

Personality Theory

Last Updated: Mon, 08/18/2025

Course prefix: PSYC

Course number: 2240

Section: A

CRN (you may add up to five):
94436

Instructor First Name: Lucas

Instructor Last Name: Provine

Semester: Fall

Academic year: 2025

Course description:

Course Description: This course provides an exploration of major theories, research findings, and applications in the field of personality psychology. Students will examine historical and contemporary perspectives on personality, including trait, biological, humanistic, and cognitive approaches, with a focus on understanding the individual differences that shape human thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Through lectures, readings, and class discussions, students will critically evaluate research methods in personality science and consider how personality theory informs real-world contexts and their own lives.

Course learning outcomes:

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

- Describe and compare major theoretical perspectives in personality psychology and their historical development.
- Apply personality theories to analyze individual differences in behavior, motivation, and emotion.
- Evaluate empirical research in personality psychology, including methods, findings, and implications.
- Discuss practical applications of personality theory in domains such as career selection, interpersonal relationships, and mental health.
- Reflect on their own personality in relation to psychological theory, fostering self-awareness and critical thinking.

Required course materials:

Recommended Textbook:

Funder, D. C. (2020). *The personality puzzle* (8th ed.). W. W. Norton & Company.

- The course content and lectures will primarily derive from this textbook. It is highly recommended that you rent or acquire a copy cheaply online. The 9th edition is the latest and can be purchased directly from [https://wwnorton.com/books/The-Personality-Puzzle/Links to an external site.](https://wwnorton.com/books/The-Personality-Puzzle/Links%20to%20an%20external%20site). The difference between these versions is minimal, so I suggest finding a cheaper 8th edition. I will discuss options further with you during our first class meeting.
- We will not be using the Norton InQuizitive addon for this course, but it serves as a helpful study aid if you choose to get it.

Grading policy:

Course Requirements & Grading

Exams - 400 Points, 40%

Attendance - 100 Points, 10%

In-Class Activities - 100 Points, 10%

Weekly Discussion Board Posts - 200 Points, 20%

Character Analysis Paper - 150 Points, 15%

Research Participation - 50 Points, 5%

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be assigned as a letter grade according to the following scale:

A	90-100%	900-1000 points
B	80-89%	800-899.99 points
C	70-79%	700-799.99 points
D	60-69%	600-699.99 points
F	Below 60%	599.99 points or fewer

This grading scale **already accounts for rounding** and any applicable curve. No further rounding or adjustments will be made on an individual basis.

Late Work Policy

- Late assignments are accepted with a 10% deduction per 24 hours late, unless an approved extension is granted.
- Extensions may be granted for extenuating circumstances but require documentation when appropriate.
- Requests for extensions should be made before the due date whenever possible.

Attendance policy:

Attendance & Participation

Regular attendance and participation are essential for your success in this course. In-class activities cannot be made up except in cases of approved excused absences. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to catch up on any missed material.

Make-Up Work

Make-up exams are allowed only in accordance with Georgia Tech policy and require official documentation (e.g., medical or university excuse). Students should notify the instructor as soon as possible if they anticipate missing an exam or major assignment.

Institute approved absences: This absence is usually for a GT event (conference, sports event, etc.). You must submit this form at least 5 days prior to the absence and get me the approval ASAP: <https://registrar.gatech.edu/info/institute-approved-absence-form-for-students>

Personal emergencies: Students may need to miss classes due to personal emergencies such as being hospitalized or being in a car accident. The Office of the Vice President and Dean of Students can assist students with documented emergencies by contacting professors on behalf of the student. For more information, please call the Office of the Vice President and Dean of Students: <https://dev.grandchallenges.gatech.edu/office-dean-students>

Religious holidays: Please contact the instructor ASAP to reschedule missed work.

I will accept documentation from the Registrar or the Dean's Office. Missed work must be made up within 5 business days of the date on the approved documentation.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help students master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion