

PSY230H1 S

Personality and Its Transformations

Winter 2024 Syllabus

Course Meetings

PSY230H1 S

Section	Day & Time	Delivery Mode & Location
LEC0101	Tuesday, 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	In Person: AH 400
	Thursday, 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	In Person: AH 400

Refer to ACORN for the most up-to-date information about the location of the course meetings.

Recordings of all lectures will be posted within 24 hours on the course Quercus page

Course Contacts

Instructor: Dr. William Ryan

Email: ws.ryan@utoronto.ca

Office Hours and Location: In Sidney Smith 4029 and on Gathertown (<https://app.gather.town/app/8ETR7Z5lq4aUir6j/WillsOffice>) times coming soon!

Additional Notes: Please see the "Asking Questions and Getting Help" Sections below for more info on the best way to get timely responses to different types of questions. Pronouns: he/him

Teaching Assistant: Reem Ayad

Email: reemayad_93@hotmail.com

Office Hours and Location: Available via email, or by appointment as needed

Additional Notes: If your surname starts with a letter between A and J (inclusive) contact this TA

Teaching Assistant: Hannah Gans

Email: hannah.gans@mail.utoronto.ca

Office Hours and Location: Available via email, or by appointment as needed

Additional Notes: If your surname starts with a letter between K and P (inclusive) contact this TA

Teaching Assistant: Louisa You

Email: louisa.you@mail.utoronto.ca

Office Hours and Location: Available via email, or by appointment as needed

Additional Notes: If your surname starts with a letter between R and Z (inclusive) contact this TA

Course Overview

Theory and research in personality structure and dynamics: the interaction of cultural and biological factors in the development and expression of individual differences.

Course Description

In what ways do people differ from one another and why? This course aims to provide students with an overview of research and theory in personality psychology. We will cover both classic and contemporary perspectives on personality including trait, psychoanalytic, evolutionary, humanistic, and narrative perspectives. We will broadly address the following questions:

1. What is personality?
2. How do researchers measure personality?
3. What factors determine and/or shape our personality?
4. How reliable is the association between personality and behaviour?
5. How stable is personality across time and situations?

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course you should be able to:

1. Understand foundational concepts and research methods in personality psychology.
2. Understand and apply various approaches to the study of individual differences in personality (e.g., trait, psychoanalytic, humanistic, narrative).
3. Critically evaluate research and theory on personality and its relation to key outcomes.
4. Apply research and theory on personality to current events and your own life.

Prerequisites: PSY100H1/ PSY100Y5/ PSYA02H3/ COG250Y1

Corequisites: None

Exclusions: PSY230H5/ PSYB30H3

Recommended Preparation: None

Credit Value: 0.5

Course Materials

Required Textbook: The required text for this course is *The Personality Puzzle* (8th edition) by David C. Funder. The e-book and print versions are available through the university bookstore and a .pdf version can also be found very affordably online by doing a Google search with the italicized words in this paragraph as your search terms.

Other Required Readings: In some cases, I have assigned empirical and review articles or podcasts and popular press articles instead of the textbook. These will be available on the course page on Quercus/Canvas under the “library course reserves” tab and/or posted directly to our course Quercus page.

Lecture Slides: Slides presented in lecture will be uploaded in PDF format to Quercus *just prior* to each lecture. The reason for not posting slides sooner is that I like to be able to update and

edit the lectures right up until the time of that lecture. This helps keep me and the lectures fresh and interesting!

Marking Scheme

Assessment	Percent	Details	Due Date
Class Survey	1%		2024-01-18
Pre-Registration	12%		2024-02-15
Midterm 1	17%		2024-02-06
Midterm 2	17%		2024-03-19
Final Paper	25%		2024-04-02
In-Person Final Exam	28%		Final Exam Period

Your grade in this course will be based on your performance on three tests (two midterm tests and a final exam) and a multi-part assignment culminating in a final paper. Details regarding each assignment are provided in the sections below.

All assignments are due before class starts (11:30 am) on the date noted.

Personality Assignment (38% Total)

In this assignment, you will have the opportunity to apply your knowledge of personality psychology by developing and testing a hypothesis. This assignment will help you understand the relationship between personality variables and various outcomes while also familiarizing you with the process of hypothesis testing and interpretation.

