



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Psychology

UBC Psychology
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Syllabus PSYC 305A: Personality Psychology (Fall 2023)

Logistics at a Glance

Class Time:

Section 1: Mondays, Wednesday, & Fridays (11.00am – 11.50am)

Section 2: Mondays, Wednesday, & Fridays (12.00nn – 12.50pm)

Class Location:

September 6th – September 22nd: [Norm Theatre](#)

September 25th – December 6th: Room 360 [MacMillan Building](#)

Instructional Team:

Dr. Friedrich Götz (he/him/his); Professor (please call me: Dr. Götz)

Office: Room 3519 [Douglas T. Kenny Building \(3rd floor\)](#)

In-Person Student Hours: Wednesdays (2.00pm – 3.00pm; Office)

Online Student Hours: Wednesdays (3.00pm – 3.30pm; [Zoom Room](#))

Email: friedrich.goetz@ubc.ca

Gordon Heltzel (he/him/his); Teaching Assistant (please call me: Gordon)

Office: Room 3605 (3rd Floor) Douglas T. Kenny Building

Student Hours: Monday 1:00-2:45pm [Week 1, 3, 6, 8, 13]

Email: gheltzel@psych.ubc.ca

Yangyilin Guo (she/her/hers); Teaching Assistant (please call me: Yilin)

Office: Room 3512 (3rd Floor) Douglas T. Kenny Building

Student Hours: Thursdays 2:00-3:45pm [Week 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12]

Email: yangyilin.guo@ubc.ca

Canvas:

Section 1: <https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/125922>

Section 2: <https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/125923>

Syllabus Structure

1. Welcome



- 2. Course Concept**
- 3. Format & Logistics**
- 4. Contents**
- 5. Values, Policies & Resources**
- 6. Syllabus Version & Potential Changes**

1. WELCOME

A very warm welcome to *PSYC 305A: Personality Psychology*. I am glad that you are joining my course and hope that you will have an insightful, enriching, and enjoyable experience in this class.

In this course, together we will adopt a multitude of different viewpoints and approaches to tackle one of the most vexing questions of humanity: who are we? As who we are is strongly connected to where we are (more on that in Week 10), who came before us (more on that in Week 6) and what we observe in ourselves and those around us (more on that in Week 8), a natural starting point is to reflect upon the place where our course will take place: The UBC Vancouver Point Grey Campus is situated on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the *xʷməθkʷəy̓əm* (Musqueam) people. As such, this land has been a place where humans have learned, taught, and shared knowledge, culture, and history for thousands of years and it will serve the same purpose for us.

As we go through this course together, we will strive to create an open, respectful, and inclusive learning environment that celebrates diversity and welcomes each and every one as they are. In trying to achieve this, it is important to be mindful of the fact that we all are bringing your very own personal motivations, experiences, and perspectives to this class. Given the topics covered in this course (which – amongst others – include the impact of previous and traumatic experiences on current thoughts, actions, and feelings), you may at times be confronted with issues (through the instructional team, fellow students, and/or class materials) that are sensitive, controversial and/or personally triggering. Also, there may – and likely will – be times when you will disagree with views and interpretations of others in this class. Such disagreement is not only fine it is actually part of what makes a good class. However, to ensure a welcoming, supportive, equitable, inclusive and safe learning environment it is imperative that we treat each other with respect and kindness. Always, but especially when we may see and interpret matters differently. In other words, our goal is not to always agree, but rather to disagree without being dismissive, threatening, or alienating.

To create an educational experience in this spirit, which empowers all students to flourish is one of the central goals of PSYC 305A. However, this requires teamwork and we can only accomplish it together.



So please join us in working toward a class culture where everyone feels appreciated and welcomed. If at any point you feel offended, threatened, or alienated in our class, please let a member of your instructional team know. Likewise, if at any point, you feel that I (Dr. Götz) am failing to create an inclusive, supportive, and safe space in this class, please let me or one of your TAs know. If you want to learn more, you can find a [comprehensive list of resources from the Equity and Inclusion Office here](#). We also invite you to check out the specific [diversity initiatives that are happening in the Department of Psychology](#). If you feel that there is a course issue that interferes with your learning, please let us know. You can also [contact the Ombudsperson](#) for help.

1.1 MEET YOUR INSTRUCTIONAL TEAM

Professor

Dr. Friedrich Götz: My name is Dr. Friedrich Götz (pronouns: he/him/his) and I am an Assistant Professor in Social/Personality Psychology at the Department of Psychology at UBC Vancouver. I am originally from Germany and grew up bouncing around the country until my family settled in the greater Braunschweig area (in-between Hamburg and Frankfurt). After high school I spent 6 months working at a Tsunami orphanage in Southern Thailand, where I caught a travel bug and a fascination with foreign cultures, languages, and people that have not left me since. Back in Germany, I completed my BSc in Psychology at the University of Konstanz (with exchange semesters and research stays



in Hong Kong, Stockholm, Vienna, and on Long Island) and then moved to England, where I did my MPhil and PhD at the University of Cambridge, studying the causes and consequences of regional personality differences. I joined UBC in 2021 and am still struck by the beauty of this part of the world and the friendliness and openness of the people living here. In addition to teaching PSYC 305A, I have taught undergraduate courses on test design and psychometrics, workshops on geographical analysis with psychological data, summer school classes on developmental and social psychology and a graduate seminar on the geographical dimension of personality

and social psychology. Aside from teaching, I am passionate about research and mentorship and am very fortunate to lead the [PANGEA \(Personality and Geographical Ambiance\) Lab](#) here at UBC. Together with my fantastic lab members, I am studying diverse questions related to personality and/or geography, ranging from how regional person-environment-fit affects individual well-being, to who is most likely to comply with Covid-19 restrictions (and why), to how artificial intelligence may help us to design effective personality measures. If you want to know more about my research, please ask! Outside of the university, I enjoy forest runs and long beach walks, dark chocolate, old



movies and life stories in any form and shape. I am looking forward to meeting you this term!

