

Faculty of Health
Department of Psychology
PSYC 4220 6.0 B: THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE
Wednesday/2:30-5:30/Fall: On-line via Zoom, Winter: in-class
Y/2021-2022

Please note: this course will be delivered on-line during the fall semester and in-person during the winter semester. Students should be prepared to be in class during the winter. On-line participation *will not* be available then. The seminar will be delivered through a combination of both synchronous and asynchronous modalities. Lectures are prerecorded. Students need to have completed the relevant lectures, reading materials and weekly review questions prior to the corresponding scheduled topic which will be delivered synchronously during the scheduled class time. *Students are expected to attend synchronous activities during the 2:30-5:30 time slot – remotely during the fall semester and in person during the winter semester.* In the fall semester, activities such as group discussions, labs, and tests will be delivered via Zoom during this scheduled class time. Students will need a computer with webcam and microphone, and/or a smart device with these features, as well as access to high speed internet. Students will participate *via video and audio*. If this poses a problem, please communicate with me directly. *Given the nature of class activities and labs, students are expected to participate in class from a location that affords privacy for yourself and your fellow students.*

Be sure that you have the most updated version of Zoom installed on your computer (or whatever device you will be using) BEFORE the start of classes. See York Zoom page at: <https://yorku.zoom.us/>

*Students **do not** have permission to duplicate, copy and/or distribute the recordings outside of the class (these acts can violate intellectual property rights and other laws).*

Instructor and T.A. Information

Instructor: Dianne Lawless, Ph.D., C.Psych.

Office Hours: By appointment, virtually. Please put course code in subject line.

Email: dlawless@yorku.ca

Course Prerequisite(s): Course prerequisites are strictly enforced

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology), with a minimum grade of C.
- HH/PSYC 2021 3.00 (Statistical Methods I) or HH/PSYC 2020 6.00 (Statistical Methods I and II)
- HH/PSYC 2030 3.00 (Introduction to Research Methods) or substitutes
- Students must be in an Honours program in Psychology and have completed at least 84 credits

Course Credit Exclusions

Please refer to [York Courses Website](#) for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

Course website: [eClass](#)

All course materials will be available on the course eClass site, unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. The site will be your central access point for course materials

Course Description

A critical examination of theories of human nature with special emphasis on their philosophical foundations and their influence on current psychological theories.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of theories of human nature.
2. Critically evaluate, synthesize and resolve conflicting results in theories of human nature.
3. Articulate trends in theories of human nature.
4. Locate research articles on theories of human nature and show critical thinking about research findings .
5. Express knowledge of theories of human nature in written form.
6. Engage in evidence-based dialogue with course director and peers.
7. Demonstrate an ability to work with others.

Specific Learning Objectives

- develop a conceptual understanding of theories' assumptions about human nature by using several different frameworks
- consider how varying theories of human nature shape the conceptualization of topics typically addressed in psychology, as well as influence the questions and research methods used to examine them
- reflect on how varying theories of human nature could influence the way we manage our lives and our relationships with others, as well as shape our aspirations we believe are possible and preferable.

Required Text

Stevenson, L., Haberman, D., Matthews Wright, P. , Witt, C. (2018) Thirteen Theories of Human Nature (7th Ed.) New York: Oxford University Press.

Course Requirements and Assessment:

| Assessment | Date of Evaluation (if known) | Weighting |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Weekly Review Questions | Minimum 9 sets | 11.25% |
| Film Review | TBD | 4% |
| Paper #1 | Oct. 20, 2021 | 4% |
| Test #1 | November 17, 2021 | 17% |

| Assessment | Date of Evaluation (if known) | Weighting |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Paper #2 | November 24, 2021 | 5% |
| Test #2 | February 9, 2022 | 20% |
| Seminar Presentation | Feb, 16-March 30, 2022 | 11% |
| Final Paper | April 4 | 17.75% |
| Participation | | 10% |
| Total | | 100% |

Description of Assignments

WEEKLY REVIEW QUESTIONS

| Topic | Date |
|---------------------|----------------|
| Introduction | Sept. 14, 2021 |
| Confucius | Sept. 21, 2021 |
| Hinduism | Sept. 18, 2021 |
| Buddhism | Oct. 5, 2021 |
| Plato | Oct. 19, 2021 |
| Aristotle | Oct. 26, 2021 |
| Biblical traditions | Nov. 2, 2021 |
| Islam | Nov. 9, 2021 |
| Kant | Nov. 30, 2021 |
| Marx | Jan 11, 2022 |
| Sartre | Jan. 18, 2022 |
| Darwin | Jan. 25, 2022 |
| Humanist Feminism | Feb. 1, 2021 |
| | |

There are thirteen sets of weekly questions. Students need to complete a minimum of nine of the thirteen sets of questions. Each set is worth 1.25 marks for a total of 11.25. All questions must be completed. These assignments must be submitted through Turnitin by 11:30 p.m. on the due date. **No late submissions will be accepted.** Respond to the questions in your own words. Do not cut and paste answers. This will result in a failing grade. Responses may be in point form. Maximum length – 400 words.

