That’s the problem with science. You’ve got a bunch of empiricists trying to describe things of unimaginable wonder. – Calvin (Bill Watterson)

🎶 Note: This syllabus is subject to small changes once the semester begins. These will include corrections and slight refinements in the assignment(s) – nothing huge.

DESCRIPTION OF COURSE FROM DEPARTMENTAL WEB PAGE:

Credit Hours: 3

The various approaches to the study of personality and a consideration of its [sic] determinant, development, and assessment form the framework of the course.

🎶 Note: This is a particularly terse catalog(ue) description, but one that gives us a measure of freedom in determining the direction we will go with the course. (The grammatical error is of course regrettable, as is the assumption of a single determinant of personality.)

TEXTBOOKS:

Basic Text:


And remember: Shop around (e.g., on the internet), ‘cause
**Optional Advanced Texts:**


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**OUR CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT:**

Through the university I am offering this course to you (and a grade in it) in exchange for your doing the work specified in this syllabus, and otherwise complying with university regulations and requirements. If you choose to continue your enrollment in the course (whether you attend or not), I will assume that this agreement is consummated. You and I will thus be responsible for the content of this syllabus and complying with its specifics. Each of us is further acknowledging that we will abide by and accept the outcomes generated in this course through the appropriate application of the guidelines of its syllabus.
GENERAL COGNITIVE OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE:

Students will develop the ability to describe and discuss several principal approaches to personality, as well as the disturbances in personality known as personality disorders. Theoretical models, based to a greater or lesser extent on empirical research, will be the principal focus, rather than a compendium of fairly narrow and contemporary research studies. In particular, students should be able to describe the basic tenets and sources of the following:

1. Traditional and contemporary approaches to the personality.
2. The use of theory and empirical investigation in general in defining the field of personality.
3. The uses and limits of mainstream, contemporary psychological science in creating theoretical models of the personality.
4. Trait approaches to personality, and the statistical procedures used to generate them.
5. The psychodynamic models of Freud and the Freudians.
6. Object relations theory.
7. Jung’s psychology of personality.
8. The roots of existential psychology in philosophy.
9. Existential approaches to the personality.
10. Humanistic models of personality.

BROAD OUTLINE OF TOPICAL CONTENT:

I. What does the term “personality” point to?
   1. Ghosts and spirits
   2. Agency
   3. Abstractions
II. What does a theory of personality do?
   1. Theory and science
   2. Theoretical options
   3. Theory and this course
III. Can we be scientific about the personality without losing too much?
   1. Yes, if we understand science in the larger sense
   2. Narrow models
   3. Broad models
IV. Trait theory and the “Big 5”
   1. Factor Analysis
   2. Raymond Cattell and the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF)
   3. The “Big Five”
   4. Measuring personality in the trait framework
5. Measuring pathological personality in the trait

V. A perhaps too dismissive look at the brain, hormones, and genetics
   1. Brain structure/function and the expression of “personality”
   2. Neurochemistry
   3. Hormonal chemistry
   4. Genetics and behavior

VI. Freud’s approach to personality
   1. Personal history and context
   2. Structure and dynamics: Core constructs
   3. Model 1: 1890-1915
   4. Model 2: 1919-1938
   5. Freud’s legacy
   6. Ego psychology and ego defenses

VII. What are disorders of personality? Object relations theory
   1. Melanie Klein and Donald Winnicott
   2. Margaret Mahler
   3. A structural model: Schemas and Masterson’s model
   4. Cognitive-behavioral thoughts and a diversion, sort of

VIII. Jung’s approach to personality
   1. Personal history and context
   2. The Burghölzli, the solar phallus man, and a priori personality structures
   3. The liaison and break with Freud
   4. Conscious aspects of personality: “Type” theory
   5. The collective unconscious
   6. Archetypal psychology, normal and pathologic
   7. Jung’s legacy

IX. Existential approaches to personality
   1. Husserl
   2. Harbingers
      i. Hebraism
      ii. Pascal
      iii. Nietzsche and Kierkegaard
   3. Sartre
   4. Heidegger
   5. Binswanger and Frankl
   6. Humanistic approaches to personality
   7. Carl Rogers
   8. Abraham Maslow
   9. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (“cheek-sent-me-high-ee“)
   10. Salvatore Maddi

