



PSY 230H1: Personality and Its Transformations

Lectures: Online, Asynchronous. Posted Monday and Wednesday by 2:00pm

Instructor and Teaching Assistant Information

Professor:

Amanda Sharples, Ph.D.
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Instructor Office hours:

By appointment. See course website
Online. Zoom link provided on course website (Wednesday between 1pm and 3pm). Personal meeting room: <https://utoronto.zoom.us/j/8493969802>. No Password.

Teaching Assistants: (Please contact the TA listed next to the first letter of your surname as noted below)

A-I: Kaitlin Derbyshire : k.derbyshire@mail.utoronto.ca
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S-Z: Elia Lam: elia.lam@mail.utoronto.ca
Office hours: by appointment

Course Description and Objective

What is
personality?

What determines
our personality?

Does our
personality
change?

Is our personality
stable or do we
respond to
situations?

In this course, we will examine theory and research in the area of personality psychology that begins to answer some of these important questions. There will be a focus on the following learning objectives:

Learning Objectives:

1. *Knowledge:* By the end of this course, you should be able to name and apply theories in the area of personality psychology. Moreover, you should understand key research methods used in the study of personality.
2. *Application:* By the end of this course, you should understand and be able to apply findings in personality psychology to your life and current events.
3. *Scientific Thinking:* By the end of this course, you should have a better understanding of common research methods used in psychology, and you should be able to think of ways to empirically examine research questions in the area of personality.
4. *Communication:* By the end of this course, you should have improved your ability to construct arguments and to communicate your thoughts verbally and in writing.
5. *Professional Development:* By the end of this course, you should have improved your time-management skills and ability to respond appropriately to constructive feedback.

Class Structure: Classes will be online and will consist of traditional lecture videos. Lectures will be

broken up into 3-5 shorter videos that you may go through at your own pace. Opportunities for synchronous activities will also be provided throughout the course. These are noted in the course schedule on the last page of this document. There will be two time options for each synchronous sessions to accommodate varying schedules. These will be noted on the course website after receiving feedback from students regarding availability.

Note about prerequisites: It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met *all* prerequisites listed in the Psychology section of the A&S Calendar for this course. If you lack any prerequisites you WILL BE REMOVED. No waivers will be granted.

This Document

This is the course syllabus and contains all the important details regarding this course; what you will learn, what you will need, how you will be evaluated, available resources, and the schedule for the course. The course syllabus is a contract between you and I, which means that we both agree to abide by its terms. At the beginning of the course, we will go through the syllabus together, make any changes we mutually agree on, and acknowledge our acceptance of its terms.

Course Resources

Required Readings:

Textbook: Link to course text available openly online (no cost): [Personality and Its Transformations | Noba \(nobaproject.com\)](https://nobaproject.com)

The chapters in the textbook are short compared to chapters in traditional textbooks. There will be required journal articles, podcasts, and videos. These will be available through links provided in the syllabus (podcasts) or through the library reading list on the course website (journal articles).

Optional readings and activities (not tested or evaluated) will also be posted on the Quercus website under each modules.

Quercus: All course materials will be made available on the Quercus website, including lecture slides, lecture videos, announcements, and supplementary materials. You are advised to regularly check the announcements section of the Quercus website because you are solely responsible for staying on top of all course announcements made through Quercus

Note about course materials: all lecture content, including recordings of the lecture, are the intellectual property of the professor. Sharing it online without permission is an academic offense.

Ongoing feedback: I've created a survey that students can fill out anonymously after each class to provide me with feedback on lectures. This gives you the opportunity to let me know if I am going through the material too quickly, if there is a particular concept you are really struggling with, if there is something that could be improved about the structure of each class, etc. The link to this survey is available on Quercus. I cannot promise that I will be able to touch on every concern expressed in the feedback surveys. I will be looking for common concerns being expressed by students.

How to get help with the course: The fastest way to get help with the course is to book a student hour with me. If you have a short question that can be answered via email, then please email myself or the TA. Before emailing, however, please check the course syllabus as most of the important information

about the course can be found there.

Sharing Course Materials: Lectures, slides, assignment instructions, course assessments, and rubrics are the intellectual property of the instructor. Students are free to use all lecture videos, slides, and other materials for their own use, however, they are NOT permitted to share any course material without the explicit permission of the instructor. Uploading course materials to the web or shared server is expressly prohibited. I do not want to discover that a student has put any of my materials into the public domain or has sold my materials. If I discover this has happened, I will contact the university and they will assist me in asserting my rights in these matters.

