YORK UNIVERSITY

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT

SEMINAR IN PERSONALITY THEORY AND BEHAVIOUR DISORDERS
4050 6.0 C

FALL/WINTER 2012-13

Tuesday 8:30 AM, Tel 0004

Course Director: Dr. Ehud E. Avitzur
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E-mail address: eavitzur@yorku.ca use it for urgent and important matters only.
PLEASE WRITE “4050 /section#” in the subject line. E-mail without such a subject line is considered “spam” and will be deleted.

Secretary: Mrs. Judy Manners, Office 280 BSB, Tel. (416) 736-2100 X 66115.

Prerequisites: 0101 (Introduction to psychology) with a minimum grade C, Statistics I, Research methods, 2130 (Personality), 3140 (Abnormal psychology). Students must be in an Honours Program in Psychology and have completed 14 university courses or 84 credits (excluding education courses).

Course Description and Objectives

This course aims at deepening the understanding of major theories of personality and personality development on the one hand and human behaviour and psychopathology on the other hand. The course will focus mainly on the emotional and social aspects of personality and psychopathology.

In the fall, we will concentrate in the theoretical aspects of personality and its development. Later, the first part of the winter semester will be devoted to students’ presentations on behavioural disorders. Guest speakers, coordinated by students and course director, would be welcomed. The last part of the winter semester will be devoted to students’ Integrative Project (see below).

In the process of learning the subject matter we will deal constantly with the nature/nurture issue and we will trace the fine boundaries between the normal and the abnormal in the Human phenomenon.

Studying personality theory and behaviour disorders has the potential of promoting a deeper psychological understanding to the participant. Active involvement of students in both reading and in class discussions is of major importance for extracting the most from this class.
Required Reading:

Course kit for the first semester.

Reading for the second semester:


Note: This textbook is for the student’s convenience, but in many content areas it is not sufficient. The text directs you to the original writings, on which you are required to base your final paper.

Course Evaluation

Your final grade will be calculated based on:

Presentations (First 20%; Second 25%); Paper (30%); Positive contribution in class (15%); Handing in a satisfactory presentation’s outline on time (2X2.5%); Originality of the integrative project (5%).

Your grade for the course will be based on the following scale: A+ 90-100; A 80-89; B+ 75-79; B 70-74; C+ 65-69; C 60-64; D+ 55-59; D 50-54;

Senate approved the following grading schemes for the Faculties of Administrative Studies, Arts, Atkinson College, Education, Fine Arts, Science and Glendon College:

A+. 9. Exceptional Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill or great originality in the use of those concepts, techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.
A. 8. Excellent Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.
B+. 7. Very Good Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques with a fairly high degree of skill in the use of those concepts, techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.
B. 6. Good Level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.
C+. 5. Competent Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with considerable skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.
C. 4. Fairly Competent Acceptable level of knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with some skill in using them to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.
D+. 3. Passing Slightly better than minimal knowledge of required concepts and/or techniques together with some ability to use them in satisfying the requirements of an assignment or course.
D. 2. Barely Passing Minimum knowledge of concepts and/or techniques needed to satisfy the requirements of an assignment or course.
E. 1. Marginally Failing
F. 0. Failing.

Teamwork: Many research projects in psychology are products of joint efforts of colleagues. In this course presentations and papers may be performed individually or as a joint effort of two or three students. If you prefer to work in a team, be aware that the workload should not be divided: All team members will work together and will be equally responsible for all parts of the presentation and paper. Make sure that all team members share similar motivation to invest in the project.
If you work as a team on your integrative project (see below), you have to add an appendix to your paper, describing your individual contributions to the project. Without such a document the group members will not be granted a final grade.

**Assignments:**

**Presentations’ outlines:** Printed, one page long. Two copies. Outlines are required to encourage student to be on top of her/his assignment. The outline should demonstrate significant reading, reflection and efforts to organize the material. The outline should be handed in on time. Please note that the outline is considered as a work in progress, so changes to the outline are permitted.

**Presentations:** The second semester is devoted to students’ presentations. Students are expected to present twice. The first presentation is focused on behavioural disorder (PTSD, bulimia nervosa, anorexia nervosa, antisocial PD, avoidant PD, OCPD, dependent PD, histrionic PD, narcissistic PD, schizoid PD, schizotypal PD, paranoid PD, borderline PD). The second presentation is part of the “Integrative Project”, which will be described later in this document.

**Criteria of presentation evaluation:** Good organization of time, added value to the reading, ability to describe the main issues of the topic, clarity, correct usage of concepts, ability to suggest relevant applications, sufficient addressing methodological issues when relevant, demonstration of critical thinking, originality, depth. A feedback on your presentation is available a week after you’ve presented.

**Final Paper:**
The paper will require integrating theory and research in application to real life, that is, in psychological understanding the life story of an individual. The paper will require a minimum of 2 theoretical perspectives learnt in class and at least one issue (theoretical or empirical) independently studied, and to apply them to the topic. The final paper will be written in accordance with the APA instructions. For example: If you decided to work on the life story of Princess Diana: you may use two of the theories discussed in class plus your research on bulimia or children of divorced parents, or on any other issue that seems psychological important in the life of Princess D.

**Paper format:** While the presentation is a semi-formal, the paper is the formal assignment for this course. It will include: APA Title; APA abstract; the core of the paper will be introduction, method (of your qualitative research; addressing the reliability and the validity of your resources), results (life story of the person on focus, focus on facts), discussion (your understanding of the life story of the person, focus on interpretation and speculation); summary; APA style reference list; appendix. The recommended length of the paper is 8 double spaced pages (not including bibliography). Maximum length is 10 pages (not including bibliography). For some topics a longer paper is preapproved. Appendix at any length is accepted.