X. Behaviorism

XI. Personality and other psychological processes
XII. “Self” awareness

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS:**

In order to assign you a grade in this course I will give you three cumulative examinations, multiple choice and short-answer format, and based on printed study objectives. You must also prepare one term project, a personality self-assessment based on one of the models discussed in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graded Course Component</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. First examination</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Second cumulative examination</td>
<td>Week 12</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Third and final cumulative examination</td>
<td>Week 15-16</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Final Project: Personality self-assessment</td>
<td>Thursday of Week 15</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Class Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I will base the grade I give you on the chart below and an assumed maximum number of points of 300.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In order to earn a/an</th>
<th>You must earn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>360 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>240 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>210 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>180 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Missing the final for a legitimate reason will net you an incomplete for the course (if you have a passing grade in the course). The incomplete must be removed by the end of the long semester following this one (lest the university convert it automatically to a grade of "F"). You, or someone with your power of attorney, must negotiate the terms of a contract for removing such an incomplete before final grades are due for the semester. Since you could miss the final due to a serious accident or
illness, one which may incapacitate you, you may wish to arrange for a
limited power of attorney now.

If you miss any of the first three examinations with an excused absence,
your grade on each of the missed test(s) will be the grade you make on
the final. If you miss any examination without a valid excuse, your grade
on that examination will be a zero (0). Missings two examinations without
an excuse will make it virtually impossible to pass the course, and you
should drop.

**SCORING RUBRICS FOR GRADED COURSE COMPONENT (Personality Self-Assessment):**

**Personality Self-Assessment (100 points).** Here is the “rubric” by which I will assign you a
score of 0 to 100 points on the assigned personality self-assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>No, or Almost Not at All</th>
<th>Partially</th>
<th>Almost Completely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the format of the report comply entirely with APA requirements, including a cover page and reference list?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you cited your sources in text and in the reference list completely according to APA format, including page numbers where required?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you adequately described details of your personal history and current character and functioning (real or otherwise) in enough detail to support an analysis of your personality from a theoretical perspective?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you shown that you understand the theoretical perspective you have chosen with which to analyze your personality?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you adequately analyzed the data you have presented about yourself using the personality model you have chosen?</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maximum points under the rubric = 100. Your grade will be total number of points you earn.
You must upload your Script by 11:59 pm on the day assigned, or you will get 0 points on it.

**ATTENDANCE:**

All other things being equal, you will perform better in this course if you
come to class regularly. We are all adults and I understand that you may
have many priorities, planned and unplanned, which exceed those of this
course. Go, therefore, when you must, but note: Things happen in college
classrooms which are crucial to becoming educated and for which it is
difficult (perhaps impossible) to test. Sometimes these things are
serendipitous and represent the most significant of our learnings; and of
course in some class periods they may not happen at all. They usually
are unpredictable and rely on spontaneous exchanges involving students.
and the professor. They may occur before the instructor arrives, or at a break. They are worth the wait and the intervening tedium. When you are absent – even if someone takes notes for you – you will miss them. To ensure that this vital part of your education is there for you, I will enforce the university's absence policy in the following way:

If you have excessive absences (either excused or unexcused), it will be hard for you to avoid getting a grade of "F" in this class. I will check the roll, and I will perhaps let you know if I believe your absences are excessive. Still, it is ultimately your call, and if you get an “F” it will be based on your grades. You may avoid this fate (i.e., getting an “F”) by officially dropping the course. For purposes of this policy, an absence occurs if you miss 5 or more minutes of a single class period, from the scheduled beginning (or my arrival, whichever is later) to the scheduled end of the period (or my dismissing you, whichever comes earlier). Absences become excessive as a direct function of how much actual class you are missing, and if you are flagrantly absent on most occasions, I may drop you officially from the roster. As noted elsewhere, some work in this course (but not all – exams, for example) may be made up if you miss it due to an excused absence. University policy permits the instructor of a class to define valid excuses for an absence. I include, in general, the following things as valid reasons for missing a class:

(1) participation in an authorized and documented university activity;
(2) documented illness of the student or a first-degree relative who cannot be provided necessary care without the student's missing class (also documented);
(3) documented alien abduction of the student or parts of the student (over 18 hours in duration; or over 1 hour if alien-induced pregnancy is documented);
(4) death in a student's immediate family; and
(5) fulfilling one's legal responsibilities (jury duty, court hearings) as a citizen.

