Psychology 668
PERSONALITY: THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL APPROACHES
George Mason University
Spring 2018

Class Day and Time: **Friday, 1:30 - 4:10 PM**
Class Location: **Robinson B218**

Instructor: Reeshad S. Dalal, Ph.D.
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Office Hour: Wednesday, 11 AM – Noon, or by appointment
Office Location: David King Hall, Room 3063

PREREQUISITES:

Graduate survey-level statistics courses (PSYC 611 and 754, or equivalent)

COURSE OVERVIEW (AND GOALS/OBJECTIVES):

This is a graduate-level survey of research related to personality, situations, and their interplay in predicting behavior. The focus is on basic scientific research, and the readings are therefore primarily peer-reviewed journal articles and chapters, primarily from the fields of personality psychology and industrial/organizational psychology.

Overall, the course aims to help students become good developers, consumers, and appliers of research. Students will additionally have the opportunity to: (1) hone their analytical and information presentation skills, and (2) gain practice in generating research proposals. Finally, one of the objectives of the course is to keep the amount of reading in any given week to a manageable length. The sincere hope is that this will encourage students to actually complete all the assigned readings. ☺

I should add that personality psychology is a broad topic. I've tried to cover a lot of ground in this syllabus, but there's a lot of good stuff I just couldn't include. To that end, I'd encourage you to check out Brent Roberts' repository of graduate-level personality psychology syllabi: https://pigee.wordpress.com/syllabus-repository-for-graduate-seminars-in-personality-psychology/

ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY:

One absence during the semester is permitted without any penalty and for any reason, as long as the student summarizes his or her reactions to the week's readings *in some depth* (at least 750 words) on the Blackboard discussion board within one week of the absence. A second or third absence for any reason will each automatically result in a letter-grade penalty (e.g., an "A" becomes an "A-") to the participation/attendance portion of the overall course grade *unless* the student not only provides reactions to the readings but also performs an additional assignment for each absence (please see me to discuss this). Barring truly exceptional circumstances (as determined by *me*), a fourth absence for any reason will automatically result in a failing grade (i.e., "F") in the participation/attendance portion of the overall course grade.

Frequent instances of late arrival to and/or early departure from class will also result in grade penalties to the participation/attendance portion of the course grade. *This is also the case for temporary departures from the classroom while class is in session. Barring emergencies, students are <u>not</u> permitted to leave and return mid-class.*

It is important for every student to complete all the assigned readings and contribute to the class discussion because the quality of this course will be influenced significantly ($p < 0.01$) by the quality of the discussion. Every student is expected to contribute to the class discussion during every course session. I do empathize with students who are introverted, and so I encourage contributions via the online (Blackboard) discussion board; however, such contributions cannot substitute completely for in-class participation. If I notice that some students are not participating in class, I will encourage them to do so, either via generalized in-class requests for everyone to participate or via emails to individual students requesting that they participate. Repeated failure or inability to participate will result in grade penalties to the participation/attendance portion of the course grade.

To facilitate participation, the use of phones is not allowed in class barring emergencies or other situations that are discussed with me ahead of time. I do allow laptop/tablet use, although non-work use (messaging, emailing, watching cat videos, retweeting memes, reading "listicles," etc.) is not permitted. I will moreover cold-call students who visibly do not appear to be paying attention. Students who are frequently disruptive will receive grade penalties. Moreover, if laptop/tablet use proves disruptive, I reserve the right to disallow further laptop/tablet use for the remainder of the semester.

CLASS CANCELLATION POLICY:

In the hopefully unlikely event that I myself need to miss class, I will do my very best to inform you via email as soon as possible. Depending on the specific content to be

covered in the missed week, the nature of the make-up may differ. For instance, we may have a guest instructor or I may request that you post reactions to the readings to the Blackboard discussion board (and I may use that medium myself to communicate critical information about the readings and/or to respond to your reactions) or we may defer the discussion of the readings until the following week.