1. **Survey Participation (1% of course grade):** Complete an anonymous class survey on personality variables and outcomes. This will serve as your class dataset on which we will test our hypotheses.
2. **Pre-Registration (12% of course grade):** Develop a correlational hypothesis that predicts a relationship between two specific variables: one personality variable, and one behaviour/attitude/demographic/other variable. "Pre-register" your hypothesis by submitting it with a brief explanation of why you made this prediction on Quercus.
3. **Hypothesis Testing and Results:** After pre-registrations are submitted, the instructor will test all student hypotheses using our class survey data and share results with the class. You will NOT be accessing or analyzing the data directly. You will report the results relevant to your hypothesis in your final paper.
4. **Final Paper (25%):** Write a 3-4 page paper. In addition to stating your hypothesis and results, your paper will also include an introduction summarizing theory and research relevant to your hypothesis and a discussion section in which you interpret your results.

Midterms & Final Assessments (62% Total)

There will be three tests in this course: Two midterm tests (worth 17% of course grade each) and a final exam (28% of course grade).

- **Location & Timing:** All tests and exams will take place *in person*. The midterms will be held during class time, locations TBA (I am booking additional space, so we don't all

have to cram into one classroom). The final exam will be held over the exam period and scheduled by A&S. They will announce the date, time, and location mid-semester.

- **Structure & Content:** All tests will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Tests will be based on the lectures and required readings. You will be responsible for material covered in both the lectures and the required readings. Questions will require knowledge not just of specific content, but ability to critically about course themes, and connect topics in the course. Each midterm test will focus on the new material covered since the last test, however since this material does build on itself, Midterm 2 is technically cumulative. The final exam is cumulative, integrating across the course while also including questions specifically addressing new content since Midterm 2. More details will be posted on Quercus and discussed in class.
- **Review Sessions:** We will hold Question & Answer review sessions during the class period prior to each midterm. The final exam review session will be held outside of class at a time and date TBA. These review sessions will be question and answer based so come prepared with questions to aid your studying. Sessions will be recorded for those who cannot attend. More details will be provided prior to each assessment.

Late Assessment Submissions Policy

A deduction of 5% will occur for each day late. See late/missed assignments policy below.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Lecture Topic	Required Readings	Optional Reading	Assignments Due
1	Tues Jan 9th	1. What is Personality Psychology?	Syllabus & Chapter 1	Ologies Podcast episode: Personality Psychology with Simine Vizire	
	Thurs Jan 11th	2. Methods in Personality: Types of Data & Studies	Chapter 2		
2	Tues Jan 16th	3. What is Personality? Person vs. Situation	Chapter 4		
	Thurs Jan 18th	4. Best Practices in Personality Research	Chapter 3 (pg. 85-102 Evaluating Assessment & Research & Ethical Issues Sections)		Class Survey Due before class starts

3	Tues Jan 23rd	5. Personality Assessment	Chapter 3 (Personality Tests, pgs. 67-85)		
	Thurs Jan 25th	6. Trait Approaches I: Single vs. Many Trait Approaches	Chapter 6 (First 3 sections: Four Ways to Study Personality, Single Trait Approach, Many Trait Approach)		
4	Tues Jan 30th	7. Trait Approaches II: Essential Traits & Typologies	Chapter 6 (The Essential Trait Approach & Typologies sections); Goldberg (2019) NYT Article		
	Thurs Feb 1	8. Review & Pets as example of trait approach			
5	Tues Feb 6th	Midterm 1			
	Thurs Feb 8th	9. Personality Judgement	Chapter 5 (147-170 up to Realistic Accuracy Model section)		
6	Tues Feb 13th	10. Personality Development & Change	Chapter 7; All in the mind podcast episode: Can you change your personality?		
	Thurs Feb 15th	11. Personality Neuroscience	Chapter 8 (Last two sections- The Big 5 & the Brain and Biology: Cause & Effect)	Chapter 8 (Anatomy and Biochemistry of Personality Sections)	Preregistered Hypotheses due
7	Tues Feb 20th	READING WEEK			
	Thurs Feb				

