Personality Psychology

Top Hat Course Code: : 877899

Psychology 236   Section 1   Spring 2020

Location: All class sessions will be held in 118 Psychology Building

Time: Tuesday and Thursday 10:20 – 11:10 am
(Final exam time: Friday 5/1/20; 7:45-9:45 am; 118 Psychology Building)

Professor: *Tim-Goth-Owens, Ph.D.*
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Campus Office: 110D Psychology Building

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 9:00 – 10:00 am, and by appointment

Course Assistance:

Graduate Teaching Assistant: *Victor Nahuel Felix de Souza Keller*
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Hours to be announced during the first week of class

Undergraduate Assistance: *Serena Wang*
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Hours to be announced during the first week of class

Phoebe Schorer
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Office and office hours: 349 Giltner Hall
Hours to be announced during the first week of class

Prerequisites: PSY 101

Overview: In the words of the noted personality scientist Dan McAdams (McAdams, 2015),

 In its full form, *personality is a developing configuration of psychological individuality that expresses a person's recognizable uniqueness, wherein life stories are layered over salient goals and values which are layered over dispositional traits*… To become fully human is to …(1) play out fully and effectively your signature *traits* in the many social stages where you perform; (2) to pursue your most cherished *goals* and *values* to the full extent you can pursue them; and (3) to narrate and live a *story* about your life that gives your life a full sense of meaning and purpose. To know yourself in full, then, is to know (and know how to live with) your traits, your goals and values, and your stories. (p.8).

We will investigate McAdams's theory of personality development and the scientific data that support it. This is not a pop psychology approach to the topic of personality, but rather, it is built on an edifice of scientific investigation. The course will examine the way personality science contributes to understanding how human personality may have evolved and how it is expressed across situations, over developmental time, and in cultural context.

 Objectives: At the end of this course, I hope you will have gained an appreciation of (1) both the lawful nature and the complexity of patterns of human personality; (2) why individual differences in personality exist; (3) what the different levels of personality are (in the McAdams theory – *social actor, motivated agent, autobiographical author*); (4) how the different levels of personality develop over the lifespan; and (5) how personality science helps us to understand an individual human life.

Disclaimer
Elements of this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any changes to this syllabus will be provided to the students in writing; the syllabus will be updated to reflect any changes and uploaded to D2L. You will be notified in class and via D2L if there are any changes.

Required technology and text:

Top Hat
We will be using the Top Hat (www.tophat.com) classroom response system in class. You will be able to submit answers to in-class questions using Apple or Android smartphones and tablets, laptops, or through text message. Additionally, we will be using the custom-built interactive textbook *Durbin. C.E. (2019)* **Personality** (ISBN: **978-1-77412-012-5**) within Top Hat for this class.

Top Hat requires a paid subscription, and a full breakdown of all subscription options available can be found here: www.tophat.com/pricing. When you respond to the request to join the class your will see the link that allows you to purchase the textbook and access to the Top Hat system for the course. I believe that it will cost you about $65 for lifetime access to the textbook and 4-month access to the course. If you purchase access to Top Hat that one fee gives you Top Hat access for all of your courses that use Top Hat.

You can visit the Top Hat Overview (https://success.tophat.com/s/article/Student-Top-Hat-Overview-and-Getting-Started-Guide) within the Top Hat Success Center which outlines how you will register for a Top Hat account, as well as providing a brief overview to get you up and running on the system.

An email invitation will be sent to you by email, but if don't receive this email, you can register by simply visiting our course website: https://app.tophat.com/e/877899. Note: our Course Join Code is 877899

Should you require assistance with Top Hat at any time, due to the fact that they require specific user information to troubleshoot these issues, please contact their Support Team directly by way of email (support@tophat.com), the in app support button, or by calling 1-888-663-5491.

You will be wasting your time and likely to get a less than useful response if you contact Dr. Goth-Owens or a course assistant about Top Hat problems. Contact Top Hat immediately; you usually get a quicker response by calling them rather than by e-mailing them.

D2L

The course will make extensive use of MSU's course management system, D2L. If you are new to MSU or have not used D2L, see Introductory video: D2L at MSU.   I will use the system to post course materials, track grades, and communicate with the class.

Readings

Required: Durbin, C.E. (2019). *Personality.* This is an e-text written specifically for and published by Top Hat.

Recommended: Much of what I present in class follows McAdams, D.P. (2015). *The Art and Science of Personality Development.* New York: The Guilford Press. **This book is required reading** *only* **for the Honors Option.** For all others, read it only to enhance your learning of the course content; it is not required and not covered in test questions, unless it is material that I have presented in class.