COURSE READINGS:

When reading an empirical article, here are some questions to keep in mind:
- Primarily *descriptive* questions:
  - What are the main points in this article? A few examples:
    - What theoretical framework is used? If you were asked to summarize the theoretical framework in 4-5 sentences, what would you say?
    - What are the major hypotheses? How do these hypotheses flow from the theoretical framework used?
    - How are the relevant constructs defined?
    - What is the research design?
    - How are the relevant constructs measured?
    - How do the author(s) analyze the data? You are in an advanced graduate-level seminar, and so it's important to sink your teeth into the results sections of empirical papers. Even in cases where the data-analytic techniques are extremely complex, try to emerge with at least a surface-level understanding of the techniques and why they are used (note that this may occasionally require you to read additional sources).
    - What are the major findings?
    - What are the implications for future research and for practice?
  - In what ways does this article relate to other articles that we have read this week or in previous weeks?
- Primarily *evaluative* questions:
  - What are the strengths of this article? For example, if the article has been cited heavily, why might this be the case?
  - What are the weaknesses of this article? How serious are they, and why do you suppose the article was published despite them?
  - Was there anything in this article that you personally found surprising or particularly interesting? Did you obtain any insights that you will apply to your own life (your work, your relationships, etc.)?

Some of the above questions will also apply to a theoretical/review article.

The reading list follows:

Note: An asterisk ("*") indicates a reading that is not required, and that may or may not be discussed in class, but that is warmly recommended for personal development. ☺

JANUARY 26:
FIRST CLASS MEETING (NO READINGS)

Introductions, discussion of syllabus, assignment of topics for student-selected readings, etc.

FEBRUARY 2:
PERSONALITY - HISTORY AND STRUCTURE

Barenbaum, N. B. & Winter, D. G. (2008). History of modern personality theory and research. In O. P. John, R. W. Robins, & L. A. Pervin (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 3-26). New York: Guilford.

Hopwood, C. J., Kotov, R., Krueger, R. F., Watson, D., Widiger, T. A., Althoff, R. R., ... & Bornovalova, M. A. (in press). The time has come for dimensional personality disorder diagnosis. In press at *Personality and mental health*.

John, O. P., Naumann, L. P., & Soto, C. J. (2008). Paradigm shift to the integrative Big Five trait taxonomy: History, measurement, and conceptual issues. In O. P. John, R. W. Robins, & L. A. Pervin (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 114-158). New York: Guilford.

FEBRUARY 9:
CRITICISMS OF, AND ALTERNATIVES TO, THE BIG FIVE

At most one student-selected reading on each of the following topics:
- Empirical paper on the generalizability (e.g., across cultures, languages, ethnicities) of the Big Five
- Empirical paper using the HEXACO framework
- Empirical paper using the Dark Triad framework
- The "narrative" or "life story" approach to personality (If you're having a hard time finding a good reading, something by Dan McAdams might be a good option.)

- Clinical Psychology approaches to personality disorders (If you're having a hard time finding a good reading, something by Thomas A. Widiger or Timothy J. Trull might be a good option.)
- Developmental (specifically, Child) Psychology approaches to personality

Note: Due to time constraints, we'll have to limit ourselves to a maximum of 5 readings in total for this week.

FEBRUARY 16:

PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT – I

Connolly, J. J., Kavanagh, E. J., & Viswesvaran, C. (2007). The convergent validity between self and observer ratings of personality: A meta-analytic review. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 15,* 110-117.

Rubenzer, S. J., Faschingbauer, T. R., & Ones, D. S. (2000). Assessing the U.S. presidents using the revised NEO personality inventory. *Assessment, 7,* 403-420.

Unnatural selection. (2009, May 21). *The Economist*, p. 84.

Vazire, S., Gosling, S. D., Dickey, A. S., & Schapiro, S. J. (2007). Measuring personality in nonhuman animals. In R. W. Robins, R. C. Fraley, & R. F. Krueger (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Personality Psychology* (pp. 190-206). New York: Guilford.

Weiner, I. B., & Greene, R. L. (2007). Ethical considerations in personality assessment. In *Handbook of Personality Assessment* (pp. 77-98). Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.

*Robins, R. W., Tracy, J. L., & Sherman, J. W. (2007). What kinds of methods do personality psychologists use?: A survey of journal editors and editorial board members. In R. W. Robins, R. C. Fraley, & R. F. Krueger (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Personality Psychology* (pp. 673-678). New York: Guilford.

