

# PSYC-175: THEORIES OF PERSONALITY

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**Effective Term**

Fall 2025

**CC Approval**

03/07/2025

**AS Approval**

03/13/2025

**BOT Approval**

03/20/2025

## SECTION A - Course Data Elements

**CB04 Credit Status**

Credit - Degree Applicable

**Discipline**

Minimum Qualifications	And/Or
Psychology (Master's Degree)	

**Subject Code**

PSYC - Psychology

**Course Number**

175

**Department**

Psychology (PSYC)

**Division**

Social Sciences (SOCS)

**Full Course Title**

Theories of Personality

**Short Title**

Theories of Personality

**CB03 TOP Code**

2001.00 - Psychology, General

**CB08 Basic Skills Status**

NBS - Not Basic Skills

**CB09 SAM Code**

E - Non-Occupational

**Rationale**

CCN update.

## SECTION B - Course Description

**Catalog Course Description**

The study of personality examines the sources of our similarities and our differences. This course will cover several major perspectives on personality including psychodynamic, behavioral, phenomenological, social-cognitive, and biological/evolutionary theories. An emphasis will be placed on integrating these theories and relating them to everyday life.

## SECTION C - Conditions on Enrollment

### Open Entry/Open Exit

No

### Repeatability

Not Repeatable

### Grading Options

Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass

### Allow Audit

Yes

## Requisites

### Prerequisite(s)

Completion of PSYC-C1000 with a minimum grade of C.

## Requisite Justification

### Requisite Description

Course Not in a Sequence

### Subject

PSYC

### Course #

120

### Level of Scrutiny

Content Review

### Upon entering this course, students should be able to:

Upon entry to PSYC 175, the student should be able to:

1. Delineate the historical development of the field of psychology
2. Apply an understanding of research methods in psychology to analyze contemporary psychological research questions
3. Identify and explain the function of basic structures in the human body that are relevant to psychology, such as the brain, the nervous system, and the sensory systems
4. Explain the basic processes of learning, cognition, and emotion
5. Analyze key theories of human development, personality, and social psychology
6. Understand major psychological disorders and forms of psychotherapy
7. Identify and summarize psychological information from various media sources

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## SECTION D - Course Standards

### Is this course variable unit?

No

### Units

3.00

### Lecture Hours

54.00

### Outside of Class Hours

108

### Total Contact Hours

54

**Total Student Hours**

162

**Distance Education Approval****Is this course offered through Distance Education?**

Yes

**Online Delivery Methods**

DE Modalities	Permanent or Emergency Only?
Entirely Online	Permanent
Hybrid	Permanent
Online with Proctored Exams	Permanent

**SECTION E - Course Content****Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Comprehend and analyze the major theories of personality.
2.	Apply the major theories of personality to better understand the self and others.

**Course Objectives**

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Understand the relation between theory and research in the field of personality.
2.	Evaluate theoretical perspectives and research findings in the study of personality.
3.	Apply concepts from psychodynamic, behavioral, phenomenological, social-cognitive, and biological/evolutionary theories to everyday life.
4.	Distinguish between classic psychodynamic theory and contemporary psychodynamic theories (neo psychodynamic theories).
5.	Distinguish between behavioral and social-cognitive theories of human behavior.
6.	Identify the concepts of phenomenological theories and biological/evolutionary theory.
7.	Relate theoretical movements in personality theory to social and cultural factors that impacted their development.
8.	Critique applications of various theories of personality.
9.	Arrange pivotal theories of personality in terms of their emphasis on determinism vs. freewill, biological factors vs. environmental factors, and other key debates within the study of personality.
10.	Assess the value of various personality theories based on their historic impact as well as their current validity and applicability.
11.	Develop a personal perspective of personality based on a critical analysis of the major contributions of personality theorists.

**Course Content**

1. Definition of Personality, Research Methods, Theoretical Development
  - a. Definitions of personality, the case study method, the correlational method, the experimental method, developing a theory.
2. Classic Psychodynamic Theory
  - a. Freud: basic theory, homeostasis and hedonism, eros and Thanatos, model of the mind, stages of development, personality structures, defense mechanisms. Evaluation of classic psychodynamic theory.
3. Contemporary Psychodynamic Theories
  - a. Jung: collective unconscious, archetypes. Adler: overcoming inferiority, striving for superiority. Horney: basic anxiety, psychology of women. Erikson: personality development, crises. Evaluation of contemporary psychodynamic theories. Comparison with classic psychodynamic theory.
4. Behavioral Theory
  - a. Watson: radical behaviorism, learning and classical conditioning, learning research. Skinner: operant conditioning, reinforcement and punishment. Evaluation of behavioral theories.
5. Phenomenological Theory
  - a. Rogers: self-actualization, the ideal self, the client-centered perspective. Maslow: hierarchy of needs, self-actualization. Evaluation of phenomenological theories.
6. Social-Cognitive Theory