There are several different journal articles that you will be required to read. These are listed in the course schedule and are either posted on D2L or assigned to you on our Top Hat course site (code 877899)

Class format*:* Class sessions will consist of formal lectures, discussion, tests, and in-class exercises.

Attendance: Please refer to the section below about the daily quizzes that will be administered in class. Absences will affect your grade and your learning. Lectures and in-class activities will sometimes overlap with material presented in your text, but not always. There will be a substantial number of questions on exams that you will be able to answer only if you have access to notes from class. The course materials I place on D2L will be outlines that will not take the place of your own personal notes. Neither my course assistants nor I will provide you with any written material beyond what I will make available on D2L. Beyond that, you decide whether you wish to attend class. You get to miss four class sessions without your grade being affected. Please use these absences wisely. If you blow off four classes early on and then illness, family tragedy, or something very important occurs, you do not get to undo the fact that you already used your absences. **You do not need to inform me of absences, provide excuses for missed classes, or have conversations with me about excusing absences. Actually, I am asking you not to have such conversations with me.**

Note: I will occasionally use the Top Hat platform to take attendance and verify that you were actually in the classroom for the attendance check. You will see attendance reports on Top Hat, but these are for my information only. If, however, I notice that you have answered in class question from a location other than the classroom, I will view these behavior as cheating. The first time it happens, I will simply point it out to you and remind you not to do it again. The second time it happens you will be referred to University channels for your violation of academic honesty. You will fail PSY 236.

Classroom expectations for you and me: *Be in class and ready to fully engage from 10:20 – 11:40 am from the beginning to the end of the semester. Read assigned readings prior to class and be prepared to ask and answer questions about the reading. Please expect to give your **full** attention to your fellow students, to me, and to the activities of PSY 236-001. If your behavior is anything less than respectful and engaged, there is a reasonably good chance that I will draw your attention to your problematic level of respect and engagement. This feedback process will be awkward and uncomfortable for me and it may be aversive to you as well. (If there is some type of health-related emergency underway for someone important to you and you are expecting important messages concerning this emergency during class, please inform me of that circumstance prior to the start of class.) You are expected to complete each assigned reading prior to the class session for which it is assigned*

Communication: Victor, Phoebe, Serena and I are available to assist you with any aspect of this course. We want you to be successful and want you to let us know if you encounter difficulties. We have office hours, although it is best to let us know ahead of time if you plan to attend office hours. You can email us. We will respond within 24 hours. Please be aware that we may not keep the same hours as you and an email you send at 3 am on the day of a test will probably not get a response prior to the 10:20 am test. Please use the message header **PSY-236** in the subject line of your email so that we recognize the email if it gets sent to a spam folder. Please note, many of the questions you have about the course are addressed in this syllabus. Please check your syllabus before emailing a question. If the answer is in the syllabus, our response to your email will be to tell that you can find the answer in the syllabus.

Assignments: There are four different types of activity that contribute to your final grade for the course (prior to any adjustments for extra credit, which will be explained below).

1) Assigned reading with embedded review questions (13.5% of your grade). I have assigned all 13 chapters of the Durbin text (embedded in top Hat) plus seven (7) additional articles. Embedded within the chapters/articles or immediately following the chapters/articles you will find 4-6 questions per reading assignment. Each question is worth .5 points and you can earn up to 54 course points (13.5% of your course grade) by correctly answer these questions prior to their due date. At some point you may notice that there are more than 108 questions (54 course points) for you to answer. This allows you to possibly get the full 54 points, even if you incorrectly answer some questions along the way.

The chapters and associated questions will be assigned on Top Hat at least four weeks prior to the date on which they are due. When answering the questions, you will not encounter a timer or any restrictions on how you figure out the answer to the question. However, you only get one try and the first answer you submit will be the answer that is counted toward your course grade. Each chapter and its questions are due at 10:15 am on the day in which the topic will be addressed in class. These due dates will all be posted on the D2L calendar in our course website. Because you will have at least four weeks available to complete theses brief assignments and because there are extra questions that allow you to make up for missed questions (to some extent), I will not consider any explanations for failing to meet a deadline. If you don't get the work done on time, you do not get credit for it. Please plan accordingly.

2) In-class quizzes (16.5% of your grade) . These tasks allow you to earn 66 course points (16.5% of your grade).   I will ask three questions per class session, interspersed throughout the lecture. Each question is worth one point for that day's quiz. For each question you earn .75 points for a correct answer and .25 points for simply answering. This turns out to be a way of getting credit for attendance. If I discover and unusually high number of incorrect answers, I will assume that we need to review the material and you will be given an additional opportunity to correctly answer the question. Note that many of these questions, or questions very similar to them, will appear on your course exams. *Your four lowest quiz scores will be dropped. Beyond that there will be no opportunities to make up work.* This policy amounts to you being able to miss four of 28 class sessions without a grade penalty.

