

Personality Psychology (PSY 420)
Winter, 2021
Prof. Lakey

Office hours are by appointment. Email me and we'll talk via phone, Facetime or Skype.

Email: lakeyb@gvsu.edu

Required reading:

McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T., Jr. (1987). Validation of the five-factor model of personality across instruments and observers. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 52*, 81-90.

Borkenau, P., Riemann, R., Angleitner, A., & Spinath, F. M. (2001). Genetic and environmental influences on observed personality: Evidence from the German Observational Study of Adult Twins. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 80*, 655-668.

Mogg, K., Bradley, B. P., Williams, R. and Mathews, A. (1993). Subliminal processing of emotional information in anxiety and depression. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 102*, 304-311.

Course overview:

Lecture will provide a broad overview of empirical research in personality. In the old days, personality courses focused on grand personality theories (*e.g.*, Freud, Sullivan) that attempt to explain everything. Although such theories are important historically, modern personality psychology is a strongly empirically oriented field. Decades ago, the field abandoned attempts to formulate or test grand theories of personality that are intended to explain most aspects of human behavior. Instead, the field focuses on documenting facts about personality. Theory is then built up from empirical facts. In this regard, personality psychology is now much more like experimental psychology than to Freud's personality theory. Theory is still important, but now personality psychologists develop limited theories, designed to explain specific empirically observed phenomena. This course will review this modern tradition of research in personality.

Journal article readings will follow the organization of lecture. Reading journal articles is designed to give the student a better sense of the nature of research in personality psychology.

Blackboard: All course material will be posted on Blackboard.

Course goals: To provide opportunities for detailed, introductory study of...

1. ...the scientific approach to personality.
2. ...key scientific findings in personality.
3. ...and how quantitative analysis advances our understanding of personality.

Course Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Identify and describe theories of personality and concepts.
2. Demonstrate ability to analyze and think critically about theories and research relating to personality.
3. Explain the scientific method as it applies to personality phenomena.
4. Apply theories of personality and concepts to experiences in everyday life.

Mode of Instruction:

A new, 50-minute lecture will be posted at noon on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, except for official university holidays. Topics covered each week are at the end of the syllabus.

Grading:

Exams: There will be three, multiple choice exams, consisting of approximately 50 questions each. All questions will be from lecture. Exams 2 and 3 are cumulative. These are open note tests. You will have three days to complete Exams 1 and 2. You will have five days to complete the final. Late exams will receive a 10% penalty.

Quizzes on lecture: There will be multiple-choice quizzes on each of the nine lectures. Quiz questions are in the same style as exam questions but are not identical. Typically, quizzes will be posted on the day that the lecture is finished. There will be a quiz on the syllabus. Quizzes are open note. Late quizzes will receive a 10% penalty. You will have three full days to finish each quiz.

Quizzes on the readings: There will be an open book, multiple-choice quiz on each of the readings. The quizzes will be posted after we have reached the appropriate section in lecture. You will have four full days to complete each quiz. Late quizzes will receive a 10% penalty.

Don't cheat. Your grade in this course should be based on your own work. You are not permitted to discuss with other students the exam or quiz questions, until both of you have completed the quiz or exam. Anyway, there is no need to cheat. Given that all the quizzes and exams are open book or open note, you will

be able to do well in this course if you simply do the work. Quiz and exam questions are the property of the Brian Lakey and so it is a violation of copyright law to copy or photograph them without my consent.

Grading: Your letter grade in the class will be based on your final course score, which will be the weighted average of your exam scores, your readings quiz scores and your lecture quiz scores. Quizzes on the readings will count for 15% of your grade, quizzes on lecture will count for 42.5%, and exams will count for 42.5%. Curving occurs after all exams, lecture quizzes and readings quizzes are completed. Exams will be curved by summing your total number of questions answered correctly across the three exams and dividing by the highest score achieved in the course, across the three exams. Lecture quizzes and readings quizzes will be curved in the same way. Of course, the sum of lecture quizzes will be divided by the highest score for lecture quizzes and the sum of readings quizzes will be divided by the highest score for readings quizzes.

Your final course score will be converted to letter grades according to the following schedule:

.90 – 1.00	A
.80 – .89	B
.70 - .79	C
.60 - .69	D
.59 and below	F

The upper two points within the range of a letter grade are assigned “+” and the lower two points within the range of a letter grade are assigned “-“. For example, an .88 would be assigned a B+ and a .81 would be assigned a B-.

Exam Dates:

Exam 1 Posted: Monday, February 22
 Exam 2 Posted: Monday, March 29
 Exam 3 (Final) Posted: Monday, April 26

Lecture Topics and Approximate Schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Lecture Topic</i>
Week 1	Overview of the course. Lecture 1: How do we know if personality characteristics are valid?
Week 2	Lecture 1: How do we know if personality characteristics are valid?
Week 3	Lecture 2: The structure of personality

Week 4	Lecture 2: The structure of personality. <i>Complete the online Personality Inventory:</i> http://www.personal.psu.edu/~j5j/IPIP/
Week 5	Lecture 3: To what extent is personality an objective property of the person?
Week 6	Lecture 4: How cross-situationally consistent is personality?
Week 7	Lecture 5: The interactional approach to personality.
Week 8	Lecture 5: The interactional approach to personality.
Week 9	Lecture 6: Genetic and environmental influences on personality.
Week 10	Lecture 7: Gene x environment interactions
Week 11	Lecture 8: Cognitive theory and mechanisms in personality
Week 12	Lecture 8: Cognitive theory and mechanisms in personality
Week 13	Lecture 9: Applying what we have learned to a new topic: Adult romantic attachment.
Week 14	Lecture 9: Applying what we have learned to a new topic: Adult romantic attachment.

This course is subject to the GVSU policies listed at <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>