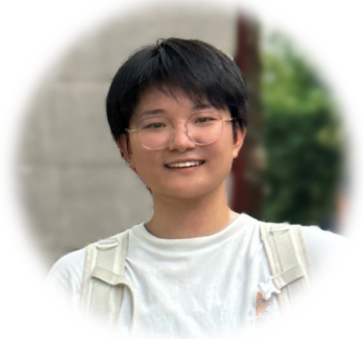
Teaching Assistants

Gordon Heltzel: My name is Gordon (he/him/his). I'm in the 6th and final year of my PhD in Social & Personality Psychology here at UBC. I'm originally from a small town in southern Indiana (about 15 minutes from Louisville, Kentucky), and did my undergraduate degree at nearby Indiana University where I majored in Psychology and minored in Animal Behaviour. After graduating, I moved to Vancouver to study questions related to morality, politics, emotions, and the self under the tutelage of Drs. Kristin Laurin and Jessica Tracy. My favorite things in life are dogs (especially mine, lil René—named after Magritte, not Descartes), Oreos, Kurt Vonnegut (my favorite other person from Indiana— inquire further for a full list), tunes (the Beatles, garage rock, underground hip-hop), houseplants and other things nature.



Looking forward to a good semester!

Yangyilin Guo: My name is Yilin (she/her/hers), and I'm a first year Master's student in the Social/Personality area co-supervised by Dr. Friedrich Götz and Dr. Steven Heine. I am originally from the province of Henan in China and moved to Montreal at the age of 9 until I finished my bachelor's degree in psychology at McGill University. My research interests broadly lie in geographical and cultural psychology (e.g., exploring cultural and regional differences between North American and East Asian countries and how these differences correlate with people's behaviors and well-being). Outside of research, I love travelling and discovering different cultures, petting dogs/cats/any fluffy animals, playing basketball, and eating tasty foods. Feel free to drop by my office hours to talk about the course, my research, grad school, or anything else!



1.2 WELL-BEING AND WORK/LIFE-BALANCE POLICY

Your schoolwork is important and grades matter. However, your academic performance will be better if you take care of your personal well-being and mental health. So please do this – both for your own happiness, and for your grades. One important and helpful step you may choose to take is to set designated times in your life for working and NOT working. We know this can be difficult to do, but we strongly encourage you to try. To



model this work/life balance, I (Dr. Götz) commit to 1) responding to any student emails within 72 hours of receiving them (for details on communication and email etiquette see p.13f., section 3.3) and 2) NOT responding to any student emails after 5pm on weekdays or at all on weekends.

Your individual circumstances may vary in how difficult or easy it is for you to implement this (and please note that you do not have to set the same hours as me (Dr. Götz), so long as you achieve a balance that works for you). Sometimes it is possible to manage challenges on your own, while at other times you may need support. In those times when you need support, please always feel free to reach out to us, your instructional team. We want to be very clear that whatever your situation is, we will do our best to work with you to find a way for you to participate in – and benefit from – this course to the greatest extent possible.

As an additional layer of support, on an institutional level, UBC is committed to providing student mental health and wellbeing resources that meet your needs and help you achieve your goals. You can find out more about the resources, strategies, and services the university offers to enhance your mental and physical health [on this UBC website](#). If you have a documented disability that affects your learning or exam performance, please contact the [Centre for Accessibility](#). If your disability accommodations involve additional time on exams, please talk to Dr. Götz as soon as possible to discuss accommodation options for the course assessments. If English is not your native language, and you think you may need to use a dictionary for in-class tests, please feel free to bring your dictionary to the exam and have it checked by Dr. Götz or one of the TAs prior to the test. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted.

2. COURSE CONCEPT

Who are you, really? In which ways are you a) like everybody, b) like most people and c) like nobody else? How does anyone become who they are, who were we 10 years ago, who will we be in 10 years and what does all of this mean for how we live our lives? These and other questions are at the heart of this course on personality psychology – the scientific study of how individual differences in attitudes, emotions, cognitions, and behaviours form fairly stable constellations that people recognise as personality. In the coming 14 weeks, together we will explore what researchers mean by personality and which methods they use to study it, how various major theories have raised different questions about – and found different answers to – the puzzle of personality, and how personality affects diverse personal and societal outcomes, from dating and work to voting and health.

The course adopts an in-person active learning approach, with 3 weekly classes (50 minutes each, with lectures, film segments, class activities and discussions), weekly



learning assignments (i.e., readings and videos) and brief personal reflections (on Canvas). Learning will be evaluated based on a combination of exams, a writing assignment and participation in continuous short personal reflection pieces.

If we are successful, by the end of this course, you will 1) be familiar with a broad range of leading theories in personality psychology and able to discuss their strengths and weaknesses in isolation and vis-à-vis each other, 2) be able to understand, interpret, and critically evaluate applications of these theories, as well as historical and contemporary research in personality psychology, 3) know major personality dimensions and their typical patterns of stability and change across the lifespan, and 4) have a clear understanding of the many ways in which personality is related to diverse important real-world outcomes and be able to reflect upon the implications of personality for your own life and the lives of others around you.

3. FORMAT & LOGISTICS

3.1 WEEKLY COURSE STRUCTURE

Classes: From the beginning of the term (September 6th) until its end (December 6th) there are 14 weeks. Each week we will meet for 3 50-minute in-person classes (Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays; 11.00am–11.50am, Section 1 / 12.00nn–12.50pm, Section 2), first in the [Norm Theatre](#) (September 6th – September 22nd) and then in Room 360 in the [MacMillan Building](#) (September 25th – December 6th). Please note, that Thursday, October 12th has been designated as a “Make-Up Monday”. Classes regularly scheduled for Thursday, October 12th are cancelled, and will be replaced by the classes normally scheduled on a Monday. This includes our course (as also highlighted in the detailed course schedule, see section 4.2; p. 17–21). Please make sure you plan to attend PSYC 305A at our regular time in Room 360 in the [MacMillan Building](#) on that Thursday.

