

PSYC 33: INTRODUCTION TO PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Fall 2025
Units:	4
Hours:	4 lecture per week (48 total per quarter)
Advisory:	One of the following: ENGL C1000 or C1000H or ESLL 26 or equivalent.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area 4: Social & Behavioral Sciences
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade Only
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Student Learning Outcomes

- Application of theory to situations of everyday life.
- Demonstrate knowledge of major theories of personality.

Description

This course is an introduction to the study of personality. The course examines theoretical explanations for understanding personality development and explores historical and modern-day theories. The course also investigates current research on personality development and how people come to be similar or different from each other. Topics include but are not limited to genetics, brain development, evolutionary psychology, emotions, traits, cultural factors, socialization, and attachment theory.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

1. Explain why personality is not a random consequential resultant of life experiences but rather an on-going dynamic phenomena.
2. Examine the basis of behavior and the overt manifestation of personality as both biological and environmental.
3. Analyze the various theoretical perspectives in personality psychology.
4. Assess the scientific-theoretical approach to the study of adjustment.
5. Identify the different assessments and research methodologies utilized in personality psychology.
6. Explain the relevance of past and current research within personality psychology to the evaluation of personality theories and their applications.
7. Apply basic principles of personality psychology to the understanding of everyday life such as interpersonal relations, workplace issues, etc.
8. Assess and critically analyze theories, research methods and findings (outcomes), and applications developed by psychologists and made available through textbooks, newspapers, professional and lay periodicals, and the internet.

Course Content

1. Topics
 - a. Introduction
 - i. Introduction to personality psychology
 - ii. Personality assessment, measurement, and research design
 - b. The dispositional domain
 - i. Traits and trait taxonomies
 - ii. Theoretical and measurement issues in trait psychology
 - iii. Personality dispositions over time: stability, coherence, and change
 - c. The biological domain
 - i. Genetics and personality
 - ii. Physiological approaches to personality
 - iii. Evolutionary perspectives on personality
 - d. The intrapsychic domain
 - i. Psychoanalytic approaches to personality
 - ii. Psychoanalytic approaches: contemporary issues
 - iii. Motives and personality
 - e. The cognitive/experiential domain
 - i. Cognitive topics in personality
 - ii. Emotion and personality
 - iii. Approaches to the self
 - f. The social and cultural domain
 - i. Personality and social interaction
 - ii. Sex, gender, and personality
 - iii. Culture and personality
 - g. The adjustment domain
 - i. Stress, coping, adjustment, and health
 - ii. Disorders of personality
2. Theorists
 - a. Psychodynamic theorists
 - i. Sigmund Freud
 - ii. Heinz Hartmann
 - iii. Neo-Freudians
 - iv. Anna Freud
 - v. Heinz Kohut
 - vi. Margaret Mahler
 - vii. Erik Erikson
 - b. Humanists
 - i. Abraham Maslow
 - ii. Carl Rogers
 - iii. Behaviorists
 - iv. Albert Bandura
 - v. B.F. Skinner
 - vi. Walter Mischel
 - c. Interpersonal theorists
 - i. Harry Stack Sullivan
 - ii. Karen Horney
 - iii. Cognitive Theorists
 - iv. George Kelly
 - v. Walter Mischel
 - d. Psychobiological theorists
 - i. Hull
 - ii. Eysenck

- e. Theory evaluation
 - i. Coherence
 - ii. Range of validity
 - iii. Empirical constructs
 - iv. Phenomenological constructs
- f. Assessment
 - i. MMPI
 - ii. MBTI
 - iii. Miscellaneous

Discipline(s)

Psychology

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

When taught as an online distance learning section, students and faculty need ongoing and continuous internet and email access.

Method(s) of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation may include but are not limited to the following:

Quizzes
Midterm examination
Essays
Problem-solving exercises
Participation
Final examination

Method(s) of Instruction

Methods of Instruction may include but are not limited to the following:

Lecture
Class discussions
Videos/DVDs
Active learning exercises

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Feist, Gregory, Tomi-Ann Roberts, and Jess Feist. Theories of Personality, 10th ed.. 2021.

Olson, Matthew H., Domenica Favero, and B.R. Hergenhahn. An Introduction to Theories of Personality, 9th ed.. 2020.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

1. Writing assignment on a specific theoretical perspective in personality psychology
2. Poster/portfolio of oneself utilizing various theories and concepts in personality psychology
3. Assessment of case studies regarding different personality disorders