PS315: Theories of Personality ONLINE
Spring 1 2007

Instructor Contact Information
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Park University
    Vision Statement
    Park University will be a renowned international leader in providing innovative educational opportunities for learners within the global society.

    Mission Statement
    The mission of Park University, a entrepreneurial institution of learning, is to provide access to academic excellence which will prepare learners to think critically, communicate effectively and engage in lifelong learning while serving a global community.

Course Description
    Examination of major personality theories and contributing research evidence with particular emphasis upon motivation and dynamics of behavior. Prerequisite: PS101. 3:0:3

Overview and Course Goals

    Welcome to Theories of Personality (PS 315) on-line! This course examines how major theoretical approaches address the structure, process, and development of personality. It is designed to provide students with a working knowledge of psychological terminology relevant to the personality field, assist students in becoming critical consumers of psychological information, and promote educated self-reflection concerning one's own personality. In this course, students will analyze and discuss the application of personality theory to everyday life, and critique the relevance and value of various theoretical perspectives. In addition, students will develop effective critical thinking skills as they learn to integrate, evaluate, and synthesize diverse theoretical views of personality presented from various sources of information (textbook, Internet, supplemental activities, etc).

    This course is an overview of the major personality theories and contributing research evidence. The course will examine theoretical differences in the motivation and dynamics of behavior. Students will analyze the major approaches to personality theory (psychodynamic, learning, dispositional, humanistic/existential), critique key personality theorists, and examine research strategies specific to the study of personality.

    Each week we'll utilize on-line conference discussions to critique various issues, analyze case studies, and/or evaluate assessments related to the study of personality. These topics are reinforced and expanded in assigned readings from the textbook, Theories of Personality by Feist and Feist (5th Edition).

Core Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

1. Describe and differentiate among the major psychological approaches which explain personality.
2. Define and apply key personality concepts, terms, and theories.
3. Identify psychologists who have made major contributions to an understanding of personality.
4. Explain research methodology and the ability to evaluate the merit of personality studies.
5. Practically apply acquired insight of personality to one's own life

Required Texts/Materials

Feist, J. & Feist, G. (2002). <u>Theories of Personality</u>. McGraw Hill. ISBN #0-07-231679-9

Order Texts at: http://direct.mbsbooks.com/park.htm

Course Policies

Policy #1: Submission of Work:

- A class week is defined as the period of time between Monday 12:01 am MST and Sunday at 11:59 PM MST. The first week begins the first day of the term/semester. Assignments scheduled for completion during a class week should be completed and successfully submitted by the posted due date.
- Create a back up file of every piece of work you submit for grading. This will ensure that a computer glitch or a glitch in cyberspace won't erase your efforts.
- When files are sent attached to an email, the files should be in either Microsoft Word, RTF, ASCII, txt, or PDF file formats.
- *Submission of Late Work:* Late work will only be accepted with written permission from the instructor.

Policy #2: Ground Rules for Online Communication & Participation

- *General email:* Students should use email for private messages to the instructor and other students. When sending email other than assignments, you must identify yourself fully by name and class in all email sent to your instructor and/or other members of our class.
- *Online threaded discussions:* are public messages and all writings in this area will be viewable by the entire class or assigned group members.
- *Online Instructor Response Policy:* Online Instructors will check email frequently and will respond to course-related questions within 24-48 hours.
- *Observation of "Netiquette":* All your Online communications need to be composed with fairness, honesty and tact. Spelling and grammar are very important in an Online course. What you put into an Online course reflects on your level of professionalism. Here are a couple of Online references that discuss writing Online http://goto.intwg.com/ and netiquette http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html.
- Please **check the Announcements** area before you ask general course "housekeeping" questions (i.e. how do I submit assignment 3?). If you don't see your question there, then please contact your instructor.

Policy #3: What to do if you experience technical problems or have questions about the Online classroom.

- If you experience computer difficulties (need help downloading a browser or plug-in, you need help logging into the course, or if you experience any errors or problems while in your Online course, click on the button in your Online Classroom, then click on the helpdesk menu item, and then fill out the form or call the helpdesk for assistance.

- If the issue is preventing you from submitting or completing any coursework, contact your instructor immediately.

Policy #4: DISABILITY GUIDELINES
- Park University is committed to meeting the needs of all students that meet the criteria for special assistance. These guidelines are designed to supply directions to students concerning the information necessary to accomplish this goal. It is Park University's policy to comply fully with federal and state law, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, regarding students with disabilities. In the case of any inconsistency between these guidelines and federal and/or state law, the provisions of the law will apply.
- Additional information concerning the criteria for special assistance and Park University's policies and procedures related to disability can be found on the Park University web page: http://www.park.edu/disability.

