

University of Waterloo, Department of Psychology

PSYCH 356: Personality

Spring 2015, Tuesdays & Thursdays 8:30-9:50 am in AL 208

Instructor: Richard Eibach

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Office hours: Tuesday, 4:00-5:00 pm, or by appointment

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Course description: Personality psychology is the science of measuring and explaining patterned individual differences in behavior and personal functioning. This course examines personality at distinct levels of analysis including: 1) temperaments and traits, 2) values, goal orientations, and personal strivings, and 3) broader meaning systems and personal identity narratives. Lectures and readings emphasize the cognitive, affective, motivational, and interpersonal processes that generate and sustain personality differences. Topics include behavioral and genetic studies of personality; continuity and change in personality over the lifespan; implicit and physiological measures of personality; sources of accuracy and bias in intuitive judgments of personality; comparative cultural, historical, and cross-species investigations of personality; personality disorders; and personality predictors of well-being.

Required texts (available at the UW campus bookstore)

- 1) McAdams, D. (2015). *The art and science of personality development*. New York: Guilford.
- 2) Gosling, S. (2008). *Snoop: What your stuff says about you*. New York.

Required articles (available on LEARN)

- 1) Ashton, M. C., & Lee, K. (2008). The HEXACO model of personality structure and the importance of the H factor. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2, 1952-1962. [Resource for Personality Rating Assignment]
- 2) Fleeson, W., & Noftle, E. E. (2009). In favor of the synthetic resolution to the person-situation debate. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 43, 150-154.
- 3) Hare, R. (1994). This charming psychopath. *Psychology Today*, Jan/Feb.
- 4) Hyde, J.S. (2005). The gender similarities hypothesis. *American Psychologist*, 60, 581-592.
- 5) Lee, K., & Ashton, M. C. (2015). *The HEXACO personality inventory revised*. Retrieved from: <http://hexaco.org/> [Resource for Personality Rating Assignment: including scale descriptions, history of the inventory, scales, and materials for researchers]
- 6) Lilienfeld, S. O., & Arkowitz, H. (2007). What “psychopath” means. *Scientific American Mind*, 18, 80-81.
- 7) Twenge, J. M. (2008). Generation me: The origin of birth cohort differences in personality traits, and cross-temporal meta-analyses. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 2, 1440-1454.

Course requirements and assessment

Assessment	Date due	Weighting
Personality evaluation assignment	5/25	25%
Test #1	6/9	25%
Personality observation assignment	6/29	25%
Test #2	7/23	25%

Notes on assignments

Submission guidelines: Completed assignments should be submitted as a text file (in MS Word or PDF format) to the relevant drop box on LEARN no later than 11:00 pm on the due date. Late submissions will NOT be accepted and will be marked 0.

Assignment descriptions

1) For the Personality Evaluation Assignment each student and another person will rate the personality of the same target individual using the HEXACO personality inventory (Ashton & Lee, 2007). After scoring each judge's ratings of the target's personality on the 6 dimensions, the student will submit a paper that analyzes possible reasons for convergences and divergences in the judges' ratings across the 6 dimensions of the target's personality. This assignment will provide experience in using and scoring personality inventories and insights into the value and limitations of this approach to personality assessment. Ashton and Lee's (2007) paper and website will be background sources for this assignment.

2) For the Personality Observation Assignment each student will examine traces of their personality expression in everyday life. Students will submit a paper that explores traces of their personality that can be found in the contents and decor of their bedrooms, their use of social network media, and/or the ways they use language to express themselves in daily life. This assignment will provide practice using the tools of psychology to recognize how personality reveals itself in everyday contexts. Gosling's (2008) book Snoop will be the primary background source for this assignment. You will be expected to have read Gosling's book in preparation for this assignment.

Notes on tests

The tests will consist of multiple-choice and short answer questions covering material from both the lectures and the assigned readings. Review sessions for the I will be scheduled on an evening before each testing session. Dates, times, and locations of review sessions will be announced in class and on LEARN.

SCHEDULE OF LECTURES, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS & TESTS

Date	Lecture topic	Reading assignment
5/5	Introduction	McAdams: Prologue & Ch. 1
5/7	Research methods	Gosling: Prologue, Ch. 1
5/12	Personality traits I: Emotionality	McAdams: Ch. 2
5/14	Personality traits II: Self-control	McAdams: Ch. 3
5/19	Behavioral genetics & gene-environment interactions	
5/21	Psychophysiology of temperament	Gosling: Ch. 2, Ch. 3
5/25	Personality evaluation assignment due	
5/26	Personality consistency & change over the lifespan	McAdams: Ch. 4
5/28	Expressive behaviour	Gosling: Ch. 4, Ch. 5, & Ch. 6
6/2	Personality judgment	Gosling: Ch. 7, Ch. 8, Ch. 9
6/4	Gender & sexuality	Hyde (2005)
6/9	Test #1	
6/11	Parsing variance in behaviour: Personality & situational influences	Fleeson & Nofle (2009)
6/16	Situational triggers and “if...then” signatures	
6/18	Personality coherence: Cognitive – affective processing systems	
6/23	Self theories & self processes:	McAdams: Ch. 5

6/25	Personal goals	McAdams: Ch. 6
6/29	Personality observation assignment due	
6/30	Defense mechanisms & unconscious motivations	
7/2	Moral worldviews & ideologies	McAdams: Ch. 7
7/7	Autobiographical narratives	McAdams: Ch. 8
7/9	Generativity and altruism	McAdams: Ch. 9
7/14	Historical change in personality	Twenge (2008)
7/16	Disordered personality: The example of psychopathy	Hare (1994); Lilienfeld & Arkowitz (2007)
7/21	Well-being	McAdams: Ch. 10
7/23	Test #2	

Course policies:

Students who are requesting accommodation for course requirements (assignments, midterm tests, final exams, etc.) **due to illness** should do the following:

- seek medical treatment as soon as possible and obtain a completed UW Verification of Illness Form: <https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/student-medical-clinic/services/verification-illness>
- submit that form to the instructor within 48 hours.
- (preferably) inform the instructor by the due date for the course requirement that you will be unable to meet the deadline and that documentation will be forthcoming.

