

MACQUARIE
UNIVERSITY



FACULTY OF
HUMAN SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PSY336
Personality

Unit Outline

Semester 2, 2011

Unit convenor: Dr Doris McIlwain C3A 406, Ph: 9850 9430 Email: doris.mcilwain@mq.edu.au

Pre-requisites / Co-requisites: PSY 234

Students in this unit should read this unit outline carefully at the start of semester. It contains important information about the unit. If anything in it is unclear, please consult one of the teaching staff in the unit.

ABOUT THIS UNIT

Unit description and credit points PSY 336 Personality is a three credit point unit and all lectures are available on iletecture. There is no text for the course, we use readings from blackboard instead and seminars (aka Tutorials) begin in week 2.

The Lectures: The study of personality addresses the individual differences that make a difference in terms of creative adaptation to and resilience in the face of changing life demands. This course explores the way we are shaped by both our temperament and our cultural experiences, beginning with our earliest relationships to others. You could call it 'Culture meets biology'. Unlike many other animals we are born fairly helpless but with a large experiencing brain. Of necessity we depend on others. How those others react to us, meet our needs (or fail to) shapes our bodily responses, our pleasures, beliefs, values and expectations about ourselves and about the world. We will explore the subtle nature of these exchanges from a variety of points of view.

This course covers theories and research addressing shared features of personality [nomothetic], and also what is unique to a single person [idiographic]. We look what temperament contributes to personality as well as developmental experiences that shape us. Emotion seems to shape morality and our openness to others. This is evident in those with unusual affective styles such as narcissistic, Machiavellian and psychopathic personalities. These case studies show how early influences can have later knock-on effects. Personality emerges as a dynamic system of adaptation. We consider optimal ways of researching and working with particular personality styles, including exploring the possibilities for personal change.

You have to be inventive to assess and capture all that matters about personality: you can **use scales** to describe it in terms of **traits**, **observe** what people **do** and infer from language and actions the nature of a person's **motivations**. Much is revealed in the stories or narratives a person tells about him/herself. There are tricky bits to the study of personality: People 'fake good' (give a socially desirable rather than a true account of what they are like) or lie. Research has to get round the problems of unconscious bias or outright deceptive processes. This is especially important if you are studying skilled deceivers, or those who don't have full insight – which is most of us. The course will cover different personality styles as well as different ways of trying to 'get at' what personality is.

Recommended reading: don't stress out and feel you have to read it all. It will not be explicitly examined in the multi-choice or short answer exam unless it is mentioned in lectures. Recommended reading is extra material provided if topics really grab you to read up on it for your exam, for interest or for future research.

Unit rationale What is unique about this course is that it has a series of lectures that give you an overview of personality and a series of seminars offered on different topics that enable you to specialise in what interests you. SO the seminar strand that Student One allocates you to will not necessarily be the one you will go to; as you may find that there is a seminar topic at another time that you like better. In this course, seminars are allocated in the first lecture, so make sure that you are there or that you send your preferences to Doris if you have no flexibility about times.

Changes from last year Seminars change every year. Staff offer topics inspired by their research interests. The lecture series has been restructured to emphasise different themes and Doris' changing research interests.

It is University policy that the University issued email account will be used for official University communication. All students are required to access their University account frequently.

TEACHING STAFF

Convenor Dr Doris McIlwain C3A 423, Ph: 9850 9430 Email: doris.mcilwain@psy.mq.edu.au **Consultation Times:** Tuesday 1-3pm, Thursday 12-1pm.

Staff and their Seminar Strand Topic & Times

Dr Simon Boag: C3A 407, Ph: 9850 8024 Email: Simon.Boag@mq.edu.au

Topics: Wednesday 10-12am - **Defense mechanisms and Unconscious processes: theory and evidence**, Thursday 2-4pm – **Jung and the Collective Unconscious**

Beatrice Alba: Beatrice.Alba@students.mq.edu.au

Topic: Personality and evolutionary psychology Times: Tuesday 3-5pm & 6-8pm

Andrew Geeves Andrew.Geeves@studentes.mq.edu.au

Topic: The Power of the past. Times Thursday 4-6pm and 6-8pm

Lana Gilmour: Lana.Gilmour@students.mq.edu.au

Topic: Personality Styles in Cyberspace Time: Thursday 4-6pm

Wes Tan: Wesley.Tan@students.mq.edu.au

Topic: Trauma & Personality styles. Times: Monday 3-5pm & 5-7pm, Tuesday 1-3pm

Madeleine Fraser: Madeleine.Fraser@students.mq.edu.au

Topic: From Nasty to Nice. Time: Wednesday 8-10am

CLASSES

Lecture: Tuesday 11am-1pm in W5A Price

There are 13 lectures of two hours duration. They are uploaded to the web where you can stream them, or download them to CD or ipod.