Course Evaluation

<i>Component</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Paper Draft	July 26th	1%
Feedback to Peers	August 2nd	4%
Midterm Assessment	July 22nd	27%
Final Paper and Reflection	August 5th	28%
Final Exam	During the final exam period	34%
Weekly Wellness Activities and Reflection	Weekly starting week of July 8th	5%
Study Participation	During the term	1%

Throughout the course there will be a combination of summative and formative forms of assessment. Summative forms of assessment are meant to test your knowledge of the content and see what you are learning in the course. These include The Midterm and Final Exam, as well as the final written paper. Formative assessments are meant to provide feedback to you so you may improve your work, and to provide feedback to me regarding how you are learning so I can make adjustments and provide clarification. These include submitting a paper draft, providing peer feedback, and participating on the Packback discussion board.

Weekly Wellness and Reflection Activities: Each week (for 5 weeks) starting the second week of the term, students will be asked to complete activities designed to help reduce stress and provide time for self-reflection. You will be asked to write a brief reflection after completing the activity each week (due by the end of the week - Sunday at 11:59pm). This may all be completed on Quercus and more details will be provided in lecture. You receive marks for completion only and will not be graded on the quality of the reflection though these will be checked to ensure some effort was made.

Study Participation:

1% of your grade will come from participating in a psychological study. This will give you the opportunity to learn more about how psychological research is conducted. Please see the instructions below:

1. Go to <https://utsg-ferberlab.sona-systems.com/>
2. Login a. Click on "UtorID Login". Login using your UTOR ID. b. Enter your U of T student number under "Student ID Number" c. Sign in by clicking "Request Account". This automatically creates an account for you tied to your UtorID. b. Select your course from the Course List Note: If you do not see your course on the list, then your course is not being recruited from and you cannot participate. Contact your course instructor. c. Agree to the Human Subjects and Privacy Policy
3. Complete the pre-screening.

4. Once you have logged in you will gain access to the Ferber Lab Participant Board, our available studies, and experimental slots. The experimental slots on the site will have instructions about what to do, and how to complete the experiment.
- 5.. Sign up for an experiment!
6. Complete the experiment at the scheduled time and location (online and in-person experiments are offered).

Final Paper: For this course, you will have to complete a final writing assignment. This will be a personality assessment that you will do on another individual. This person can be someone you know well, like a close friend or family member, or they can be a character from the media (e.g., a popular television show or book series). Please note that if you choose to analyze a friend or family member, you should give them a fictitious name, and if you choose to analyze a media character you want to make sure you have enough information about that character to provide an analysis of their personality. of this person's personality (e.g., social skills, altruism, aggression, etc.) using two of the approaches discussed in class. You should not just discuss each approach in isolation but rather, you should make connections across the approaches. Please go to the **Quercus website - Assignments - Final Paper** for full instructions and a video explaining the paper in depth. Please note the video is from another semester so the dates have changed - **go by the dates in this syllabus. Papers should be written in essay format and should be 5 pages long. These should be double-spaced, 12-point font.**

Draft: Before submitting the final paper, you will submit a draft. This will allow you to get feedback from your peers before submitting the final paper. If you submit this on time, you get 1%. There will be no extensions and you will not be able to get feedback from peers if this is not submitted on time. Drafts will be examined to ensure there was a reasonable effort put in. If there is not reasonable effort put in, you will not receive the full 1%.

Peer Feedback: After drafts are submitted, you will be randomly assigned 3 peers and you will need to read their papers and provide each of them with one piece of constructive feedback to help improve their final paper. More information on how to provide constructive feedback will be provided in class. There are no extensions available for this, so please plan ahead and make sure you have time to provide feedback. **Important: If you do not submit a draft you will not automatically be assigned peers and you need to contact me so that I can manually assign you peers. You need to do this within two days of the draft due date (by July 28th at 11:59pm).** Otherwise, you will not be able to provide feedback and you may receive 0 for this.

Final Paper: After receiving feedback from your peers, you will incorporate the feedback that you feel is useful in the final draft of your paper. You will also submit a brief reflection explaining why you chose to incorporate each piece of feedback, or not to, how you felt about the assignment, and what you learned from the assignment. This reflection should be about 1 page long (no more than 1 page), double-spaced, 12-point font. This should be submitted as a separate document with the final paper. Note: It is your responsibility to ensure both documents are submitted.

A few important details: For the analysis you submit, you should include citations for at least 2 papers published in peer-reviewed journals (we will discuss this in class). More details on these assignments will be provided in lecture.

