

Florida State University
Psychology of Personality: PPE 3003
Course Syllabus Spring 2019

In what ways do you differ from other people, and in what ways are you similar? How did you come to be that way? The psychology of personality examines how individual differences in tendencies toward attitudes, behavior, and cognition cohere into stable constellations that people recognize as personality. We will explore the history of personality research and tour the major theoretical perspectives, with a focus on trait research, gene-environment contributions, motivation, and development. Along the way, we will enhance your understanding of the scientific study of personality. Besides, you might discover new things about yourself and those around you.

Learning Objectives: By the end of the course, students should be able to identify and discuss the major theories of personality psychology and their historical emergence, describe and discuss some of the major dimensions of personality and their developmental trajectories, identify and critique the methodologies involved in studying personality, interpret scientific articles regarding personality, and reflect on how your and others' personality influences your life. Finally, students should gain the basic ability to create and interpret personality measure.

Course time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30pm-1:45pm

Course Location: Psychology A106

Final Exam: Friday May 3, 7:30-9:30am Psychology A106

Instructor: Dr. Paul Conway

Office: Psychology B333

Email: conway@psy.fsu.edu

Office Phone: 850-644-4079

Office Hours: Thursdays 2:45-3:45 (after class) and by appointment

Departmental Assistant: Doug Kievit

Email: kievit@psy.fsu.edu (However please direct questions to Paul by default)

Textbook: Funder, D.C. (2016). *The Personality Puzzle* (7th edition). (Required)

Course Website: Canvas—here you will find announcements, the syllabus, the course gradebook, and the lecture powerpoints (after class)

Grade Breakdown

Exam 1: 20% - 30 MC questions (15 points), 1 brief response (5 points)

Personality Assignment: 10% - written assignment

Exam 2: 20% - 30 MC questions (15 points), 1 brief response (5 points)

Your Scale Project: 20% - design, analyze, & report new measure

Final Exam: 30% - 50 MC questions (25 points), 1 brief response (5 points)

Research participation: Up to 3% bonus

Course Schedule

| # | Date | Topic | Reading |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | January 8 | Introduction | Chapter 1 |
| 2 | January 10 | Research Methods | Chapter 2 |
| 3 | January 15 | Research Methods | Chapter 2 |
| 4 | January 17 | Assessment, Effect Sizes | Chapter 3 |
| 5 | January 22 | Assessment, Effect Sizes | Chapter 3 |
| 6 | January 24 | Ethics | Chapter 3 |
| Submit Scale Design by Midnight | | | |
| 7 | January 29 | Traits & Situations | Chapter 4 |
| 8 | January 31 | Traits & Situations | Chapter 4 |
| 9 | February 5 | Personality Judgment | Chapter 5 |
| February 7 | | | Exam 1 |
| | | | Not Cumulative |
| 10 | February 12 | Traits & Behavior | Chapter 6 |
| 11 | February 14 | Traits & Behavior | Chapter 6 |
| 12 | February 19 | Personality Development | Chapter 7 |
| 13 | February 21 | Personality Development | Chapter 7 |
| 14 | February 26 | Physiology | Chapter 8 |
| Personality Assignment Due by Midnight | | | |
| 15 | February 28 | Physiology | Chapter 8 |
| 16 | March 5 | Genetics & Inheritance | Chapter 9 |
| 17 | March 7 | Genetics & Inheritance | Chapter 9 |
| 18 | March 12 | Psychoanalysis | Chapter 10 |
| March 14 | | | Exam 2 |
| | | | Not Cumulative |
| | <i>March 19</i> | <i>Spring Break</i> | <i>Relax</i> |
| | <i>March 21</i> | <i>Spring Break</i> | <i>Relax</i> |
| 20 | March 26 | Humanism | Chapter 12 |
| 21 | March 28 | Cultural Differences | Chapter 13 |
| 22 | April 2 | Behaviorism | Chapter 14 |
| 23 | April 4 | Personality Processes | Chapter 15 |
| 24 | April 9 | The Self | Chapter 16 |
| 25 | April 11 | The Self | Chapter 16 |
| Submit Scale Report by Midnight | | | |
| 26 | April 16 | Personality & Health | Chapter 17 |
| 27 | April 18 | Personality & Health | Chapter 17 |
| 28 | April 23 | Catch Up & Review | <i>Prep for exam</i> |
| 29 | April 25 | Catch Up & Review | <i>Prep for exam</i> |
| May 1, 7:30-9:30am | | | Cumulative |

Grading Scale (Canadian Style)

The grading scale for each element of the course and for the course overall is as follows: Final grade percentages ending in a decimal of “.5” or greater will be rounded up to the next whole number.

| | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| A 100 – 92 | B 83 – 80 | C 71 – 67 | D 58 – 55 |
| A- 91 – 88 | B- 79 – 76 | C- 66 – 63 | D- 54 – 50 |
| B+ 87 – 84 | C+ 75 – 72 | D+ 62 – 59 | F 49 or below |

Exam Format: Exam 1 and 2 have 30 multiple choice questions, plus 1 brief response question (each requiring a couple sentences/paragraph). The final exam will have 25 multiple choice questions, plus 5 brief response questions. The final exam is cumulative, but Exam 2 is not. About 2/3 of exam material will come from lecture and readings. Questions will aim to test your *general understanding* of the main ideas in the reading and their implications—can you explain key concepts to non-experts? Adjust your study strategies accordingly! Practice explaining concepts to others.

Personality Assignment: You will complete a brief written response to a personality scale worth 10%. Find a scientific scale measuring some aspect of personality. Some places to try:

In the ‘Try for Yourself’ sections of the textbook

Implicit Response Tendencies: www.projectimplicit.org/index.html

Big Five Personality Scale: www.outofservice.com/bigfive/

Moral thinking and other personality scales: www.yourmorals.org

I may post more suggestions as the course goes on.

Then, find a peer-reviewed scientific article using the scale (preferably published after the year 2000). Download a .pdf copy of the article—I recommend google scholar. Note to get the full power of this search engine you need to use FSU computers, FSU wifi, or remotely log in through the library. Then you can download the vast majority of articles.

Name your .pdf: *Author Names, Year, Brief Article Title, Brief Journal Title*

For example, *Kammrath & Schooler, 2011, How Highly Agreeable People Judge Positive and Negative Acts, PSPB*

Step 1: Upload your article to the assignment dropbox in Canvas. (2 points)

Step 2: Upload your paper answering the following questions. Please use Times New Roman 12 Point Font, single spaced, in full paragraphs. Aim for more than half but less than a full page.

1. **What aspect(s) of personality does this scale aim to measure?** In other words, what is the *psychological construct* that the researchers theorize about? How would you describe each one in about a sentence—clearly explain the concept to a non-expert. (2 marks)

For example: The construct *warmth* reflects a personable interpersonal style characterized by a motivation and tendency to socialize with others and the preference the company of others to solitary tasks.

2. **How does this this scale operationalize the construct in question?** In other words, how does it measure whether people score high or low on the scale? Answering this correctly requires providing both a) an example of the items used to measure a construct and b) the labels for the numerical scale, researchers could follow your ‘recipe’ to understand and recreate the measure. For example, they might think ‘this participant gave themselves a 7 on the item *sincere*, meaning they feel the word *sincere* ‘*very much*’ describes them. They are probably high on the psychological construct *warmth*. (4 marks)

For example: Participants indicated how well four warmth traits (*warm, good-natured, tolerant, sincere*) and five competence traits (*competent, confident, independent, competitive, intelligent*) described themselves on 7-point scales anchored at 1 (*not at all*) and 7 (*very much*). We averaged judgments into composites of warmth ($\alpha = .89$) and competence ($\alpha = .87$).

Bonus: what is/are the Cronbach’s alpha(s)/reliability score for each part of this scale? (1 bonus mark)

3. **In the paper, what was one key finding using the scale?** Describe and explain to a non-expert with words—no numbers. (1 mark)

For example: People who scored higher on warmth were also rated by perceivers as more emotionally sensitive and as more attractive social partners as assessed by observer ratings. People who scored higher on competence were rated as better leaders by observers.

Overall clarity of communication: 1 mark. (Total: 10 marks).

Important: **use your own language** to describe the scale; do not rely on the language used in the website. It is vitally important to develop the skill of accurately summarizing and explaining other people’s work without using their words. Also, plagiarism is bad. Please do not do it. Try to balance being thorough with being efficient—there should be no unnecessary fluff, and you should cover all the important

aspects. Experts call that kind of writing “muscular” and one builds writing muscles much like gym muscles—lots of (pen) lifting. **Bonus challenge:** Write the entire thing in rhyme. (Kidding. Mostly).

Submission: You must submit your written assignment through turnitin on the course Canvas Website. You must also upload your .pdf article through the site. Assignments are due by **midnight February 26**. Assignments submitted later than this will lose 1/10 points per day thereafter.

Your Scale Project (20%) Think of some aspect of personality you would like to know about. Is there a certain way of acting, thinking, or feeling that you wish you understood better? Here is your chance to find out more using scientific techniques!

Step 1: Scale Design. First 6%. Submit via Canvas by midnight January 24.

Clarify the psychological construct you are aiming to capture. Define it in a sentence or more. (2 points).