	22nd				
8	Tues Feb 27th	12. The inheritance of personality	Chapter 9 (All except 5 Stress Tests for Evolutionary Psychology section)	Chapter 9 (5 Stress Tests for Evolutionary Psychology section)	
	Thurs Feb 29th	13. Culture	Chapter 13		
9	Tues March 5th	14. Psychoanalytic approaches	Chapter 10		
	Thurs March 7th	15. Neo-psychoanalytic approaches I	Chapter 11		
10	Tues March 12th	16. Neo-psychoanalytic approaches II & Attachment	Fraley (2023) Attachment through the life course.	Chapter 16 Love & Attachment (pg 599-605)	
	Thurs March 14th	17. Review & Behaviourist & Social Learning Approaches	Chapter 14 (Behaviourism & Social Learning Sections only)		
11	Tues March 19th	Midterm 2			
	Thurs March 21st	18. Existential & Humanistic Personality Psychology	Chapter 12 (First Four sections, up to (but not including) Positive Psychology)		
12	Tues March 26th	19. Motivation & Goals	Chapter 14 (Motivation Section Only)		
	Thurs March 28th	20. The Self I	Chapter 15		
13	Tues	21. The Self II &	McAdams &	Big Thing	Final Paper Due

	April 2nd	Narrative Approaches	McLean (2013) Article	Podcast. Stories: How humanity makes its meaning	
	Thurs April 4th	22. Return to Big Questions	Chapter 18	Return to (from 1st lecture): Ologies Podcast episode: Personality Psychology with Simine Vizire	
	TBD	Final Exam (during final exam period)			

Policies & Statements

Land Acknowledgement & Statement of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusivity

I wish to acknowledge and honour the history of this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years, it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land. [Learn more about the acknowledgement of traditional land in the University of Toronto.](#)

I am committed to creating a learning environment for my students, where your diverse perspectives and identities are respected and represented. I intend for this course to respect and promote diversity, equity, and human rights and to include multiple perspectives and critiques of classic research and theory. I am always open to and actively looking for ways to improve my courses and myself, especially in relation to principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Your suggestions and critical feedback are therefore encouraged and appreciated! You can provide this feedback in office hours, via email, or anonymously via the course surveys that will be conducted at the midpoint and end of the course.

Quercus

We will be using Quercus/Canvas (q.utoronto.ca) as a primary means of (1) accessing and submitting course assignments, (2) communicating announcements, and (3) posting/tracking grades*. A current version of the syllabus and other relevant course resources will also be posted. Please make sure you check Quercus regularly for important announcements and course information.

*Grades posted are for your information only, so you can view and track your progress through the course. No grades are considered official, until they have been formally approved and posted on ACORN at the end of the course.

Late/Missed Assignments

Assignments handed in late will incur a 5% deduction in points for EACH day that they are late. See sections below for policies on accommodations related to illness, personal or family emergencies, accessibility needs, and religious observances. Assignments not turned in will receive a 0.

The 48 Hour Late Ticket: Each student gets one 48-hour late ticket good for (almost) any assignment*. To use this late ticket, all you have to do is comment "Late ticket" in the comments box on your late submission. You do NOT need to seek permission to use your late ticket or let the TA or I know. We will keep track of who uses their late tickets on each assignment. Although Quercus may automatically flag your assignment as late (it doesn't know you are using your ticket), no points will be deducted and it will be treated as on time.

*Note: This ticket may NOT be used for tests or the exam.

Missed Tests & Exams

As a rule, makeup tests are not given. If you miss a midterm test, you must submit documentation that demonstrates your inability to complete that exam (i.e., the ACORN illness self-declaration tool or Verification of Illness) and let Will/Dr. Ryan know within 7 calendar days of the due date of the missed test. In these cases, the weight of the midterm assessment will be added to the final exam. If you miss the final exam, you must get in touch with your College Registrar as soon as possible to work out a plan.

Grade Disputes: The 24/14 Policy

You must wait for at least 24 hours following the return of an assignment before bringing a grade concern to me; use this time to reflect upon your performance and grade (and give your professor and TAs a chance to breath after posting the grades). If, after review, you are still concerned about the grading of a particular item or assignment, you may submit a Regrade Request Form detailing your concern. This form will be made available on Quercus and will be due within 14 business days of the return of the assignment/assessment (the specific date will be specified for each returned submission). Regrade requests after this deadline will not be considered. If there is a mistake in the grading, we need to address that in a timely manner. For midterm test regrade requests, you must attend a midterm test viewing session to see your test before requesting a regrade (so you can determine whether there is a mistake to be regraded). Grade disputes are not to be directed to your TAs. Only reasonable and well-justified concerns will be considered, and all decisions are final. Note that in agreeing to resubmit your work for remarking, you are agreeing to a re-evaluation of the entirety of your work; your grade may go up, go down, or stay the same. Regrade requests that are based on proximity to a desired grades will not be considered.