*Song, A. V., & Simonton, D. K. (2007). Personality assessment at a distance. In R. W. Robins, R. C. Fraley, & R. F. Krueger (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Personality Psychology* (pp. 308-321). New York: Guilford.

FEBRUARY 23:

PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT – II

At most one student-selected reading on each of the following topics:
- Implicit personality
- Commentaries to Drasgow et al. (2010). Note that, because the commentaries are short, two commentaries should be selected.

Bosson, J. K., Swann, W. B., & Pennebaker, J. W. (2000). Stalking the perfect measure of implicit self-esteem: The blind men and the elephant revisited? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 79,* 631-643.

Drasgow, F., Chernyshenko, O. S., & Stark, S. (2010). 75 years after Likert: Thurstone was right! *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, *3*, 465-476.

Johnson, R. E., Tolentino, A. L., Rodopman, O. B., & Cho, E. (2010). We (sometimes) know not how we feel: Predicting work behaviors with an implicit measure of trait affectivity. *Personnel Psychology, 63,* 197-219.

MARCH 2:
NO CLASS TODAY

Reaction papers due via the Blackboard Discussion Board by 1:30 PM

MARCH 9:
PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT – III

At most one student-selected reading on each of the following topics:
- Balloon Analogue Risk Task (BART)
- Some other cool/unusual (yet reliable and valid) way of assessing personality

Back, M. D., Stopfer, J. M., Vazire, S., Gaddis, S., Schmukle, S. C., Egloff, B., & Gosling, S. D. (2010). Facebook profiles reflect actual personality, not self-idealization. *Psychological Science, 21,* 372-374.

Naumann, L. P., Vazire, S., Rentfrow, P. J., & Gosling, S. D. (2009). Personality judgments based on physical appearance. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 35,* 1661-1671.

Wrzus, C., & Mehl, M. R. (2015). Lab and/or field? Measuring personality processes and their social consequences. *European Journal of Personality*, *29*, 250-271.

*de Montjoye, Y.-A., Quoidbach, J., Robic, F., & Pentland, A. (2013). Predicting personality using novel mobile phone-based metrics. In A. Greenberg, W. G. Kennedy, & N. D. Bos, *Social computing, behavioral–cultural modeling and prediction* (pp. 48-55). Berlin, Germany: Springer.

*Gosling, S. D., Ko, S. J., Mannarelli, T., & Morris, M. E. (2002). A room with a cue: Personality judgments based on offices and bedrooms. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *82*, 379-398.

*Park, G., Schwartz, H. A., Eichstaedt, J. C., Kern, M. L., Kosinski, M., Stillwell, D. J., ... & Seligman, M. E. (2015). Automatic personality assessment through social media language. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *108*, 934-952.

MARCH 16:
NO CLASS TODAY (SPRING BREAK)! ☺

MARCH 23:
PUTATIVE OUTCOMES OF PERSONALITY

At most one student-selected reading on each of the following topics:
- Commentaries to Hough and Oswald (2008). Note that, because the commentaries are short, two commentaries should be selected.
- Non-workplace outcome(s) of personality

Converse, P. D., & Oswald, F. L. (2014). Thinking ahead: Assuming linear versus nonlinear personality-criterion relationships in personnel selection. *Human Performance*, *27*, 61-79.

Hough, L. M. & Oswald, F. L. (2008). Personality testing and industrial-organizational psychology: Reflections, progress, and prospects. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 1,* 272-290.

Ozer, D. J., & Benet-Martinez, V. (2006). Personality and the prediction of consequential outcomes. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *57*, 401-421.

*Ambady, N., & Rosenthal, R. (1992). Thin slices of expressive behavior as predictors of interpersonal consequences: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 111,* 256–274.

*Bogg, T., & Roberts, B. W. (2004). Conscientiousness and health-related behaviors: A meta-analysis of the leading behavioral contributors to mortality. *Psychological Bulletin, 130,* 887-919.

*Gonzaga, G. C., Campos, B., & Bradbury, T. (2007). Similarity, convergence, and relationship satisfaction in dating and married couples. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 93,* 34-48.