Such excuses must be documented to my satisfaction, including support for the notion that you had no choices (e.g., alternative university activities, legal continuance, alien impregnation, etc.). As noted above, I will perhaps counsel you in some form as your absences accumulate to near critical levels. Notwithstanding, I do not guarantee that I will do this on a consistent basis. I am more likely to do so if I see you in person on occasion, e.g., you come to class occasionally or you come by the office for a chat.
CONDUCT

Faculty members are required to include in their course syllabi the following statement: "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student’s Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)

Admission and attendance in a college or university form an honor and a privilege. Where tuition and other expenses are subsidized, either by private or public funds, the person has received an additional trust that inherently entails conducting one’s affairs as a student within the constraints of civil society. In this class I will expect you to behave in a way that is respectful of others, their right to receive (and deliver) elements of a college education, and their identities as unique persons in the world. I expect us all to act toward others as we would like them to act toward us.

I will also expect you not to plagiarize, steal or otherwise procure tests or other class materials that are not supposed to be publicly available (including copyright violations), or cheat on examinations. Do not copy and/or turn in other people’s work. Do not allow other people to use your own good work. Do not trust previous tests and assignments for this class, as they change subtly over time. In general, do your own work. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes cheating please see me. I will give you an F for any of these infractions, and I will make an appreciable effort to have you dismissed from the university. Oscar Wilde has noted, “Life is too important to be taken seriously.” Still, I value the notion that we in a university setting should never lie, cheat, or steal, or, really, to tolerate such behavior in others.

Here are some other dos and don’ts that will also be a part of our code of conduct in class. Some of them of course are my own and arbitrary. The rest are somebody else’s – and just as arbitrary:

1. Far beyond the particulars of this course, do respect the divine principle of the universe, which seems also to be detectable in other people. As one deity is said to have put it: "Inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these [e.g., other students and the teacher, other enemies], you have done it also to me."
2. Do remember that this course is about a limited area of empirical and conceptual content; don't forget that there are bigger realities. This is just a course.

3. Don't talk trash in excess. Occasional right-brain language epithets may be okay for emphasis, but learn to use your language more elegantly than that (or remain silent). In a related vein, don't abuse the rest of the class with your use of cell phones, MP3 players (including iPods), hand-held gaming systems, your laptop computer, and the like.

4. Do take some time off from constant work during the semester. Do remember to reflect on things beyond the course. (This is not an injunction to ditch class, but rather a reminder to place your studies in a larger perspective.)

5. Do let those who support and have supported your educational efforts know how much you appreciate them sometime during the term.

6. Don't attack the person of another member of the class.

7. Don't sexually (or otherwise) harass a member of the class.

8. Don't steal others' work, and don't let them steal yours – it amounts to the same thing. (Plagiarism will net you an F in the course and my effort to get you removed from the university permanently.)

9. Don't distort the truth, about your data, its sources, or your colleagues.

10. Do be satisfied with where you are in your own professional development. Others may be farther along than you, but don't waste time envying them. Do work to become who you were meant to be.
REQUESTS FOR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:

Faculty members are encouraged to include in their course syllabi the following statement:

Students with Disabilities:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library
Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

Section 10 - Faculty are encouraged to include in their course syllabi the following statement: Students requesting accommodations for disabilities must go through the Academic Support Committee. For more information, please contact the Director of Disability Resources and Services, Halladay Student Services Building, Room 303D, (903) 886-5835.

Section 11 - Faculty are required to include in their course syllabi the following statement: "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." (See Student's Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct)
GUY TEACHING COURSE:

Steve Ball  Steve & his Mum
(some time back)

Steve Ball  As a younger man

Associate Professor of Psychology
Laboratory/Office: Binnion 122 (enter at Binnion 101)
Phone (In Developmental Cognition Lab – switches to fax after 7 rings, sometimes fewer): 903-886-5586 – go to Binnion 101 to find me in the lab
Community Counseling & Psychology Clinic: Binnion 101 (903-886-5660)
Steve.ball@tamuc.edu, academicstevie@yahoo.com
Office hours posted once the semester begins

SELECTED REFERENCES:

Books:

These are the books and other sources that, as far as something you read can do so, have defined who I am. There are, I am sure, many that I cannot remember, and quite a few that (where I am sitting now) I can’t adequately document. These include Ray Kytle’s *Clear Thinking for Composition*, some cereal company’s *Straight Arrow’s Injun-unities* (a clever pun and a racial slur all in one), *The White Buffalo, Cocky Cactus, The Cat Whose Whiskers Slipped*, poems by Eugene Fields and Robert Louis Stevenson, James Barrie’s *Peter Pan*, Helen Gardner’s art history text, Arnold Lazarus’ *Behavior Therapy and Beyond*, Andersen’s and Grimm’s fairy tales, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey*, Hibbard’s *Writers of the Western World*, a book on poetry that had “The Death of the Ball Turret Gunner” in it, Neil Gaiman’s *American Gods* and *Stardust*, the Bobbsey twin books, science fiction of the 50s and 60s that made nothing NASA ever did later surprise me (except when they blew up a couple of shuttles – apparently due to Powerpoint presentations), John Hersey’s *Hiroshima*, a book about Viet Nam called *Dispatches* that Dr. Chuck Keenan gave me, Unca Scrooge comics from the 40s and 50s, Rick Brant science-adventure stories, an essay by George Orwell called “Politics and the English Language,” Butler’s *Lives of the Saints* (concise edition), some of Shakespeare’s plays and sonnets
(especially *Hamlet*), Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex*, Otto Rank’s *The Trauma of Birth*, several editions of Joe Wolpe’s book on behavior therapy, an essay by William Gass published in *Salmagundi* and called “Representation and the War for Reality.” Muzafar and Carolyn Sherif’s social psychology text, Faulkner’s *The Unvanquished* (complex enough Faulkner for me!), Ken Follett’s *Pillars of the Earth*.

I haven’t read all of each of these books, but I don’t care. I got what I needed and went on. I could go back and maybe find more later.

American Psychological Association. *American Psychologist.* [Must regular reading for the psychologist. I confess that don’t regularly read *Psychological Science.*]


Augustine. (1963). *The confessions of Saint Augustine.* Translated by R. Warner. New York, NY: Mentor. [A number of translations are available. This is powerful and offers a nice nonscientific perspective]


*Bible.* [You may select any recent scholarly Christian translation, with or without the Apocrypha. It is also fine to use a separate Hebrew Bible and
a Christian Testament. I do not recommend that you use paraphrased versions such as The Living Bible. You may wish to select a text with notes by commentators, though you place yourself at peril of their prejudices when you do so. Greek and Hebrew texts are always valuable, but most of us have difficulty in reading them fast enough. I use this book in my history course because of an increasing suspicion that the dualistic influence of Plato and Judeo-Christianity (especially through Paul) has had a disproportionate impact on the emergence of modern psychology. At the same time, Christianity has, at its core beliefs, always saved itself from purely transcendent (metaphysical) dualism by preserving its fundamental connection to pre-Platonic Hebraic experience. Approach the text with the same attitude you would use with any other: Bracket your a priori beliefs, and evaluate the work for what it is.]


Bolles, R. C. (1975). *Theory of motivation*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: Harper and Row. [A solid review of theory, especially coming out of learning theory, up until the time that the concept began to become invisible in scientific psychology – though it has begun to reemerge.]


Freud, S. (1919). *Beyond the pleasure principle*. New York, NY: Norton. [There’s more to *Das Es* than you might have thought.]


Freud, S. (1954/1965). *The interpretation of dreams*. New York, NY: Avon Books. [This is James Strachey’s authorized translation. For the most part, it includes all of the additions and deletions through multiple editions following the first edition of this book, which was published in 1900 (actually November 1899, but that’s another story). Before long you should read all of this classic (if sometimes tedious) work of Freud’s.]


Kantor, J. R. (1958). *Interbehavioral psychology*. Bloomington, IN: Principia Press. [Dear to me in growing up as a psychologist.]


Skinner, B. F. (1953). *Science and human behavior*. New York, NY: Basic Books. [Cribbing from Kantor while the two were both at Indiana, Skinner makes the most sense here of anywhere.]


* Fiction