

**Personality Theory (Psych 324) Section 001**

**Instructor:** Jeffrey Volkmann M.A.

**Location:** Science and Technology I 206

**Mon, Weds, Fri 12:30-1:20 pm**

**Office:** TBA

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**Office Hours:** Wednesday 11-12 or  
by appointment

**Required Texts:**

Feist, J., & Feist, G. J. (2006). *Theories of personality* (6th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

**Recommended Reading:**

Frankl, Viktor (2006). *Man's Search for Meaning*, Boston, Mass: Beacon Press

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on the major models of personality including Psychoanalytic, Neoanalytic, Learning, Dispositional, and Humanistic-Existential. During the term we will examine these models and approaches, the major theories representative of each, each theory's methods and research, and will explore the assumptions about human nature which underlie each perspective. We will examine how people like Freud, Jung, Maslow, and others reached their conclusions about personality. In addition, we will apply various theories in an analysis of an individual of your choosing.

**Assignments:**

**Thought Exercises:**

Although issues pertaining to how human personalities develop and function are of interest to everyone and each person can make a substantial contribution to our discussion based on his or her own unique perspective, considerable reflection and effort is often necessary to really understand the complex theoretical issues that have been raised in this domain of psychological thought. To facilitate our class discussion of various issues, you'll be asked to think about (and struggle with) an issue or question in advance and prepare a 1-2 page summary of your ideas and questions to bring to the next class meeting.

There will be 9 Thought Exercises assigned during the semester. Thought Exercises are to be type and double-spaced, with 1" margins on all sides of the paper. You will bring the completed Thought Exercise to class so that you can refer to it during our discussion of the topic. At the conclusion of our class discussion, you will turn in your Thought Exercise for me to review. **E-mailed Thought Exercises will not be accepted, nor will late papers. They must be brought with you to class every Monday and turned in at the end of the class period.**

Each Thought Exercise will be graded on a scale of 0-10 points, based on the extent to which your response indicates that you have thought seriously about the issue. For example, you will receive only 5 points if you turn in an exercise that shows only a superficial analysis of the issue. You will receive 0 points for the exercise if you did not prepare it prior to coming to class or if your response is irrelevant to the issue. Your lowest grade will be dropped.

**Video Analysis:** The week before the final presentations are due, a video will be shown in class. The class will then work together first in small groups, and then as a class, to analyze one

character from the movie. The assignment will be completed in class and be worth 20 points. This should help prepare you for the final project.

**Analysis Presentation:** The purpose of the analysis presentation is to provide you the opportunity to apply a major theorist from the major categories of personality theorists to a character of your choosing (this character could be from a book or movie. The character may be fictional or real). The presentation is worth 100 points and should be completed in a group. The presentation should last between 10 and 15 minutes. You are responsible for giving the instructor a one page outline of your presentation. Each presentation must include examples from the book and lecture to support your analysis. Also, include aspects of the character's personality or behavior that the theories do not adequately explain. Dates when the analysis presentation is due are listed on the syllabus. More will be explained in class.

**Exams:** There will be three exams in this course (not including the final exam). All exams will be weighted equally. The lowest exam grade will be dropped, thus a total of 2 exams will count toward your final grade in the course. Exams will primarily cover material since the previous exam. However, the final exam will be cumulative. Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, true-false and short answer/essay questions. You will be required to bring a scantron sheet (dark green) and two #2 pencils to each exam.

**Make-up Exam Policy:** There will be no make-up exams offered in this course. Instead, you will be permitted to drop your lowest exam grade of the four exams. Therefore, if you miss an exam for any reason, or perform poorly on an exam, you may simply drop that exam in lieu of completing a make-up exam. I WILL NOT entertain requests to allow you to make up an exam because you must miss it, but did poorly on a previous exam which you do not want to have count toward your final grade.

**One Final Exam will be given:** The Final exam will be cumulative and worth 200 points. It will be the same format as the prior tests. **No Make UP FOR THIS EXAM WILL BE GIVEN**

**There will be a total of 600 pts**

Thought Exercises: 10 points each (80)

Video Analyses (20) points

Group Project (100 points)

Exams (200 points) Lowest Dropped

Final Exam 200 points

|                                  |   |                                |                      |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| Week 1<br>8/28-8/30              | Introduction to Text and Syllabus   |                                | Chapter 1            |
| Week 2<br>9/1, 9/6,<br>9/8       | Psychodynamic Perspectives<br>Psychoanalysis (Freud)<br>Individual Psychology (Adler)     | Thought Exercise 1 due<br>9/1  | Chapter 2, Chapter 3 |
| Week 3<br>9/11,<br>9/13,<br>9/15 | Psychodynamic Theories<br>Analytical Psychology (Jung)<br>Object Relations Theory (Klein) | Thought Exercise 2 due<br>9/11 | Chapter 4, Chapter 5 |
| Week 4<br>9/18,                  | Psychodynamic<br>Horney Psychoanalytic Social   | Thought Exercise 3 due<br>9/18 | Chapter 6, Chapter 8 |