Write three items that could tap the construct you have in mind. Try to get all three to clearly measure one construct without integrating other constructs much if possible (3 points).

Clearly describe the responses scale (e.g., 1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree), 1 point.

Step 2: Take the Course survey. Get others to take it as well. The more the better.

Step 3: Analysis and Reporting. Last 14%. Write a brief report on your scale. Start by reminding the reader of the construct and operationalization from Scale Design (2 points).

Download the SPSS .sav file and syntax file from the Canvas site and run on any school computer. Follow the steps to combine your three items into a single average. **Report the mean and standard deviation**, APA style (2 points).

Run the Cronbach’s alpha analysis on your three items. **Record your alpha** in your report. (1 point).

Run the correlational analysis between your measure and the following measures (at minimum). *Big 5 personality factors, CRT Performance, Empathic concern, Political orientation*. Make an **APA format correlation table** with a title reporting these correlations, using asterixis to mark significance (7 points).

Overall clarity and APA format (2 points).

Research participation

At Florida State University, as at other major universities, the accumulation of new knowledge in the field of psychology comes from research conducted by faculty and students. You may participate in department research projects and earn extra credit in this course. Participating in research both helps advance our knowledge about psychology and is an excellent way of getting to know how such research is conducted. You will encounter research methods firsthand and after the study is completed you will be informed of its purpose and given an explanation of the study. You may volunteer to **participate in up to 3 credits worth of experiments, for up to 3% bonus (shared with bonus assignments)** in your final grade. One research credit typically ranges from 30-60 minutes of time. Descriptions of the experiments and lists of time slots available are on the psychology experiment website. You use your FSU email account to log onto the site:

<https://fsu.sona-systems.com/default.aspx>.

Then select the Experiment Sign-up option, and finally choose the General Psychology Research Participants option (not the one for Experimenters). At that point, log on with your username name and password, and you can see descriptions of the experiments and times available, and you may sign up for open times. Please make a note of when and where the study is to take place. Students who fail to show up for a study at the agreed-upon time twice in one semester will no longer be eligible to participate in research experiments for credit. You may also come back to check on the title and where you are supposed to be for an experiment under My Sign-ups. All extra credit related to research participation must be completed by **April 23, 2019, at 11:59pm**. Extra credit will be given only for participation in approved departmental research projects that appear on the SONA website.

Bonus Assignments: Alternative to Research Participation

As an alternative to research participation, you may also earn extra credit by writing additional Personality Assignments (see above). You may do **up to 3 extra credit assignments, for up to 3% bonus (shared with research participation)** in your final grade. Again, all extra credit research summaries must be turned in by the end of the day of **April 23, 2019, at 11:59pm**. You may do a combination of research participation and personality scale reflections, but you cannot exceed 3 extra credit points.

Attendance: You are expected to attend all classes and actively participate by taking notes, asking questions, engaging in thoughtful dialogue, and completing class activities. Although attendance will not officially form part of your grade, you will find that regularly attending is extremely useful for doing well on the exams. Attendance is mandatory on the first day of class or you will be dropped from the course. **Attendance is mandatory for exams. There will be no opportunity to make up missed exams unless one has an official FSU-sanctioned reason** to have missed class that day (see University Attendance Policy below).

Engagement: You are recommended to take notes via paper and pencil; doing so is superior to computerized notes. Aside from first class, there is no official attendance. We are all adults here. You do not need to contact me if you will miss class. (However, do contact me about missing an exam). Please avoid texting, engaging in social media, working on assignments for other courses, course-irrelevant socializing, and other distractions during class.

University Attendance Policy

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Free Tutoring from FSU

On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services' comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options - see <http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring> or contact tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment and on a walk-in basis. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

Academic Honor Policy

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to ". . . be honest and truthful and . . . [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at: <http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy>)

Title IX Statement

As a recipient of Federal financial assistance for education activities, FSU is required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to ensure that all of its education programs and activities are free from discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexual discrimination includes sexual misconduct (sexual violence, stalking, intimate partner violence, gender based animosity and gender based stereotyping). If you have questions about Title IX or wish to file a Title IX complaint, please visit the FSU Title IX website: <http://www.titleix.fsu.edu> or call the Title IX Director 850-644-6271. Please note that as Responsible Employees, all faculty are required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Office.

The Victim Advocate Program at FSU has a confidential advocate on call twenty-four hours a day to respond to FSU students, faculty, and staff who are victimized, or any

other person who is victimized on our campus, or by an FSU student. Daytime Phone: 850.644 .7161, 850.644.2277, or 850.645.0086. Nights, Weekends & Holidays 850.644.1234 (FSUPD) Ask to speak to the on-call advocate.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

- (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center;
- (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu
<http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

Syllabus Change Policy

"Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice."