**ESSEX COUNTY COLLEGE**

**Division of Social Sciences**

**PSY 205 – Theories of Personality**

**Course Outline**

**Course Number & Name:**  PSY 205 Theories of Personality

**Credit Hours:**  3 .0 **Contact Hours:**  3.0 **Lecture:** 3.0 **Lab:**  N/A **Other:**  N/A

**Prerequisites**:  Grade of “C” or better in PSY 101

**Co-requisites:** None **Concurrent Courses:** None

**Course Outline Revision Date:**  Fall 2010

**Course Description**: This course explores current approaches and theories of personality development and organization. Emphasizing healthy personality development, selective theories of personality that guide research as represented by the psychoanalytic, sociocultural, trait, learning, sociobiological, and existential-humanistic paradigms will be presented and critically evaluated.

**Course Goals:** Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to do the following:

1. define ‘personality’ and discuss the major concerns that personality theorists attempt to answer;

2. identify the factors that various personality theorists stress in their attempts to explain personality;

3. discuss the various questions confronting personality theorists in their attempts to present a complete picture of the human being;

4. identify the central themes of paradigms and the theorists chosen to represent the various paradigms;

5. conduct an inter/intra-comparison and contrast of the major paradigms, theorists, key terms, assumptions, and associated concepts; and

6. discuss the personality theory’s heuristic function, influence on psychotherapy, its criticisms, and miscellaneous contributions, whichever is appropriate.

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs)**: Upon successful completion of this course, students should specifically be able to do the following:

1. Define ‘personality’ and discuss the major concerns that personality theorists attempt to answer:

1.1 *describe the various ways in which personality is defined*; and

1.2 *describe the three tasks of personality theorists (i.e., what all human beings have in common, what human beings share as a common culture, and how each human is unique)*

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs)** (continued):

2. Identify the factors that various personality theorists stress in their attempts to explain personality:

2.1 *discuss the influence of genetics on personality development;*

2.2 *discuss the importance of traits in the theorists’ explanations of personality;*

2.3 *discuss the influence of one’s culture on personality development;*

2.4 *discuss the importance of learning or patterns of reward and punishment in explaining personality;*

2.5 *discuss the importance of free will and personal choice in determining one’s personality;*

2.6 *discuss the importance of unconscious mechanisms or the underlying causes of personality;*

2.7 *discuss the importance of cognitive processes or how information from the environment is perceived, retained, transformed, and acted on by a person on personality development;* and

2.8 *describe how personality is a function of genetics, traits, culture-society, learning, personal choice, unconscious mechanisms, and cognitive processes*

3. Discuss the various questions confronting personality theorists in their attempt to present a complete picture of the human being:

3.1 *discuss ‘What is the relative importance of the past, present, and future?’*;

3.2 *discuss ‘What motivates human behavior?’;*

3.3 *discuss ‘How important is the concept of self?’;*

3.4 *discuss ‘How important are unconscious mechanisms?’;*

3.5 *discuss ‘Is human behavior freely chosen or is it determined?’;*

3.6 *discuss ‘What can be learned by asking people about themselves?’;*

3.7 *discuss ‘What aspects of one’s personality are unique versus those that are common with other human?’;*

3.8 *discuss ‘How are the mind and body related?’;*

3.9 *discuss ‘What is the nature of human nature?’*; and

3.10 *discuss ‘How consistent is human behavior?’*

4. Identify the central themes of paradigms and the theorists chosen to represent the various paradigms:

4.1 *recognize that the psychoanalytic paradigm, with its focus on the analysis of the psyche, is represented by Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung;*

4.2 *recognize that the sociocultural paradigm, with its focus on the study of societal-cultural factors, is represented by Alfred Adler, Karen Horney, and Erik Erikson;*

4.3 *recognize that the trait paradigm, with its focus on the importance of traits that persons posess, is represented by Gordon Allport, Raymond B. Catttell, and Hans J. Eysenck;*

4.4 *recognize that the learning paradigm, with its focus on the importance of learning for personality development, is represented by B. F. Skinner, John Dollard, Neal Miller, Albert Bandura, and Walter Mischel;*

4.5 *recognize that the evolutionary paradigm, with its focus on the inherited tendency to engage in certain social behaviors, is represented by David M. Buss;* and