Film discussion(4%)

A part of each synchronous zoom class will be devoted to a film review and discussion. Students will sign up to be a discussant. Film discussants will need to preview the film. Because viewing time is limited to 10-15 minutes, you will need to select a portion of the film you believe would be most useful for the class to see. After the class views the selected portions, you will give your reactions to the film as a means of stimulating class discussion. N.B.: This is NOT a presentation. *Your objective is to help facilitate a class discussion.*

Term Tests

Both term tests will take place on-line during scheduled class times. They are *not* open-book tests. Tests are a combination of multiple choice and written answer questions. Questions must be answered sequentially, meaning you can not return to answer previous questions. Time allowed for MC questions is 1 minute per question. Times for written question will vary based on the weight of each question.

Test #1 (15%) Nov. 17, 2021: Chapters 1-7 inclusive, plus lecture slides and Assigned Reading, Plato's allegory of the Cave

Test #2 (18%) February 9, 2022 Chapters 8-13 inclusive, historical interlude, plus lecture slides

Both tests will consist of multiple choice, short answer and essay style questions covering the text and supplemental chapters covered to date. The second test is not cumulative.

Paper #1: CULTURAL METAPHORS (maximum: 750 words).
DUE OCT. 20, e-copy to turnitin (through link on eClass)

It is often difficult to convey to others exactly what a specific culture is like. Metaphors can allow us to more easily grasp a new concept by framing it in terms of something familiar. Martin J. Gannon (2002) proposes the use of cultural metaphors as a way to easily express a cultural mindset and compare it to that of other cultures. These metaphors involve identifying an activity or phenomenon that most members of a culture would view as important, and then using it as a metaphor for describing key features of the cultural group. While cultural metaphors are generalizations and will not apply to all members of a group, these metaphors can provide a framework for beginning to understand and compare cultural groups

Directions: Construct your own cultural metaphor for a culture with which you are familiar. See assignment guidelines on eClass course page for details

Paper #2: Understanding proverbs from away. 2-3 pages double spaced.

DUE: NOV. 24 e-copy to turnitin (through link on eClass)

With their expressed consent, interview a person from a culture different from your own and ask them to identify a proverb that is common to their culture (e.g., time is money; no man is an island; for every hand there is a glove). Ask them to choose four or five dimensions of their culture to explain its meaning. Be sure to ask for elaboration and clarification to help you grasp its interpretation. Reflect back the meaning as you understand it and ask for feedback. In your paper, present the proverb and identify the culture. Provide a clear and comprehensive written account of its meaning as explained by your informant. Identify three aspects of human nature that are embedded in this metaphor and explain your choices. See assignment guidelines on eClass for details.

Seminar Presentation February 16 to March 30, 2022

Each student is expected to give a group presentation to the class in the second term. Your one-hour presentation will be done in groups of four to five. The presentation can include lecture, audiovisual material, class exercises, and guided group discussion. Presentation content will examine two different psychological theories that address the same subject area. A list of suggested topics will be provided. Feel free to discuss additional topics with the course director. Topics and presentation dates will be established early in the first term. You will need to have your proposed topic approved by the course director. You will be expected to discuss the conceptual and research literature in your area of interest and present the material in a clear and organized manner, with a demonstrated grasp of the material that is beyond an introductory level.

More specific guidelines regarding the expectations for the presentation will be discussed in class.

Final Paper April 6, 2022

The final term paper may be an elaboration of the same topic as the seminar presentation, or students can choose a different topic (with approval of the Course Director). Details will be announced in class. The paper should be written in accordance with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Papers should be approximately 10-12 double spaced pages (2500-3000 words). See eClass for assignment details

Participation

Class participation will be evaluated based on **two** components. 8% will be based on active and informed participation and reflection in all class discussions and exercises. Please note, this mark is not based on attendance per se, however, it goes without saying that attendance is necessary in order to participate. It will be helpful to prepare for each meeting by completing the assigned readings prior to each class. 2% will be based on providing a peer review for a minimum of four final group presentations.

Class Format and Attendance Policy

This course will be delivered on-line during the fall semester and in-person during the winter semester. *Students are expected to attend synchronous activities during the 2:30-5:30 time slot – remotely during the fall semester and in-person during the winter semester.* Attendance will be taken during that time. Students are expected to have listened to the relevant lecture and completed reading material and weekly assignment *prior* to the zoom meeting during scheduled class times. Students will participate **via video and audio** during the online fall classes. If this poses a problem, please communicate with me directly. *Given the nature of class activities and labs, students are expected to participate in on-line classes from a location that affords privacy for yourself and your fellow students.*

Grading as per Senate Policy

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and

tests* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 89, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar – [Grading Scheme for 2021-22](#)

Missed Tests/Midterm Exams/Late Assignment

For any missed quiz or late assignment, students MUST complete the following online form which will be received and reviewed in the Psychology undergraduate office. At this time, due to COVID-19 an Attending Physician’s Statement (APS) is not required, however, a reason for missing an evaluated component in the course must be provided.

[HH PSYC: Missed Tests/Exams Form](#). Failure to complete the form within 48 hours of the original deadline will result in a grade of zero for the missed quiz or late assignment.

