



Syllabus PSYC 305A: Personality Psychology (Fall 2025)

Logistics at a Glance

Class Time & Location:

Section 001: Tuesdays, & Thursdays (09.30am – 11.00am) Room 1030
[Brock Commons South \(BRCS\)](#)

Section 002: Tuesdays, & Thursdays (11.00am – 12.30pm) Room 1030
[Brock Commons South \(BRCS\)](#)

Section 003: Tuesdays, & Thursdays (02.00pm – 03.30pm) Room 202
[Hennings Building \(HENN\)](#)

Instructional Team:

Dr. Friedrich Götz (he/him/his); Professor (please call me: Dr. Götz)
Office: Room 3519 [Douglas T. Kenny Building \(3rd floor\)](#)
Student Hours: Mondays (10.00am – 12.00nn)
Email: friedrich.goetz@ubc.ca

Yangyilin Guo (she/her/hers); Teaching Assistant (please call me: Yilin)
Office: Room 3512 (3rd Floor) Douglas T. Kenny Building
Student Hours: Fridays (10.00am – 11.00am) [Weeks 1-6]
Email: yangyilin.guo@ubc.ca

Caroline Lee (she/her/hers); Teaching Assistant (please call me: Caroline)
Office: Room 4005 (4th Floor) Douglas T. Kenny Building
Student Hours: Fridays (11.00am – 12.00nn) [Weeks 7-10]
Email: slee202@student.ubc.ca

Daniela Pasqualini (she/her/hers); Teaching Assistant (please call me: Daniela)
Office: TBD
Student Hours: TBD [Weeks 11-14]
Email: daniela.pasqualini@gmail.com

Canvas:

Section 001: <https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/171708>

Section 002: <https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/173157>

Section 003: <https://canvas.ubc.ca/courses/169638>

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 11 and 12) 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 x^wməθk^wəyəm (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.



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Psychology

UBC Psychology

2136 West Mall

Vancouver, BC

Canada V6T 1Z4

Phone: 604 822 2755

Web: psych.ubc.ca

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 Associate 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 graduate seminars on geographical psychology and advanced research methods. 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 fall pretty to misinformation (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

Yangyilin Guo: My name is Yilin (she/her/hers), and I am a first-year PhD 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, and eating tasty foods. Feel free to drop by my office hours to talk about the course, my research, grad school, or anything else!



Caroline Lee: My name is Caroline (she/her/hers), and I'm a third-year undergraduate student pursuing an Honours degree in Psychology along with a double major in Economics. I was born in South Korea, but since I was five, I've been living back and forth between Canada and Korea. My interests within Psychology are ever-expanding as I continue with my studies, but I'm especially drawn to social/personality psychology as well as cross-cultural differences in relation to these areas. Outside of academics, I

enjoy both playing and listening to music, going to the beach, and discovering new food spots in Vancouver. Feel free to reach out if you would like to chat about the course, navigating school as a

Psychology major, or anything else!



Daniela Pasqualini: My name is Daniela (she/her/hers), and I'm in the first year of my Masters in the cognitive science area supervised by Dr. Todd Handy. I'm originally from Toronto, and completed my undergrad at the University of Waterloo, where I fell in love with psychology research. My academic interests are now centred around attention, cognition, and mental health. Outside of the lab you can find me backpacking, swimming, knitting, or exploring the city with friends. Drop by my office hours any time you have any questions about the course or just want to chat – I'm always open to new café recommendations!



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 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 2 weekly classes (1.5 hours each, consisting of lectures, videos, class activities, and discussions), weekly learning assignments (i.e., readings, podcasts, 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 2nd) until classes end (December 5th) there are 14 weeks ([for details on term dates consult the UBC Senate website here](#)). Each week we will meet for 2 1.5 in-person classes (Tuesdays, Thursdays; 09.30am – 11.00am, Section 001; 11.00am – 12.30pm, Section 002; 2.00pm – 3.30pm, Section 003).

The only times when we will not meet are due to the observance of statutory holidays (i.e., National Day for Truth and Reconciliation) and the UBC-wide Winter Reading Break, all of which are clearly indicated in the detailed course schedule (see section 4.2, p.16–20). 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 or Week 11 & 12 on Personality as Biology and Genetics).

Teaching Approach: The teaching philosophy of this class rests on 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 and/or record 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. With limited resources at a public university, that’s energy, time and money that would not be spent on creating and delivering an engaging class, providing feedback and interacting with students (i.e., you).