Policy on Lateness: I understand life gets challenging and things may come up that make it difficult for you to complete your work on time. I am happy to support you and work with you so that you can successfully complete this course and have a positive learning experience. For the main course assignments (paper draft, peer feedback, and final paper), you do not need to contact me so long as your assessments are submitted within 24 hours of the due date. Following this, a 2% late penalty may apply. If you are concerned about meeting a deadline or need assistance making a plan for getting work completed, please contact me as soon as you can so we can work this out together. Please contact me in

advance to the due date unless this is not possible. Unfortunately, the 24-hour extension does not apply for the Midterm and Final exam. You can contact me as soon as possible if you think you are not able to write the midterm on the scheduled date. For the final exam, if you miss this you will have to petition to write a deferred exam.

Specific Medical Circumstances. If you become ill and it affects your ability to do your academic work, consult me right away. Normally, I will ask you for documentation in support of your specific medical circumstances. This documentation can be an Absence Declaration (via ACORN) or the University's Verification of Student Illness or Injury (VOI) form. The VOI indicates the impact and severity of the illness, while protecting your privacy about the details of the nature of the illness. If you cannot submit a VOI due to limits on terms of use, you can submit a different form (like a letter from a doctor), as long as it is an original document, and it contains the same information as the VOI (including dates, academic impact, practitioner's signature, phone and registration number). For more information on the VOI, please see <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>. For information on the Absence Declaration Tool for A&S students, please see <https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/absence>. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible

Midterm and Final Exam: There will be two timed assessments over the course of the semester. These will test your knowledge of content discussed in lecture and in the assigned readings and podcasts. Please check the reading and listening guides carefully to get a sense of what you might be asked about as some content you are tested on will be *only* from the readings or podcasts.

Midterm: This will be an online, timed test and will include a multiple-choice, fill in the blank, matching, and t/f style questions, as well as short and medium written response questions getting you to apply your knowledge and think critically about the course content. As this is an online assessment, it will be openbook and opennotes, but I strongly encourage you not to rely on your notes too much. The entire assessment will be timed. You may start it anytime within the 24 hour period (starting at 12:00am the day of) but once start, you will have a time limit of 2 hours to complete the assessment. These need to be completed online, but **I highly recommend saving your responses somewhere** (e.g., a word document for written responses) in case you have any issues with your internet access.

Final Exam: The final exam will be held during the final exam period and will **be in person**. Date, time and location will be provided online sometime in late July. This will also include fill in the blank, matching, and t/f style questions, as well as short and medium written response questions. This will **not** be openbook and will be cumulative, though the focus will be on content covered following the midterm. Please view the following link to get more information about final exams including exam conflicts and the process for deferring exams:

<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/faculty-registrar/final-exams>

Missed Assessments. If you miss a deadline for an assessment, please contact me. You have one week from the date to get in touch with me and declare your absence on ACORN.

Ensuring Transparency in Marking: Your final paper and online assessments will be marked by the TAs and I. Marking these types of assignments and tests can be very challenging and somewhat subjective (my perception of a good argument may differ slightly from the TAs'). In order to make this process as fair as possible, I will be creating a detailed rubric for myself and the TAs to use when grading the final paper. I will provide you with a copy of these rubrics at least one week before the assignment or test is due. For the test, you will receive feedback as to why you lost marks and may submit a regrade request if you feel the grade does not accurately reflect your understanding (see below).

Contesting your grade: Please carefully review and consider your feedback before contesting your grade for an assignment or test. Your course instructors and TAs work very hard to mark course assignments and exams as fairly as possible. If you have concerns about how an assignment was graded, you need to submit an official re-grade request form explaining why you think your assignment should be re-graded. This can be found on Quercus under “course materials.” You must send this to the person that graded your assignment (either myself or the TA) within 2 weeks of receiving your grade. We will review your request but reserve the right to remark the entire paper, which means you could lose marks in other sections.

If there has been a calculation error, please just let myself or the TA know and we will re-calculate your grade immediately.

Final grades: While I encourage you to focus on what you are learning in the course rather than on any particular grade you receive, I understand the importance of grades to students. There are times when a grade we obtain does not align with our goals (I have been there!). Grading is not a perfect process, but your final grade should be a fairly accurate representation of your performance in the course as it is calculated across multiple forms of assessment that range in difficulty. Moreover, you are given many opportunities throughout the course to seek help, to work on assessment related activities in class, and to contest grades if you feel they do not adequately reflect the quality of your work. I encourage you to be proactive and seek help throughout the course if there is a particular grade you are working towards. **I do not make changes to final grades** in the course for the reasons noted above and the fact that requests for final grade increases may lead to systemic biases.