The only times when we will not meet are due to the observance of statutory holidays (i.e., National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Thanksgiving) and the UBC-wide Winter Reading Break, all of which are clearly indicated in the detailed course schedule (see section 4.2, p.17–21). Each week is dedicated to a specific topic or theme and as such forms its own module. At times, several weeks may be connected, thus forming a broader module (e.g., Week 3 & 4 on Personality as Traits).

Teaching Approach: The teaching philosophy of this class is founded upon an in-person active learning approach.

In-person means that class attendance is expected and critical for learning all the material from the course. In line with departmental recommendations, in-person also means that we will not livestream any course sessions. Here is why: 1) it can interfere with pedagogical approaches (especially active learning – which is introduced next), 2) it can disrupt class dynamics (e.g., some class members may feel less comfortable expressing themselves knowing that they will be captured on camera), 3) there is empirical evidence



that it leads to lower class attendance¹, 4) it can enable undesirable and ineffective learning strategies (such as interrupted, inattentive watching of recordings, or “binge-watching” close to an exam), 5) it absorbs a lot of resources. Instead, we will opt for – what we believe to be – a more resource-efficient and educationally effective approach. That is, while we will not livestream any course sessions, we will record all course sessions. Though not a substitute for in-person attendance, all recordings will be shared with you after classes end so that you can use them in whichever way you see fit when studying for the final exam.

Active learning means that students actively participate in the learning process. That is, you will not just acquire content knowledge, but you will apply it yourself. The course is deliberately designed in a way that enables, encourages, and promotes active learning. Here are three examples of how we are doing this: First, across all sessions we will be using [Mentimeter](#), an easy-to-use, interactive software which allows large classroom communication with active involvement of everybody in real time. Second, on most Fridays, our sessions will be held as Lab Sessions. By that, we mean that they will deviate a little bit from the – still interactive but more lecture-heavy – format of the Monday and Wednesday classes and instead offer a platform to get your hands dirty and try out different ways to use, evaluate, and transform the contents that you have learned in that weekly module in an applied setting. For example, once we will have learned about personality research methods (Week 2), we may actually take a bunch of personality tests ourselves and critique them together. Third, each week has in-built short reflection assignments (see also section 3.2, p. 10–13) on Canvas. First and foremost, these serve the purpose of letting you document your own learning journey in this course, and are meant to deepen your understanding of the course contents through reflective writing.

Course Materials: This course will combine contents and materials from one of the field’s most esteemed and classic textbooks (“*The Personality Puzzle*” by David Funder; 8th edition) as well as cutting edge research in personality psychology that comes straight from the lab.

To that end, for each weekly module there will be assigned course materials which will include one or two book chapters from the textbook and/or videos, blogposts, and scientific articles published in psychological journals.

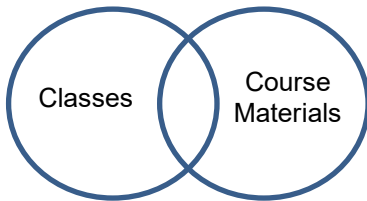
All assigned academic articles, blogposts, and videos will be directly accessible via Canvas. However, unfortunately, due to copyrights the textbook chapters cannot be shared and the textbook must thus be purchased.

¹ Skead, N., Elphick, L., McGaughey, F., Wesson, M., Offer, K., & Montalto, M. (2020). If you record, they will not come—but does it really matter? Student attendance and lecture recording at an Australian law school. *The Law Teacher*, 54(3), 349-367.



The textbook is: Funder, D. C. (2019). *The Personality Puzzle (8th edition)*. New York. W. W. Norton & Company.

The textbook is available through the UBC bookstore and comes with access to InQuizitive, an online learning tool for the contents of the textbook. InQuizitive is not required, but you might find it helpful to test yourself on the material, particularly in a gamified, dynamic way. If you use it, remember that none of your InQuizitive scores will



count toward your final grade – it is 100% optional. Please note that there are used copies on the market of the 7th – or an even earlier – edition of the *Personality Puzzle*. However, those overlap only about 80% (or less) with the 8th edition. You will be tested on the material from the 8th edition. Importantly, if you are unable to purchase the textbook due to financial pressures

but would still like access, please reach out to me (Dr. Götz) and I will work with you to find a way to make the contents accessible to you.

There will never be more than three assigned course materials in any given week. You will be expected to work through all the course materials on the assignment list. We strongly recommend that you familiarise yourself with each week's course materials in parallel to the corresponding module session to get the most out of each week. We will post lecture slides on Canvas at the end of each week. Please note, that they are not a substitute for class notes. If you have to miss a class, please make sure to borrow notes from a classmate. If you do not know anybody in this class now is a great time to meet people!

Integration of Classes and Course Materials: The in-person classes and the assigned course materials for each module are designed to be complementary. This means that while there will be some overlap between the two, there will also be important contents in the assigned course materials that will not be covered in the classes and vice versa. You are responsible for learning all of it and in order to do well in this class it is crucial that you engage with both. Both will be independently covered in the exams.

We know: this may not sound like great news at first! However, ultimately it makes for more engaging and novel learning experiences in both settings (rather than you feeling that the in-person sessions only regurgitate the course materials and vice versa) – and for a deeper, richer, and broader understanding of the materials.

Canvas: As for most courses at UBC, Canvas is our digital course platform. Here you will find announcements, the syllabus, course materials (everything except for the textbook, as described above), and lecture slides (posted at the end of each week). Canvas is also where you will be asked to submit the two brief written learning reflections each week (i.e., Monday: 1-Minute Essay; Wednesday: End-of-Class Summary). Canvas will also house a Course Logistics Discussion Board – which is open to everybody, and a FAQ Course List – which the instructional team will update each week. The purpose of the FAQ Course List is simple: all the questions that we get asked and that we can answer in a straightforward way are published here. That way all of you have access to the same knowledge. This



also means: before you send out an email to us, please do take a moment and check the FAQ catalogue. Chances are your question may already be answered there.