On the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Gen AI) Tools

Gen AI tools (such as ChatGPT) should not be used to generate your entire assignment submissions, though they can be helpful tools. If you choose to use generative artificial intelligence tools to assist you in the assignments in this course, this use MUST be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used (e.g., include your prompts), and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work. These tools can be most helpful in improving your writing and the clear expression of your ideas (rather than trying to generate complete content, which is unlikely to meet the standards of the assignments).

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources. For example, to learn more about how to cite and use source material appropriately and for other writing support, see the U of T writing support website at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca>. Consult the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for a complete outline of the University's policy and expectations. For more information, please see [A&S Student Academic Integrity \(https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity\)](https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academic-advising-and-support/student-academic-integrity) and the [University of Toronto Website on Academic Integrity \(https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca\)](https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca).

Although we will be using a plagiarism detection tool (Ouriginal) in this course, please note that I (Will/Dr. Ryan) understand that this is an imperfect tool and will always do additional investigation before interpreting a specific "plagiarism detection score". Sometimes the scores on this are inflated for reasons other than plagiarism (e.g., building on a first draft, including common references or assignment instructions) and I will always take this into consideration and will never rely solely on this automatic analysis in registering an academic integrity concern. I am also aware that there are many ways to prevent these programs from detecting plagiarism, artificially reducing the score. Again, this is but one tool I use in assessing the originality of student writing.

Plagiarism Detection Tool

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Accommodation for Illness & Personal & Family Emergencies

If you become ill or face a personal or family emergency that negatively impacts your ability to do your academic work, please consult me right away (over email or in office hours) so we can work out a plan that best supports your needs. Indeed, I am here to support you and will make accommodations where reasonable, possible, and in fairness to other students.

In order to receive accommodations (e.g., extension, midterm re-weight) documentation is required. You will need to complete one of the following:

1. the ACORN absence declaration form (<https://registrar.utoronto.ca/policies-and-guidelines/absence-declaration/>). The ACORN absence declaration tool can be used for medical emergencies as well as personal and family emergencies whereas the VOI is for medical absences only. Please note that as of Fall 2023, the University is allowing students to use the ACORN absence declaration tool only *once per term* and for a period of up to 7 days.
2. the Verification of Illness (VOI) form (<http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php>). This form may be used for any illness or medically-related absences.
3. Documentation from a medical professional that contains the same information as the Verification of Illness form.

More information on the current Faculty of Arts & Science Policy is available here:

<https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/academics/student-absences>.

Please note, that you do NOT need to divulge specifics of your situation to me, just the duration of the absence and the support or accommodation requested.

Depending on your circumstances it may also be a good idea to speak with an advisor in your College Registrar's office; they can support you in requesting extensions or accommodations, and importantly, connect you with other resources on campus for help with many situations and concerns. If you get a concussion, break your hand, or suffer some other acute injury, you should register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible.

Students with Disabilities or Accommodation Requirements

Students with diverse learning needs are welcome in this course. If you have an acute or ongoing disability issue or accommodation need, you should register with Accessibility Services (AS) at the beginning of the academic year by visiting <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/accessibility-services/>. Without registration, you will not be able to verify your situation with your instructors, and instructors will not be advised about your accommodation needs. AS will assess your situation, develop an accommodation plan with you, and support you in requesting accommodation for your course work. Remember that the process of accommodation is private; AS will not share details of your needs or condition with any instructor, and your instructors will not reveal that you are registered with AS.

Religious Accommodations

As a student at the University of Toronto, you are part of a diverse community that welcomes and includes students and faculty from a wide range of cultural and religious traditions. For my

part, I will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations, or other compulsory activities on religious holy days not captured by statutory holidays. Further to University Policy, if you anticipate being absent from class or missing a major course activity (such as a test or in-class assignment) due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice (at least two to three weeks), so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

Cell Phones and Laptop Usage

Technology can support student learning, but it can also become a distraction. Research indicates that multi-tasking during class time can have a negative impact on learning. Out of respect for your fellow students in this class, please refrain from using laptops or mobile phones for purposes unrelated to the class. Do not display any material on a laptop which may be distracting or offensive to your fellow students.

Video Recording and Sharing (Download Permissible; Re-use Prohibited)

This course, including your participation, will be recorded on video and will be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session.

Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other sources depending on the specific facts of each situation and are protected by copyright. In this course, you are permitted to download session videos and materials for your own academic use, but you should not copy, share, or use them for any other purpose without the explicit permission of the instructor.

