

**Faculty of Health**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**HH/PSYC 4220 6.0A, FC 103, Mondays 8:30 – 11:30**  
**THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE**  
**Fall/Winter 2016-2017**

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**Instructor:** Tifrah Warner, Ph.D.

**Secretary:** Agnes Levstik, BSB #281; (416) 736-2100 ext. 55125

**Office:** BSB 277

**Office Hours:** After class or by appointment

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Please contact me only when it is an issue that cannot be addressed during the class or office hours.  
(always put course number in the subject line)

**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 (excluding (EDUC) education courses)

**Course website:** [Moodle](#)

**Course Description**

This course surveys an array of psychological views on human nature.

- This survey will focus on the theoretical principles that are proposed to describe human behaviour and change.

The first half of the course consists of:

- a review of traditional perspectives on human nature, and
- a review of Systems theory approach.

Special to this half of the course is:

- an introduction of a Vedic-yoga framework that organizes the diverse approaches in terms of strata of existence, and
- a look at successful application of Systems approach principles as exemplified by the clinical work of Milton H. Erickson.

The second half of this course:

- follows the format of the introduced Vedic-yoga framework,
- it looks at current psychological theories, and
- consists of assigned readings and students' presentations.

The readings for this course:

- comprise of a mixture of material; including original academic articles and chapters from popular books by scientists.
- These readings are meant to give you both the experience of studying primary scientific sources and of stirring your interest.

The grading scheme aims to create an opportunity for deeper study, thus:

- there is no one all-encompassing exam and class work is distributed throughout the course,
- there is an assignment for every class, quizzes twice a month, a presentation and a paper.

## 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

Learning will be accomplished through multiple means, including:

- Weekly analytical summaries of each of the theoretical approach covered.
- Class discussions.
- Writing and presenting an analytic paper.
- Keeping a self-observation journal.
- Working with a team.

## Required Text

- Any Introduction to Psychology textbook
- Course Kit

## Course Requirements and Assessment

### Grading Scheme, option 1

1. 7 multiple-choice quizzes 40%
2. 17 class reading assignments (pass/fail) 10%
3. Self-observation research journal (2 parts) 20%
4. Paper-Presentation, including
  - a. team game (pass/fail) 30%
  - b. class presentation (pass/fail)
  - c. 1 page handout
  - d. A short essay

### Grading Scheme, option 2

Recommended for those who plan to continue with graduate studies

1. 7 multiple-choice quizzes 20%
2. 17 class reading assignments (pass/fail) 10%
3. Self-observation research journal (2 parts) 20%
4. Paper-Presentation, including
  - a. team game (pass/fail) 30%
  - b. class presentation (pass/fail)
  - c. 1 page handout
  - d. A short essay
5. 1 paper 20%

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Total	100%
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**\*Note:** Fail = 0%, Pass = 80%

## Description of Assignments

### Quizzes

- Each one will cover all the topics scheduled since the last quiz, unless otherwise specified.
- Multiple-choice format
- 15 or 30 minutes (depending on number of questions)

### Assignments

There are weekly assignments, they consist of listing the main point and answering a number of questions about each reading.

### Human Nature Self-observation journal.

The journal consists of recording of your observation of specified aspects of the course material. Part I involves observation of principles of human behaviour as they manifest in daily life. Part II involves observations of various dimensions that make-up a person's life, such as ego, imagination, and environment.

### Paper - Presentations

Consists of (a) an analytical discussion paper on any theory within the specified scheduled topic, (b) a class handout that summaries the paper, (c) a presentation of the paper, and (d) a team organized game on the scheduled topic.

### Paper for grading scheme option 2

This is an 8 to 12 pages paper that gives an analytical comparison of three perspectives on human nature.

## 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 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - [calendars.students.yorku.ca/2016-2017/academic-and-financial-information/academic-services/grades-and-grading-schemes](http://calendars.students.yorku.ca/2016-2017/academic-and-financial-information/academic-services/grades-and-grading-schemes))

## Late Work/Missed Tests or Exams

Students with a documented reason for missing a course test, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (Attending Physician Statement which can be found at: <http://registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf>) may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

**Assignment Submission:** Due dates and times are specified on the class schedule. Earlier submissions may be made to the course secretary (BSB 281) and have to be date stamped.

**Late Assignments:** Late assignments are not accepted without an officially satisfactory reason. Technical problems involving computer and printer are not acceptable reasons for missing these due dates.

## Eligibility for a make-up quiz

- The student has to contact the CD or secretary within 48 hours of the missed quiz (unless circumstances do not allow). Circumstances preventing contact within 48 hours must be accompanied by documentation.
- If the student expects to miss a quiz in advance, he or she has to apply for a make-up exam before making arrangements to be elsewhere.

## Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Important Dates](#)

Important dates	Fall (F)	Year (Y)	Winter (W)
Last date to add a course <b>without</b> permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 21	Sept. 21	Jan. 18
Last date to add a course <b>with permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 5	Oct. 19	Feb. 1
Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 11	Feb. 10	March 10
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a "W" on the transcript – see note below)	Nov. 12 - Dec. 5	Feb. 11 - Apr. 5	March 11 - Apr. 5

## **Information on Plagiarism Detection**

All written assignments and papers are uniquely tailored to this course.

## **Electronic Device Policy**

Use of laptop and other electronics in the classroom is acceptable for special needs situations only. Some references about the impediment this may cause for successful learning are:

- Carrie B. Fried, (2008). Computers & Education.
- Josh Fischman, March 16, 2009. The Chronicle of Higher Education  
Students Stop Surfing After Being Shown How In-Class Laptop Use Lowers Test Scores.
- Linda Stone, September, 2009. Continuous Partial Attention and email Apnea.
- York University newspaper, yFile 13.03.2013 Study finds multitasking on a laptop impedes classroom learning

## **Attendance Policy**

Attendance is not required, but... you are responsible for the content covered in class in addition to required readings.

## **Academic Integrity for Students**

York university takes academic integrity very seriously, please visit [an overview of Academic Integrity at York University](#) from the Office of the Vice-President Academic.

The following links will assist you in gaining a better understanding of academic integrity and point you to resources at York that can help you improve your writing and research skills:

- [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#)
- [Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity](#)
- [Information for Students on Text-Matching Software: Turnitin.com](#)
- [Beware! Says who? A pamphlet on how to avoid plagiarism](#)
- [Resources for students to help improve their writing and research skill](#)

## **Test Banks:**

The use of test banks is not permitted in this course and may be considered a potential breach of academic honesty. This includes but is not limited too; buying or selling test banks.

## **Electronic Devices During a Test/Examination:**

Electronic mobile devices of any kind are not allowed during a test or examination. Students are required to turn off and secure any electronic mobile device in their bag which is to be placed under the chair while a test/exam is in progress. Any student observed with an electronic device during a test/exam may be reported to the Undergraduate Office for a potential breach of Academic Honesty.

## **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 [York University Accessibility Hub](#) is your online stop for accessibility on campus. The [Accessibility Hub](#) provides tools, assistance and resources. Policy Statement

**Policy:** York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs.

The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses.

Provided that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder.

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 4220 6.0A 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.

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