Lastly, in addition to the essentials – that is, the things you need to know to cover a module well – for each module we have also curated a list of extra materials. These are 100% optional and will not be part of any formal evaluation that affects your grades. It is simply a little service from us for you. If you are curious to go beyond and learn more than what we can cover in class, this is a good starting point. And sometimes it is also a place where you will find a compilation of pop songs or poems that may relate to the class topics in unexpected ways. In short, this is for you to explore freely (as much or as little as you like) and have fun with!

Weekly Structure Summary Chart: Here is a brief visual illustration of what a typical week in our course will look like.

Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Action	In-Person Session 1 (50 minutes)		In-Person Session 2 (50 minutes) 2.00pm–3.30pm Office Hours (Dr. Götz)		In-Person Session 3 (Lab Day; 50 minutes) Lecture Slides Get Posted on Canvas		
	Brief Reflection on Canvas: 1-Minute Essay (due 11.59pm)		Brief Reflection on Canvas: End-of-Class Summary (due 11.59pm)		New Canvas Module Gets Released		

Note. As described below, TA Student Hours may vary and are thus not listed here. Course Materials are assigned ahead of time and it is up to you when to read, and watch them.

3.2 ASSESSMENTS & GRADING

In this course, we will employ three different types of learning assessments – which will jointly make up your overall grade. These are specifically designed to both test and reinforce the learning goals laid out in the Course Concept (see section 2, p.5f.).

(1) Exams (2 Mid-Terms (September 29th, October 27th) 20% each, 1 Final (Date TBD) 30%; Total: 70%): There will be three written exams. The two Mid-Terms, Exam 1 (Friday, September 29th) and Exam 2 (Friday, October 27th) are non-cumulative. They will each last 50 minutes and will be conducted during class time on the respective dates. The Final Exam (Exam 3) is cumulative. That is, it will cover contents from the entire course, although a special focus will be on the contents not covered in Exams 1 and 2. The Final Exam will take place on a separate date after the end of the course, which has yet to be



set by the Faculty of Arts. We will inform you of the date, time and location of the final exam in class, as soon as this information will be shared with us.

The following applies to all exams:

1. The vast majority of exam questions will be multiple-choice questions and fill-in-the-blank questions.
2. In addition, there may be a few short essay questions.
3. Exam questions will be based on contents covered both a) in in-class sessions and b) in the assigned course materials, with an emphasis on the contents covered during the in-person classes.

(2) Written Reflections (continuous throughout the term; 10%): After the first week, each week you will submit two brief written reflections through Canvas. On Mondays, you will write a 1-Minute Essay (due by 11.59pm Vancouver Time that day). On Wednesdays, you will write an End-of-Class Summary (due by 11.59pm Vancouver Time that day), which should also not take longer than 3-4 minutes. We, the instructional team, aim to personally read as many of these submissions as we can (this also means we will spot check them). Through Canvas each of these submissions will be graded. If you submit a reflection by the deadline and this submission – when checked – indeed engages with the question that you were asked to engage with, you will get credit for it. If you do not submit a reflection or if – when checked – the submission is found not to engage with the question that you were asked to engage with, you will not get credit for it.

Overall, there will be 22 prompted opportunities to submit a written reflection. Below you find the grading scheme for the written reflections:

1. 20 valid submissions or more: 10%
2. 18–19 valid submissions: 9%
3. 16–17 valid submissions: 8%
4. 14–15 valid submissions: 7%
5. 12–13 valid submissions: 6%
6. 10–11 valid submissions: 5%
7. 8–9 valid submissions: 4%
8. 6–7 valid submissions: 3%
9. 4–5 valid submissions: 2%
10. 2–3 valid submissions: 1%
11. 1 valid submission or less: 0%

(3) In-Class Essay (November 17th; 20%). In this course we will consider, evaluate, and critique a number of prominent personality theories. All of those come with their own unique set of advantages and shortcomings and all of them raise and answer different questions. In this in-class essay – administered during class time on Friday, November 17th – you will be presented with a popular press article describing the life and character of a public figure. This popular press article will be around 1,000 words long and you are not



expected to know anything else about the person other than what is written in the article. Next, based upon the information available to you, you will be tasked with analysing the character of the described person from the perspectives of two different theories of personality psychology of your choice that are covered in this course.

The Psychology Department’s Policy on Grade Distributions and Scaling: In order to a) resist grade inflation (which ensures that UBC grades and UBC degrees continue to be meaningful and highly valued designations of academic excellence) and b) maintain equity across multiple course sections (which ensures that earning a certain grade is equally easy or difficult to obtain regardless of which course you take and who you take it with), all psychology courses are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions.

Under this policy, for a 300-level class such as ours, the mean grade will be set at 75 for a strong class, 73 for an average class, and 71 for a weak class, with a standard deviation of 13.

Psychology Department’s Policy on Grad Distributions: 300-Level Courses

Class Performance	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strong class	75	13
Average class	73	13
Weak class	71	13

The department will scale (curve) grades up or down as necessary to conform to the listed averages and standard deviations (note: as indicated above this is a department wide policy and not at the discretion of the professor who is teaching the class). If this occurs, it will happen after all final grade are in and you will be informed through Canvas. This means that a) your final posted grade may be different from what you calculated your grade to be based on the class assessments and b) grades are not official until they appear on your academic record. You will receive both a numerical and a letter grade for this course. For additional information about the UBC grading scale – showing letter grades and corresponding numerical grades, please see the [UBC Course Calendar](#).

Extra Credit: You may earn up to a total of 3 extra credit percentage points in this class. You have 3 options to do so.