Seminars: [We call tutorials seminars in this course]

Seminars begin in week two and go through to week 7. You will have six seminars and each is two hours in duration (so that we can show films where relevant).

Managing Classes: *Despite the fact that you will have been allocated to a seminar stream via student one, in this unit we have different topics on different days. Students see a small presentation from each staff member in the first lecture. On that basis you select your topic of interest according to your timetable. You give your top three options and we will try to give you your first preference.*

Day	Time	Place	Seminar Leader	Topic
Monday	3-5pm	Y3A 211	Wes Tan	Trauma
Monday	5-7pm	W5C 334	Wes Tan	Trauma
Tuesday	1-3pm	W5C 309	Wes Tan	Trauma
Tuesday	3-5pm	C5C 238	Beatrice Alba	Evolutionary Psych
Tuesday	6-8pm	W5C 311	Beatrice Alba	Evolutionary Psych
Wednesday	8-10am	W5C 234	Madeleine Fraser	From nasty to nice
Wednesday	10-12am	W5C 334	Simon Boag	Defense mechanisms
Thursday	2-4pm	W5A 203	Simon Boag	Collective Unconscious
Thursday	4-6pm	W5A 203	Lana Gilmour	Cyberspace Personality
Thursday	4-6pm	W5C 312	Andrew Geeves	Power of the past
Thursday	6-8pm	W5A 203	Andrew Geeves	Power of the past

Attendance: While there is no formal role taken in seminars, you need to be there to do well in the assessments which are based on topics covered in your seminars and essays set by your seminar leader.

REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS AND/OR MATERIALS

Prescribed text: There is no main text for this course this year, but a core collection of readings available on the course webpage.

UNIT WEB PAGE

The web page for this unit can be found at: <http://learn.mq.edu.au/> for overheads, & up to the minute course news

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course Objectives and Generic Skills

In completing this course successfully, you will

1. Gain a basic insight into central issues in contemporary personality research in terms of theory, psychometric and developmental issues.
2. Learn of the variety of approaches to the study of personality, and their relevance to everyday life, research and the working world.
3. Learn how to read critically, to take your own stance on an array of issues in writing and in discussion with your peers.
4. Write an essay that synthesises a body of material and argues for an original position.
5. Develop research skills and undertake an independent seminar research project, which may be developed either individually or in a small group.
6. Acquire enough background knowledge to direct further studies in the area.
7. Learn how to communicate effectively during group discussions in seminars.

In addition to the discipline-based learning objectives, all academic programs at Macquarie seek to develop students' generic skills in a range of areas. This unit offers students the opportunity to develop their skills in the following: Literacy, Self-awareness and interpersonal skills; Communication; Critical analysis and Creative thinking skills.

Graduate Capabilities Developed

Course graduate capabilities:

1. **Awareness of everyday ethical issues:** Given the emphasis on unconscious processes and the fact that people lack full insight into their motivations, course graduates should be alert to what contributes to prejudice and discrimination as they operate at a conscious and unconscious level. Graduates will also become aware of the challenges of managing power well (rather than in a self-serving way) in hierarchical work environments.
2. **Reflective practice:** Course graduates should be able to reflect on their own efforts and abilities, and assess how well they have achieved self-set goals.
3. **Clear written and verbal communication without reliance on jargon:** Course graduates should be able to write succinctly (short and sweet) and communicate clearly to those without the same specialist knowledge.
4. **Creative research** Course graduates should be able to identify gaps in existing knowledge; formulate creative ways of defining and clarifying questions in new research areas and devise relevant methodologies.
5. **Questioning rather than complying:** Course graduates should be able to challenge and question rather than accepting without critique definitions, methods, foci of interest and conclusions.

How is the unit taught?

The unit covers a broad array of material that enables you to locate what interests you most, so that you can specialise in that. It aims to teach you how to formulate what interests you and to explore relevant theoretical and empirical material. It encourages you to take your own stance on issues, as this is what is required of you at a higher level of research in psychology. There are also serious efforts made to help you enhance your writing skills so that you make the best use of the material you have read.