Grading Policy

You will be able to track your grade throughout the term. Grades will be determined by your performance on a final exam, a research reaction paper, weekly homework assignments, weekly journal entries, a group debate, mastery questions and participation in online class discussions. Points will be assigned as follows:

Final exam (Week 8)	120 points
Research reaction paper (Week 7)	70 points
Weekly homework assignments	80 points
Weekly journal entries	35 points
Weekly mastery questions	70 points
Group debate	45 points
Participation in online discussions	80 points
Total	**500 points**

Final course grades will be determined as follows:

A	90% - 100%	448 points and higher
B	80% - 89%	398 – 447 points
C	70% - 79%	348 – 397 points
D	60% - 69%	298 – 347 points
F	59% and lower	297 points and lower

You will know in advance the standards for each assignment. My goal is to give you prompt, clear, and useful feedback to help you critically analyze psychometric information and communicate this knowledge in a professional manner. Each student is responsible for:
- Completing weekly reading assignments
- Completing weekly homework assignments
- Completing weekly journal entry
- Completing weekly mastery questions
- Participating in weekly on-line class discussions
- Participating in a group debate
- Completing a research reaction paper
- Completing a proctored final examination

Proctored final examination/Project - A final proctored examination will be taken in a proctored testing environment during the 8th week at one of the Park University sites around the country or at an alternative location. For proctored examinations, photo identification is required at the time of the test. Guidelines for selecting an acceptable proctor can be found on the Park University Website.
- **Other Information on proctored exams:**

- It will be the responsibility of the student to arrange for a proctor, by the 6th week of the term, who is accepted and approved by the course instructor.
- Approval of proctors is the discretion of the Online instructor.
- A proctor request form will be made available to you during the first week of class so that you can send your requested proctor to your instructor for approval.
- Failure to take a final proctored exam (or submit your final project for some online graduate courses) will result in an automatic "F" grade.

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is the foundation of the academic community. Because each student has the primary responsibility for being academically honest, students are advised to read and understand all sections of this policy relating to standards of conduct and academic life.

Academic dishonesty includes committing or the attempt to commit cheating, plagiarism, falsifying academic records, and other acts intentionally designed to provide unfair advantage to the students.

- *Cheating* includes, but is not limited to, intentionally giving or receiving unauthorized aid or notes on examinations, papers, laboratory reports, exercises, projects, or class assignments which are intended to be individually completed. Cheating also includes the unauthorized copying of tests or any other deceit or fraud related to the student's academic conduct.
- *Plagiarism* involves the use of quotation without quotation marks, the use of quotations without indication of the source, the use of another's idea without acknowledging the source, the submission of a paper, laboratory report, project, or class assignments (any portion of such) prepared by another person, or incorrect paraphrasing.
- *Falsifying academic records* includes, but is not limited to, altering grades or other academic records.
- *Other acts* that constitute academic dishonesty include:
  - Stealing, manipulating, or interfering with an academic work of another student or faculty member.
  - Collusion with other students on work to be completed by one student.
  - Lying to or deceiving a faculty member.

In the event of alleged academic dishonesty, an Academic Dishonesty Incident Report will be submitted to an Online Academic Director who will then investigate the charge. Students who engage in academic dishonesty are subject to a range of disciplinary actions, from a failing grade on the assignment or activity in question to expulsion from Park University. Park University's academic honesty policy and related procedures can be found in full in the Park University Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs.

Attendance

Professors are required to keep attendance records and report absences throughout the term. Excused absences can be granted by the instructor for medical reasons, school sponsored activities, and employment-related demands including temporary duty. The student is responsible for completing all missed work. Any student failing to attend class for two consecutive weeks, without an approved excuse from their instructor, will be administratively withdrawn and notified via email that you have been withdrawn and a grade of "WH" will be recorded.

An attendance report of "P" (present) will be recorded for students who have logged in to the Online classroom at least once during each week of the term. PLEASE NOTE: Recording of attendance is not equivalent to participation. Participation grades will be assigned by each individual instructor according to the criteria in the Grading Policy section of the syllabus.

More details on the attendance policy can be found in the [Park University Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs](#).