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, in each session, we will have immersive hands-on segments. By that, we mean that they will deviate a little bit from the – still interactive but more lecture-heavy – segments earlier in

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.



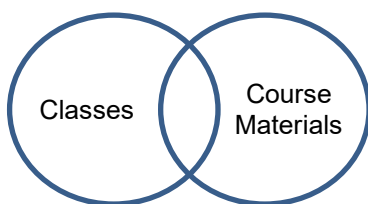
each session and instead offer a platform to get your hands dirty and try out different ways to use, evaluate, and transform the contents that you have learned in an applied setting. For example, once we will have learned the basics of personality research methods (Week 2), we will actually take a bunch 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 the [NOBA Project](#), an innovative, free, and fully customisable textbook that offers chapters on major psychological topics written by some of the field's pre-eminent scholars, as well as cutting edge research in personality psychology that comes straight from the lab. To that end, for each week there will be assigned course materials which may include thematically-aligned chapters from the NOBA project, and/or videos, blogposts, podcasts, newspaper articles and scientific papers published in peer-reviewed psychological journals.

All assigned chapters, academic papers, articles, blogposts, podcasts, and videos will be directly accessible via Canvas.

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 sessions to get the most out of each week. We will post lecture slides on Canvas right before each class. 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, and lecture slides. Canvas is also



where you will be asked to submit the two brief written learning reflections each week. Canvas will further house a Course Logistics Discussion Board – which is open to everybody, and a FAQ Course List – which the instructional team regularly update. 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	10am–12.00nn Office Hours (Dr. Götz)	Lecture Slides Get Posted on Canvas In-Person Session 1 (1.5 hours)	Brief Reflection on Canvas (due 11.59pm)	Lecture Slides Get Posted on Canvas In-Person Session 2 (1.5 hours) New Canvas Module Gets Released			Brief Reflection on Canvas (due 11.59pm)

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, watch, and listen to 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.6).



(1) Exams (3 Mid-Terms (October 2nd, October 23rd, November 20th) 20% each, 1 Final (Date TBD) 30%; Total: 90%): There will be four written exams, all of which are closed-books exams. The three Mid-Terms, Exam 1 (Thursday, October 2nd), Exam 2 (Thursday, October 23rd), and Exam 3 (Thursday, November 20th) are non-cumulative. They will each last 1.5 hours and will be held during class time on the respective dates. The Final Exam is cumulative. That is, it will cover contents from the entire course, although a special focus will be on the contents not covered in the Mid-Term. 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 each session (with a few notable exceptions, including the first session and Mid-Term exams), you will submit a brief written reflection through Canvas (due by 11.59pm Vancouver Time on Wednesdays for Tuesday sessions and Sundays for Thursday sessions), based on a specific prompt. Each reflection should not take more than 4-5 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 21 prompted opportunities to submit a written reflection. Below you find the grading scheme for the written reflections:

1. 20–21 valid submissions: 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%

The Psychology Department's Policy on Grade Distributions and Scaling: In the Psychology Department, we aim to offer learning experiences that welcome and challenge all students to engage meaningfully in our discipline. We strive for grades that accurately reflect student learning and achievement of course learning objectives, rather than solely reflecting their performance relative to others.

The Psychology department employs department-wide grading standards to promote equitable alignment, supporting students and course instructors as they learn and teach across many diverse courses and sections. For each Course Section, instructors should aim for a grade average in the following Target Ranges (before any bonus HSP points are added, but including any mandatory HSP points): B- (68-71%), in Introductory 100-level and 200-level courses; B (72-75%), in Intermediate 300-level courses; B+ (76-79%), for Advanced 400-level courses and Selective-Entry lower-level courses (e.g., PSYC 277, 278, 312, 370, 371, 349, 359, 365). Ranges are intended to provide some flexibility to instructors and account for differences that can occur between classes. Ranges increase across year levels to account for improvements in student learning, and students' ability to self-select into more specialized courses.