*Roberts, B. W., Kuncel, N. R., Shiner, R., Caspi, A., & Goldberg, L. R. (2007). The power of personality: The comparative validity of personality traits, socioeconomic status, and cognitive ability for predicting important life outcomes. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 2,* 313-345.

MARCH 30:
BEHAVIOR GENETICS AND PHYSIOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO PERSONALITY

At most one student-selected reading on each of the following topics:
- Empirical journal article on physiological approaches to personality

Baker, C. (2004). How is genetic research on behavior conducted? In *Behavioral genetics: An introduction to how genes and environments interact through development to shape differences in mood, personality, and intelligence* (pp. 38-57). American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) and The Hastings Center. Retrieved from http://www.aaas.org/sites/default/files/Chapter4.pdf

Beer, J. S., & Lombardo, M. V. (2007). Patient and neuroimaging methodologies. In R. W. Robins, R. C. Fraley, & R. F. Krueger (Eds.), *Handbook of Research Methods in Personality Psychology* (pp. 360-369). New York: Guilford.

Borkenau, P., Riemann, R., Angleitner, A., & Spinath, F. M. (2002). Similarity of childhood experiences and personality resemblance in monozygotic and dizygotic twins: A test of the equal environments assumption. *Personality and Individual Differences*, *33*, 261-269.

Bouchard, T. J. (2004). Genetic influence on human psychological traits. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 13,* 148-151.

*Buss, D.M. (2009). How can evolutionary psychology successfully explain personality and individual differences? *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 4,* 359-366.

*Ilies, R. & Judge, T. A. (2003). On the heritability of job satisfaction: The mediating role of personality. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88,* 750-759.

APRIL 6:
FAKING AND SOCIALLY DESIRABLE RESPONDING

At most one student-selected reading on each of the following topics:
- Faking bad (could be in either a workplace or non-workplace setting)
- Any sub-topic (other than faking bad) on faking or socially desirable responding (your choice!)

Fluckinger, C. D., McDaniel, M. A., & Whetzel, D. L. (2008). Review of faking in personnel selection. In M. Mandal (Ed.), *In search of the right personnel* (pp. 91-109). New Delhi, India: Macmillan.

Kuncel, N. R. & Borneman, M. J. (2007). Toward a new method of detecting deliberately faked personality tests: The use of idiosyncratic item responses. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 15,* 220-231.

LeBreton, J. M., Barksdale, C. D., Robin, J., & James, L. R. (2007). Measurement issues associated with conditional reasoning tests: Indirect measurement and test faking. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92,* 1-16.

APRIL 13:
PERSONALITY VARIABILITY - I: LONG-TERM PERSONALITY CHANGE: AGE-, EVENT-, AND INTERVENTION-RELATED CHANGE

Outlines for term papers are due via email by 1:30 PM

At most one student-selected reading on each of the following topics:
- Age-related changes in personality (The reading could focus on any age range. However, if the reading focuses on adulthood, then the reading must be more recent than Roberts & Mroczek, 2008.)
- Interventions to change personality

Jackson, J. J., Hill, P. L., Payne, B. R., Roberts, B. W., & Stine-Morrow, E. A. (2012). Can an old dog learn (and want to experience) new tricks? Cognitive training increases openness to experience in older adults. *Psychology and Aging*, *27*, 286-292.

Jayawickreme, E., & Blackie, L. E. (2014). Post-traumatic growth as positive personality change: Evidence, controversies and future directions. *European Journal of Personality*, *28*, 312-331.

Roberts, B. W., & Mroczek, D. (2008). Personality trait change in adulthood. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *17*, 31-35.

*Blackie, L. E., & Jayawickreme, E. (2014). Promoting change in posttraumatic growth research: Response to commentaries. *European Journal of Personality*, *28*(4), 351-361.

*Mroczek, D. K., Almeida, D. M., Spiro, A., & Pafford, C. (2006). Modeling intraindividual stability and change in personality. In D. K. Mroczek & T. D. Little (Eds.), *Handbook of Personality Development* (pp. 163-180). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

*Roberts, B. W., Luo, J., Briley, D. A., Chow, P. I., Su, R., & Hill, P. L. (2017). A systematic review of personality trait change through intervention. *Psychological Bulletin*, *143*, 117-141.

