THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIECNES
Department of Psychology

COURSE OUTLINE (2023/2024, SEMESTER TWO)

1. Basic Course Information

Course Code	PSYC7306
Course Title	Psychology of Personality
Course Credits	6
Lecture Time	Mon 3:30-6:20pm (Venue: MB141)

2. Course Lecturer, Coordinator, and Tutors

Name	Office	Phone	E-mail	Consultation Hour
Dr Henry NG (Lecturer)	6.16, JCT	39178205	nghks@hku.hk	Monday 2:30- 3:30pm
Terry TSE	6.19, JCT	39178231	yltsec@hku.hk	Monday 1:00-2:00pm

3. Course Description

This course will critically examine a number of theories. The relationship of specific theories to practical applications, personality assessment and psychotherapeutic techniques may be included. The major aims of the course are to provide a survey of the breath and complexity of this field and to provide a perspective from which to examine assumptions about human nature and the evaluation of behavior.

4. Course Learning Outcomes

On completing the course, students will be able to:
- Demonstrate understanding of key theoretical conceptions within the field of personality based on the major domains of knowledge and from viewpoints of personality theorists covered in the course
- Appreciate the research design and assessment methods of current scientific inquiry in personality psychology while also be able to evaluate the research findings critically
- Develop a critical perspective on some of the ways as psychologists we understand ourselves and our behavior
- Apply personality theories and concepts to situations, familiar or novel, in everyday life.

5. Lectures and online resources

Lectures will be delivered face-to-face and streamed on zoom simultaneously (see Moodle for the meeting link) during the scheduled time. Lecture recordings will be available after each meeting.

All course materials and announcements will be posted on Moodle. You should check it regularly to update yourself with the latest arrangements.

6. Assessment

There are 5 assessment components. The following weightings apply to your final grade.

Assessment	Weight
1. Group presentation	20%
2. Class participation	10%
3. Group report – scale construction	10%
4. Individual essay	30%
5. Final test	30%

7. **Assessment Components**

i. Group presentation
In a group of 5 to 6 students, you will present a research article on a personality topic that is not covered in class. You will be assigned an article at in week 2.

In the 40-minute presentation, you will deliver the theoretical background, methods, results, and implications of the paper. You will also include one to two public figures as examples to illustrate key concepts. You may, for example, compare the personalities of two celebrities on the personality topic, analyse possible causes leading to the personality, highlighting discrepancies with the paper, etc. In preparing for the presentation, you may consider looking up additional research to support your arguments or analysis, but please do it succinctly and focus on the assigned article.

The presentation will be screen-recorded and graded based on the following criteria:

10%	Clarity and accuracy in presenting the article
6%	Application to public figures
4%	Mechanics (e.g., presentation style, visual aids)

ii. Class participation
After each presentation, the audience will give feedback in the form comments, self-reflection, or questions, to the presenters. You will get 2% for each presentation responded.

iii. Group report – Scale construction
Testing is fundamental to personality research. A personality construct is useless unless it can be measured with certain tools. How are such tests developed? You will go through the process in this project.

In this project, you will …
1. Search for a construct that has not been measured before. A good source of ideas is to look for memes and slangs on the Internet. For example, how to measure the level of being a *green tea b*tch* (greenteab*tchiness), being a *Karen* (karenness), or being a *luen naam* (literally *warm man*). Many of these slangs are culture-specific and having members of different cultural backgrounds should give you a small advantage.

2. Come up with a pool of items (20 ~ 30) that the group thinks are relevant to the construct. Be liberal.

3. Invite two experts who are familiar with the construct to rate the items' quality (e.g., 2 – Very relevant, 1 – somewhat relevant, 0 – Irrelevant). Work with the experts to trim down your scale to around 10 items.

4. Think of two validation criteria and include them into the questionnaire. You must include the ten-item personality inventory (TIPI-G) as one of the criteria (i.e., how is my scale supposed to correlate with the TIPI-G). For the second criterion, you may include an additional scale for concurrent validity, or demographic data for group comparison (e.g., older men should score higher than younger men on this scale), or behavioral prediction (e.g., people high on this scale should report higher frequencies of laughing).

5. Compile the questionnaire (not more than 40 items) and collect data from 50 people of your target population. Note that this is not a research project, but you should still ensure anonymity and confidentiality of your respondents.

