

**Psychology 330, Personality Theory and Research  
Spring, 2021**

Time: TR, 8 – 9:20 a.m.  
Location: <https://tinyurl.com/PSYC330S21>  
Professor: Margaret Beier  
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Office: 429 E Sewall Hall  
Phone: 713-348-3920  
Office hours: Mondays, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. or by appointment  
<https://tinyurl.com/mebzoom>

Teaching Assistant: Meg Davenport  
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Office hours: Tuesdays, 1:00 – 2:00 p.m. or by appointment  
<https://tinyurl.com/meghanofficehour>

Course Objectives:

Provide an overview of five prominent approaches to personality psychology: (1) trait, (2) biological, (3) psychoanalytic, (4) phenomenological, (5) learning and cognitive. You will be able to read and critically evaluate primary research articles, critically evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each approach, and synthesize your thoughts about a specific topic in a term paper by the end of the semester.

Required Resources:

Funder, D. C. (2019). *The personality puzzle* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Norton.

Additional required readings (available in PDF format), zoom links, video, and audio recordings are on Canvas. Contact me or the TA if you have difficulty retrieving these materials.

Optional Resources:

*Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th edition, 2020). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association. Available for purchase at <http://www.apastyle.org/manual/index.aspx>

Course Format:

Information will be presented in the course lectures, video and audio recordings, and in readings. During the second week of class, you will be assigned a “study group” of three to four other students with whom you will interact for class exercises (e.g., paper peer review). All lectures will be videotaped, and some study groups may choose to meet outside class time to accommodate asynchronous students.

Canvas:

Course material (e.g., the syllabus, zoom links, discussion forums, assignments, handouts, and information about grades) will be available on Canvas. I will hold you responsible for all announcements about the class, including any changes to the syllabus that I post there. You should have a habit of checking the site regularly.

### Evaluation:

Your evaluation consists of reading checks, a paper assignment with multiple parts, article summaries, and a class/group participation grade. There is no final exam for this course.

### ***Reading checks***

You will complete a short quiz based on the week's assigned readings each day. Quizzes will be comprised of one or two open-ended, multiple choice, or fill in the blank questions. Tuesday's reading check will be posted on Canvas by midnight CST on the prior Sunday. Thursday's reading check will be posted by midnight CST on the prior Tuesday. Reading checks are due by the beginning of class (Tues/Thurs, 8 a.m.). There are no reading checks on sprinkle days. Reading checks are open book/open notes and independent work covered by the honor code.

### ***Paper Assignment***

You are required to write a term paper for this course, which is due on the last day of finals at 5:00 p.m. Papers can be research proposals or extensive literature reviews. Either way, papers must be written in APA format (using the seventh edition of the APA publication manual).

Papers should be between 10 – 12 pages long (inclusive of title page and references). **You must cite at least 8 references in your paper, at least 6 of which are empirical (i.e., research studies). References can be papers we have discussed in class.**

You can write about any topic you choose related to course content. Some ideas from past semesters (which you are welcome to use or modify) are:

- The “best” way to measure personality
- A research proposal to examine the personality determinants of creativity
- What are functional personality traits in American culture? Are they different in other cultures?
- Personality: Nature or nurture

The paper assignment is broken down into sub-assignments as follows:

1. Topic statement
2. Literature search and annotated bibliography
3. Expanded outline
4. Paper draft for peer review (on Google Docs)
5. Final revised version of paper

You are encouraged to discuss paper topics with classmates and you will discuss/workshop your topic statement, literature search/annotated bibliography, and outline within your study groups. You will also participate in a peer-review process with your paper draft (I won't review your draft, but two of your peers in your study group will, and you will review two peers' papers). You will be evaluated on the timeliness and thoroughness of your peer review of others' papers as part of your class/group participation grade.

Although you will receive input and feedback on your paper from your classmates, you are responsible for writing your paper. See [these tips](#) for avoiding plagiarism.

### *Article Summaries*

You will read and summarize six articles listed below and made available on Canvas. Your summary should include the following information:

- The reference in APA format
- The main research question or theoretical topic as you understand it
- A description of the results and/or general conclusions
- Any ideas generated by the article
- Discussion questions: these questions should be broad and aimed at facilitating discussion. You will also post these discussion questions in the Discussion Forum on Canvas on the designated discussion day.

Article summaries are designed to give you a basis from which to have a discussion about the article. You should not develop an elaborate presentation. An example article summary is available in the “Files” section of Canvas.

**Article summaries and discussion question postings are due at 11:59 PM CST** on the date listed on the course schedule. Although you are encouraged to discuss the articles amongst your peers, article summaries are independent work covered by the honor code.

In addition to posting discussion questions on Canvas, you are responsible for responding to **four** of your classmates’ discussion questions for each article. This part of the assignment counts toward your class/group participation grade (see below). **Responses are due by the start of class (i.e., 8 a.m. CST)** on the date indicated on the syllabus.