1. Gain hand-on experience and participate in one or several of the many psychological studies that are being run at the Department of Psychology! You may earn up to 3 points of credit toward your course grade by participating in studies that are posted on <https://ubc-psych.sona-systems.com>. Please register on our online system (<https://hsp.psych.ubc.ca>) by end of the first month of class (i.e., September). You can also earn your first half hour of credit by completing a pretesting survey that will make you eligible for a wider variety of studies. Please note that in a given term, you can earn no more than one hour of credit for online studies (not including the pretesting).



Once registered in the system, you will be able to browse through and select which studies you wish to participate in, sign up for an available timeslot, and confirm your accumulated credits afterward. At the end of the last day of class for the term, the subject pool is closed. At that point, you will no longer be able to receive credits. We strongly encourage you to participate in and confirm your credits long *before* the last week of class since many studies will not offer timeslots near the end of the term and you may be locked out before allocating your credits to your desired course. Further instruction on how to use the HSP online system can be found at <https://psych.ubc.ca/undergraduate/opportunities/human-subject-pool/> in the document entitled “Subject Pool Information for Participants.”

Please also note, that we no longer have an online credit limit. Instead, you are free to receive your HSP bonus credits from any combination of “in-lab” and “online” studies. However, “in-lab” studies will offer a bonus 0.5 credits on top of the standard 0.5 credits per 30 minutes of participation (e.g., a 1 hour “in-lab” study will award 1.5 credits, while an equivalent “online” study will award 1 credit).

2. Get creative! Come up with up memes that summarise core problems, insights, or discussions of the course in a succinct, fun, and novel way. For each meme you can earn 1 extra credit point – up to a maximum of 3. To earn an extra credit point, the memes have to be original, witty, and an accurate reflection of the scientific issue that they are depicting.
3. Submit a playlist! Personality psychology can be found everywhere – including in the fine arts and particularly in music. If you are so inclined, earn up to 3 extra credit points by putting together a playlist for this course. Submit the playlist along with a short document (0.5 pages maximum) in which you describe why you picked the songs in the playlist, which themes they feature and how they relate to our course on personality psychology. The playlists and companion explanatory documents will be reviewed by the instructional team and up to 3 extra credit points will be awarded (1 point if the music selection is fitting, 1 point if the explanation is appropriate and 1 point if the music selection and the explanation are well-matched).

Please note, that a) you cannot combine these three options (i.e., if you are participating in psychological studies to earn extra credit points for this course, please do not also submit memes and/or a playlist) and b) you cannot earn more than 3 extra credit percentage points under any circumstances.

Any extra credit percentage points that you earn will be added to your final course grade after scaling has been applied (should that be necessary).

3.3 COMMUNICATION & EMAIL ETIQUETTE

You have a question about the course? We – your instructional team – are here for you and will do our best to make sure you get a helpful and quick answer. However, to allow us to do this most effectively and to serve all of you as well as we can, it is of critical



importance that you adhere to our communication and email etiquette, laid out below. That way, you will not only save us time and energy but also get better answers faster and ensure that your fellow students can do the same. Sometimes it is easy to be hero. This is one of those times. So please be a hero! Thank you!

Communication Etiquette. What to do when you have a question:

1. Check if your question is already answered in your syllabus. Yes, we know this is a long document – but the only reason for that is so that it contains as much useful and relevant information as possible. This is your one-stop-shop for many things so please make sure to stop here, first.
2. If you cannot find an answer in your syllabus, please check the continuously updated FAQ page on Canvas (described in section 3.1 on p.9).
3. If neither your syllabus, nor the FAQ page provides an answer now is the time to reach out to your instructional team. **We love hearing from you and we love talking to you. But emails should be your last resort. Instead, please come and talk to us during student hours – we will be able to have a proper, fulsome conversation then. (Try it out – it's often more helpful and always more fun than writing emails!)** Also, on a practical level – with limited resources and two fully-booked (and oversubscribed) sections to serve, we will simply not be able to offer lengthy replies to emails. Thus, the only times when sending a question via email is the encouraged mode of communication are when a) your question can be answered in a single sentence, or b) you would like to come to the student hours but have a conflict in your schedule and would like to arrange another time to meet.

If you do have a question that can be answered in a single sentence, please contact your TAs first. Your TAs, Yilin Guo and Gordon Heltzel are highly knowledgeable, well-trained, and very capable graduate students who know their stuff and will do their best to help you. They are also delightful people. What they are not, however, are technology experts, so if your question is technical or logistical (and not addressed in the syllabus or FAQ Course List) then your next best bet is to post it on the Course Logistics Discussion Board on Canvas – so that everyone in the class can see it. Chances are someone else previously ran into the same issue and may have already figured out how to resolve it. We will also carefully monitor the Course Logistics Discussion Board and add any community-sourced answers to such questions to the FAQ Course List as soon as we can.

If your question can be answered in a single sentence, and has not been answered by the Syllabus, FAQ Course List, Course Logistics Discussion Board or your TAs, please contact me (Dr. Götz) and I will do my best to sort things out! Please note, regardless of whom you contact – if your email cannot be answered in a single sentence, we will kindly ask you to come to our student hours.



Student Hours: As described above, – other than the Syllabus and the FAQ Course List – student hours are your easiest, most direct and most effective way to get in touch with us and discuss any questions you may have. Each week you have multiple options to choose from: Every week one of your 2 TAs (i.e., Yilin Guo & Gordon Heltzel) will hold student hours. This is because we are operating on a TA expert model. That means that each TA only tackles select weeks, but is a true expert in the topics of those weeks and can offer you much clearer, more profound and ultimately more helpful answers than if they had to cover every week. Hence, for any questions that relate to that week’s material the TA student hours are a great place to raise them.