6. Test the internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) and validity (see point 4.) of your scale.

7. Examine if the scale can be reduced into a number of factors (in-class activity).

8. Make suggestions as to how the scale can be improved.

9. Write a group report (<1000 words) summarizing points 1 to 8.

The Group Report will be due by **11:59pm 6th May 2024 (Monday)**

iv. Individual essay

At the end of the semester, you will hand in a personality analysis of yourself or a living person whom you know very well. If you choose the latter, make sure that they are generally comfortable with discussing their upbringing and personal matters (e.g., values, beliefs) and completing _non-clinical psychological tests_ (e.g., a questionnaire that measure a particular personality construct). This is to ensure that you will have adequate materials to work on in analyzing their personality.

You will analyze the personality from two perspectives, each coming from one of the two lists below. You can include multiple theories under each perspective.

List 1	List 2
Psychoanalytic	Behavioral
Phenomenological	Cognitive
Trait	Social-cognitive

Ethical issues:

a) This is not a research project, and your report will only be read by the teaching team.

b) If you choose to analyze yourself but are uncomfortable with revealing your identity to the teaching team, you can disguise it as an analysis of a living person referred to by a pseudonym. This is acceptable and is not considered as academic dishonesty in this assignment.

c) If you choose to analyze a living person, you must assure them that their identity will not be revealed, and they will only be referred to by a pseudonym in the report. You must also assure them that they will not be coerced to complete any tasks or talk about anything unwillingly. They can stop whenever they want to.

d) Bear in mind that you are not qualified to give any personality assessment, diagnosis, or advice to your study subject. You can discuss the theoretical background of a task you give to your subject (e.g., the Q-sort is a tool that can be used to compare the discrepancy between the real self and ideal self), but you must NOT draw any inferences about them (e.g., from your response, I see that your real self and ideal self are quite different, which can be due to how you were raised up). Make such inferences in your report only.

e) You must NOT present any materials hinting at criminal activities (e.g., sexual assault) or self-harm behavior (e.g., suicide). If your subject brings up such topics, stop the conversation immediately and halt the project. Advise them to seek professional help.

f) Do not invite people who are under 16 years old or psychologically vulnerable. When you invite a person, make sure that they have never been diagnosed with mental disorders (e.g., major depressive).

g) Go through points a) to f) with your study subject before beginning your project.

The word limit is 2500 words (excluding title page, references, tables, and figures ONLY) and the work must abide by the APA formatting. It will be graded based on the following criteria:

4%	Target's bio (~500 words)	A concise biography of the target, including major life events, that is core to the analysis that follows
9%	Analysis from perspective 1 (~800 words)	Summarizing the perspective and related theories Analysing the target's personality
9%	Analysis from perspective 2 (~800 words)	Summarizing the perspective and related theories Analysing the target's personality
4%	Discussion (~400 words)	Compare and contrast the analyses (e.g., strengths and weaknesses) given by the two perspectives
4%	Mechanics	Mechanics (e.g., APA style, grammar, structure)

To facilitate the writing process, students are strongly recommended to submit the essay outline for comment. In the outline, you only need to include the person you plan to analyze and the two perspectives you plan to use and submit it to the Moodle between 21st to 25th March.

The essay will be due by **11:59pm on May 13, 2024 (Monday)**.

v. Final test

The final test consists of multiple-choice questions and short questions. The test covers lectures, book chapters, and reference materials in class 1 to 11 only. Materials for group presentations will not be tested.

8. Important Notes

NOTE 1: In normal circumstances, make-up tests, absence from tutorials, and late submission of assignments are granted for medical (physical and mental) reasons only, including situations arising from quarantine and travel restrictions. You must present legitimate medical documents to support your requests, such as a note written by a qualified physician, medical doctor, clinical psychologist, or a counsellor.

Below are examples of exceptions that have been granted for non-medical reasons: representing your University (i.e. HKU, but NOT your hall) and/or country (e.g., qualifying for the Olympics), attending a funeral service for a close family member.

Below are examples of situations that will DEFINITELY be rejected: being forgetful (of anything), being physically unwell but fail to see a doctor on the date of test/ submission to provide a medical proof (note: if you are that unwell, you should have been sent to the ER), having booked a flight during the assessment period and therefore being unable to attend the final test.

NOTE 2: Send your requests for make-up tests or late submission Terry (yltsec@hku.hk), BY 11:59pm of the day in which the tests/the deadlines are scheduled. Please consider NOTE 1 above before sending in your requests.

NOTE 3: The University Health Service provides basic medical consultation for free. The Centre of Development and Resources for Students (CEDARS) provide counselling service. Seek their help if you need the proof for special arrangements stated in NOTE 1. Make sure that any special request should be sent to the course coordinator ONE WEEK before the tests/deadlines. Requests that are submitted afterwards will generally be rejected.