For questions about the recording and use of videos in which you appear, please contact your instructor.

Harassment/Discrimination

The University of Toronto is a richly diverse community and as such is committed to providing an environment free of any form of harassment, misconduct, or discrimination. In this course, I seek to foster a civil, respectful, and open-minded climate in which we can all work together to develop a better understanding of key questions and debates through meaningful dialogue. As such, I expect all involved with this course to refrain from actions or behaviours that intimidate, humiliate, or demean persons or groups or that undermine their security or self-esteem based on traits related to race, religion, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital status, family status, disability, receipt of public assistance, record of offences, or any other identity category.

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 emergencies, or other crises. 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 resources for every situation and every level of stress- from the typical stress of university life to coping with severe crises. These resources are available through your College Registrar or through Student Life (<http://studentlife.utoronto.ca> and <http://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.

Additional Content

Asking Questions & Getting Help

There are several options for getting your questions answered. You should feel free to use any of these options.

1. **Questions during lecture.** If you are attending the lecture in person, you will be able to ask clarifying questions at various points throughout lecture. I will not be able answer questions before the lecture as I am setting up the PowerPoint and preparing to start class. I may be able to answer a few individual questions after lecture as time allows, but this should not be your primary mode of question-asking.
2. **Office Hours with Will/Dr. Ryan**
 - **Online drop-in hours TBA** on Gathertown. Link: <https://app.gather.town/app/8ETR7Z5lq4aUir6j/WillsOffice>
 - In-person drop-in hours **TBA** pm in Sid Smith 4029
 - If you cannot make any of these times, you may email Will/Dr. Ryan for an appointment.
3. **Discussion Board.** If you have questions about content and/or assignments, you can post these on the general discussion board on Quercus. Will/Dr. Ryan and the TAs will answer questions there and other students can provide answers as well. This is a great place to ask questions that other students may have as well.
4. **Emails** should be reserved for idiosyncratic or personal questions that can not be addressed via the above options. This is not because your TAs and I don't care about you, but because with so many students this simply isn't an efficient or effective way to provide support to all our students.
 - Any questions about course content, assignments, or policy should be addressed to your TA. Your surname (last name) determines which TA you should be emailing.

Surname	TA	Email
A - J	Reem Ayad	reemayad_93@hotmail.com
K- P	Hannah Gans	hannah.gans@mail.utoronto.ca
R - Z	Louisa Yu	louisa.you@mail.utoronto.ca

- Personal questions (such as those about accessibility accommodations) can come directly to me (Dr. Ryan/Will).
- The TAs and I will do our best to reply to all emails within two business days.
- Before emailing, please check to make sure the information you are seeking is not already available on Quercus.
- Email is best for quick questions that are specific to you, while content or other questions that may be shared by your classmates are best posted on the discussion board. Longer, more complex questions are best addressed in office hours (online or in-person).

Tips for Success

Everyone has different learning preferences and strategies that work best for them. However, there are a few things that everyone can do to ensure they receive the best possible grade in this course:

1. Attend lecture weekly (aka come in person and/or watch recording). When watching, avoid other distractions. Put your phone away, close other windows on your computer, and take notes!
2. After watching lectures review the lecture slides. Compare these to your notes. Reorganizing and combining this information can help you to consolidate and remember it.
3. Do all the readings! Required readings will be covered on the assessments. Read and take notes. Most students find it helpful to read more than once.
4. Study hard. Review your notes, make flashcards, form a study group.
5. Come to office hours! The instructor and the TAs are here to help you. If you have any concerns or questions regarding the course or material, please get in touch!

Additional Required Readings & Podcasts

For some lectures we will have required articles or podcasts in addition to or instead of text book readings.

Lecture 7: Goldberg (2019). Personality tests are the astrology of the office. *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/17/style/personality-tests-office.html>

Lecture 10: Qadar, S. (Host) (2022). Can you change your personality? [Audio Podcast Episode]. *All in the Mind*. <https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/allinthemind/can-you-change-your-personality/13888958>

Lecture 16: Fraley, R. C. (2023). Attachment through the life course. In R. Biswas-Diener & E. Diener (Eds), *Noba textbook series: Psychology*. Champaign, IL: DEF publishers. Retrieved from <http://noba.to/s3kj9ufv>

Lecture 21: McAdams, D. P., & McLean, K. C. (2013). Narrative identity. *Current directions in psychological science*, 22(3), 233-238.