

## Course Outcomes Guide

**Course/Program Title:** PSY 208 Theories of Personality

**Date:** Spring 2017

**Course/Program Team:** Louise Wine

### Expected Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the course, the student will be able to:

- Discuss the basic concepts of the Psychoanalytic, Neoanalytic, Cognitive, Behavioral, Trait, and Humanistic perspectives as they apply to his/her life.
- Formulate his/her own theory of personality, describing the basic personality constructs and dynamics of these constructs as they relate to basic philosophical questions of human existence.

### Assessment

Three unit tests addressing the core concepts of the various theories of personality requiring knowledge, comprehension, analysis, & synthesis of the material.

Three critical thinking assignments which require students to apply theories to case studies. A formal paper describing the student's own theory of personality, answering the following questions:

- Is personality influenced more by early childhood experiences or by the present or future?
- Is behavior motivated by conscious or unconscious drives?
- Is personality more influenced by heredity or environment?
- What are the basic motives behind human behavior?
- Are people more rational/logical or do they act more on emotions?
- Is human nature basically positive and altruistic or primitive and self-serving?

This paper is a synthesis activity which requires the student to develop his/her own integrated theory of personality. It must cite any theorist(s) his/her position might be consistent with regarding each of these issues.

### Validation

Test questions are taken from the text's publisher's test bank. These questions have been validated on a large population of students.

The critical thinking assignments & personal theory of personality paper are assessed on internal validity and overall quality of thought, employing a rubric.

## **Results**

Over the past 3 years, grade distribution has been fairly consistent, with a slight majority of students earning A's and B's. With a total n=34 for the year, 29% earned A's, and 32% earned B's. My primary concern is that there is a significant percentage of students who perform poorly in this class. 3% of students who completed the course earned a D and 12% earned F's (however, all were walk-away). The inclusion of more case studies to encourage students to apply the theories has seemed to improve comprehension, however, there seems to be a portion of students who take this course without an understanding that it requires effort to be successful. Once colleague who used to be an advisor at another institution remarked to me that he found that students often think that Psychology is an easy major. That is not the case! The personal theory paper has improved, however, over the past several semesters, with the vast majority of students who actually completed the course earning A's and B's on that assignment.

## **Follow-up**

One of the consistent comments I receive on my evaluations is that there is too much material covered for each test (four theories covered on each of two tests, and three theories covered on the other test). I have put a lot of thought into this, and just do not believe that is an unreasonable expectation for a college-level course. Consequently, I don't intend to change this model at this time. I will continue to adjust instruction to emphasis key themes, concepts, etc. in order to reinforce the main ideas in each perspectives, integrating more discussion, analysis, and case study applications.

## **Budget Justification**

No additional resources needed at this time.