**Criteria for paper evaluation:** Are similar to the criteria for presentation evaluation. In addition: Reference list of original sources (no textbooks, no Wikipedia or similar websites), demonstration of independent academic library research. **Penalties:** referring to a textbook or to an unreliable website. Papers are to be handed in by the
due date. Students handing in the paper in a delay will be penalized (3% per day). Students presenting their work during the last two weeks of classes will be automatically granted with a seven-day extension.

Further on the Integrative project:

This project aims at integration between personality, personality development and behaviour disorders in real life. Since students are not eligible to apply clinical concepts to real people, a compromise is offered: Instead of exploring the life of a real “living” person, students may focus on a known person. Examples: Joseph Stalin, Conrad Black, Sylvia Plath. Of contemporary interest: Russell Williams (An officer and a serial killer), Andres Breivik (Norway masacar), Michael Thomas Rafferty, Terri-Lynn McClintic (Victoria Staford), Marc Lepine (Polytechnique), Seung-Hui Cho (Virginia Tech.), and recently added: Magnotta Luka Rocco (unfortunately this list constantly grows). The person on focus does not have to demonstrate psychopathology: Barak Obama, Stephen Harper would be good candidates to be the focus of your study.

It is advisable to choose an interesting, multilayered, complex personality about whom there is enough reliable psychologically relevant information to be the centre of your project. You may find such personalities in good biographies and autobiographies (www.biography.com or similar websites may be useful) and good documentaries or similar websites for suggestions). Students are expected to demonstrate critical thinking about data collection issues, such as contradictions among sources, reliability and validity. The students are encouraged to consult with the course director early in the year before making the final decision about the focus of the project. Please note that projects on people with very similar pathologies will not be approved.

Important dates:
Fall Semester begins September 5, 2012; ends December 3, 2012.
Last date to enroll without permission of course instructor: September 19, 2012
Last date to drop the course without receiving a grade: February 15, 2013 (Make sure you have enough feedback on your performance prior to this date).
Final paper due date: April 8, 2013.

No class on:
Fall Cocurricular Days October 31- November 2, 2012
Winter Reading week February 16-22, 2013
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading for the class</th>
<th>Students’ activity</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A general introduction to the course; The scientific evolution of ideas; Temperament. A movie demonstration</td>
<td>Thomas and Chess: Temperament Plus 1010 text or 2110 text on temperament</td>
<td>Plan how to play temperamental characteristics in an encounter situation: Hand in the following class</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Temperament applied</td>
<td>Freud’s readings from the course kit</td>
<td>Debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Freud’s structural theory; Life and death instincts.</td>
<td>Freud’s readings from the course kit</td>
<td>Debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The defences.</td>
<td>Read and reflect about each of the defences.</td>
<td>Warm-up 2: Students will present the concept of each defence mechanism and play it: No grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Object Relations School: Melanie Klein’s main concepts. Prep for working in groups</td>
<td>Greenberg and Mitchell on Klein</td>
<td>Debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>On sex, gender, sexual orientation</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Alfred Adler</td>
<td>Beneath the mask on Adler</td>
<td>Hand in an outline (two copies) of the first presentation BEFORE the class begins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Self Psychology Planning the first presentation Feedback on the first outline:</td>
<td>Kohut and Wolf: The disorders of the self</td>
<td>Debate</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Psychogenic Development; Allocating time slots and topics for the two presentations.</td>
<td>Millon: Chapter 3</td>
<td>Demonstration by a guest, a movie, a documentary etc. Debate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>DSM Finalizing the plan for the winter semester.</td>
<td>Globe and Mail’s article</td>
<td>Debate</td>
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**ATTENTION:**
Make sure you have enough feedback on your performance in the course prior to the last date to drop the course without receiving a grade. Check the specific date on previous pages.

*Happy Holidays!*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Behavioural irregularity</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Presenting Students</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A general introduction to personality disorders The DSM IV-TR</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hand in a tentative outline (two copies) of the second presentation BEFORE the class begins.</td>
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</tbody>
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| 2  | 1  
2  
3  
(a bonus)                                                                 | Read about the discussed behaviour disorders in your abnormal psychology textbook. |                                                                                     |
| 3  | 4  
5  
Feedback on the outlines                                                                 |                                                                         |                                                                                     |
| 4  | 6  
7  
8  
(a bonus)                                                                 | Read about the discussed behaviour disorders in your abnormal psychology textbook. |                                                                                     |
| 5  | 9  
10 
11                                                                        | Read about the discussed behaviour disorders in your abnormal psychology textbook. | Receive a feedback on your first presentation before the last day to drop without receiving a grade |
| 6  | First final Presentations  
(a bonus)                                               |                                                                         | 1  
2                                                                                               |
| 7  | Final Presentations                                                                    |                                                                         | 3  
4                                                                                               |
| 8  | Final Presentations                                                                    |                                                                         | 5  
6                                                                                               |
| 9  | Final Presentations                                                                    |                                                                         | 7  
8                                                                                               |
| 10 | Final Presentations                                                                    |                                                                         | 9  
10                                                                                              |
| 11 | Final Presentations                                                                    |                                                                         | 11  
12                                                                                              |
| 12 | TBA                                                                                    |                                                                         |                                                                                     |

Last date to submit/ hand-in final paper is the last day of classes

Have good spring and summer!