In the case of a missed final exam, the instructor and student will negotiate an extension for the final exam which will typically be written as soon as possible, but no later than the next offering of the course.

In the case of a missed assignment deadline or midterm test, the instructor will either: 1) waive the course component and re-weight remaining term work as he/she deems fit according to circumstances and the goals of the course, or 2) provide an extension.

In the case of bereavement, the instructor will provide similar accommodations to those for illness. Appropriate documentation to support the request will be required.

Students who are experiencing extenuating circumstances should also inform their academic advisors regarding their personal difficulties.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities The Access-Ability Services Office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the Access-Ability Services Office at the beginning of each academic term.

Concerns About the Course or Instructor (Informal Stage)

We in the Psychology Department take great pride in the high quality of our program and our instructors. Though infrequent, we know that students occasionally find themselves in situations of conflict with their instructors over course policies or grade assessments. If such a conflict arises, the Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies is available for consultation and to mediate a resolution between the student and instructor. Contact information is as follows: Richard Eibach, email: reibach@uwaterloo.ca , Phone: 519-888-4567 ext 38790

A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. See Policy 70 and 71 below for further details.

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Further details: <http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>]

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity [<http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/>], to avoid committing academic offenses, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about 'rules' for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline [<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm>].

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4 [<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm>].

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals [<http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm>].

Students are responsible for all e-mail that is sent to the official uWaterloo email address. Check e-mail regularly for important and time sensitive messages. See "Official Student E-mail Address" for further details e.g., procedures and warnings regarding forwarding e-mail to other accounts. <http://ist.uwaterloo.ca/cs/uWaterlooITstudentguidelines.html>

Research Experience Marks: Information and Guidelines

Experiential learning is considered an integral part of the undergraduate program in Psychology. Research participation is one example of this, article review is another. A number of undergraduate courses have been expanded to include opportunities for Psychology students to earn grades while gaining research experience.

Since experiential learning is highly valued in the Department of Psychology, students may earn a **"bonus" grade of up to 4%** in this course through research experience. Course work will make up 100% of the final mark and a "bonus" of up to 4% may be earned and will be added to the final grade if/as needed to bring your final grade up to 100%.

The two options for earning research experience grades (participation in research and article review) are described below. Students may complete any combination of these options to earn research experience grades.

Option 1: Participation in Psychology Research

Research participation is coordinated by the Research Experiences Group (REG). Psychology students may volunteer as research participants in lab and/or online (web-based) studies conducted by students and faculty in the Department of Psychology. Participation enables students to learn first-hand about psychology research and related concepts. Many students report that participation in research is both an educational and interesting experience. Please be assured that all Psychology studies have undergone prior ethics review and clearance through the Office of Research Ethics.

Educational focus of participation in research

To maximize the educational benefits of participating in research, students will receive feedback information following their participation in each study detailing the following elements:

- Purpose or objectives of the study
- Dependent and independent variables
- Expected results
- References for at least two related research articles
- Provisions to ensure confidentiality of data
- Contact information of the researcher should the student have further questions about the study
- Contact information for the Director of the Office of Research Ethics should the student wish to learn more about the general ethical issues surrounding research with human participants, or specific questions or concerns about the study in which s/he participated.

Participation in LAB studies has increment values of 0.5 participation credits (grade percentage points) for each 30-minutes of participation. Participation in ONLINE studies has increment values of .25 credits for each 15-minutes of participation. Researchers will record student's participation, and at the end of the term the REG Coordinator will provide the course instructor with a credit report of the total credits earned by each student.

How to participate?

Study scheduling, participation and grade assignment is managed using the SONA online system. All students enrolled in this course have been set up with a SONA account. You must get started early in the term.

[Participating/SONA information: How to log in to Sona and sign up for studies](#)

**** Please do not ask the Course Instructor or REG Coordinator for information unless you have first thoroughly read the information provided on this website. ****

More information about the REG program is available at:

[REG Participants' Homepage](#)

Option 2: Article Review as an alternative to participation in research

Students are not required to participate in research, and not all students wish to do so. As an alternative, students may opt to gain research experience by writing short reviews (1½ to 2 pages) of research articles relevant to the course. The course instructor will specify a suitable source of articles for this course (i.e., scientific journals, newspapers, magazines, other printed media). *You must contact your TA to get approval for the article you have chosen before writing the review.* Each review article counts as one percentage point. To receive credit, you must follow specific guidelines. The article review must:

- **Be submitted before the [last day of lectures](#). Late submissions will NOT be accepted under ANY circumstances.**
- Be typed
- Fully identify the title, author(s), source and date of the article. A copy of the article must be attached.
- Identify the psychological concepts in the article and indicate the pages in the textbook that are applicable. Critically evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article. If inappropriate or incorrect, identify the error and its implications for the validity of the article. You may find, for example, misleading headings, faulty research procedures, alternative explanations that are ignored, failures to distinguish factual findings from opinions, faulty statements of cause-effect relations, errors in reasoning, etc. Provide examples whenever possible.
- Clearly evaluate the application or treatment of those concepts in the article.
- Keep a copy of your review in the unlikely event we misplace the original.