3) Writing exercises (15% of your grade) : You will have three written assignments for this course. Details of the assignments will be posted on D2L. You will take a *Big 5 personality inventory* online (Link to Big 5 test) and write some brief comments about the results of that test (if you do not wish to disclose information about yourself, you can use the available option of taking it as an observer of someone you know well). This task is worth 5% of your course grade (20 points). Next you will take the *Implicit Association Test* (Link to Implicit Association Test) and write some brief comments about the results of this test. If you have a personal or philosophical objection to taking this test and alternative assignment will be provided. This task also is worth 20 points (5% of your course grade). Your third written assignment will be to choose yourself or someone whom you know well, describe a vignette from that person's life and

use examples to illustrate what the vignette suggests about that person's traits, motives, goals, values, and personal narrative. This task is worth 20 points or 5% of your course grade.

Please be clear about University policies relating to limits of confidentiality and be sure that you do not, in writing your papers, tell us something that we are obliged to report, unless you are comfortable with that process. See the language below in the syllabus regarding mandated reporting within the MSU community.

You will have access to these tasks throughout the course and ample opportunities to complete them on time. It is highly unlikely that I would accept late work for any of these assignments. If you encounter a technical problem in submitting your work to D2L, I will only consider your problem if you show evidence that you immediately phoned the D2L help desk when you encountered the problem and the problem occurred at least two hours prior to the deadline. In other words, if you wait until the last minute to submit the work and fail to allow yourself time to address any technical problems, I will be unlikely to accept your late work.

4) Exams (55% of your grade) .   There are three exams administered in class using Top Hat. This means that you will take the exams on your own phone, tablet, or laptop. The three exams constitute 55% of your course grade. See the addendum at the end of this syllabus for technical details about using Top Hat to take exams. Here are the details of the three exams:

Exam 1 is on Tuesday of Week 5 (2/4/20), has 60 points, and is 15% of your grade.   The 30 questions (each worth 2 course points) will be drawn from the reading review and in-class review questions.   Note that when I say the questions come from in-class lecture quizzes and reading review questions, I am only saying that I will ask about the same content. I am not saying I will ask the exact same question in the same language. You will need to understand the question that you answered when you first encountered it and not simply recall the correct answer.

Exam 2 is on Tuesday of Week 10 (3/17/20), has 70 points, and is 17.5% of your grade. The 35 questions (each worth 2 course points) will be drawn from the reading review and in-class review questions.
In addition, the content of five questions from the first exam will be repeated on this exam. Note that when I say the questions come from Exam 1, in-class lecture quizzes, and reading review questions, I am only saying that I will ask about the same content. I am not saying I will ask the exact same question in the same language. You will need to understand the question that you answered when you first encountered it and not simply recall the correct answer.

Exam 3 (final exam) is on the Friday of finals week, Friday 5/1/20 from 7:45 – 9:45 am, has 90 points, and is 22.5% of your grade. The 45 questions (each worth 2 course points) will be drawn from the reading review and in-class review questions. In addition, the content of 15 questions from each of the first two exams will be repeated on this exam Note that when I say the questions come from previous exams, in-class lecture quizzes, and reading review questions, I am only saying that I will ask about the same content. I am not saying I will ask the exact same question in the same language. You will need to understand the question that you answered when you first encountered it and not simply recall the correct answer.

Missed Exams.   *Tests can be made up only for documented family emergencies or documented illnesses.* **To make up a test for one of these unusual circumstances you must send me an email informing me of your absence** *prior* **to the beginning of the class period during which the test will be administered.** Oversleeping, failure to set an alarm clock, being confused about the date of the exam, and similar explanations will not be grounds for making up an exam. If you arrive late for an exam and another student has already completed the exam and left the room, I reserve the option of not allowing you to take the exam. Under all these circumstances, you will receive a score of zero for the missed exams. *Make-up tests may be in short answer, rather than multiple choice format.*

Grades: *A total of 400 points is available for the course. The points are distributed as follows:*

> **Exams (in class, administered via Top Hat):** 220 points (55% of course grade)
>> Exam #1 30 questions - 60points (15% of course grade)
>> Exam #2 35 questions - 70 points (17.5% of course grade)
>> Exam #3 45questions - 90 points (22.5% of course grade)
>
> **Writing assignments:** 3 assignments totaling 60 points (15% of course grade)
> **Assigned reading review questions (administered via Top Hat:** 54 points(13.5% of course grade)
> **In-class quizzes (administered via Top Hat):** 66 points (16.5% of course grade)

Extra credit: There are two extra credit options and the details will be posted on D2L during the second week of class. One involves participation in Psychology department research and the other involves reading additional materials for the course and completing a quiz on D2L. You can raise your course grade by 2%, which translates to 8 course points in our 400-point grading scheme.