Make-ups/extensions will be provided for legitimate reasons (e.g., illness). Conflict with work schedules is not considered a legitimate reason.

Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Fall/Winter 2021-22 Important Dates](#)

| | Fall (Term F) | Year (Term Y) | Winter (Term W) |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines) | Sept. 21 | Sept. 21 | Jan. 23 |
| Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines) | Oct. 5 | Oct. 26 | Feb. 7 |
| Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines) | Nov. 12 | Feb. 11 | 18-Mar |
| Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of “W” on transcript – see note below) | Nov. 13 - Dec. 7 | Feb. 12 - April 10 | March 19 - April 10 |

Add and Drop Deadline Information

There are deadlines for adding and dropping courses, both academic and financial. Since, for the most part, the dates are **different**, be sure to read the information carefully so that you understand the differences between the sessional dates below and the [Refund Tables](#).

You are strongly advised to pay close attention to the "Last date to enrol without permission of course instructor" deadlines. These deadlines represent the last date students have unrestricted access to the registration and enrolment system.

After that date, you must contact the professor/department offering the course to arrange permission.

You can drop courses using the registration and enrolment system up until the last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (drop deadline).

You may [withdraw from a course](#) using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as 'W'. The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.

Information on Plagiarism Detection

To promote academic integrity in this course, students will be normally required to submit their written assignments to Turnitin (via the course eClass) for a review of textual similarity and the detection of possible plagiarism. In so doing, students will allow their material to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used only for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin service are described on the Turnitin.com website.

Electronic Device Policy

This course will be delivered in part, with an online format and therefore electronic devices (e.g., tablets, laptops) are permitted during class time for course-related purposes. It is expected that you would complete tests/exams in a manner that does not require consulting an unauthorised source during an examination unless the tests/exams are open-book.

Academic Integrity for Students

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

It is recommended that you review Academic Integrity by completing the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and [Academic Honesty Quiz](#)

Test Banks

The offering for sale of, buying of, and attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers), or any course specific test questions/answers is not permitted in the Faculty of Health. Any student found to be doing this may be considered to have breached the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as "Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation" (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or "encouraging, enabling or causing others" (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The university encourages students with disabilities to register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to discuss their accommodation needs as early as possible in the term to establish the recommended academic accommodations that will be communicated to Course Directors as necessary. Please let me know as early as possible in the term if you anticipate requiring academic accommodation so

that we can discuss how to consider your accommodation needs within the context of this course.

<https://accessibility.students.yorku.ca/>

Excerpt from Senate Policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

1. Pursuant to its commitment to sustaining an inclusive, equitable community in which all members are treated with respect and dignity, and consistent with applicable accessibility legislation, York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs. This policy aims to eliminate systemic barriers to participation in academic activities by students with disabilities.

All students are expected to satisfy the essential learning outcomes of courses. Accommodations shall be consistent with, support and preserve the academic integrity of the curriculum and the academic standards of courses and programs. For further information please refer to: [York University Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities Policy](#).

Course Materials Copyright Information

These course materials are designed for use as part of the PSYC 4220B course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#).

Course Schedule

| | |
|----------|---|
| Sept. 8 | Welcome and Introduction to course |
| Sept. 15 | Rival Theories and Critical Assessments Chapter 1: |
| Sept. 22 | Confucianism Film: Family Values: The Chinese Family in Transition |
| Sept. 29 | Chapter 2: Upanishadic Hinduism Film: Eastern Mystics Part 3 |
| Oct. 6 | Chapter 3: Buddhism Film: Eastern Mystics Part 2 |
| Oct. 13 | reading week – no class |
| Oct. 20 | Chapter 4: Plato |

AR: Plato's Allegory of the Cave

Due: Paper #1 creating a cultural metaphor

- Oct. 27 Chapter 5: Aristotle
- Nov. 3 Chapter 6: The Bible Humanity in relation to God
Film: [No rest for the wicked](#)
- Nov. 10 Chapter 7: Islam
Film: [East to West. Episode 4. The Muslim Renaissance](#)
- Nov. 17 **Test #1**
- Nov. 24 Historical Interlude: Rise of Science
Due: Paper #2: Proverbs from away
- Dec 1 Chapter 8: Kant
Film: [Kant and Categorical Imperatives](#)
- Jan. 12 Chapter 9: Marx
Film: [People like us: Social class in America](#)
- Jan. 19 Chapter 11: Sartre
Film: [Griefwalker](#)
- Jan. 26 Chapter 12: Darwin
[Laughing and crying](#)
- Feb. 2 Chapter 13: Human Nature and Feminist Theory
Film: [Marilyn Waring—The Unpaid Work That GDP Ignores -- And Why It Really Counts](#)

| | |
|----------|-------------------------|
| Feb. 9 | Test #2 |
| Feb. 16 | Student Presentation |
| Feb. 23 | reading week – no class |
| March 2 | Student presentation |
| March 9 | Student Presentation |
| March 16 | Student presentation |
| March 23 | Student presentation |
| March 30 | Student presentation |
| April 6 | Final paper due |