- Like discussion questions, your responses to your peers’ discussion questions will be evaluated on the extent to which they convey your understanding of the course material and your thoughtfulness. For example, writing “good point” as a response to a classmate’s comment will not earn high marks. Rather, we expect you to engage with the ideas such as, “I had a similar idea, but felt that the arguments made by Sun and Vazire were convincing. In particular, their assessment of personality using the EAR showed that self-report and other-reports of personality converged.”

### *Class/group Participation*

You are expected to participate in various activities as part of your enrollment in this class either individually or within your study groups. Article discussions that take place in the discussion forum in Canvas and your peer review of paper drafts within your small group are examples of activities that count toward class/group participation.

### **Grading**

The breakdown of your grade for this course is as follows:

Reading checks	20%
Paper	45% as follows:
	▪ Topic statement (1%)
	▪ Annotated bibliography (4%)
	▪ Expanded outline (5%)
	▪ Paper draft (15%)
	▪ Final paper (20%)
Article Summaries	20%
Class/group participation	15%

Up to 2 points of extra credit *added to your paper grade* are also available. See the last page of the syllabus for information on extra credit.

Grades will be determined on the following scale:

100 - 93% = A	89 - 88% = B+	79 - 78% = C+	69 - 68% = D+	59 - 0% = F
92 - 90 % = A-	87 - 83 % = B	77 - 73 % = C	67 - 63 % = D	
	82 - 80 % = B-	72 - 70 % = C-	62 - 60 % = D-	

### **Late assignments.**

Total points available for late assignments are as follows: 90% 1 day, 80% 2 days, 70% 3 days, 60% 4 days, 50% 5 days. If your assignment is going to be more than five days late, please email or call Dr. Beier ([beier@rice.edu](mailto:beier@rice.edu); 713-348-3920).

### **Important Notes and Resources**

*Writing Center:* The term paper is a large part of your grade in this class. Please take advantage of the [Center for Academic and Professional Communication](#) to assist you in writing.

*Disabilities:* If a student has a documented disability and needs academic assistance in this or any other course, they should so inform me within the first two weeks of classes. All discussions will remain as confidential as possible. Students should contact me by e-mail. Students with disabilities requesting accommodation will also need to contact Disability Resource Center ([adarice@rice.edu](mailto:adarice@rice.edu)).

*Academic Integrity:* Students are expected to abide by the Honor Code. All reading checks, paper assignments, and article summary assignments are covered under the Honor System. More information about the honor code and plagiarism can be found here: <http://honor.rice.edu/honor-system-handbook/>. Students are encouraged to bring any concerns involving academic integrity to my attention.

*Title IX Responsible Employee Notification.* Rice University cares about your wellbeing and safety. Rice encourages any student who has experienced an incident of harassment, pregnancy discrimination or gender discrimination or relationship, sexual, or other forms interpersonal violence to seek support through The SAFE Office. Students should be aware when seeking support on campus that most employees, including myself, and the TA, are required by Title IX to disclose all incidents of non-consensual interpersonal behaviors to Title IX professionals on campus who can act to support that student and meet their needs. For more information, please visit [safe.rice.edu](http://safe.rice.edu) or email [titleixsupport@rice.edu](mailto:titleixsupport@rice.edu).

*Notes on this semester.* This is the first time that Personality Theory and Research has been offered in an online modality. In redesigning the course, we have tried to focus on building classroom community and to anticipate student needs for synchronous and asynchronous learning. Nonetheless, we know we may have missed some things. We will be surveying students periodically throughout the semester to get your feedback on how the class is going and encourage you to reach out as needed outside of these surveys.

We'd love for you to learn a ton and have fun in this class. If there is anything we can do to help you in this regard, please let us know.

## Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

*Notes:* Assigned reading should be completed **before** the class meetings. Reading checks will cover all of the *chapter readings* assigned in a given week. If there is only one chapter assigned, then reading checks for both Tuesday and Thursday will cover that one chapter. Articles are not included in reading checks.

Date	Day	Topic	Assignment
1/26	Tues	Introduction/syllabus	Chapter 1
1/28	Thurs	Personality Research Methods	Chapter 2
2/2	Tues	Personality Assessment <b>Article summary due, Sun &amp; Vazire, 2019</b> <b>Post discussion questions for Sun &amp; Vazire, 2019</b>	Chapter 3 Sun & Vazire, 2019
2/4	Thurs	<b>Post peer responses for Sun &amp; Vazire, 2019</b>	
2/9	Tues	Traits	Chapter 4
2/11	Thurs	Judgments	Chapter 5
2/16	Tues	Traits and Types <b>Article summary due, Klein et al., 2004</b> <b>Post discussion questions for Klein et al., 2004</b>	Chapter 6 Klein et al., 2004
2/18	Thurs	<b>Post peer responses for Klein et al., 2004</b>	
2/23	Tues	Personality Stability and Change	Chapter 7
2/25	Thurs	<b>Paper topic due</b>	
3/2	Tues	Biological Approaches <b>Article summary due Caspi et al., 2002</b> <b>Post discussion questions for Caspi et al., 2002</b>	Chapter 8 Caspi et al., 2002
3/4	Thurs	<b>Post peer responses for Caspi et al., 2002</b>	
3/9	Tues	Behavioral Genetics	Chapter 9
3/11	Thurs	Psychoanalytical approach <b>Annotated bibliography due</b>	Chapter 10
<b>3/16</b>	<b>Tues</b>	<b>Sprinkle Day</b>	
3/18	Thurs	Modern Psychoanalysis <b>Extended outline due</b>	Chapter 11
3/23	Tues	Humanism/Phenomenological approach <b>Article summary due Kushlev et al., 2019</b> <b>Post discussion questions for Kushlev et al., 2019</b>	Chapter 12 Kushlev et al., 2019
3/25	Thurs	<b>Post peer responses for Kuhshlev et al., 2019</b>	
3/30	Tues	Cross Cultural <b>Article summary due Geeraert et al., 2019</b> <b>Post discussion questions for Geeraert et al., 2019</b>	Chapter 13 Geeraert et al., 2019