4.6 *recognize that the existential-humanistic paradigm, with its focus on free choice and personal responsibility, is represented by George Kelly, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and Rollo May*

**Measurable Course Performance Objectives (MPOs)** (continued):

5. Conduct an inter/intra-comparison and contrast of the major paradigms, theorists, key terms, assumptions, and associated concepts:

5.1 *compare and contrast the key terms, definitions, and concepts of psychoanalytic theories as represented by Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung;*

5.2 *compare and contrast the key terms, definitions, and concepts of sociocultural theories as represented by Alfred Adler, Karen Horney; and Erik Erikson;*

5.3 *compare and contrast the key terms, definitions, and concepts of trait theories as represented by Gordon Allport, Raymond B. Cattell, and Hans J. Eysenck;*

5.4 *compare and contrast the key terms, definitions, and concepts of learning theories as represented by B. F. Skinner, John Dollard, and Neal Miller;*

5.5 *identity the key terms, definitions, and concepts of evolutionary theories as represented by David Buss;*

5.6 *compare and contrast the key terms, definitions, and concepts of existential-humanistic theories as represented by George Kelly, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and Rollo May;* and

5.7 *compare and contrast the key terms, definitions, concepts of representative theorists between the psychoanalytic, sociocultural, trait, learning, evolutionary, and existential-humanistic paradigm*

6. Discuss the personality theory’s heuristic function, influence on psychotherapy, its criticisms, and miscellaneous contributions, whichever is appropriate:

6.1 *discuss each personality theory’s ability to generate new research;*

6.2 *discuss each personality theory’s influence on psychotherapy;*

6.3 *discuss each personality theory’s strengths and weaknesses;* and

6.4 *discuss each theory’s miscellaneous contributions (e.g., on religion, philosophy, education, literature, art, and the social sciences)*

**Methods of Instruction**: Instruction will consist of, but not be limited to, a combination of lectures, class discussion, demonstrations and exercises, and media/audiovisual or educational videos. Specific choice of instructional methods is left to the discretion of the instructor.

**Outcomes Assessment:** Quiz and exam questions (if applicable) are blueprinted to course objectives. Checklist rubrics are used to evaluate non-test type assessment instruments (e.g., logs, reaction papers, theme papers, oral/written presentations, and projects), for the presence of course objectives. Data collected will be analyzed to provide direction for the improvement of instruction, viability of class assignments, relevancy of assigned literature, and evaluation of instructional time spent on specific topics.

**Course Requirements:** All students are required to:

1. Maintain regular and prompt attendance to all class sessions.

2. Participate in class discussions.

3.    Complete all assignments and take all quizzes and exams that are scheduled.

4. Follow any specific class requirements mandated by the instructor.

**Methods of Evaluation:** Final course grades will be computed as follows:

**% of**

**Grading Components final course grade**

* **Attendance/Class Participation** **5 – 15%**

Attendance points will be computed based on the ratio of the number of days attending the course during a regular semester (i.e., 28 contact days). A similar procedure will be used to determine participation points.

* Logs 10 – 15%

Logs are written exercises designed to heighten student’s awareness of various psychological phenomena that is experienced, observed, read, or viewed on television. Student must relate experiences to chapters either discussed/not discussed throughout the semester.

* **Reaction Papers 15 – 20%**

Reaction papers are 2 – 3 page written exercises in which students read outside sources (e.g., newspapers, magazines, or “self-help” books in psychology), discuss their “emotional” reaction to the issue or author’s point of view, yet use critical thinking guidelines to assess claims made augmented by scholarly literature.

* **Theme Papers 20 – 25%**

Theme papers are 3 – 5 page written exercises in which students discuss how taking the course has been personally meaningful, beneficial, and relevant to their future professional aspirations. References can be cited using scholarly journals, psychologically-based magazines, or internet sites.

* **Literature Reviews/Research Papers 10 – 20%**

Literature reviews/research papers are written exercise in which students must investigate a particular topic either in the textbook or assigned by the instructor that is related to the course objectives and conduct a review of the psychological literature. Based on the literature review, students are required to develop a thesis/theme and draw conclusions on the topic researched.