*Roberts, B. W., Walton, K. E., & Viechtbauer, W. (2006). Patterns of mean-level change in personality traits across the life course: A meta-analysis of longitudinal studies. *Psychological Bulletin, 132,* 1-25.

*Shiner, R. L. (2015). The development of temperament and personality traits in childhood and adolescence. In M. Mikulincer, P. R. Shaver, M. L. Cooper, & R. J. Larsen (Eds.), *APA handbook of personality and social psychology, Vol. 4: Personality processes and individual differences* (pp. 85-105). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

APRIL 20:
NO CLASS TODAY (SIOP CONFERENCE)!

I encourage those of you attending the SIOP conference to scan the conference program for presentations/posters on personality psychology, select the one or two sessions that seem most interesting to you, attend those sessions, and then write a Blackboard Discussion Board post in which you attach the slides (or a photograph of the poster, or

whatever) and briefly provide your reactions. Students who are not attending the SIOP conference can do something relatively similar: for instance, watch and then summarize a YouTube video on personality psychology featuring a <u>reputable researcher</u>. This is an <u>optional</u> assignment, but can contribute toward your participation grade in the course.

APRIL 27:

PERSONALITY VARIABILITY - II: SHORT-TERM PERSONALITY FLUCTUATION, INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN PERSONALITY VARIABILITY, AND CONTEXTUALIZED PERSONALITY (FRAME OF REFERENCE)

<u>At most one</u> student-selected reading on each of the following topics:
- Contextualized or frame-of-reference personality: <u>workplace</u> application
- Contextualized or frame-of-reference personality: <u>non</u>-workplace application
- An <u>empirical</u> study on the Cognitive-Affective Processing System (CAPS)

Dalal, R. S., Meyer, R. D., Bradshaw, R. P., Green, J. P., Kelly, E. D., & Zhu, M. (2015). Personality strength and situational influences on behavior: A conceptual review and research agenda. *Journal of Management*, *41*, 261-287.

Fleeson, W. (2004). Moving personality beyond the person-situation debate: The challenge and the opportunity of within-person variability. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, *13*, 83-87.

Mischel, W. Shoda, Y., & Mendoza-Denton, R. (2002). Situation-behavior profiles as a locus of consistency in personality. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 11,* 50-54.

*Cervone, D. (2005). Personality architecture: Within-person structures and processes. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *56*, 423-452.

*Fleeson, W., & Gallagher, P. (2009). The implications of Big Five standing for the distribution of trait manifestation in behavior: Fifteen experience-sampling studies and a meta-analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *97*, 1097-1114.

*Shaffer, J. A., & Postlethwaite, B. E. (2012). A matter of context: A meta-analytic investigation of the relative validity of contextualized and noncontextualized personality measures. *Personnel Psychology*, *65*, 445-494.

MAY 4:
SITUATIONS (CONTENT AND STRENGTH) + THE FUTURE OF PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY

Course evaluations

At most one student-selected reading on each of the following topics:
- Either situations or the future of personality psychology (whichever you prefer)

Benet-Martínez, V., Donnellan, M. B., Fleeson, W., Fraley, R. C., Gosling, S. D., King, L. A., Robins, R. W., & Funder, D. C. (2015). Six visions for the future of personality psychology. In M. Mikulincer, P. R. Shaver, M. L. Cooper, & R. J. Larsen (Eds.), *APA handbook of personality and social psychology, Vol. 4: Personality processes and individual differences* (pp. 665-689). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Meyer, R. D., Dalal, R. S., José, I. J., Hermida, R., Chen, T. R., Vega, R. P., Brooks, C. K., & Khare, V. P. (2014). Measuring job-related situational strength and assessing its interactive effects with personality on voluntary work behavior. *Journal of Management*, *40*, 1010-1041.

Serfass D.G., & Sherman R.A. (2015) Situations in 140 characters: Assessing real-world situations on Twitter. *PLoS ONE, 10(11),* e0143051.

*Buss, A. R. (1977). The trait-situation controversy and the concept of interaction. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 3,* 196-201.

