



OTRP online

Office of Teaching Resources in Psychology

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

INSTRUCTOR: Mary Lou Frank, Ph.D., Professor Psychology
TEXTS: Frank, M. L. (2006) Packet of articles.

Access to the *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th ed.).

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

Historically, psychology was an outgrowth of the study of philosophy. These philosophical roots are most evident in our theories of personality development. Personality development addresses such fundamental questions as “What is the essential nature of humankind?” “How do individuals develop healthy and unhealthy personalities?” and “How do people change and evolve?” These questions are a few of the core philosophical issues that influence each clinician’s theoretical orientation and determine our therapeutic change strategies.

This course will examine a section of the major personality theories that are most influential in contemporary clinical practice. You will read original works by many of the individuals shaping the field of personality theory and psychology. In addition to the theoretical and philosophical analysis of those conceptual systems, we will discuss how the theories are applied in actual therapy situations. Each theory suggests specific conditions that should enhance the process of individual and systemic growth.

Finally, the objective of the course is to emphasize the subjectivity of each of the personality development theories. Although considerable research has been conducted to substantiate the many of the major theories, the basic philosophical premises that underlie each theory reflect the individual theorists’ view of the world. Thus, personality theory is actually a very intimate interaction between the individuals and their own personal constructions of reality. Personality theories are not only about real people, but they are by real people, with all of the complexities and contradictions that epitomize the human experience. Within that entanglement of ideas and perceptions rests the humanness of personality development theory.

The goals of this course are to provide: 1) exposure to various personality theorists 2) an opportunity to formulate your reactions to the theories, noting your own development over the semester, and 3) an opportunity to begin developing your own view of personality.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. You are responsible for reading the materials assigned before each class. In addition to using the reading as an impetus for class activities and discussions, you will be keeping a “Reactions Journal” in which you will write your reactions to each assigned reading. The journal will be collected once toward the end of the semester.

The journal entries do not need to adhere to any specified format or length. However, for you to be able to write your paper at the end of the term, you will be well served if the journal entries reflect your thoughts that have occurred about the content of the article. You are not judged or graded as to whether your reactions are “right” or “wrong,” but you need to develop substantiation for your position. Think about how these theories support or contradict your life experiences.

You will be asked to write a paper of 4-5 pages in length describing your reflections on your Reactions Journal. The paper should cover

- 1) what you perceive your development to have been over the course of the semester,
- 2) significant articles that changed, modified, or validated your perception of others (and yourself),
- 3) a set of conclusions you have made about personality because of your exposure to the readings.

The Reactions Journal and the 4-5 page paper (word-processed, double-spaced) will be collected. The paper will be graded according to the above criteria and the journal for completeness. Neatness and professional presentation are expected at the graduate level. Forty percent (40%) of your grade is based on the Reactions Journal and paper.

2. There will be one required theoretical paper for the semester. It should be original and thoughtful. Please make certain that you use a word processor. The paper will account for 40% of your grade. The following must be included in your paper.

- 1) exploration of one theoretical model,
- 2) explanation of how the model fits you and your life experience,
- 3) explanation of how the model addresses:
 - a) the change process,
 - b) psychopathology,
 - c) life situations and issues (give an example of an application),
 - d) individual development
 - e) the fate/hope of the human condition.

Your theory paper should have at least eight (8) references other than the texts. Use original (first) sources whenever possible. (Use the APA reference manual for format). The paper will not exceed five (5) word-processed, double-spaced pages in length.

*You may explore two models together, however, eclectic models need to be philosophically and clinically consistent.

If you have an alternate project idea, you will need to propose the project to your instructor.

3. Class attendance and participation account for 10% of your grade. This is measured by your willingness to contribute when asked, your consistent interest in class discussion, and your desire to offer constructive comments to classroom discussions.

4. The remaining 10% will be based on your presentation of some of your findings from your theoretical paper one of the last two class sessions. The presentation needs to be innovative, insightful, and interesting. Basically, share your thoughts with the class and have some fun with it!

READING ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1 Personality theory: An introduction	McAdams
Week 2 Psychoanalytic theory: Freud revisited	Freud (3) Blanck & Blanck Orbach & Eichenbaum
Week 3 Developmental theory, in stages	Erikson Roberts & DelVecchio
Week 4 Jung at heart	Jung (2) Bolen (1974) Woodman Hillman
Week 5 Beyond the personal	Hammer Wilber Rowan
Week 6 Systems theory: A network	Minuchin Jones & Kinnick

	Levy McLendon, McLendon, & Petr
Week 7 Gender development	Hotelling & Forest McNamara & Rickard Bolen (1989) Good, Gilbert & Scher Barrett Castellini, Nelson, Barrett, Nagy, & Quatman
Week 8 Understanding each other, understanding ourselves: Theories of diversity	Pope-Davis, D. B., Liu, W.M., Ledesma- Jones, S., & Nevitt, J. Diaz-Guerrero McNair Heinrich, Corbine, & Thomas Poston
Week 9 Behavior: A science of reason	Watson (2) Watson & Rayner Bandura Datilio & Epstein
Week 10 Cognitive theory: Thoughtful work *Theoretical paper due	Skinner Weinrach Ellis Black
Week 11 Behind the mask: Humanism	Rogers (2) Maslow (2) Taylor Dass
Week 12 Gestalt: The whole thing	Perls Rock & Palmer Bernard Henle
Week 13 Finding meaning: Existential dilemmas *Reactions journal and paper due	Bugental (2) Yalom (2) Frankl
Week 14 An integration	Andrews Viney Wrenn Seligman Duckworth et.al. Guterman Lazarus Kelly
Week 15 Give presentations to the class	

Reading List

Mary Lou Frank, Ph.D.

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- Guterman, J. T. (1996) Doing mental health counseling: A social constructionist revision. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 18*, 228-252.
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