4/1	Thurs	<b>Post peer responses for Geeraert et al., 2019</b>	
4/6	Tues	Learning, motivation, emotion	Chapter 14
<b>4/8</b>	<b>Thurs</b>	<b>Sprinkle Day</b>	
4/13	Tues	<b><i>Paper draft due for peer review</i></b>	
4/15	Thurs	The Self	Chapter 15
4/20	Tues	Applications: Relationships and Business <b>Article summary due, Denissen et al., 2017</b> <b>Post discussion questions for Denissen et al., 2017</b>	Chapter 16 Denissen et al., 2017
4/22	Thurs	<b>Post peer responses for Denissen et al., 2018</b> <b><i>Peer review comments back to authors</i></b>	
4/27	Tues	Applications: Mental health	Chapter 17
4/29	Thurs		
<b>5/12</b>		<b><i>Final Paper Due (5 p.m.)</i></b>	

**List of articles for article summaries (available on Canvas in “Files\Research Articles”)**

Caspi, A., McClay, J., Moffitt, T. E., Mill, J., Martin, J., Craig, I. W., Taylor, A., & Poulton, R.

(2002). Role of genotype in the cycle of violence in maltreated children. *Science*,

297(5582), 851–854.

Denissen, J. J., Bleidorn, W., Hennecke, M., Luhmann, M., Orth, U., Specht, J., & Zimmermann,

J. (2017). Uncovering the power of personality to shape income. *Psychological Science*,

29(1), 3–13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797617724435>

Geeraert, N., Li, R., Ward, C., Gelfand, M., & Demes, K. A. (2019). A tight spot: How

personality moderates the impact of social norms on sojourner adaptation. *Psychological*

*Science*, 30(3), 333–342. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797618815488>

Klein, O., Snyder, M., & Livingston, R. W. (2004). Prejudice on the stage: Self-monitoring and

the public expression of group attitudes. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 43(2),

299–314. <https://doi.org/10.1348/0144666041501697>

Kushlev, K., Hunter, J. F., Proulx, J., Pressman, S. D., & Dunn, E. (2019). Smartphones reduce

smiles between strangers. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 91, 12–16.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2018.09.023>

Sun, J., & Vazire, S. (2019). Do people know what they’re like in the moment? *Psychological*

*Science*, 30(3), 405–414. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797618818476>

## **Extra Credit**

Up to 2 points of extra credit *added to your paper grade* are also available. There are two options for extra credit.

*Option 1:* You may participate in a maximum of 4 hours of psychology experiments through SONA. You will receive ½ a point added toward your final grade for each hour of research. Note that you must be at least 18 years old to participate in psychological research. Instructions for participating in SONA experiments is available on the course Canvas site (Training Student Participants SONA.pdf).

*Option 2:* You may complete a report on an empirical research article (not a review article) for extra credit. These can neither be articles assigned in class, nor articles you have cited in your paper (ask if you have questions). Articles may be selected from the journals listed below. Note that the article **MUST** be related to course content. You will receive ½ a point of extra credit for each report (0 if the report is sub-par). Reports should be single spaced, typewritten (12 pt font). They should cover the following things:

- 1) complete reference in APA style
- 2) brief description of the research question
- 3) explanation of how the research article fits with course content
- 4) description of the research design and analysis if appropriate (e.g., measures used, correlational or experimental research, etc.)
- 5) brief description of conclusions
- 6) your interpretation of whether or not the conclusions are warranted

You must include a copy of the original research article (or receive a zero). These article summaries can be handed in at any point in the semester through Canvas, but will not be accepted after the **last day of classes (Friday, April 30, 2021) at 5:00 p.m.**

## **Eligible Journals**

*Developmental Psychology*  
*Journal of Abnormal Psychology*  
*Journal of Applied Psychology*  
*Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*  
*Journal of Personality*  
*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*  
*Journal of Personality Assessment*  
*Journal of Research in Personality*  
*Personality and Individual Differences*  
*Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*  
*Psychology & Aging*  
*Psychology & Marketing*  
*Social Behavior and Personality*