Grading scale:
Final course grades are dependent upon a straight percentage of points earned during the course. There is no "curve', which means that no one in the course is statistically required to do poorly and everyone in the course is eligible (and expected) to earn a 4.0 for the semester.

4.0	90 – 100%	360 – 400 points
3.5	85 – 89%	340 – 359 points
3.0	79 – 84%	316 – 339 points
2.5	72 – 78%	288 – 315 points
2.0	67 – 71%	268 – 287 points
1.5	62 – 66%	248 – 267 points
1.0	57 – 61%	228 – 247 points
0.0	<57%	<228points

At the end of the semester, percentages of <u>total</u> points earned that include a fraction that is at least 4/10 of a percentage point will be raised to the next whole percentage point. For example, if you earn 89.4% to 89.9% of the course points, I will raise that score to 90%. But if you earn between 89.000001 and 89.399999% your percentage will not be rounded up to 90%. Beyond that adjustment, I will not raise students' grades at the end of the semester simply because they are within a point or two of a higher grade, or worked really hard, or believe they deserve a higher grade, or will suffer adverse consequences because of the grade they earned, etc. Please do not ask. Also, it is also a violation of University standards for me to allow an individual student an opportunity to earn a few extra points by doing some additional work at the end of the semester, unless that opportunity is available to everyone in the class. Please do not ask me to do this either. I promise you right now that the answer is "no".

Errors in reporting your grades: If we fail to record a score on for a test that you have taken, please inform me or a course assistant (by e-mail) as soon as you become aware of the error. We will fix it if we have made an error. D2L tracks all student login information. It keeps a record of when you log in to D2L and when you log out. If you tell us that you had a problem with submitting an assignment, we will be able to access the D2L log to see when you attempted to submit the work.

Honors option: There is an opportunity for 20 students to complete an Honors Option. The details of this option will be posted on D2L.

Academic Honesty: Article 2.III.B.2 of the <u>Student Rights and Responsibilites (SRR)</u> states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In

addition, the Psychology Department adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.)

Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Students who violate MSU academic integrity rules may receive a penalty grade, including a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also the Academic Integrity webpage.)

You are expected to adhere to the Spartan Code of Honor, which is as follows: *"As a Spartan, I will strive to uphold values of the highest ethical standard. I will practice honesty in my work, foster honesty in my peers, and take pride in knowing that honor is worth more than grades. I will carry these values beyond my time as a student at Michigan State University, continuing the endeavor to build personal integrity in all that I do."*

Limits to confidentiality: Essays, journals, and other materials submitted for this class are generally considered confidential pursuant to the University's student record policies. However, students should be aware that University employees, including instructors, may not be able to maintain confidentiality when it conflicts with their responsibility to report certain issues to protect the health and safety of MSU community members and others. As the instructor, I must report the following information to other University offices (including the Department of Police and Public Safety) if you share it with me:

--Suspected child abuse/neglect, even if this maltreatment happened when you were a child,

--Allegations of sexual assault or sexual harassment when they involve MSU students, faculty, or staff, and

--Credible threats of harm to oneself or to others.

These reports may trigger contact from a campus official who will want to talk with you about the incident that you have shared. In almost all cases, it will be your decision whether you wish to speak with that individual. If you would like to talk about these events in a more confidential setting you are encouraged to make an appointment with the MSU Counseling Center.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities [from the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)]: Michigan State University is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services and activities. Requests for accommodations by persons with disabilities may be made by contacting the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities at 517-884-RCPD or on the web at rcpd.msu.edu. Once your eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, you will be issued a Verified Individual Services Accommodation ("VISA") form. Please present this form to me at the start of the term and/or two weeks prior to the accommodation date (test, project, etc.). Requests received after this date may not be honored.

