

# Psychology 34-01: Personality Psychology Syllabus and Course Outline

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**Office Hours:** Monday, Wednesday & Thursday from 3:00 – 4:00pm

## Course Description

(3 credits. 3 hours.) An examination of the phenomenon of personality; including psychodynamic, social-cognitive, and contemporary neurobiological perspectives; topics include personality development, typology, pathology, growth, and the construction of meaning. Prerequisite: PSY 1100

## Course Textbook

The primary text for this course will be George Boeree's Online Personality textbook. Professor Boeree permits his web-based text to be used for educational, non-profit use free of charge.

(If you have a computer at home, don't forget to "bookmark" or add this address to your "favorites list" so that you don't have to re-type it every time you want to access the text.)

We will use Professor Boeree's text for the unit on Classic theories of Personality. Additional articles and online texts will also be assigned for this and for the units on Emerging Perspectives and Personality Disorders.

## Course Schedule

### *Unit 1 – Classic Theoretical Perspectives of Personality*

#### 1. **Week 1-6 - Psychodynamic:**

- a. Sigmund (& Anna) Freud, Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Karen Horney, Viktor Frankl Erik Erikson

#### 2. **Week 7 - Humanistic Perspective:**

- a. Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow

#### 3. **Week 7 - Social Learning:**

- a. Albert Bandura ( )

#### 4. **Week 8-9 - Trait Perspective:**

- a. Raymond Cattell, Hans Eysenck, The NEO and "The Big Five", the MMPI, Walter Mischel

### *Unit 2 – Contemporary and Emerging Perspectives*

#### **Positive Psychology**

- The concept of *Flow*
- The psychology of happiness (week 10)



## Current Biological and Neuroscience Perspectives

1. The biology of joy, neurotransmitters, frontal lobe, “emotional” brain; mirror neurons (week 11)

### Unit 3 – Personality Disorders

- Major DSM-5 categories of personality disorders (week 12)

## Blackboard and online communication

We will be using the BlackBoard web environment for this course, and will also be communicating with some frequency by e-mail. In order to access the BlackBoard site, students will be required to create an account through the Kingsborough or CUNY web page (if you haven't done so previously).

## Course overview

We will begin this course with an examination of several of the historically important and conceptually influential “classic” personality theories. Our focus will be on the critical evaluation of these theories, the identification of their respective strengths and weaknesses, and the extraction of core principles that are relevant to the understanding of personality today. During the course of this semester, we will investigate several continuing controversies, explore various exciting new developments in the field, and seek to understand the nature of the *disordered personality*.

## Exams, and written assignments

There will be 3 in-class tests, and a final exam. **Please bring pencils for all exams!** Details and exact dates for the in-class exams will be announced in class with ample notice; the Final exam will be given during Final Exam week after the conclusion of the semester. There will also be writing assignments required for this class, which will center on selected topics throughout the term. Details for each assignment will be provided separately. **The written assignments are not optional or for extra credit – they are required assignments and will factor in to your final grade.** One or two of these may be group assignments. The requirements for written work will be explained more fully during the course of the semester. The written assignments will count for 15% of the final grade.

## Grading policy

Class exams, written assignments, the final exam, class participation and attendance are all factors in your final grade.

### Attendance in class is required

A student may be absent for up to 3 classes without explanation. Any student absent more than 3 times must see me for consultation. Failure to do so may result in grading penalties. Students may see me during office hours, or at other mutually convenient times by appointment. A student with five or six absences will be penalized one grading level; for example, if a student who would normally receive a B for the course had six absences, his grade for the course would be dropped to a B-. Seven to 8 absences will result in an additional grade level penalty. No student will be given a passing grade in this class with more than eight absences. If you believe that you will accumulate more than eight



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absences before the end of the term, you have the option of dropping the class before the withdrawal deadline (see above). Withdrawing from a course will not affect your grade point average. A student who does not withdraw by the deadline date and has nine or more absences will receive a WU (Withdrawn Unofficially) grade. This grade is essentially the same as an F, and will be listed as such in the following semester's transcript.

Please try not to be late. If you are late, come in quietly and find a seat without causing a disruption. Chronic lateness will not be tolerated. **The fourth lateness in the term will count as an absence.** After that, every second lateness will be counted as an absence. **I reserve the option to refuse admittance to any student who is late to class by 25 minutes or more.**

Please turn your cell phone off in class. If it is *absolutely necessary* to maintain contact with your family for medical or personal reasons, you may keep your phone in vibrate mode. ***I am sure you understand that no phone calls or text messaging in class are permitted during class time.***

## **Available free services for students.**

### ***The Reading and Writing Resource Lab***

In L219 (Library). All students will be expected to become familiar with the Reading and Writing Lab. This is the place to get help with writing assignments from this and other courses. Invaluable resource!

### ***Free counseling:***

All students should be aware that Kingsborough offers free personal counseling. If you would like to see a counselor to discuss a personal issue or situation in complete confidence, you can easily make an appointment in D102.

*Access-Ability Services (AAS) serves as a liaison and resource to the KCC community regarding disability issues, promotes equal access to all KCC programs and activities, and makes every reasonable effort to provide appropriate accommodations and assistance to students with disabilities. Your instructor will make the accommodations you need once you provide documentation from the Access-Ability office (D-205). Please contact AAS for assistance.*

## **PSY 34 Personality Psychology Desired Learning Outcomes**

PSY 34 provides an examination of the historically important and conceptually influential "classic" personality theories with an eye towards the identification of respective strengths and weaknesses, and the extraction of core principles that are relevant to the understanding of personality today. Modern and emerging approaches to the study of personality, such as the neuroscience perspective and positive psychology are investigated, as are contemporary and continuing controversies in the field, and the core topic of personality disorder.

### ***Upon passing Psych 34 students will:***

1. Have a critical understanding of the core concepts of the "classic" personality theories



2. Understand the historical contexts of the emergence of important perspectives in personality psychology
3. Be able to critically compare such theories and perspectives as *psychoanalytic*, *humanistic*, *trait* and *temperament*, *social learning*, *positive psychology* and *neuroscience*
4. Be able to identify core ideas from classical theories that have and have not found support through contemporary empirical research
5. Have been exposed to contemporary neuroscience perspectives on personality and behavior
6. Have an understanding of the relevance of both heredity and environment in the determining of observed differences in personality characteristics
7. Have an appreciation for the complexities surrounding the definition and designation of abnormal behavior and disordered personality
8. *Be familiar with the 10 currently recognized categories of personality disorder and their characteristic symptomologies.*