Student Resources

- **McAfee Memorial Library** - Online information, links, electronic databases and the Online catalog. Contact the library for further assistance [via email](#) or at 800-270-4347.
- **Park University Online Bookstore** - Select "Online Learning- Graduate," or "Online Learning - Undergraduate," and then click on the appropriate course code (ex. AC 201, PA 501) to see the list of required and optional texts for each course that you are enrolled in.
- **Advising** - Park University would like to assist you in achieving your educational goals. Your Campus Center Administrator can provide advising to you, please contact them for assistance. If you need contact information for your Campus Center, [click here](#).
- **Online Tutoring Services** - Park University has arranged for Online students to receive five hours of free access to Online tutoring and academic support through Smarthinking. If you would like Online tutoring, please contact me to receive their recommendation and information on how to access the Online tutoring.
- **Career Counseling** - The Career Development Center (CDC) provides services for all stages of career development. The mission of the CDC is to provide the career planning tools to ensure a lifetime of career success.
- **Online Classroom Technical Support** - For technical assistance with the Online classroom, email helpdesk@parkonline.org or call the helpdesk at 866-301-PARK (7275). To see the **technical requirements** for Online courses, please visit the http://parkonline.org website: click on the "Technical Requirements" link, and click on "BROWSER Test" to see if your system is ready.
- **Park Helpdesk** - If you have forgotten your User ID or Password, or if you need assistance with your PirateMail account, please email helpdesk@park.edu or call 800-927-3024.

Course Calendar

The following overview provides some guidelines to assist you in planning your coursework and scheduling the major learning activities in the course:

Week	Readings	Activities
Week 1	Chapter 1	• Personal introduction • Discussion activity with peer responses • Website posted to course webliography • Homework • Journal • Mastery quiz
Week 2	Chapters 2 and 3	• Discussion activity with peer responses • Homework • Journal • Personal response to debate • Mastery quiz
Week 3	Chapters 4 and 6	• Discussion activity with peer responses • Homework • Journal • Mastery quiz • Topic Debate Group Posting (assigned group only) • Personal response to debate
Week 4	Chapters 7 and 9	• Discussion activity with peer responses • Homework

		• Journal • Mastery quiz • Topic Debate Group Posting (assigned group only) • Personal response to debate
Week 5	Chapters 15 and 16	• Discussion activity with peer responses • Homework • Journal • Mastery quiz • Topic Debate Group Posting (assigned group only) • Personal response to debate
Week 6	Chapters 13 and 14	• Discussion activity with peer responses • Homework • Journal • Mastery quiz • Topic Debate Group Posting (assigned group only) • Personal response to debate
Week 7	Chapters 18, 10, and 11	• Discussion activity with peer responses • Homework • Journal • Mastery quiz • Core Assessment - Research Reaction Paper
Week 8	Article: Personality Plus	• Discussion activity with peer responses • Homework • Bonus Activity (optional) • Final Exam

Assignments

Through the course of this term, you will complete two major projects related to theories of personality: a research critique and a controversial issues group debate. In addition, you will complete 8 weekly discussions, homeworks, quizzes and journals. The following pages provide more detailed information about each of these assignments.

Research Critique

In order to help you relate theories of personality to current research in the field, you will complete a research reaction paper. For this reaction paper, you will select an underline empirical research article from the empirical articles found in "Doc Sharing" in the empirical articles folder (once you click on the doc sharing file, you will need to use the drop-down menu to select the empirical articles folder).

Your research reaction paper should include a summary and discussion of the research article including the following areas: 1) topic area; 2) hypotheses; 3) method; and 4) major results and findings. Finally, reaction papers should include a thoughtful commentary by the student. Specifically, not only should you provide a general summary, but you should include a critique of the research question and design, as well as a discussion of how the research relates to other theories of personality. In addition, you should include a commentary about the relationship of the research findings to your own life and personality development. ***Your comments, critique, and discussion should form the majority of the paper.***

Use the following guidelines and section headers to organize your paper:
1) *Summary* (the entire summary section as described below should only take two to three pages):
   o Topic area: In one or two sentences, identify the general topic area of your paper.

- o Hypothesis: You may use the verbatim hypothesis directly from the study you are critiquing. The hypothesis is generally only a couple of sentences long
- o Method: Provide a summary of the research method utilized in your study; this summary should be several sentences in length. Identify the type of research, the subject population, number of subjects, methods or tests used and other relevant information.
- o Results and Discussion: Summarize (in less than 10 sentences) the findings of the research study. You do not have to go into great detail, just report the conclusions drawn by the study.

