
PERSONALITY & INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES in Fall 2019 (PY2022)

Course Code	PY2022	Professor(s)	Martin Dege
Prerequisites	None	Office Number	PV-202
Class Schedule	TF: 13:45-15:05 in SD-5	Office Hours	by appointment
Credits	4	Email	mdege@aup.edu
Semester	Fall 2019	Office Tel. Ext.	

Course Description

The personality concept claims to address central psychological questions such as: How do persons think?; How do they feel?; How do they act? This course discusses the basics of theory and research in personality psychology. Students will learn about classic and contemporary perspectives in the field as well as continuing controversies and debates. We will read original texts. Beyond the classical tradition of personality psychology, we will reflect on self, identity, and positioning theories to understand the role of concepts of persons in a neoliberal context. The course is taught in parallel with a child development course at the American University in Cairo. Students will get involved in a collaborative project.

PY1000 is recommended as a prerequisite.

Course Learning Outcomes

Knowledge of the major perspectives on human personality
The ability to compare and debate the strengths and weaknesses of personality theories
Knowledge of the empirical and theoretical basis of the major instruments to assess personality
Ability to apply personality theories to the study of human lives.
Strengthen skills reading and critiquing primary source materials

General Education

This course can be used to fulfill the Mapping the World requirement and as such has the following learning outcomes:

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- helps students understand how human experience has been organized in and across time and space
 - helps students to learn how various forms of social experience emerge

Course Outline

SEPTEMBER

Week I: 3rd-6th

Tuesday 3rd: Intro: The Superhero personality

Cowsill, Marvel Avengers. (Will be provided in class)

Friday 6th: Personality in Psychology

[Funder, The personality puzzle Ch 1.](#)

[Assingment I](#): Write a short reflection about the concept of personality.

- What do you think is it good for?
- What are the potentialities?
- What are its dangers?

Two pages maximum. Use APA Style. Due Sunday (8th) midnight.

Week II: 10th-13th

Tuesday 10th: Personality and Psychoanalysis I

[S. Freud, The ego and the id.](#)

Friday 13th: Personality and Psychoanalysis II

[A. Freud, The ego and the mechanisms of defense. Part IV.](#)

[S. Freud, Beyond the pleasure principle.](#)

Week III: 17th-20th

Tuesday 17th: Alfred Adler and the concept of Individual Psychology I

[Adler, Understanding Life Ch 1, 2.](#)

Wednesday 18th, 6:30pm movie screening

A Dangerous method. Room C102

Friday 20th: Alfred Adler and the concept of Individual Psychology II

[Adler, Understanding Life Ch 3, 4.](#)

Assignment II: Write a reflection paper about psychoanalytical concepts of personality. Contrast the various theories introduced in class and discuss their applicability. APA Style, minimum 5 pages, include at least 3 external sources. Due Friday (27th) midnight.

Week IV: 24th-27th

Tuesday 24th: Collaboration with AUC

Group task with students from the American University of Cairo I: Instructions will be given in class.

Friday 27th: Humanistic Psychology I

[Rogers, Client-Centered Therapy, Part III.](#)

[Binswanger, The case of Ellen West.](#)

Special instructions: Start reading Binswanger, *The case of Ellen West* as early as possible. It is an easy text to read but it is long and we will work with it throughout our discussion of humanistic and positive psychology.

OCTOBER

Week V: 1st-4rd

Tuesday 1st: Humanistic Psychology II

[Maslow, A theory of human motivation.](#)

Friday 4rd: Positive Psychology I

[Seligman, Flourish Ch 1 & 2.](#)

Week VI: 8th-11th

Tuesday 8th: Positive Psychology II

[Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, Introduction to the special issue.](#)

[Buss, The evolution of happiness.](#)

[Larson, Toward a psychology of positive youth development.](#)

[Massimini & Fave, Individual development in a bio-cultural perspective.](#)

[Peterson, The future of optimism.](#)

[Myers, The funds, friends, and faith of happy people.](#)

[Diener, Subjective well-being.](#)

[Ryan & Deci, Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being.](#)

[Taylor, Kemeny, Reed, Bower, Gruenewald, Psychological resources, positive illusions, and health.](#)

Assignment III: Write a reflection paper about humanistic and positive psychology. Discuss the appearance and demise of humanistic psychology and the benefits and pitfalls of a positive psychology. APA Style, minimum 5 pages, include at least 3 external sources. Due Sunday (13th) midnight.

Friday 11th: Positioning Analysis

Online lecture

[Brockmeier & Harré, Narrative: Problems and promises of an alternative paradigm.](#)

Group task with students from the American University of Cairo II: Positioning Analysis with students from the American University of Cairo. Detailed information will be given in class.

Week VII: 15th-18th

Tuesday 15th: Roundup before the midterm exam

Friday 18th: Midterm exam

Week VIII: 22nd-25th

Tuesday 22nd: Personality and environmental consciousness

reading to be announced in class

Tuesday 22nd, 6:30pm, Q-801: The Ecological Self in Relationship

Guest Lecture by [Paul Sebastian Ruppel](#)

[Gergen & Gergen, Narrative and the self as relationship.](#)

Friday 25th: Identity; what it is

[Hammack: Theoretical Foundations of Identity.](#)

[Assignment IV](#): Write a reflection paper about ecology and the self. APA Style, minimum 5 pages, include at least 3 external sources. Due date: Friday (November 1st) midnight.

Week IX: 29th

No class

NOVEMBER

Week X: 5th-8th

Tuesday 5th: The psychology of life stories

[McAdams, The psychology of life stories.](#)

[McAdams, The Psychological Self as Actor, Agent, and Author.](#)

Friday 8th: Exploring identity in Interviews

[Josselson, Interviewing for Qualitative Inquiry Ch 1.](#)

Group task with students from the American University of Cairo III: Conduct a life story interview.

Week XI: 15th

Friday 15th: no class

Week XII: 19th-22th

Tuesday 19th: Traditional personality concepts

[Adorno et al., The Authoritarian Personality, Ch 1a, 1b, 2.](#)

[McCrae & Costa, The five factor theory of personality.](#)

Friday 22nd: A Critique of Traditional Concepts

[Holzkamp, Personality: the function of a concept.](#)

Assignment V: Compare the personality concepts of Adorno et al. and Costa & McCrae. Think about alternative understandings of Personality based on Holzkamp's critique of the concept. APA Style, minimum 5 pages, include at least 3 external sources. Due Friday (29th) midnight.

Week XIII: 26th

Tuesday 26th: The social construction of personality I

[Gergen, Relational being Ch 3-5.](#)

Friday 29th: The social construction of personality II

[Gergen, Relational being Ch 3-5.](#)

DECEMBER

Week XIV: 3rd-6th

Tuesday 3rd: Personality and neoliberalism II

[Teo, Homo neoliberalus: From personality to forms of subjectivity.](#)

[Winston, Neoliberalism and IQ.](#)

Assignment VI: Reflect about the creation of the subject, personality and neoliberalism. APA Style, minimum 5 pages, include at least 3 external sources. Due Friday (6th) midnight.

Friday 6th: Roundup before the final

NOTE: This is a tentative course schedule, it is subject to modifications.

Textbooks

This course doesn't have any textbook.

Attendance Policy

ATTENDANCE: Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes.

ASSIGNMENTS: Written assignments must be uploaded to Blackboard before the deadline. Neither printed copies nor emailed versions will be accepted.

GROUP TASKS: Students are expected to actively participate in all classroom activities and discussions.

READINGS: Texts will be provided as pdfs on Blackboard and must be read ahead of class.

Grading Policy

Attendance and participation: 30%

Assignments: 30%

Exams: 20% (each)

Other

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Students are expected to act according to the principles of Academic Integrity. This includes a commitment to fairness, respect, honesty and appreciation of others' contributions. (For further information on academic integrity visit: [<https://www.aup.edu/academics/academic-and-career-resources/academic-resource-center/academic-integrity>])

PLAGIARISM “is the presentation of someone else's work as one's own. This includes the use of any ideas, words or data, in written, oral or electronic form, without properly attributing their source(s). It also includes the submission of purchased papers or papers borrowed from or written by other students or authors. The American University of Paris deplores cheating, lying, fraud, theft and other behaviors that show disrespect for the rights of others and diminish the value of your degree. All academic work submitted at AUP must be the product of the student's own reflection, study and research.” ([<https://www.aup.edu/academics/academic-and-career-resources/academic-resource-center/academic-integrity>])

SUPERVISION: Students are invited to talk to me or email me with any issues or questions they might have with respect to the class.