Course schedule (Subject to change)

Week	Day	Date	Reading	Topic	Assignments due
1	T	1/7	Syllabus	Course introduction	
	Th	1/9	Ch. 1	What does it mean to know a person?	
2	T	1/14	Self & Identity article	*Begin in-class quizzes with Top Hat* Intro to McAdams theory and key concepts	Self & Identity questions 10:15am
	Th	1/16	Psychodynamic Perspective article	The contributions of Freud and Erikson	Psychodynamic perspective questions 10:15 am
	Sunday	**1/20**			**Big 5 paper due in D2L assignments folder before 11:59 pm.**
3	T	1/21	Ch.2	The evolution of personality	Chapter 2 questions 10:15 am
	Th	1/23	Ch.12	The cultural context of personality	Chapter 12 questions 10:15 am
4	T	1/28		Implicit Association Test (IAT)	
	Th	1/30		Behavioral genetics and personality	
5	**T**	**2/4**	**Exam #1**	**See syllabus for details of test content**	
	Th	2/6	Ch.3	The scientific study of personality: Part 1	Chapter 3 questions 10:15 am
	Sunday	**2/10**			**Implicit Association Test paper due in D2L assignments folder before 11:59 pm**
6	T	2/11	Ch. 4	Introduction to traits	Chapter 4 questions 10:15 am
	Th	2/13		The scientific study of personality: Part 2 – measurement and construct validity	
7	T	2/18	Ch. 5	Social/emotional traits 1: extraversion/positive emotionality	Chapter 5 questions 10:15 am
	Th	2/20		Social/emotional traits 2: neuroticism/negative emotionality	
8	T	2/25	Ch.6	Self-regulation traits 1: Conscientiousness	Chapter 6 questions 10:15 am
	Th	2/27		Self-regulation traits 2: Agreeableness	
	M-F	**3/2-3/7**		*SPRING BREAK*	
9	T	3/10	Ch. 7	The five-factor model (FFM)	Chapter 7 questions 10:15 am
	Th	3/12	Personality traits article	The person-situation debate	Personality traits questions 10:15 am
10	**T**	**3/17**	**Exam #2**	**See syllabus for details of test content**	
	Th	3/19	Ch. 10	Motives/goals/values: Getting ahead	Chapter 10 questions 10:15 am

11	T	3/24	Motives and goals article	Motives /goals/values: Getting along	Motives and goals article questions 10:15 am
	Th	3/26	Ch.11	Development of narrative identity	Chapter 11 questions 10:15 am
12	T	3/31	Narrative identity article	The life story: Its measurement and dimensions	Narrative Identity questions 10:15 am
	Th	4/2		The life story: Its correlates	
13	T	4/7	Ch. 8	Why personality matters 1	Chapter 8 questions 10:15 am
	Th	4/9		Why personality matters 2	
	Sunday	**4/12**			**Personality analysis paper due in D2L assignments folder by 11:59 pm**
14	T	4/14	Ch.9	Personality development in childhood	Chapter 9 questions 10:15 am
	Th	4/16	Personality stability and change article	Personality development in adulthood	Personality stability and change questions 10:15 am
15	T	4/21	Personality change – Hudson and Fraley article	Self-directed personality change	Hudson & Fraley questions 10:15 am
	Th	4/23	Personality change – Roberts et al article	Personality change through psychotherapy	Roberts et al questions 10:15 am
	Friday	**4/24**			**All extra credit must be completed by 5:00 pm**
Final Exam	**Friday**	**5/1**	**7:45-9:45 am 118 Psychology**	**See syllabus for details of test content**	

Technical assistance I: D2L

MSU D2L Help-Line: 1-800-500-1554 (toll-free) or 517-432-6200 (local) D2L website: D2L HELP!!!

Any concerns regarding the D2L system should be directed to the MSU Help-Line. Put these numbers in your cell phone. If they are only in D2L and you can't get into the D2L site, then you have a problem.

Use this link to see a video demonstration of MSU's course management software system, Desire2 Learn (D2L): Introductory video: D2L at MSU

Technical assistance II: Top Hat

The Top Hat course code for PSY 236-001 (spring, 2020) is 877899

1. Navigate to Top Hat instructions.
2. Or, if you prefer - Top Hat Student Quick Start Guide
3. Follow the instructions on the page to either log into your Top Hat account that you created for another course or to create a new account. Notice that, once you have an account, you can follow steps to use it on any of your devices. Once you have an account it is good for all classes using Top Hat – you do not need a new account for each class.
4. Follow the instructions to pay for your account; we are using Top Hat Classroom and the Top Hat e-text *Personality*, written by C. Emily Durbin.
5. Follow the instructions to join the course (our course code is *877899*).
6. Use Top Hat support whenever you encounter a difficulty. So far, I have found them to be very responsive and helpful. You have paid for their services. You can contact them directly by way of email (support@tophat.com), this link(Top Hat Support), or calling 1-888-663-5491.

You will be wasting your time and likely to get a less than useful response if you contact Dr. Goth-Owens or a course assistant about Top Hat problems. Contact Top Hat immediately; you usually get a quicker response by calling them rather than by e-mailing them.