Chapter 11	

<b>WEEK 12 – Cognitive Constructs</b>		
Tues, Nov 16 <sup>th</sup>	Textbook Chapter 12	
Thurs, Nov 18 <sup>th</sup>		
<b>WEEK 13 – Self Regulation</b>		
Tues, Nov 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Chapter 13	
Thurs, Nov 25 <sup>th</sup>	<b>NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING</b>	
<b>WEEK 14 – Personality and Health/Wrap Up</b>		
Tues, Nov 30 <sup>th</sup>	Readings on Canvas	
Tues, Dec 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Chapter 14	
<b>Exam 4 (Chapters 11-14, and readings) – TBA – will occur during finals week, as will the due date for Exam 4 extra credit</b>		