Of course, you are also warmly invited to attend Dr. Götz’ student hours, which are offered both in-person (Wednesdays 2.00pm to 3.00pm; Office 3519 in the Kenny Building) and on Zoom ([Wednesdays 3.00pm to 3.30pm](#)). Here you can discuss any questions that relate to course materials (from any module). You can also ask about ongoing research or talk to me about graduate school, careers in academia etc. You can also just drop by to chat. It is totally up to you! Either way, we are looking forward to talking to you!

3.4 ONE-OFF LOGISTICS

Twice in this term we will do something that is neither part of the regular weekly module, nor an assessment that will contribute to your grade in any way.

Open Invitation – Excursion to the Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre (National Day for Truth and Reconciliation; October 5th): In observance of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (September 30th), there will be no class on Monday, October 2nd (Week 5). Each and every one of us will find their own personal way to engage with the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation and its important mandate. Personally, I (Dr. Götz) will use that day to visit the [Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre](#) – right here on campus, in front of the main library – to better understand and educate myself more about the colonial legacy of residential schools and other policies imposed by the Canadian government on Indigenous Peoples. I warmly invite you to join me and do the same! As the Centre is closed on October 2nd and 3rd, and as we have our regular office hours on October 4th, I will visit the Centre on Thursday, October 5th. I will start my visit at 2.00pm at the main entrance of the centre and will end it at 4.00pm, when the centre closes.

Interim Course Feedback Survey (October 6th): We want to offer you the best course that we can! That is why at the end of Week 5, before Thanksgiving, on Friday, October 6th, we will send out a brief Qualtrics survey to all of you and ask for your feedback on the course so far. This will be an opportunity for you to let us know what (if anything) you like and appreciate about the course as well as what (if anything) you would like us to change and how. Please be as specific as you can. Of course, there are many different demands on this course that need to be balanced and – as with every other course – resources are



finite. However, we – your instructional team – will carefully go through all of your feedback, consolidate it and try to act accordingly. This is your chance to help us make this a better course and enhance the learning experience, not only of those who come after you, but also for yourselves!

4. CONTENTS

4.1 TOPICS AT A GLANCE

Chronological list of topics by week.

Week 1: Syllabus & Introduction

Week 2: Methods in Personality

Week 3: Personality as Traits I

**Week 4: Personality as Traits II
Mid-Term I**

**Week 5: Personality Stability Development & Change
Open Invitation: Excursion to Indian Residential School History and
Dialogue Centre
Interim Course Feedback Survey**

Week 6: Personality as Biology and Genetics

Week 7: Personality as Unconscious Desires



**Week 8: Personality as Self and Identity
 Mid-Term II**

Week 9: Personality as Lived Experience I

Week 10: Personality as Lived Experience II

**Week 11: Winter Reading Break
 In-Class Essay**

Week 12: Applications of Personality I

Week 13: Applications of Personality II

**Week 14: Remaining Questions & Challenges / Wrap-Up
 Final Exam (Date TBD)**

4.2 DETAILED SCHEDULE

Detailed breakdown of session topics, assessments and course material assignments.

Module	Week	Day	Topic	Course Materials	Notes
Syllabus & Introduction	1	Wed, Sep 6	Syllabus & Introduction	(1) Brian Little: Who Are You, Really? The Puzzle of Personality (TedTalk, 2016; 15.07min)	TA: Gordon
		Fri, Sep 8	Introduction to Personality		
Methods in Personality	2	Mon, Sep 11	Personality Research Methods	(1) Simine Vazire: Personality Research Methods (SPSP Video Series, 2018; 9.11min)	TA: Yilin
		Wed, Sep 13	Personality Assessment	(2) Brian Nosek: Breaking the Wall to Improve Research Culture (Falling Walls Foundation, 2022; 3.13min)	
		Fri, Sep 15	Lab Day	(3) Personality Puzzle Chapter 3	
Personality as Traits I	3	Mon, Sep 18	Persons and Situations	(1) Tera Letzring: Personality Assessment and Judgement	TA: Gordon



		Wed, Sep 20	Personality Judgement	(SPSP Video Series, 2018; 7.24min)		
		Fri, Sep 22	Lab Day	(2) Sarah Osterholz: Decoding Personalities on Instagram (SPSP Character & Context Blog, 2023)		
				(3) Personality Puzzle Chapter 4		
Personality as Traits II	4	Mon, Sep 25	Personality as Traits: The Big Five and Beyond I	(1) Paulhus, D. L. (2014). Toward a Taxonomy of Dark Personalities. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i> , 23(6), 421–426.	TA: Yilin	
		Wed, Sep 27	Personality as Traits: The Big Five and Beyond II	(2) Personality Puzzle Chapter 6		
		Fri, Sep 29	Mid–Term I			
Personality Stability, Development and Change	5	Mon, Oct 2	NO CLASS National Day for Truth and Reconciliation			
			Wed, Oct 4	Personality, Stability, Development and Change I	(1) Dan Gilbert: The Psychology of Future Self (TedTalk, 2014; 06.36min)	TA: Yilin
			Fri, Oct 6	Personality Stability, Development and Change II	(2) Bleidorn, W., Hopwood, C. J., Back, M. D., Denissen, J. J. A., Hennecke, M., Hill, P. L., Jokela, M., Kandler, C., Lucas, R. E., Luhmann, M., Orth, U., Roberts, B. W., Wagner, J., Wrzus, C., & Zimmermann, J. (2021). Personality Trait Stability and Change. <i>Personality Science</i> , 2. https://doi.org/10.5964/ps.6009	Thu, Oct 5 Open Invitation: Excursion to the Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre (2.00pm – 4.00pm)
					Interim Course	



