



PSY 230H1: Personality and Its Transformations
Lectures: Asynchronous. Mondays by the end of the day
Synchronous Activities: See lecture schedule. Times TBD

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

Teaching Assistants:

Last names A – H : Leo Huang, leorh.huang@mail.utoronto.ca
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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 understand 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 comprised of lecture videos and synchronous group discussions

Asynchronous Lectures: Lectures will be broken down into short (10-30 minute) videos. These will be posted weekly by the end of the day Monday starting September 13. Please try to watch each lecture before the next lecture is posted so that you do not fall behind. I chose to make lectures asynchronous as I recognize that many students will struggle to attend a synchronous lecture due to various stressors including work, issues with internet connectivity, and being in a different time-zone. Moreover, issues with internet connectivity could disrupt the lectures and reduce clarity.

Synchronous Discussions: While the lectures are asynchronous, I also understand the importance of human connection and the desire to discuss course content with myself and other students. As such, there will be synchronous discussions scheduled every few lectures, though attendance at these sessions is not mandatory. The weeks that these sessions will occur can be found on the lecture schedule. These will be held via zoom and links will be provided on the course website. There will be multiple sessions each week, and you may attend the session that is most convenient. I still need to determine the times. Please see course welcome video on Quercus website for more details

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.

Course Resources

Required Readings:

Textbook: Link to course text available openly online (no cost): <http://noba.to/xr5gzdus> Link to site where you can order a printed version of the text for a small fee, if you prefer this (anticipate this taking 10-15 days):

<https://www.lulu.com/en/us/shop/noba-project/personality-and-its-transformationssharples/paperback/product-ejdr2k.html> (Links to an external site.)

There will be required journal articles, podcasts, and videos. These will be available through links provided in the syllabus and under the modules (podcasts and videos) or through the library course reserves (journal articles).

We will also be using an online platform called packback for this course and there is a small fee for this (\$29 but may be less if you've used it before). Well I try to keep my course free of additional costs, I think this small fee will be worth it for how this tool will add to your learning and help create a sense of community in this online course.

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 offence.

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.

Course Evaluation

<i>Component</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Weight</i>
Paper Draft	Nov 3	1%
Feedback to Peers	Nov 15	4%
Assessment 1	Oct 12-15	26%
Final Paper and Reflection	Nov 24	25%
Final Assessment	During final exam period	26%
Weekly Reflections	Weekly Sept-Oct	3%
PackBack Discussions	Throughout the semester	15%

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 tests and the final assessment, 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. These include peer feedback and weekly reflections.

Reflections: Throughout the first part of the term, you will be asked to think about different behaviours you could engage in and how these may change your personality. You will be asked to pick three behaviours each week (starting the week of September 20th) and try to implement them (you do not have to - just try to the best of your ability). At the end of each week over the course of 5 weeks, you will complete a brief reflection (online survey with 4-5 questions). This is marked for completion only and you will receive full marks so long as there is some effort to reflect. This pedagogical activity is meant to help you better understand how you can apply the course content to your own life.

Packback: Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. Packback Questions is an online community where you can be fearlessly curious and ask open-ended questions to build on top of what we are covering in class and relate topics to real-world applications.

Packback Requirements: Your participation on Packback will count toward 15% of your overall course grade.

There will be a Weekly Sunday at 11:59PM EST deadline for submissions (you may do this over the week instead of on the weekend). In order to receive full credit, you should submit the following per each deadline period:

1. An open-ended Question every week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 50.
2. Responses every week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 50.

Half credit will be provided for questions and responses that do not meet the minimum curiosity score.

How to Register on Packback: An email invitation will be sent to you from help@packback.co prompting you to finish registration. If you don't receive an email (be sure to check your spam), you may register by following the instructions below

1. Create an account by navigating to <https://questions.packback.ca> and clicking "Sign up for an Account". Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can log in with your credentials.
2. Then enter our class community's lookup key into the "Looking to join a community you don't see here?" section in Packback at the bottom of the homepage.

Community Lookup Key: 69004e3e-2b02-48d9-a8c6-0d2b4616522a

3. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

Packback may require a paid subscription. Refer to www.packback.co/product/pricing for more information. Although I try to keep courses low cost, this is a small fee (\$29) and I believe it is worth it for the feedback you are able to get through packback. There are no other costs to this course.

How to Get Help from the Packback Team: If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at help.packback.co. If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at help@packback.co

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions

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. **Papers should be written in essay format and should be 3-4 pages long (no more than 4 pages long - we will stop reading). 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 between July 28th and August 3rd 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 Nov 5th 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 chose 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 the assignment video, which will be posted under the outline and the final paper.

Policy on Lateness: The Covid 19 pandemic has impacted all of our lives in various ways, and I understand that some of you may be facing many additional stressors as a result of this. I understand this and 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 all course assignments, you do not need to contact me so long as your assignment is 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.

Midterm and Final Assessment: There will be two assessments over the course of the semester. Both of these will be take-home tests and will include a short timed multiple choice component, and untimed short and medium response questions getting you to apply your knowledge and think critically about the course content. The final assessment will be held during the final exam period will be comprised of a timed multiple choice component and of short and medium answer questions. The final assessment will not be cumulative. Both assessments should not take any longer than 2-3 hours to complete, so please put that much time aside.

Missed Assessments. If you miss a deadline for a test, please contact me right away so we can work out a make-up test or possibly re-weight your grade.

Ensuring Transparency in Marking: Your final paper and take-home 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 these assignments and tests. I will provide you with a copy of these rubrics at least one week before the assignment or test is due.

Academic Resources

Accessibility Needs: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course, and we will do everything in our 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. This is a WIT course and as such there is a lot of focus on writing. 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.

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>

Resources for Distressed Students: 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

Lecture	Date	Topics	Readings	Notes
L1	Sept 13	Course Introduction	Chap for this module (this content will not be tested directly nor will the lecture 1 content)	
L2	Sept 20	The Psychoanalytic Approach	Chap for this module	
L3	Sept 27	Developmental Approaches	Chap for this module	
L4	Oct 4	The Trait Approach Part 1	Chaps for this module	Synchronous Review Sessions.
	Oct 12-15	<i>Assessment 1</i>		Take-home
L5	Oct 18	The Trait Approach Part 2	Podcast: Invisibilia, Episode: The Personality Myth, https://www.npr.org/podcasts/510307/invisibilia <i>CW:</i> contains some discussion of sexual assault and violence.	
L5	Oct 25	Biological and Evolutionary Approaches	Chaps for this module	
L6	Nov 1	The Humanistic Approach and Positive Psychology	Chaps for this module	
	Nov 5	<i>No Lecture</i>	<i>Reading week</i>	
L7	Nov 15	Behavioural and Social Learning Approaches	Chaps for this module Podcast: Hidden Brain, Episode: Nature, Nurture, And Our Evolving Debates About Gender. https://www.npr.org/templates/transcript/transcript.php?storyId=669192536	Synchronous writing workshops.
L8	Nov 22	Cognitive Approaches	Chap for this module Podcast: On Wisdom, Episode 1: Wisdom vs Intelligence: https://onwisdompodcast.fireside.fm/episodes	
L9	Nov 29	Personality and Culture	Journal Article: Markus & Kitayama (1991)	
	Dec 6-10	<i>Review and Assessment Prep</i>	<i>Bring your questions!</i>	Synchronous Review Sessions.