*Chaplin, W. F. (1997). Personality, interactive relations, and applied psychology. In R. Hogan, J. Johnson, & S. Briggs (Eds.), *Handbook of Personality Psychology* (pp. 873-890). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

*Edwards, J. R. (2008). Person-environment fit in organizations: An assessment of theoretical progress. *The Academy of Management Annals*, *2*, 167-230.

*Meyer, R. D. (2009). Defining the nature and structure of work situations (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN, USA.

*Meyer, R. D., Dalal, R. S., & Bonaccio, S. (2009). A meta-analytic investigation into the moderating effects of situational strength on the conscientiousness-performance relationship. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *30*, 1077-1102.

*Parrigon, S., Woo, S. E., Tay, L., & Wang, T. (2017). CAPTION-ing the situation: A lexically-derived taxonomy of psychological situation characteristics. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *112*, 642-681.

*Rauthmann, J. F., Gallardo-Pujol, D., Guillaume, E. M., Todd, E., Nave, C. S., Sherman, R. A., Ziegler, M., Jones, A. B., & Funder, D. C. (2014). The situational eight DIAMONDS: A taxonomy of major dimensions of situation characteristics. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *107*, 677-718.

*Yang, Y., Read, S. J., & Miller, L. C. (2006). A taxonomy of situations from Chinese idioms. *Journal of Research in Personality, 40,* 750-778.

MAY 11:
NO CLASS (AND NO READINGS)

==Term Papers are due by 1:30 PM, via email.==

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The following sections provide additional details regarding various aspects of the course.

STUDENT-SELECTED READINGS:

This is a solo project.

Each student will individually present **two (2) readings** of his or her choice over the course of the semester. Each chosen reading *must be relevant to personality psychology* (duh!) *and more specifically the topics mentioned in the course schedule presented above, must be at least eight (8) pages long in its original form, and must have been published in a peer-reviewed journal article*. Students can certainly choose from the list of recommended readings, but must otherwise choose a reading *published during the last decade*. These criteria still provide considerable flexibility. This is *your* reading: choose something that *you* believe will be interesting and important!

It is the responsibility of the student presenting a particular reading to "educate" the rest of us because, in all likelihood, neither the other students nor I will have read what you are presenting. Thus, each student should prepare a PowerPoint presentation that includes:
- First slide:
    1. The student's name
    2. A full reference for the reading selected (in American Psychological Association style)

- Second slide (or, if needed, second and third slides):
    1. Information regarding why that particular reading was chosen
    2. Information regarding how the chosen reading fits in with the topics covered in class and the required readings in the syllabus
- Remaining slides:
    1. A summary of the chosen reading. For instance, for an empirical journal article, this should include things like: theoretical framework, hypotheses, methods used, analyses conducted, and conclusions drawn. You will have to be judicious here: for instance, although I obviously don't expect you to discuss every statistical test in the results section, you'll need to think about how to represent the main findings very efficiently but yet in sufficient depth to reveal your understanding of the nuances of the data analysis.

Please make sure that all slides are numbered. Please also post your slides to the Blackboard discussion board prior to your presentation. Please practice your presentation before class, and please time it to ensure that it does not exceed **15-16** minutes. To allow sufficient time for all presentations, I may have to stop the presentations at 16 minutes. To prevent needless delays, please download your slides to the computer **before** the beginning of class on the day on which you are presenting (Yes, this does mean that you will need to show up to class several minutes early on that day! ☺).

Each presentation will be followed by a brief (**4-5** minutes) question-and-answer session involving the other students and me.

REACTION PAPER:

This is a solo project.

Each student will read or watch at least **three (3)** autobiographies by personality psychologists. These autobiographies will be provided to students ahead of time. Subsequently, each student will submit a short reaction paper via the Blackboard Discussion Board. The reaction paper should be at least **1,000 words** long.

I am deliberately leaving the format of the reaction paper rather flexible, so as to allow creativity. However, the reaction paper must start by **listing** the 3 (or more) autobiographies the student read or watched. Moreover, it should be clear from the reaction paper that the student has actually read and pondered the autobiographies.

Some potential topics to cover in the reaction paper include:
- Were there any general themes or connections you could glean across the 3 autobiographies?