During the course, instructors may choose to adjust grades and/or difficulty of the assessments, to align with the Target Range. At the end of the course, if the average falls outside the Target Range (either direction), instructors will typically be expected to use a linear transformation to adjust final grades (i.e., add or subtract the same number of points to all students' marks, while ensuring no student fails the course due to this transformation). If a course mean falls in within one +/- letter grade band above the Target Range (e.g., in the B+ range for Intermediate courses), and the instructor believes these grades to be justified, the instructor may submit a justification request using the departmental approval final grades submission form, and the grades may stand. This Upper Range is intended to inspire further excellence in learning and teaching, and allow for the possibility that some classes select for higher performing students. Courses with means exceeding the Upper Range will be expected to provide justification as well as use a linear transformation to fall within the Upper Range. Grades are not official until they appear on students' academic record. Students will receive both a percent and a letter grade for this course (for conversion see key available on 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 hands-on experience and participate in one or several of the many psychological studies that are being run at the Department of Psychology! As part of this course, you are invited to earn 3% extra credit. Most students will choose to earn these credits by spending **three hours participating in psychology studies (worth 1% point for each hour)** through the Department of Psychology's Human Subject Pool (HSP) system. You can locate, create an account, and sign up for studies by going to <https://hsp.psych.ubc.ca>. **Please register in the system by the end of the first month of classes to have the opportunity to earn your first 0.5 hour credit with a brief online survey that will increase your eligibility for more studies.**

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 urge 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".

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 three 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, Daniela Pasqualini, Caroline Lee, and Yilin Guo are highly knowledgeable, well-trained, and very capable senior 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 3 TAs (i.e., Yilin Guo, Caroline Lee, Daniela Pasqualini) 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 each Monday (10am to 12nn; Office 3519 in the Kenny Building). 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!

4. CONTENTS

4.1 TOPICS AT A GLANCE

Chronological list of topics by week and session.

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

**Week 5: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
 Mid-Term I**

**Week 6: Personality Stability Development & Change
 Interim Course Feedback Survey**

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 / Personality as Biology and Genetics I

**Week 12: Personality as Biology and Genetics II
 Mid-Term III**

Week 13: Applications of Personality

**Week 14: Outlook & 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	Tue, Sep 2	NO CLASS Imagine Day	(1) Laura King: Introduction to Personality Psychology (SPSP Video Series, 2019; 4.42min)	TA: Yilin
		Thu, Sep 4	Syllabus & Introduction		
Methods in Personality	2	Tue, Sep 9	Personality Research Methods	(1) Simine Vazire: Personality Research Methods (SPSP Video Series, 2018; 9.11min)	TA: Yilin



		Thu, Sep 11	Personality Assessment	(2) New York Times (2023). The \$2 Billion Question of Who You Are at Work. (3) TIME (2024). Are Personality Tests Actually Useful?	
Personality as Traits I	3	Tue, Sep 16	Persons and Situations	(1) Edward Diener & Rich E. Lucas. Personality Traits . NOBA Project. (2) New York Times (2025). What Makes a Person Cool? (3) Tera Letzring: Personality Assessment and Judgement (SPSP Video Series, 2018; 7.24min)	TA: Yilin
Personality as Traits II	4	Tue, Sep 23	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. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721414547737 (2) Soto C. J., Napolitano, C. M. & Roberts, B. W. (2021). Taking Skills Seriously – Toward an Integrative Model and Agenda for Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Skills. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i> , 30(1), 26-33. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721420978613 (3) New York Times (2013). “Everyday Sadists” Among Us.	TA: Yilin
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	5	Tue, Sep 30	NO CLASS National Day for Truth and Reconciliation		



		Thu, Oct 2	Mid-Term I		
Personality Stability, Development and Change	6	Tue, Oct 7	Personality, Stability, Development and Change I	(1) Dan Gilbert: The Psychology of Future Self (TedTalk, 2014; 6.36min) (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	TA: Yilin Interim Course Feedback Survey
		Thu, Oct 9	Personality Stability, Development and Change II	(3) Uugwanga, S. N., Naudé, L., & Thalmayer, A. G. (2025). Becoming an Ovambo Adult: Growing into Agentic communalism in Sub-Saharan Africa. <i>Psychological Science</i> . https://doi.org/10.1177/09567976241311920	
Personality as Unconscious Desires	7	Tue, Oct 14	Basics of Psychoanalysis	(1) Robert Bornstein. The Psychodynamic Perspective . NOBA Project.	TA: Caroline
		Thu, Oct 16	Psychoanalysis After Freud	(2) Todd Dufresne: History versus Sigmund Freud . (TedEd, 2020; 5.54min)	
Personality as Self and Identity	8	Tue, Oct 21	Personality as Self and Identity	(1) Personality Psychology Podcast: #16 Self-Esteem with Ulrich Orth, Ketaki Diwan, and Lorenzo Filosa (EAPP, 2022; 38.08min) (2) Samantha Krauss & Ulrich Orth: Low Self-Esteem and Eating Disorders – A Vicious	TA: Caroline