					Feedback Survey
Personality as Biology and Genetics	6	Mon, Oct 9	NO CLASS Canadian Thanksgiving		
		Wed, Oct 11	The Anatomy and Physiology of Personality	(1) Personality Puzzle Chapter 8 (2) Personality Puzzle Chapter 9	TA: Gordon
		Thu, Oct 12	Genetics and Evolution: The Inheritance of Personality		EXTRA MAKE-UP-MONDAY SESSION ON THURSDAY
		Fri, Oct 13	Lab Day		
Personality as Unconscious Desires	7	Mon, Oct 16	Basics of Psychoanalysis	(1) Personality Puzzle Chapter 10	TA: Yilin
		Wed, Oct 18	Psychoanalysis After Freud: Neo-Freudians, Object Relations, and Current Research	(2) Personality Puzzle Chapter 11	
		Fri, Oct 20	Lab Day		
Personality as Self and Identity	8	Mon, Oct 23	Self & Identity	(1) Samantha Krauss & Ulrich Orth: Low Self-Esteem and Eating Disorders – A Vicious Cycle (SPSP Character & Context Blog, 2023)	TA: Gordon
		Wed, Oct 25	Lab Day	(2) Personality Puzzle Chapter 15	
		Fri, Oct 27	Mid-Term II		



Personality as Lived Experience I	9	Mon, Oct 30	Humanistic Psychology	(1) Eftychia Stamkou, Eddie Brummelman, Rohan Dunham, & Milica Nikolic: Small Self, Big Heart (SPSP Character & Context Blog, 2023) (2) Buttrick, N. R., & Oishi, S. (2023). Money and Happiness: A Consideration of History and Psychological Mechanisms. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America</i> , 120. (3) Personality Puzzle Chapter 12	TA: Yilin
		Wed, Nov 1	Positive Psychology, and the Science of Happiness		
		Fri, Nov 3	Lab Day		
Personality as Lived Experience II	10	Mon, Nov 6	Cultural Variation in Experience, Behaviour, and Personality	(1) Shige Oishi: Personality and Culture (SPSP Video Series, 2018; 7.42min) (2) Personality Puzzle Chapter 13	TA: Yilin
		Wed, Nov 8	Regional Variation in Experience, Behaviour, and Personality		
		Fri, Nov 10	Lab Day		
Winter Reading Break	11	Mon, Nov 13	NO CLASS Winter Reading Break		
		Wed, Nov 15			
		Fri, Nov 17	In-Class Essay		
Applications of Personality I	12	Mon, Nov 20	Mental Health	(1) Olivia Atherton: Personality and Health (SPSP Video Series, 2018; 6.33min)	TA: Yilin



		Wed, Nov 22	Physical Health (Guest Lecture by Yilin)	(2) Allen, M. S. (2019). The Role of Personality in Sexual and Reproductive Health. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i> , 28(6), 581–586. (3) Bishop, B. (2008). The stuff in your bedroom signals how you vote . <i>Slate.com</i>	
		Fri, Nov 24	Political Outcomes (Guest Lecture by Gordon)		
Applications of Personality II	13	Mon, 27 Nov	Social Outcomes	(1) Soto, C. J. (2019). How Replicable Are Links Between Personality Traits and Consequential Life Outcomes? The Life Outcomes of Personality Replication Project. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 30, 711–727. (2) Stephen Antonoplis & Oliver P. John: Who Has Different-Race Friends? (SPSP Character & Context Blog, 2022)	TA: Gordon
		Wed, 29 Nov	Economic Outcomes		
		Fri, 1 Dec	Lab Day		
Outlook & Wrap Up	14	Mon, 4 Dec	Personality in Non-Human Animals	(1) Arshad, M., & Chung, J. M. (2022). Practical recommendations for considering culture, race, and ethnicity in personality psychology. <i>Social and Personality Psychology Compass</i> , 16. (2) Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). Most people are not WEIRD. <i>Nature</i> , 466, 29.	TA: Gordon
		Wed, 6 Dec	Diversity & Inclusiveness in Personality Psychology, Review & Wrap Up		Final Exam Coming Up (Date TBD)
		Fri, 8 Dec	NO CLASS Term End		

Note. Personal Reflections (to be submitted via Canvas) are an in-built element of the course that recurs every week. As such, they are not explicitly listed here.

5. VALUES, POLICIES, & RESOURCES



5.1 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

In the Department of Psychology, at UBC and in scholarly communities more generally, we share an understanding of the ethical ways in which knowledge is produced and commit to upholding them. And that is exactly what we will do in this class, too! This means that we **DO** acknowledge the contributions of others to our work (typically through formal references and citations), and that we **DO NOT** buy or copy papers or exams, or have someone else edit them, falsify data or sources, or hand in the same work in more than one course. Academic integrity is something truly wonderful and one of the major driving forces of collaboration, mutual support and scientific progress. However, this also means that any form of academic misconduct and violations of these ethical principles constitutes a severe transgression that we – your instructional team –, the Department of Psychology, the Faculty of Arts and UBC as a whole take very seriously.

This means that all graded work in this course must be original work done independently by you. Any instance of cheating or taking credit for someone else's work, whether intentionally or unintentionally, can – and often will – result in receiving at minimum a grade of zero for the assignment. Moreover, – without exception – these cases will have to be reported to the Department Head, and the Faculty of Arts Associate Dean, Academic. According to the [University Act \(section 61\)](#), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to the student's transcript. If you have any questions as to whether or not what you are doing is even a borderline case of academic misconduct, please consult Dr. Götz. For details on pertinent University policies and procedures, please see Chapter 5 in the [UBC Calendar](#) and read the [University's Policy 69](#). See also this excellent compilation on "[Tips for Avoiding Plagiarism](#)", courtesy of the Purdue Online Writing Lab.

Ultimately, – unlike in many situations in life – there is a very simple, right choice here. Don't cheat! It is dishonest and dishonesty adds up and weakens your character (dare I say: your personality!). In a class in which grade scaling may be applied as per departmental guidelines it is also very unfair to your fellow classmates who will have to bear the brunt of this. Equally importantly, it is also missing the whole point of getting a university degree which is about learning, exploration, and holistic growth as a person and



human being. And finally with all the new detection technologies in place (e.g., Turnitin, exam response behaviour checking software etc.) it is more likely than not that you will get caught. If that happens things get very ugly for you and we will have to subject you to various unpleasant processes that we really do not want to subject you to! So please let's spare ourselves that experience and have a fantastic and fair joint learning experience instead!