- What lessons (e.g., about careers or life) did you take away from the autobiographies?
- If you had to choose the <u>single biggest</u> contribution to personality psychology associated with <u>each</u> of the 3 people whose autobiographies you read or watched, what would it be—and why? (So, 1 contribution per person x 3 people = 3 contributions in total.)
- What most surprised you about these autobiographies?
- Which was your favorite autobiography, and why?

Reaction papers are due via the Blackboard Discussion Board by 1:30 PM on Friday, March 2.

RESEARCH PROPOSAL
(BULLETED OUTLINE + TERM PAPER):

Students may work individually (solo) or in pairs.

If students work in pairs, they <u>must</u> include a paragraph indicating what work each student did. For example: "Both students agreed on the 'big idea' and, after a quick literature review, the preliminary set of hypotheses. Scheherazade did the in-depth literature review and wrote the first draft of the introduction section. Elise wrote the first drafts of the method and anticipated analyses sections. Each student provided feedback on the section(s) drafted by the other student. Scheherazade proofread the paper. Elise checked the citations against the references."

Students are required to propose an original research project *explicitly focused on the topic of personality (or situations)*. In other words, personality (or situations) cannot simply be treated as an independent/predictor variable (or, for that matter, a dependent/outcome variable): it must be the *focus* of the paper.

In practical terms, the end product will essentially consist of the *introduction, method, and "anticipated analyses" sections* of an <u>empirical</u> *journal article.*[†]

- For the introduction section, you should first review the literature on a particular topic and then propose your own hypotheses. The introduction (from opening "hook" to hypotheses) should be structured as per Kendall et al. (2000) or similar sources. Each hypothesis should be preceded by a sound theoretical rationale. Ideally, the hypotheses would be derived logically from a single theory; certainly, a mishmash of disparate theories, each discussed only in a few sentences, should be avoided.

Kendall, P.C., Silk, J. S., & Chu, B. C. (2000). Introducing your research report: Writing the introduction. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Writing articles for publication in psychology*

journals: A handbook (pp. 41-57). New York: Cambridge University Press.

- For the method section, you should describe your sample and procedures. As part of describing the sample, you should indicate not only who the participants will be (e.g., demographic information, job types, etc.) and why, but also *how many* participants you will need. The number of participants needed can be estimated either via a formal power analysis (which you should describe *in detail*, along with appropriate citations, and which should be targeted at the most sample-size-intensive of your anticipated analyses) or, failing that, via a rule of thumb that has been articulated for the analyses you plan to conduct (which you should describe *in detail*, along with appropriate citations).

- The "anticipated analyses" section should be as close to a results section as you can get without actually having any data. Basically, you should describe the data-analytic techniques you plan to conduct, along with a brief justification for the use of these techniques. This justification becomes critical if, as is often the case, there are multiple techniques that could be used to analyze your data.

I'd also recommend consulting the American Psychological Association's "Journal Article Reporting Standards": http://www.apastyle.org/manual/related/JARS-MARS.pdf (You don't need to cover every topic suggested in the "JARS"—indeed, space constraints won't permit you to do so—but they're a good resource.)

Note that this term paper is a proposal for *basic* research. It should focus on psychological constructs and their inter-relationships. Hypotheses should ideally be derived from psychological (or other social science) theories. A paper discussing an applied research problem (e.g., "Here is a description of a consulting project I conducted for *Elegantly Wasted Winery*, Inc., comparing employee personality across the winery's Production and Sales departments") is inappropriate for this course and will receive a failing grade.

The paper topic should be *specific*. For example, whereas "conscientiousness" or even "Conscientiousness as an outcome rather than an antecedent" are too broad, something like "Reciprocal conscientiousness-deviance relationships: A cross-lagged panel study" would be more appropriate.

You should propose *original* research. Though our discipline should have a place for replications, this is not that place: the current paper is designed in part to assess your creativity and knowledge of a subject area.[††]

The idea is for students to use this opportunity to develop research proposals in areas relevant and interesting to them. In the past, many students have gone on to conduct the studies they proposed for this course and have submitted them to well-regarded journals. I would urge you to do the same.

Papers should be formatted in American Psychological Association style, as exemplified by the latest edition of the APA Publication Manual.