				Cycle (SPSP Character & Context Blog, 2023)	
		Thu, Oct 23	Mid-Term II		
Personality as Lived Experience I	9	Tue, Oct 28	Humanistic Psychology	(1) Edward Diener. Happiness: The Science of Subjective Well-Being . NOBA Project. (2) Ke Wang. Gratitude Can Lead to Healthier Choices . (SPSP Character & Context Blog, 2024) (3) Knowledge at Wharton (2023). Does Money Buy Happiness? Here's What the Research Says .	TA: Caroline
		Thu, Oct 30	Positive Psychology, and the Science of Happiness		
Personality as Lived Experience II	10	Tue, Nov 4	Cultural Variation in Experience, Behaviour, and Personality	(1) Shige Oishi: Personality and Culture (SPSP Video Series, 2018; 7.42min) (2) Rentfrow, P. J. & Jokela, M. (2016). Geographical Psychology: The Spatial Organization of Psychological Phenomena. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i> , 25(6), 393–398. https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721416658446	TA: Caroline
		Thu, Nov 6	Regional Variation in Experience, Behaviour, and Personality		
Winter Reading Break / Personality as Biology and Genetics I	11	Tue, Nov 11	NO CLASS Winter Reading Break		
		Tue Nov 13	Genetics and Evolution (Guest Lecture by Yilin)	(1) Eric Turkheimer. The Nature-Nurture Question . NOBA Project.	TA: Daniela
Personality as Biology and Genetics II	12	Tue, Nov 18	The Anatomy and Physiology of Personality	(1) DeYoung, C. G., Beaty, R. E., Genç, E., Latzman, R. D., Passamonti, L., Servaas, M. N., Shackman, A. J., Smillie, L. D., Spreng, R. N., Viding, E., &	TA: Daniela



				<p>Wacker, J. (2022). Personality Neuroscience: An Emerging Field with Bright Prospects. <i>Personality Science</i>, 3. https://doi.org/10.5964/ps.7269</p> <p>(2) Harlow, J. M. (1869). <u>Recovery from the Passage of an Iron Bar Through the Head.</u> <i>Massachusetts Medical Society</i>.</p>	
		Thu, Nov 20	Mid-Term III		
Applications of Personality	13	Tue, Nov 25	Social & Health Outcomes	(1) <u>Olivia Atherton: Personality and Health</u> (SPSP Video Series, 2018; 6.33min)	TA: Daniela
		Thu, Nov 27	Economic Outcomes	<p>(2) Jacob D. Teeny & Sandra C. Matz (2024). We Need to Understand “When” Not “If” Generative AI Can Enhance Personalized Persuasion. <i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences</i>, 121(43). https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.2418005121</p> <p>(3) <u>Stephen Antonoplis & Oliver P. John: Who Has Different-Race Friends?</u> (SPSP Character & Context Blog, 2022)</p>	
Outlook & Wrap Up	14	Tue, Dec 2	Above and Beyond: Diversity, Inclusivity, and Personality in Non-Human Animals	<p>(1) Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). Most people are not WEIRD. <i>Nature</i>, 466, 29. https://doi.org/10.1038/466029a</p>	TA: Daniela



		Thu, Dec 4	Review, Wrap Up, & Ask Me Anything	(2) Ghai, S. (2021). It's time to reimagine sample diversity and retire the WEIRD dichotomy. <i>Nature Human Behaviour</i> , 5(8), 971–972. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-021-01175-9	Final Exam Coming Up (Date TBD)
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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](#).



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). In the spirit of flexibility and compassion, we have deliberately designed a course in which there will be no marks for live in-class participation, and you can miss a personal reflection piece 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 the mid-term exam, the weight of the missed exam will be equally distributed across the remaining exams, which will each receive an additional weight (e.g., if you miss the second mid-term, then the third mid-term and the final exam will each receive an additional final grade weight of 10%). 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, 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 \(UBC Chapman Learning Commons\)](#)
- [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; September 1st 2025) was authored by Dr. Friedrich Götz with helpful input from Caroline Lee, Yilin Guo, and Daniela Pasqualini. 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 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. 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 UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Department of Psychology

UBC Psychology
2136 West Mall
Vancouver, BC
Canada V6T 1Z4
Phone: 604 822 2755
Web: psych.ubc.ca

The end.