

# Psychology 431

# Theories of Personality

Fall 2007

**INSTRUCTOR:**

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**OFFICE HOURS:**

Before and after class

**TEXTBOOK:**

Allen, Bem P. (2006). *Personality Theories*  
(5<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Allyn and Bacon

**COURSE DETAILS:**

Class: Thursday night 6:00 – 8:50 PM  
Credit: 3 Hours

**COURSE PHILOSOPHY:**

Theories of Personality is an introduction to the many and diverse theories of what makes us tick – our personalities. In this course, we will discuss what makes us different, how we develop a personality (according to the various theorists), and what those theorists consider important to that development. These theories are also a cornerstone to understanding psychology as a discipline.

**GOALS:**

1. To understand the different approaches to understanding personality.
2. To grasp the basics of what a theory is and what purpose it serves in personality.
3. To recognize the various schools of thought that contribute to our understanding of personality.
4. To learn critical thinking, to be skeptical, and to improve problem-solving abilities.

**COURSE FORMAT:**

This course will be taught as a lecture and discussion course. Your participation is encouraged.

## **COURSE EVALUATION:**

There will be three exams; all of which will be multiple choice. The number of questions will be determined by the material; expect a minimum of 50 questions per test. Each question will be worth one point. Your grade will be determined by the total points accumulated – the person with the highest total points will represent 100% for an “A”, and all other totals within 90% of this total will also be an “A”; from 80 – 89% will be a “B”; 70 – 79% will be a “C”; 60 – 69% will be a “D”; and let’s not contemplate below 60%. Bonus points, if you earn them through attendance, will be added in after the parameters for the grades are determined. In other words, if you have 5 extra credit points and you are only 3 points from an “A” after you test grades are added up, you will receive an “A”. I do not convert scores to the classic 100 points, I only work off total points. If, after three tests, you have 150 total points (used as a theoretical highest score), you would get an “A”. If someone else in the class has 150 total points, and you have 145 points, then you would fall into the 90% range (in this case 135 – 150 points) and you would also make an “A”. If you have 133 points, and have earned the 5 bonus points for attendance, this would boost you to 138 points, and this would also be an “A”.

Make-ups will be taken the next time you come to class, so come prepared to take the make-up exam at that time. I realize that life happens, that some of you will get legitimately sick or have pressing responsibilities at home or work; I do not penalize anyone for this. Just come prepared to take the test, if at all possible. Excuses are not necessary as I have heard them all, but if you have a particularly entertaining one, then by all means, tell me. Just make sure it’s original and witty.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY:**

Attendance will be taken at each class, and I will follow university policy of allowing you two absences without penalty. However, my attendance policy also comes with a reward. Should you not miss more than one lecture class, I will give you five points of extra credit toward your final grade. This is based on the assumption that you will have learned at least that much simply by being in class and listening to scintillating discussions and lectures that will be over information that will not wind up on your tests.

I expect adult behavior in class. This includes respecting your fellow students’ desire to learn – keep side-talking to a minimum; cell phones in the “off” or vibrate position, no text messaging (if I can go without communicating with my clients, some of whom may be suicidal, you can return the courtesy), no food or tobacco products, and if you must leave, do so quietly and return quietly. If one of your neighbors appears distracted or upset about your side-talking, either police yourself or expect a comment from me.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

The faculty and administration of Sam Houston expect that students will conduct their studies with honesty and integrity. Failure to do so may result in failing the course and dismissal from the University. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: cheating on a test, plagiarism, collusion – the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit, the abuse of resource materials, and misrepresentation of credentials or accomplishments as a member of the college.

The University's policy on academic honesty and appeal procedures can be found in the manual entitled Student Guidelines, distributed by Division of Student Services (reference section 5.3).

NOTE: You are cheating if I think you are cheating. Don't make me think you are cheating.

### **NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY:**

It is the policy of Sam Houston State that no individuals otherwise qualified shall, solely by reason of their disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any academic program or activity. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

### **RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:**

University policy provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy days(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

## COURSE OUTLINE (TENTATIVE)

- Unit 1: Scientific Method, Models and Assessment, plus the first three theories
1. Introduction
  2. The Psychoanalytic Legacy: Sigmund Freud
  3. Personality's Ancestral Foundation: Carl Jung
  4. Overcoming Inferiority and Striving for Superiority: Alfred Adler

Test 1: September 20<sup>st</sup>

- Unit 2: The next four theories
7. The Seasons of Our Lives: Erik Erikson
  8. The Sociopsychological Approach to Personality: Erich Fromm
  9. Every Person is to be Prized: Carl Rogers
  10. Becoming All that One can be: Abraham Maslow

Test 2: October 25<sup>th</sup>

- Unit 3: The next four theories
11. Marching to a Different Drummer: George Kelly
  12. The Social-Cognitive Approach to Personality: Walter Mischel and Julian Rotter
  13. Thinking Ahead and Learning Mastery of One's Circumstances: Albert Bandura
  14. It's All a Matter of Consequences: B. F. Skinner

Test 3: December 13<sup>th</sup>

NOTE: Last day to drop courses without a failing grade is October 11<sup>th</sup>. November 22<sup>nd</sup> is Thanksgiving; no class will be held. Unless you want to show up by yourself.