* **Introspective Theme Paper/Case Study Analysis 30 – 40%**

The introspective theme paper/case study analysis is a 7 – 10 page written exercise in which students integrate and synthesize concepts to perform an in-depth analysis and demonstrate relevance of various theories to oneself as an emerging theoretical orientation or professional identity. If a

child or teenager, adult person(s) or professional is interviewed, students must analyze, synthesize, integrate, and demonstrate relevance of concepts to course objectives.

**Methods of Evaluation** (continued)**:**

**% of**

**Grading Components final course grade**

* **Written/Oral Presentation of Child, Teenager, Adult, 15 – 25%**

**Agency, or Professional in the Field**

The written/oral presentation of the interview of a child, teenager, adult, agency, or professional requires the student to gather information and to determine its relevance to concepts and theories presented in class and related to course objectives.

* **Oral Presentations 15 – 20%**

Oral presentations are based on a topic either discussed/not discussed during the semester, that is relevant to the study of psychology and related to course objectives. The instructor may require a written outline to augment the oral presentation.

* **Quizzes 10 – 15%**

Quizzes will provide evidence of the extent to which students have met course objectives.

* Exams (number of exams and dates specified by the instructor) **20 – 30%**

Exams will provide evidence of the extent to which students have mastered and synthesize course material and have met course objectives.

**Note**: The instructor will determine (as appropriate) the specific components for the course and provide specific weights which lie in the above-given ranges at the beginning of the semester.

**Academic Integrity:** Dishonesty disrupts the search for truth that is inherent in the learning process and so devalues the purpose and the mission of the College.  Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* plagiarism – the failure to acknowledge another writer’s words or ideas or to give proper credit to sources of information;
* cheating – knowingly obtaining or giving unauthorized information on any test/exam or any other academic assignment;
* interference – any interruption of the academic process that prevents others from the proper engagement in learning or teaching; and
* fraud – any act or instance of willful deceit or trickery.

Violations of academic integrity will be dealt with by imposing appropriate sanctions.  Sanctions for acts of academic dishonesty could include the resubmission of an assignment, failure of the test/exam, failure in the course, probation, suspension from the College, and even expulsion from the College.

**Student Code of Conduct:** All students are expected to conduct themselves as responsible and considerate adults who respect the rights of others. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. All students are also expected to attend and be on time all class meetings. No cell phones or similar electronic devices are permitted in class. Please refer to the Essex County College student handbook, *Lifeline*, for more specific information about the College’s Code of Conduct and attendance requirements.

**Course Content Outline:** based on the text by Olson, M. H. & Hergenhahn, B. R. (2011). *An Introduction to Theories of Personality* (8th edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc./Prentice Hall.

Note: It is the instructor’s discretion to recommend other references, as appropriate (e.g., student handbooks, textbooks, resources pertaining to careers in psychology, or style/writing manuals).

**Unit Areas/Topic**

1 Introduction – Defining personality, concerns of personality theory, proposed determinates of personality, questions confronting the personality theorist, and the role of the scientific enterprise

2 Psychoanalytic Paradigm – Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung

3 Sociocultural Paradigm – Alfred Adler, Karen Horney, and Erik Erikson

4 Trait Paradigm – Gordon Allport, Raymond B. Cattell, and Hans J. Eysenck

5 Learning Paradigm – B. F. Skinner, John Dollard and Neal Miller, Albert Bandura, and Walter Mischel

6 Evolutionary Paradigm – David Buss

7 Existential-Humanistic Paradigm – George Kelly, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and Rollo May

8 Miscellaneous Personality Theorists – Harry Stack Sullivan and Erick Fromm (sociocultural paradigm), Edward Wilson (sociobiological paradigm), and Henry A. Murray (existential-humanistic paradigm)

**Note:** In PSY 205, the Introduction and Miscellaneous Personality Theorists Units notwithstanding, the instructor must cover 4 out of the other units (i.e., Units 2 – 7) listed above minimally in any reasonable order throughout the semester/term. For paradigms with only two theorists, *both* theorists should be covered; for paradigms with three or more theorists, *at least* two theorists should be covered. Theorists ‘paired’ together (e.g., John Dollard and Neal Miller) are considered as ‘one’ theorist because they share similar views about personality. Also, the instructor may include additional areas based on his/her expertise and/or interest.