The philosophy of teaching that informs this unit is that if you are present and awake during lectures you should pass. If you do some of the reading you should do well, and if you learn how to structure an argument that synthesises an array of material cogently as well as taking an original stance that you clearly identify to your reader and defend using evidence, you should get a very high mark indeed.

Lecture material and what is explicitly on the overheads in lectures is relevant to multiple choice and short answer questions in the final exam. Lecture material, reading from the lecture series and from your seminar strands will be relevant to the essay question in the final exam.

What is expected of students?

This course does not assume that you will read everything offered on blackboard as relevant to lectures. It does encourage you to read what interests you and to read the writers in the original at times rather than merely reading textbook chapters. It is so much more exciting and makes much more sense if you can dip into the writers as we go: to get their original verve. You'll know from your basic reading what inspires your curiosity to read further. You need only ask for further references.

The best exam preparation for this course is to go deeply into what fascinates you.

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Lectures at a glance

Date	Lecturer	Topic
1. August 2	Dr Doris McIlwain	Seminar Allocation. Describing Personality: Personality Traits
2. August 9	Doris	Describing Personality: Nomothetic and Idiographic approaches. Using traits to profile groups and profile a single individual
3. August 16	Doris	Describing personality: does personality change?
4. August 23	Simon	Unconscious Processes
5. August 30	Doris	Development of personality: A blueprint for exploring how personality forms: emotion & theory of mind
6. September 6	Doris	Development of personality: Personality & relationships: attachment, trust & empathy
7. September 13	Doris	Development of personality: Failures of Empathy: Narcissists, Machiavellians and psychopaths
Break- Sept 19		
To October 4		
8. October 4	Doris	Mental Time Travel and Morality
9. October 11	Doris	Development of personality: Forgiveness, shame and self-compassion: Narcissism means never having to say you are sorry
10. October 18	Doris	Tricky aspects of personality: Deceiving ourselves, deceiving others
11, October 25	Doris	Contextualising personality: Audience power: Telling stories & being dismissed
12. November 1	Doris	Contextualising personality: Personality, Memory & self
13. November 8	Doris	Getting ready for exams: Linking themes

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

- We assess how much you know (scope of knowledge; assessed by short answers and multi-choice in exams) how deeply you know it, and how well (and creatively) you can put it all together (relevant to essays and in group discussions).
- Course assessment has three main foci – a) scope of coverage and description of theory and empirical findings; b) using your material to advance a line of argument; c) taking an original stance over and above the material you have been taught – in short, showing innovation.

- **What marks are accorded for:**
- **Fail:** Disorganisation and/or errors in description of material. Reads like notes taken for an essay. This work may have neither adequate scope nor structure but evidence of some research into sources. No evidence of critical engagement. Inadequate use of sources.
- **Pass:** Adequate descriptive coverage of material (reasonable scope but no real line of argument).
- **High Pass:** Good descriptive coverage of material (good scope of material but still no line of argument).
- **Credit:** Critical engagement with material which shows an evaluative ability – good scope. Evidence of a line of argument, even if some inconsistencies are present, and attempts to use the material to answer the question or reformulate the question in the light of evidence.
- **Distinction:** Taking an original stance that is clearly argued, adequately backed-up with evidence, and shows compelling logical flow in the line of argument.
- **High Distinction:** Evidence of real original flair of the sort that is like a very good review article that clarifies and synthesizes a range of inconsistencies and issues in the area, or one that demarcates an issue requiring empirical research and clears the way for the obvious next step in terms of empirical research. Work with tight logical flow, excellent **use** of material, showing ability in critical engagement rather than just accepting existing definitions and measures.

- The short answer questions in exams address scope of knowledge: your basic insight into contemporary research and theory, knowledge of the different ways of studying personality, and why personality matters. (Learning objectives 1-3).
- **We don't just assess your skill at putting together an argument - we try to teach you how to do it.** How well you put your material together is addressed by the take home essay and the exam essay. The essay summary explicitly teaches you how to put your material together. The essay requires you to do original research and synthesise it into a clear line of argument.

How take home coursework prepares you for the exam:

The ten-point summary prepares you for short answers in your exam. The essay prepares you for the exam essay. The essay teaches you how to find material relevant to a topic that interests you, synthesise the main points of that material and shape them into an argument that puts forward your position. *It allows you to be original.* Not everyone will agree with your stance, but they should be able to see why you hold the views you do and on the basis of what evidence. This is relevant to honours in psychology, to writing reports about clients in the workplace, and to writing for the wider public.