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|--|---|---------------------------------|--|
| 9/20,<br>9/22                              | Theory<br>Sullivan: Interpersonal Theory  |                                 |  |
| 9/25                                       | EXAM 1  |                                 |  |
| Week 5<br>9/27,<br>9/29,<br>10/02          | Psychodynamic<br>Fromm: Humanistic<br>Psychoanalysis<br>Psychodynamic<br>Erickson: Post Freudian Theory                         | Thought Exercise 4 due<br>9/27  | Chapter 7, Chapter 9<br>5                                  |
| Week 6<br>10/4<br>10/6<br>10/10            | Part III<br>Humanistic<br>Maslow: Holistic Dynamic<br>Theory<br>Humanistic<br>Rogers: Person Centered Theory                    | Thought Exercise 5 due<br>10/4  | Chapter 10, Chapter<br>11,                                 |
| Week 7<br>10/11<br>10/13<br>10/16          | Existential Theory<br>May/Frankl Existential Theory   | Thought Exercise 6 due<br>10/11 | Chapter 12; Frankl<br>Man's Search for<br>Ultimate Meaning |
| 10/18                                      | EXAM 2  |                                 |  |
| Week 8<br>10/20<br>10/23<br>10/25<br>10/27 | Part IV Dispositional Theory<br>Allport Psychology of the<br>Individual<br>Eysenck McCrae, and Costa Trait<br>and Factor Theory | Thought Exercise 7 due<br>10/20 | Chapter 13,<br>Chapter 14                                  |
| 10/30<br>11/01<br>11/03                    | Part V<br>Learning Theories<br>Skinner Behavioral Analysis<br>Bandura Social Cognitive  | Thought Exercise 8 due<br>10/30 | Chapter  |
| 11/06<br>11/08<br>11/10                    | Rotter and Mischel: Cognitive<br>Social Learning Theory<br>Kelly: Psychology of Personal<br>Constructs                          | Thought Exercise 9 due<br>11/06 | Williams Chapter 9;<br>Gladwell 100-147                    |
| 11/13                                      | Exam III  |                                 |  |
| 11/15<br>11/17<br>11/20                    | Catch up/ Prepare For Final<br>project Demonstration in Class/<br>Personality Disorders   |                                 |  |
| 11/22-<br>11/26<br>Break                   |   |                                 |  |
| 11/27<br>11/29<br>12/1                     | Video Analyses  |                                 |  |
| 12/4<br>12/6                               |   |                                 | Final Presentations  |

|       |  |  |                              |
|-------|--|--|------------------------------|
| 12/8  |  |  |                              |
| 12/18 |  |  | <b>9:00-10:30 Final Exam</b> |

**Extra Credit:** You may participate in psychology research projects for up to 5 hours of extra credit. Each hour will be worth 1 pt.

To sign up for an experiment, you must follow the following instructions:

1. log on to [www.experimetrix.com/gmu](http://www.experimetrix.com/gmu) and click on new user link
2. enter all the required information
  - a. don't include dashes in your SSN
  - b. use your GMU e-mail account (your password will be sent to this account). If you do not know your GMU e-mail account, log on to <http://www.gmu.edu/mlnavbar/finder/index.html> and enter your last name to find your GMU e-mail account
3. click on register

Your login and password will be sent to your GMU e-mail account. You will need to log on to the site to activate your account within 3 days or else you will need to re-register. Click 'log in' to access your account. You will need to select your course by clicking on the 'Edit your course Selection link' (Psyc 324 001). You can also edit your information (change your password, add an additional e-mail account, etc.).

**University Honor Code Statement:**

The University has established a clear Honor Code. The bottom line is: do NOT cheat, do NOT plagiarize, do NOT lie and do NOT steal. Any academic dishonesty including plagiarism will result in severe consequences. Under no circumstances are students to collectively write papers or complete homework assignments. If you have questions about any aspect of proper conduct, please ask me.

**Special Needs:** I will do all I can to accommodate students with special needs. "If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office."

**The add and drop deadlines for classes.**

**Last day to add – Sept 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Last day to drop – Sept 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Technology Use:** Most lectures will be delivered using Power Point. The majority of communication will take place through campus email and WebCT. Please check it regularly.

You can access Webct by using the following link

<https://webct41.gmu.edu/webct/public/home.pl>.

**Grades:**

| Grade | Percentage | Grade | Percentage | Grade | Percentage | Grade | Percentage |
|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|------------|
| A+    | 97 – 100   | B+    | 87 – 89.9  | C+    | 77 – 79.9  | D+    | 67 – 69.9  |
| A     | 93 – 96.9  | B     | 83 – 86.9  | C     | 73 – 76.9  | D     | 63 – 66.9  |
| A-    | 90 – 92.9  | B-    | 80 – 82.9  | C-    | 70 – 72.9  | D-    | 60 – 62.9  |
|       |            |       |            |       |            | F     | 0 – 59.9   |

*The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus.*