2) *Critique* (should take approximately two to three pages):
- o This is your opportunity to critically evaluate the research study. You will want to discuss the appropriateness of the research methods utilized, the applicability of the subject population, the utility of the assessment measures, conclusions drawn, etc.
- o Basically, you are evaluating the quality of the research design and the conclusions. Your task it to demonstrate that you are a critical consumer of psychological information.

3) *Relationship of the study to personality theory* (approximately two to three pages):
- o Discuss the relationship of this study to theories identified in class. Often, the research study will not directly address its relationship to theory; it is your task to draw these types of conclusions.
- o Critically evaluate what the results of this study contribute to the field of personality theory.

4) *Relationship of the study to your own life and personality development* (approximately two pages):
- o Discuss the relevance of the study to your own life and personality; highlight areas that it either particularly applies or is not relevant.

Paper Criteria:
- o 10 pages (not including a title and reference page)
- o all papers must be typed and use correct grammar/spelling/punctuation
- o APA format (i.e., cite your reference using APA guidelines, double-space, 12-point font, 1-inch margins) - see [Landmarks Citation Machine](#) for assistance in converting your references into APA style
- o submit via the Dropbox as either a Word or RTF file
- o due on Sunday, midnight of Week 7

Controversial Issues Group Debate

Weeks 2 through 6, we are going to engage in weekly "topic debates." The weekly debate topic will involve an in-depth investigation of a controversial topic relevant to the field of personality psychology. Each of you will be assigned to a partner; you will debate against your partner in ONE weekly debate (the partners will be posted in an announcement on the course homepage). You will only debate against your partner during the week that you are assigned to present the debate material. During all other weeks, you will simply post your own thoughts and opinions on the subject.

In addition to providing an opportunity to engage in a lively debate on a topic relevant to personality psychology, the debate also requires you to fine-tune your skills in online communication. As such, a secondary goal of this project is effectively online peer-to-peer collaboration. Like all professional interactions and debates, the interdependent nature of the project is often more challenging than the topic you are focusing on. This type of communication is even more challenging in the online world; be sure that you debate in a professional, curtious manner.

How the debates work:
- o At the beginning of the term, I will assign each person to a debate partner; each partner will then be assigned to either the "yes" or "no" side of one of the debate topics (the names of each person in the group can be found in the announcement titled "Topic Debate Partners" that appears at the end of Week 1 or beginning of Week 2). For example, one topic debate might be "Should couples be required to take personality tests during premarital counseling?". One person would be required to locate research and information to support a "yes" answer and the other person would be required to research and support a "no" answer.

- Each partner pair will have ONE debate that they are responsible for providing the debate information; this is the only week that you will work to debate against your partner. During all other weeks, you will work alone to read the information posted by the assigned pairs and provide your own thoughts and opinions.
- All topic debates will take place in a designated discussion thread.
- During your assigned debate, you must provide ONE persuasive, informational post to the relevant discussion thread. This may be a page of written text, a PowerPoint presentation, a online video, or any other creative way of conveying your information. The information you provide does not have to be lengthy as long as it contains relevant information and is expanded to clearly explain your position. You are required to utilize and correctly reference three (3) quality, academic sources to support your position. You should use correct APA style in formatting your debate information.
- The partner pair assigned to the weekly debate must post their persuasive information by Thursday at midnight.
- Then, each partner must reply with a rebuttal to the opposing viewpoints presented by the other person assigned to that week's debate (due Sunday at midnight).
- Finally, everyone in the class should read the debates and post their own position. When responding to the debates, you just need to write whether you support the "yes" or "no" side of the debate with a sentence or two highlighting why you support that position (also due on Sunday by midnight). You do not have to agree with the side of the debate that you were assigned to represent.

Points to keep in mind:
- While there is no "right" answer to this type of debate question, there is a body of research that either supports or refutes each side of the position. You should incorporate research into your response.
- This is a persuasive argument, not just an opinion. Your personal opinion may differ from the position that you are assigned to research and represent in the thread; this is fine, just be sure that you still create a persuasive argument for the assigned topic.
- I encourage you to be creative in your presentation of information. You are not limited to simple written text. You can use attachments or links to include a range of visual, audio or internet sources. Really push yourselves to represent your information in a creative, meaningful, interesting fashion. If you need ideas, please feel free to call or email and I will be happy to discuss your project with you.
- Because this project requires research, START EARLY! Do not wait until the last minute as it can be time consuming to prepare for a debate. You will notice that the topics are all listed on this page and the partner pairs are assigned at the beginning of the term. This means that you should immediately start researching your debate question.