NOTE 4: Make-up tests are held within one week of the scheduled date of the test on campus (i.e. NOT online). There will be one make-up session for each test only, and you will get zero mark if you cannot attend the original and the make-up test.

NOTE 5: Penalties are incurred for late submission of assignments at a discount rate of 10% within each day of lateness. For late submission of tests (i.e., not returning your paper when the invigilators collect them after the test), you will get zero.

NOTE 6: From the undergraduate handbook,

"The University does not allow or tolerate plagiarism. This is a grave academic offence. The commission of plagiarism is a violation of the University's Regulations Governing Students' Academic Conduct Concerning Assessment. *Any student who commits plagiarism is liable to disciplinary action which can result in serious consequences - including expulsion from the University*.

The University has published a booklet entitled "What is Plagiarism?" All newly-enrolled students are expected to read the booklet. Please consult your teachers if you have any questions about how to avoid plagiarism."

Link: http://www.rss.hku.hk/plagiarism/page2s.htm

All assignments submitted to this course will be checked for plagiarism. Don't you ever try it.

NOTE 7: Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in any form of academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating on exams, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, interfering with grading, falsification and fabrication of data in any academic exercise etc.) will receive a grade of F in this course and will be reported to the Department/Faculty Office/University Disciplinary Committee for further disciplinary action. There will be no exceptions. If you are not sure what constitutes the academic offense of plagiarism, checkout the webpage at http://www.hku.hk/plagiarism. Department of Psychology has formulated departmental policies/guidelines on student misconduct. Visit the website at https://www.psychology.hku.hk/?page_id=1814 for more information.

9. Textbook

Cervone D., & Pervin, L. A. (2022): Personality: Theory and Research (15 Ed). New York: Wiley

Note. It's fine to use a 14 Ed, but the chapter references are different. The instructor has not received the 15 Edition yet.

Purchase links:
(print) Personality: Theory and Research
https://apbookshop.com/HKU/EN/Display/PrintedBook?ISBN=9781119891673&ForMaterials=False&Created=False
(e-book)
https://apbookshop.com/HKU/EN/Display/PrintedBook?ISBN=9781119492016&ForMaterials=False&Created=False

10. References

Field, A. (2018). *Discovering Statistics Using IBM SPSS Statistics (5th Edition)*. London: Sage. The chapter on factor analysis.

Calm down, it is not exactly required, but in case you want more technical details about factor analysis (Lecture 6), it is a useful guide to it. The good thing about this book is that it is used for the stats modules of the programme, but any other stats textbook covering factor analysis should serve the same purpose. Consult Henry if you want a truly mathematical introduction to this topic.

Hofstede et al. (2010) – *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. Chapter 1 – 8. E-book available in the HKU library

The lecture content of *Culture and Personality* is selected from this work. You do not need to study the 8 chapters, but they serve as a good reference when you do revision on the cultural perspective.

Schimmack, U. (2021). Personality Science: The Science of Human Diversity, Chapters 7 – 9.
https://replicationindex.com/2020/08/19/personality-science-the-science-of-human-diversity/

Schimmack's book offers a more updated account of the biological aspects of personality, which the textbook lacks. You can access the content by choosing a guest login.

10. Meeting Schedule and Dates

#Class	Date	Lecture Content	Reading	In-class Activities	Presentation schedule
1	15 Jan	What is Personality Psychology?	1, 2	Forming groups	
2	22 Jan	The Freudian approach	3, 4	Dreams and Defense	
3	29 Jan	Carl Rogers's phenomenological theory	5, 6	Q-sort	
4	5 Feb	Trait perspective – I	7	Group Project – Briefing	
	12 Feb	Chinese New Year (Class Suspension)			
5	19 Feb	Trait perspective – II	8	-	Group 1
6	26 Feb	Factor analysis – a-not-so-mathematical demonstration	Field*	-	Group 2
	4 Mar	Reading Week			
7	11 Mar	Culture and Personality	13+ Hofstede*	-	Group 3
8	18 Mar	Biological perspective	14 + Schimmack*	-	Group 4
9	25 Mar	Project Consultation/ Individual Essay Tutorial			-
	1 Apr	Public Holiday			
10	8 Apr	Behavioral and George Kelly's cognitive approach	9, 10	Repertory Grid Test	Group 5
11	15 Apr	Social cognitive theory	11, 12	-	Group 6
12	22 Apr	Wrapping up and revision		Project Consultation	
	29 Apr	**Final test (3:30-5:30pm) Venue: CPD3.28**			
	6 May (Mon)	**Group Project Due (11:59pm 6th May 2024)**			
	13 May (Mon)	**Individual Essay Due (11:59pm 13th May 2024)**			