5.2 ABSENCES

Please do not come to class if you are feeling sick, regardless of what you think you might be sick with (e.g., cold, flu, Covid-19). In the spirit of flexibility and compassion, we have deliberately designed a course in which a) there will be no marks for live in-class participation, and b) you can miss up to 3 of the personal reflection pieces linked to the in-person classes and still receive full points on this assessment (as described in section 3.2, p.10f.).

If you do miss a class, please do your best to catch up. To do so, ask fellow students for their notes (again, take a moment to connect with other students in this class; if you don't know anybody yet, get to know people now!), consult the class materials on Canvas, make sure to engage with the assigned course materials, and come to our student hours.

If you miss a Mid-Term, please email your TAs **and** Dr. Götz as soon as you are confident you should not come to the scheduled exam. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient resources to offer make-up exams for mid-terms. That is, if you have to miss a mid-term exam, the weight of the missed exam will be equally distributed across the remaining exams. For example, if you miss the first mid-term the second mid-term and the final will each receive an additional weight of 10%. If you miss the second mid-term, the full 20% will be carried over to the final. Please do not do come in sick! It is not worth it. If you do show up for an exam and you are clearly ill, we will have to send you home. It is much better for you and everybody to contact us ahead of time and not attend.

If you miss the Final Exam, again, please email your TAs **and** Dr. Götz as soon as you are confident you should not come to the scheduled exam. In this case there is a bit more of a bureaucratic process involved as Finals are centrally administered by the Faculty of



Arts and UBC, and thus outside of the powers of your instructional team. So, if you miss the Final Exam, you must apply for deferred standing (an academic concession) through Arts Advising no later than 48 hours after the missed final exam/assignment. Students who are granted deferred standing sit the final exam/assignment at a later date. [Learn more and find the application online.](#)

Instructor absence due illness: I (Dr. Götz), will do my best to stay well, but if I am ill, or test positive for Covid-19, then I will not come to class. If that happens, here is what you can expect:

If I am well enough to teach, but am taking precautions to avoid infecting others, we may have an online session or two. If this happens, you will receive an email and an announcement on Canvas telling you how to join the class. You can anticipate that this would very likely be a last-minute email (even though I will of course always inform you as early as I can). Our classroom will still be available for you to sit and attend an online session, in this (hopefully hypothetical) instance.

If I am not well enough to teach, I will do my best to find a suitable replacement. This will most likely be one or several of your fantastic TAs, or one of my esteemed colleagues at the Department of Psychology. As in the scenario described above, you will be notified via email and through a Canvas announcement. Class will be canceled if – and only if – we are unable to find a replacement for me. So please do always assume that the class is still happening, until you are explicitly told otherwise.

All of these precautions are used to help reduce risk and keep everyone safe. Please bear this in mind and act in accordance with them.

5.3 UBC ACADEMIC CALENDAR

Further information about academic regulations, course withdrawal dates and credits can be found in the [Academic Calendar](#).

5.4 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Here is a non-exhaustive list of additional UBC resources. Many of these, we hope you will find helpful as you contend with the challenges of completing your degree work and just dealing with life's challenges more broadly. Others, we really hope you will never need to use. But if you do, they are here to help and support you!

- [AMS Food Bank](#)
- [AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre](#)
- [BC Crisis Centre](#)
- [Campus Light Box](#) (a student run guide to UBC Mental Health Resources)
- [Centre for Accessibility \(Access & Diversity\)](#)
- [Counselling Services](#)
- Distress Line (Phone number: 1-800-Suicide (784-2433))
- [Guidance on useful skills for students](#)
- [Kaleidoscope](#) (confidential peer-run mental health support group)
- [Mental Health Support](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)
- [Student's Guide to Canvas](#)
- [UBC Mental Health Awareness Club](#)
- [UBC Mood Disorders Clinic](#)
- [UBC Policies on Academic Concession](#)
- [UBC Psychology Clinic](#)
- [UBC Sexual Violence Prevention & Reporting Office](#)
- [UBC Wellness Centre](#)

6. SYLLABUS VERSION & POTENTIAL CHANGES

This syllabus (v1.1; September 14th 2023) was authored by Dr. Friedrich Götz with helpful input from Yilin Guo and Gordon Heltzel. It was informed by various recommendations and policies of the UBC Department of Psychology and UBC more generally as well as the very helpful UBC Psychology Instructional Guide written by Dr Lily May. It has been drawing inspiration from many sources, including previous syllabi of Drs Azim Shariff, Ara Norenzayan, David Funder, Jessica Tracy, Kathryn Klement, Kristin Laurin, Liz Dunn, Mark Schaller, Paul Conway, Steve Heine, Tera Letzring, & Toni Schmader all of whom have kindly made their syllabi available. Dr Jimmy Calanchini deserves credit for the idea to let students earn extra credit points through scientific memes and for his excellent thoughts on work-life balance modelling.

The current syllabus is an attempt at a comprehensive information document that outlines in detail and with sufficient clarity, what you as students, and I (Dr. Götz) and the TAs as



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instructors can and should expect from each other and from this course. It also seeks to set the tone and be a warm, welcoming and inclusive first point of contact for each and every one of you as you are embarking on this journey.

The syllabus itself may change in some of its details (e.g., in response to your feedback on the course in the survey administered after Week 5). If and when that happens you will be notified in class and via email as well as through Canvas announcements and an updated version of the syllabus will be shared with you.

That is all.

Welcome to PSYC 305A – a wondrous world awaits you and we are delighted and thrilled to have you!

The end.