

Personality Psychology, 2130, O January 2014

Professor Ian McGregor

Course Information

Objectives:

1. Integrate historical roots, classic theories, and contemporary science of *personality*.
2. Understand why and how personality science is conducted and how knowledge evolves through cycles of theory and research.
3. Apply personality psychology knowledge to better understand your life and social issues.

Prerequisite: PSYC 1010 6.0 with the minimum grade of C

Location: Section N, Tuesdays 11:30-2:30, CLH E

Professor: Ian McGregor: ianmc@yorku.ca, 240 BSB

Teaching Assistant: Section M: Eldar Eftekhari <eftee@yorku.ca>

Email Protocol: When sending email the Professor or TA always indicate the course code and section in the subject of your email, e.g., “2130O, query about lecture 2” In the body of the email please also always indicate your full name and York ID# at the end.

Readings: There is no textbook. PDFs of weekly readings will be provided for free in Moodle.

Lecture Timing: Lectures will begin 5 minutes after the scheduled start time, and end at least five minutes before the scheduled end time. There will be a 10 minute break near the middle.

Lecture Attendance: Lecture attendance is important because some material presented will not be in the readings. To do well, take notes during the lecture and do not fool yourself into thinking you are “attending” just because you are sitting there. Keep your mind focused on the material and free from distractions (see next section on technology). Exchange contact information with a classmate for notes-sharing in case one of you have to miss a lecture.

Technology Regulations: Laptop use during lectures for email, face-book, or other non-course-related activities is not permitted. It is distracting for me and the other students (and you). Please wait for the break, or step outside the lecture hall if you need a social-media fix, or to call or message. Phones and other devices should be off during lecture. I recommend (and appreciate) no laptops at all during lectures. The temptation to distract yourself is too high and although most students (wishfully) think they can effectively multitask during lecture, in fact, studies consistently show that students who “multitask” on laptops during class earn far lower grades than those who do not. If you insist on using a laptop for note-taking, please sit near the back of the class so that other students and I won’t be distracted by your clicking and screen contents.

Drop Date: To drop the course without receiving a grade, you must do so before March 7th.

Grades

Quizzes: Five short quizzes, each with around 25 multiple choice items, will each be worth 10% of your grade, and will be administered at the beginning of every second lecture (starting week 3) via power point. Each quiz will cover material from two previous weeks' lectures/readings.

Short Essays: Five short essay assignments will each be worth 10% of your grade. Each assignment will consist of either two questions that require short essay answers (each question with a 300 word limit) or one question with a 600 word limit for the answer. Each essay assignments will focus on the two previous weeks' lectures/readings. Essays must be submitted online, two nights before the next week's lecture, or they will receive a grade of zero.

Best 8 of 10 Quizzes/Essays: Missed quizzes/essays will receive a zero regardless of the reason, and there will be no opportunity to write make-ups. Instead, all students will be allowed to drop their two lowest essay/quiz grades, and only the top 8 out of 10 essay/quiz grades will count toward the final course grade. This flexibility is provided instead of make-up tests/assignments.

Final Online Essay: Worth 17%, 2000 word limit, due date April 12th. Instruction to follow.

Research Participation: 3% of your grade will come from participation in three research studies directly related to course material. The first two will be completed online. The third requires that you sign up online and then participate in person at Room 007B Central Square (i.e., in basement underneath the library). The TAs and I will have access to aggregated, anonymous data, only, and will not match your personal identifying information to your responses (i.e., neither your names nor student numbers will be stored in the data files). The research participation is designed to give you hands-on experience with aspects of contemporary personality research that will be discussed in the course. You will also be given the opportunity to see where your personality scores stand in relation to those of the other students taking the course. My hope is that this will give you a more interesting and experiential appreciation for the course material. The TA will email you your own Research Identification Number, which you will use to identify yourself in the studies that you participate in. Links to Studies 1 and 2 will be available on Moodle for you to access by January 13th, participation deadline, January 28th. Study 3 participation deadline is April 8th. Each study will be around an hour long. Make sure to sign up early for the in-lab Study 3 to get a time for participation that suits you best. If you sign up for the lab study but then fail to show up without a day's notice you will not be given another opportunity to participate. As an alternative to research participation, students may choose to make their final essay worth 20% instead of 17%. If you wish to do so, however, you must declare your intention to opt out of the research component by January 21st. Please note that at the end of the term you may email to ask the TA to delete your responses if for any reason you object to the research and do not wish to have your data used for research purposes.

Medical Notes: If medical issues cause students to miss more than two quizzes or assignments, provisions can be made for make-up quizzes or assignments, but only if students have physician-signed documentation saying that they were *medically unable to complete 3 or more of the quizzes/essays on their specified dates*.

Grade Bump-Ups: Every year dozens of students come to me after the course is over and say something like, “I missed my B by .3%, please bump me up—my whole life depends on it!!!” Because one in six students are always in the position of missing a higher grade category by a fraction of a mark, indulging all such requests would result in unacceptable grade inflation, and granting selective bump-ups would be unfair to other students. Accordingly, I am sorry that I will not agree to bump you up.

Lecture and Assessment Schedule

Week 1, Jan 6: Myth

Week 2, Jan 13: Religion

Week 3, Jan 20: Psychoanalysis (*Online Essay 1, Due 2 nights before lecture, 10%*)

Week 4, Jan 27: Traits (*Quiz 1, 10%*)

Week 5, Feb 3: Biology (*Online Essay 2, Due 2 nights before lecture, 10%*)

Week 6, Feb 10: Desire (*Quiz 2, 10%*)

Reading Week, Feb 17

Week 7, Feb. 24: Illusion (*Online Essay 3, Due 2 nights before lecture, 10%*)

Week 8, March 3: Security (*Quiz 3, 10%*)

Week 9, March 10: Pride (*Online Essay 4, Due 2 nights before lecture, 10%*)

Week 10, March 17: Meaning (*Quiz 4, 10%*)

Week 11, March 24: Love (*Online Essay 5, Due 2 nights before lecture, 10%*)

Week 12, March 31: Wisdom (*Quiz 5, 10%*)

Exam Period: (*Final Online Essay, Due April 12th, 17%*)

Overall Grade Computation: *80% (from best 8 of the 10 essays or quizzes) + 17% (from final essay) + 3% (from research participation).*