A) TAKE HOME ASSESSMENT

1. Ten point Summary or essay plan:

A small 10-point summary of major points describing and evaluating an article or issue covered in your seminar strand. You can submit this to your seminar leader before your essay submission if you wish to use it as an essay plan. This exercise is to get you to practise achieving logical flow to the points you make in an essay, exam or verbal presentation. It is also explicitly teaching you how to approach the short-answer section of your end of year exam.

Word limit: 500 words

Worth: 15% of your final grade.

Late penalties and over-length penalties: You lose 5% of your total mark per day late and 5% of your total mark per 100 words over the word limit. the assignment.

Submission date: August 26 at 10am (to allocated box outside the student office or in the single Psychology Essay Box located outside the entrance of C3A after hours).

Return date: September 13.

Assignments will be returned to students during seminars. Seminars leaders of evening seminars will return ALL assignments during the late classes. The remaining assignments will then be available for collection from the Psychology Office. During Semester time, Psychology Office opening hours are: 10AM to 5PM.

2. Essay: Choose a topic from those provided by the seminar leaders in your special interest seminar. I will post all essay topics and reference lists on the course webpage in week three of the course.

Word limit: 1,500 words. **Worth:** 35% of your final grade.

Submission date: October 7 at 10am. To allocated box outside student office by 10 am or in the single Psychology Essay Box located outside the entrance of C3A after hours and with a cover sheet signed by you. The signature is evidence that you consider this to be your own work.

Return Date: October 28

Late penalties and over-length penalties: Five percent of your total assignment mark will be taken off for every 100 words over. This gives you 99 words over the word limit before you are penalised.

B) EXAM ASSESSMENT

3. Exam: A one hour exam during the end-of-year exam period.

Worth: 50% of your final grade.

It has three parts:

Part I (worth 25%) consists of 1 essay question (out of 3).

Part II (worth 15%) consists of 1 (out of 3) short answer questions.

Part III (worth 10%) consists of 15 multiple-choice questions.

- **Really Really Really Late submission:**

Assignments will not be accepted after the return of marked assignments.

- **Where students are to hand in their assignments.** Assignments can ONLY be submitted via the LABELLED locked boxes in the foyer of building C3A or in the single Psychology Essay Box located outside the entrance of C3A after hours.

The assignment boxes are cleared at 10 am on Mondays to Fridays and again at 4 pm ONLY ON FRIDAYS (Assignments received at 4pm on Fridays, after the 10 am clearing, are counted as an additional 1 day late). Assignments submitted after the 4 pm clearing on Fridays will be cleared on Monday at 10 am and will incur a weekend (counted as two additional days) penalty. The assignment boxes are cleared at 10 am on Mondays to Fridays and again at 4 pm ONLY ON FRIDAYS.

All assignments submitted must be accompanied by a completed and signed Psychology Department coversheet which is available from outside the Psychology Office or downloadable from <http://www.psy.mq.edu.au/pdf/coversheet.pdf>

Assignments will not be accepted unless a correct coversheet is completed and signed.

A copy of the assignment must be kept as proof that the assignment was completed and submitted.

Electronic copies of assignments are not accepted.

Assignments submitted by post will not be accepted.

AFTER AN ASSIGNMENT IS SUBMITTED:

It is the responsibility of the student to check the Psychology Webpage (<http://www.psy.mq.edu.au/assrec/>) after submitting the assignment to ensure that his/her assignment has been received. The webpage will be updated by 5pm on the due date of the assignment. If an assignment is not noted as being received, it is the student's responsibility to immediately contact the staff in the Psychology Office in writing to inform them. The student will then be required to submit a fresh copy of the assignment and the date of receipt will be the date the Psychology Office was informed of the non-receipt in writing. Lateness penalty will be applied until the date the Psychology Office is informed of the non receipt of assignment.

Assignments submitted after the 4 pm clearing on Fridays will be cleared on Monday at 10 am and will incur a weekend (counted as two days) penalty.

Request for Extensions for Assignments are granted by the Psychology Office for all units:

Ordinarily, no extensions of time for submission of written work will be granted since ample time for its preparation will have been given. If an extension is required for medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may request this in writing by completing a Request for Extension on Written Work form, available outside the Psychology Office, with supporting documentary evidence (such as medical certificate, counsellor note, or similar). The form and the supporting documentary evidence must be submitted to the Psychology Office (C3A 334). The staff in the Psychology Office will make all decisions regarding extensions. Neither individual tutors nor the course convenor will grant extensions.