- a. Bandura: reciprocal determinism, social-learning theory, self-efficacy. Rotter: locus of control, expectancy. Evaluation of social-cognitive theories. Comparison with behavioral theories.
- 7. Biological/Evolutionary Theory
  - a. Darwin: basic theory of natural selection. Evolutionary psychology: evolution of psychological mechanisms, gender differences, cultural universals. Evaluation of biological/evolutionary theory.
- 8. Synthesis of Theories of Personality
  - a. Developing your own personality theory. Combining personality theories. Selective application of personality theories. Thinking critically about theoretical approaches.

## Methods of Instruction

### Methods of Instruction

Types	Examples of learning activities
Discussion	Discussion topics regarding the major theories of personality
Lecture	Lecture topics focused on theories of personality

### Instructor-Initiated Online Contact Types

Announcements/Bulletin Boards  
 Chat Rooms  
 Discussion Boards  
 E-mail Communication  
 Telephone Conversations  
 Video or Teleconferencing

### Student-Initiated Online Contact Types

Chat Rooms  
 Discussions  
 Group Work

### Course design is accessible

Yes

## Methods of Evaluation

### Methods of Evaluation

Types	Examples of classroom assessments
Exams/Tests	Final Exam Mid Term 1. Objective examination questions For example: A. Phenomenological theory is focused on: 1. childhood trauma 2. subjective experience 3. modeling 4. conditioned responses B. Sigmund Freud emphasized: 1. self-actualization 2. operant conditioning 3. archetypes 4. unconscious processes 2. Essay examination questions For example: a) Compare and contrast John Watson's behaviorism and Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory in terms of their perspectives on the classic nature versus nurture debate. b) Which of the major personality theories discussed in this course most strongly suggests that human beings are essentially good and motivated by noble intentions? Explain why you believe that the theory that you have selected most embodies this perspective. Give specific examples of constructs in the theory to support your point of view.

Quizzes

Essays/Papers

## Assignments

### Reading Assignments

1. Textbook chapter readings
2. Additional academic articles and book excerpts of the instructor's choosing.

For example:

- a) An excerpt from Sigmund Freud's book, "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life" - to give students a deeper understanding of central aspects of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory
- b) An excerpt from Carl Jung's book, "Memories, Dreams, Reflections" - to help students better understand the life and theoretical perspective of Carl Jung
- c) John Watson & Rosalie Rayner's article, "Conditioned emotional reactions," from the Journal of Experimental Psychology - to enhance student understanding of a classic study on the psychology of learning and to illustrate an application of behaviorism.
- d) Carl Rogers' article, "What understanding and acceptance mean to me," from the Journal of Humanistic Psychology - to help students better understand the humanistic perspective of Carl Rogers.

### Writing Assignments

1. Critical analysis papers (3 to 8 papers)

For example:

- a) The major personality theorists were all strongly influenced by their culture, history, and religious background. Based on your knowledge of the personal life experiences of Sigmund Freud, B.F. Skinner, and Carl Rogers, select one of these theorists and analyze the way these life experiences may have influenced the theorist's view of personality.
  - b) Evolutionary psychology suggests that women and men behave as they do today because the genders faced different challenges as they were evolving. Explain why you believe that evolutionary theory does or does not offer the best explanation for current behavioral gender differences. Give specific examples of gender differences in behavior that you have witnessed. If you believe that evolutionary theory offers the best explanation of these gender differences, explain how these behaviors might be traced evolutionarily. If you do not believe that evolutionary theory offers the best explanation for these differences, discuss a rival theory and explain how it would address the differences more accurately.
2. Essay examination questions (See Assessment section above for examples)

## SECTION F - Textbooks and Instructional Materials

### Material Type

Textbook

### Author

Feist, J. & Feist, G

### Title

Theories of Personality

### Edition/Version

10TH

### Publisher

McGraw-Hill

### Year

2021

### Material Type

Textbook

### Author

Ryckman, R

### Title

Theories of Personality

### Edition/Version

10TH

**Publisher**

Wadsworth

**Year**

2013

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**Course Codes (Admin Only)**

**ASSIST Update**

No

**CB00 State ID**

CCC000456223

**CB10 Cooperative Work Experience Status**

N - Is Not Part of a Cooperative Work Experience Education Program

**CB11 Course Classification Status**

Y - Credit Course

**CB13 Special Class Status**

N - The Course is Not an Approved Special Class

**CB23 Funding Agency Category**

Y - Not Applicable (Funding Not Used)

**CB24 Program Course Status**

Program Applicable

**Allow Pass/No Pass**

Yes

**Only Pass/No Pass**

No