Academic Resources

Accessibility Needs: It is very important to me that students with diverse learning needs feel supported in this course. There is no one-size-fits all approach to course design, so I do my best to build in accessible course policies. For example, all students have a 24 hour extension on assessments as noted above under policy on lateness, and you can also approach me if you need additional support. I understand that some students may have accessibility needs, but may not have the documentation to get specific accommodations. I hope that by having these broader policies those students feel supported in this course. I will do everything in my power to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to succeed in the course. If you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978 8060; accessibility.utoronto.ca.

Writing: Writing is an important communication skill that you will continue to develop over the course of your undergraduate degree. The university provides its students with a number of resources to help them develop this skill. For more information on campus writing centres and writing courses, please visit <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/>. More info on writing resources available at U of T will be posted on Quercus. I highly recommend that you make use of these. Moreover, I’m more than happy to give you feedback on your writing during my office hours, so feel free to stop by.

English Language Learners (ELL) Program: <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell> ELL offers a range of programs/workshops/resources to assist all Arts & Science students who wish to improve their English language skills (including reading, listening, speaking, and writing). Please see their website for more information about these resources.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: Academic misconduct will be taken very seriously in this class. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported through the official university

channels. Please refer to the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for more information about what constitutes academic misconduct and how academic misconduct will be dealt with: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf>

Mental Health and Well-being: As a student, you may experience challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation, financial concerns, family worries, and so forth. These factors may affect your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate fully in daily activities. All of us benefit from support and guidance during times of struggle; there is no shame in needing help or in asking for help. There are many helpful resources available through your college Registrar or through Student Life (studentlife.utoronto.ca and www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/feeling-distressed). An important part of the University experience is learning how and when to ask for help. Please take the time to inform yourself of available resources and do not hesitate to seek assistance from your Teaching Assistants or from me to help learn what supports are available.

Lecture Schedule and Assigned Readings

I will try to stick to this outline, but changes may be made. Changes will be announced on Quercus. M refers to module and L refers to lecture.

Lecture	Date	Topics	Readings	Notes
L1	July 3rd	Course Introduction	Course Syllabus	
M1 L2	July 8th	The Psychoanalytic Approach	Chapters (2 total) for this module	
M2 L3	July 10th	Developmental Approaches	Chapters (2 total) for this module Journal Article: Coard (2022).	Reflection 1 due by Sunday at 11:59pm
M3 L4	July 15th	The Trait Approach Part 1	Chapters (3 total) for this module	
M3 L5	July 17th	The Trait Approach Part 2	Podcast: Invisibilia, Episode: The Personality Myth, https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510307/invisibilia CW: contains some discussion of sexual assault Journal Article: Fleeson & Jayawickreme, 2015	Synchronous Review sessions Reflection 2 due by Sunday at 11:59pm
	July 22nd	Midterm Assessment		Online - Timed
M4 L6	July 24th	Biological and Evolutionary Approaches	Chapters for this module (2 total) Podcast: The Psychology Podcast, Episode: Cybernetics and the Science of Personality https://scottbarrykaufman.com/podcast/cybernetics-science-personality-colin-deyoung/	Synchronous Writing Workshops (July 24th) Reflection 3 due by Sunday at 11:59pm
M5 L7	July 29th	The Humanistic Approach and Positive	Chapters for this module (2 total) Journal Article: Kumar (2022)	Paper Draft Due July 26th

		Psychology		
M6 L8	July 31st	Behavioural and Social Learning Approaches	Chapters for this module (2 total) Podcast: Hidden Brain, Episode: Nature, Nurture, And Our Evolving Debates About Gender. https://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=669192536	Peer Feedback Due Friday August 2nd Reflection 4 due by Sunday at 11:59pm
M7 L9	August 5th	Cognitive Approaches	Chapter for this module (1 total) Podcast: On Wisdom, Episode 1: Wisdom vs Intelligence: https://onwisdompodcast.fireside.fm/episodes Reading: How to Act More Wisely Psychology Today	
M8 L10	August 7th	Personality and Culture	Chapter for this module (1 total) Podcast: The power of social norms—rules to make or break? - ABC Radio National	Final Paper Due Friday, August 9th Reflection 5 due by Sunday at 11:59pm
	August 12th - Optional	<i>Review and Exam Prep</i>	<i>Bring your questions!</i>	Synchronous Review Session