All requests for extensions should be made prior to the due date for the assignment. If an extension is granted the authorisation section of the form must be collected and attached to the assignment. Failure to do so will result in a late penalty being applied as the marker will not know that an extension has been granted.

The University Examination period in **Second Half Year 2011 is from November 18 to December 4, 2011.**

You are expected to present yourself for examination at the time and place designated in the University Examination Timetable. The timetable will be available in Draft form approximately eight weeks before the commencement of the examinations and in Final form approximately four weeks before the commencement of the examinations.

<http://www.timetables.mq.edu.au/exam>

The only exception to not sitting an examination at the designated time is because of documented illness or unavoidable disruption. In these circumstances you may wish to consider applying for Special Consideration. Information about unavoidable disruption and the special consideration process is available at

<http://www.reg.mq.edu.au/Forms/APSCon.pdf>

If a Supplementary Examination is granted as a result of the Special Consideration process, the examination will be scheduled after the conclusion of the official examination period.

15th and 16th of December, for Semester Two 2011. Supplementary Exams are only offered to students who have satisfactorily completed all other assessments for the unit and were unable to sit the final exam.

Instructions on applying for sitting of a supplementary exam are available from the website, www.psy.mq.edu.au/speccond. It is the student's responsibility to follow the steps outlined in this website. An email will be sent to the student advising them of the outcome of their request for a supplementary exam. If a supplementary exam has been granted it is the student's responsibility to check the web if a supplementary exam has been granted. Students who are granted to sit for a supplementary exam

must make themselves available to sit for the supplementary exam on the specified dates. There will be only one alternative time. It is the student's responsibility to email the Psychology Office, psy_off@mq.edu.au to confirm attendance to the supplementary exams.

You are advised that it is Macquarie University policy not to set early examinations for individuals or groups of students. All students are expected to ensure that they are available until the end of the teaching semester, which is the final day of the official examination period.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic honesty is an integral part of the core values and principles contained in the Macquarie University Ethics Statement. The Policy covering Academic Honesty is available on the web at:

http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Plagiarism is an example of dishonest academic behaviour and is defined by the Policy on Academic honesty as: "Using the work or ideas of another person and presenting this as your own without clear acknowledgement of the source of the work or ideas".

Plagiarism is a serious breach of the University's rules and carries significant penalties. The Academic honesty Procedure is available at

http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/procedure.html

This procedure notes the following responsibilities for students:

- Act in accordance with the principles of the Academic Honesty Policy.
- Become familiar with what academic dishonesty is, what are appropriate referencing techniques and the consequences of poor practice.
- Seek assistance from the unit convenor (or their nominee) to remedy any deficits or if you are unsure of discipline specific practice.
- Submit only work of which you are the author or that properly acknowledges others.
- Do not lend your original work to any other person for any reason.
- Keep drafts of your own authored work and notes showing the authorship or source of ideas that are not your own.

The penalties which can be applied for academic dishonesty are outlined in the Academic Dishonesty – Schedule of Penalties which can be found at:

http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/schedule_penalties.html

The penalties range from applying a fail grade for the assessment task or requiring the student to re-submit the assessment task for a mark no greater than 50 to applying a fail grade to the unit of study and referral to the University Discipline committee.

You must read the University's Policy and Procedure on Academic Honesty.

UNIVERSITY POLICY ON GRADING

Academic Senate has a set of guidelines for the achievement of grades across the range from fail to high distinction. Your final result will include one of these grades plus a standardised numerical grade (SNG).

On occasion your raw mark for a unit (i.e., the total of your marks for each assessment item) may not be the same as the SNG which you receive. For more information please refer to the Macquarie University Handbook.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Macquarie University provides a range of Academic Student Support Services. Details of these services can be accessed at <http://www.student.mq.edu.au>.

On matters pertaining to the regulations, the Registrar's Office should be consulted or, within the Department of Psychology, Dr Julia Irwin, Director of Undergraduate Studies. Students with disabilities who have problems within the Department should consult Ms Radha Pathy, the Disability Liaison Officer. If your difficulties cannot be resolved by these members of staff you should consult the Head of Department.

If you have a major difficulty associated with writing skills, you could enrol in a short course on writing skills. For details go to:

http://www.ling.mq.edu.au/support/writing_skills/index.htm

APPEALS AGAINST GRADE

Please refer to the Faculty of Human Sciences website <http://www.humansciences.mq.edu.au/>