Debate topics:

Week	Debate Topic
Week 2	Should a person be held legally responsible for criminal acts committed by their unconscious (or unconscious aspects of their personality)?
Week 3	Should personality tests (such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) be used as pre-employment screening devices?
Week 4	Is personality a stable construct that is formed in childhood and remains relatively constant throughout the lifespan?
Week 5	Are parents responsible for the personality development and subsequent behavior of their children?
Week 6	Are personality traits more useful than situational or environmental influences for predicting behavior?

Discussions

All exploration discussions will adhere to the following guidelines:
- **Due Dates** - Initial response due on Thursday by midnight; two peer replies due on Sunday by midnight. Peer replies should be substantial responses and/or insightful questions. Responses that simply state "I agree" or something similar to this will not be accepted.
- **Grading** - Your exploration posting will be graded according to the quality of your response. In order to earn the full 15 points, your posting should be clear, complete, insightful and original; in addition, you must have high-quality peer replies. Responses that are incomplete, vague, lack-detail or repeat previous postings will receive reduced grades. Remember, you should always relate your postings to social psychology. Postings are not simply your opinion; they involve your opinion but include an application to the relevant social psychological principles.

For example:

Week 2 – Examining Freud's Legacy

Download and read the article, "Examining Freud's Legacy." This article is posted in the document sharing area (click on the "doc sharing" tab at the top of the page, then select the "Week 2: Discussion" category).

After reading the article, post your answers to the following questions:

- What aspects of Freud's theory do you see applied most often in real life? Justify your answer.
- As controversial as Freud's theory has been, why is it still so important to the study of personality? What would psychology be missing without Freud's theory?

After posting your own answers, respond to the answers or comments of at least 2 other people in the class.

Homeworks

The homework assignments highlight key topics for each week. All homework assignments are due on Sunday at midnight and must be submitted through the dropbox.

For example:

Week 4 – Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development

One of the key aspects of Erikson's theory is his ideas concerning the fixed, stage theory of psychosocial development. Your task this week is to examine how each psychosocial conflict applies (or will apply) to your own life.

Start by thinking about the following list of events in your life. For each event, list what was (or will be) your greatest concern at each event:
- first day of kindergarten
- first day of junior high school
- high school graduation
- college graduation
- 10 year high school reunion
- 30 year high school
- 50 year high school reunion

Now look back at your list and relate your responses to Erikson's psychosocial stages and conflicts. How do your concerns relate to psychosocial development? Was Erikson accurate in his theories about the

various conflicts that we all experience?

Quizzes

Each week, you will complete a set of multiple-choice questions regarding the key information for that chapter. Quizzes consist of 10 multiple-choice questions. You may complete the mastery quiz assignment as many times as you like *prior to the due date for each quiz*; only the highest score you receive prior to the due date will be recorded.

Journals

Each week you will be required to enter a personal reflection in your journal. Your personal reflection does not need to be lengthy, you are only required to write one paragraph (although you are welcome to write more if you would like).

Please submit your entry via the "journal" located in the dropbox. To access the journal, please be sure you use the dropbox feature as opposed to directly accessing the journal tab. Your journal entry is due at midnight on Sunday.

For example:

> *Week 2 – Psychoanalytic Theory*
>
> The journal is your opportunity to relate the theories of personality that we have investigated to your own life. Select one of the theories examined this week and write a brief description of how this applies to your own personality.

Final Exam

The final exam is:
- Comprehensive – it covers all chapters of the book
- Closed-book – you may not use any notes or books
- Proctored – must be supervised by an authorized proctor
- One-time - you may only attempt the final exam ONE time

The final exam will consist of a combination of multiple-choice and essay questions; it is designed to take approximately 2 hours to complete. The multiple-choice questions are drawn from the weekly mastery and review assignments, while the essay questions are selected from the weekly Questions for Further Thought. *Do not let this fool you. . . the final is still very difficult!*

In order to help you prepare for the final exam, I have provided practice exams. These practice exams do not count toward your grade; they are simply a means of studying. I suggest that you use the practice tests to help guide your studying; at the completion of each practice exam look at the areas that you got correct and incorrect. For example, if you got most of the Freud questions right, then you can spend less time studying that material as you have a good understanding. If you were incorrect on most of the Rogers questions, then you can go back to your textbook and the discussions to review that information. The practice exams are not the only way to study, but they provide a means of testing yourself and guiding your study time. In addition, all the final exam questions will be drawn from the practice exam

testbank; so practicing with these questions will definitely prepare you for the final. You can take as many practice exams as you like.