For both your sanity and mine, the term paper will be fairly short: **11-14**[†††] double-spaced pages of size 12 font text—that is, *excluding* title page, abstract (limit 125 words) and keywords (limit of 5 words/phrases), references, and any tables or figures you may have. You do not need a discussion section. You will need *at least 17 references* in the final paper. The short length of the paper does not preclude the necessity of being thorough.

To facilitate viable research proposals, the submission of the paper will be preceded by a *bulleted outline*. This should be **3-4** double-spaced pages in length, plus a title page and a references section (you should have at least *10 references* at this stage). The outline should include sections associated with the introduction, method and anticipated analyses. By this stage, you should also have an estimate for (and explanation of) the number of participants you will require.

I will, of course, provide extensive feedback on the outlines and term papers. The purpose of providing feedback on the term papers is (in addition to justifying the grade) to assist students with their writing/framing skills in general, and to suggest areas for improvement as well as "next steps" in the event that they wish to pursue their projects further (beyond the end of the semester).

Please proof-read your outlines and term papers carefully!

[†]I am potentially open to a theory or review paper instead of an empirical paper. If students are interested in writing a theory or review paper, they should come and talk to me about it *at least two (2) weeks prior to the due date for the outline*. I would need to see a good justification for a theory or review paper, as well as evidence that students have thought about where (i.e., in which journal) they would publish such a paper.

[††]Having said that, if students do want to do a replication study, I am potential open to that. I would need to see, *well ahead of time*: (1) A justification for which journal article would be replicated, and *why*, (2) Information that convinces me that a replication is feasible in a relatively short period of time, (3) Evidence that the students are aware of "best practices" for replicating research, and (4) Evidence that the students have thought about where (i.e., in which journal) they would publish the replication.

[†††]For certain paper topics, a paper that is slightly shorter or longer may be warranted. Students should request my permission *ahead of time* if they feel that the length guidelines would unduly interfere with the quality of their research proposal.

Outlines are due via email by 1:30 PM on Friday, April 13.
Term Papers are due via email by 1:30 PM on Friday, May 11.

GRADING SCHEME AND SCALE:

Class Participation (including Attendance)	40%
Student-Selected Readings (Two)	20%
Reaction Paper	5%
Outline for Term Paper	10%
Term Paper	25%
TOTAL	**100%**

Grade	% Range	Quality Points	Satisfactory/Passing?
A+	100.00% - 96.67%	4.00	Satisfactory/Passing
A	96.66% - 93.34%	4.00	Satisfactory/Passing
A-	93.33% - 90.00%	3.67	Satisfactory/Passing
B+	89.99% - 86.67%	3.33	Satisfactory/Passing
B	86.66% - 83.34%	3.00	Satisfactory/Passing
B-	83.33% - 80.00%	2.67	Satisfactory*/Passing
C	79.99% - 70.00%	2.00	Unsatisfactory/Passing
F	69.99% - 0.00%	0.00	Unsatisfactory/Failing

*Although a B- is a satisfactory grade for a course, students must maintain a 3.00 average in their degree program and must present a 3.00 GPA on the courses listed on the graduation application.

Note that this is certainly not an "Easy A" course. Poor work will receive a poor grade.

UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE:

George Mason University has an Honor Code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. Please familiarize yourself with the university's honor code (available at https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/full-honor-code-document/) and conduct yourself accordingly. I may use *iThenticate* or some other plagiarism detection software (http://oria.gmu.edu/ethical-conduct-of-research/) on your writing. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee. Ignorance of the honor code does not constitute an acceptable excuse for violating it.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

If you have a disability and may need academic accommodations, please contact

Disability Services at ods@gmu.edu or 703-993-2474 at the beginning of the semester. Please also come and talk to me at the beginning of the semester.

TECHNOLOGY USED IN THE COURSE:

All readings (other than the textbook) will be provided via Blackboard. Blackboard will be used to post grades, augment in-class discussion and, occasionally, to make announcements. All other electronic communication will be via email.

OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION VIA MASON E-MAIL:

Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their Mason email account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

ADD/DROP DEADLINES:

Last date to add a course or to drop a course with no tuition penalty: January 29
Last date to drop a course with a 33% tuition penalty: February 12
Last date to drop a course with a 67% tuition penalty: February 23

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus with reasonable advance notice.