

Faculty of Health
Department of Psychology
HH/PSYC 4220 6.0 Section B
THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE
F/W 2016-2017

Instructor and T.A. Information

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Course Prerequisite(s): Course prerequisites are strictly enforced.

- HH/PSYC 1010 6.00 (Introduction to Psychology), with a minimum grade of C.
- HH/PSYC 2021 3.00 (Statistical Methods I) or HH/PSYC 2020 6.00 (Statistical Methods I and II)
- HH/PSYC 2030 3.00 (Introduction to Research Methods) or substitutes
- Students must be in an Honours program in Psychology and have completed at least 84 credits (excluding (EDUC) education courses)

Course website: [Moodle](#) Students are responsible for checking the course website for additional course updates and information.

Course Description

A critical examination of theories of human nature with special emphasis on psychological theories, cultural and social theories, psychoanalysis, philosophical theories, racial theories and economic theories

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of theories of human nature.
2. Critically evaluate, synthesize and resolve conflicting results in theories of human nature.
3. Articulate trends in theories of human nature.
4. Locate research articles on theories of human nature and show critical thinking about research findings .
5. Express knowledge of theories of human nature in written form.
6. Engage in evidence-based dialogue with course director and peers.
7. Demonstrate an ability to work with others.

Specific Learning Objectives

- develop a conceptual understanding of their assumptions about human nature by using several different frameworks
- consider how varying theories of human nature shape the conceptualization of topics typically addressed in psychology, as well as influence the questions and research methods used to examine them
- reflect on how varying theories of human nature could influence the way we manage our lives and our relationships with others, as well as shape the kinds of people possible for us to be.

Required Text

Stevenson, L., Haberman, D., Matthews Wright, P. (2013) Twelve Theories of Human Nature (6th Ed.) New York: Oxford University Press.

Course Requirements and Assessment

Assessment	Date of Evaluation (if known)	Weight
Film Review	TBD	4%
Paper #1	October 12	4%
Test #1	October 26	18%
Paper #2	November 9	5%
Paper #3	November 30	6%
Test #2	January 25	22%
Seminar Presentation	TBD	12%
Final Paper	April 5	19%
Participation		10%
Total		100%

Description of Assignments

Film review

A part of each class will be devoted to a film review. Students will sign up in groups of three to be a discussant. Film discussants will need to preview the film. All films are available in the York library. Because viewing time is limited to 10-15 minutes, you will need to select a portion of the film you believe would be most useful for the class. After the class views the selected portions, you will give your reactions and facilitate a class discussion. N.B.: This is NOT a presentation. Your objective is to help promote a class discussion. *Please note: the library takes reserved films off of the shelf 1 week prior to the viewing date. This means students will need to review their films more than a week before the show date.*

In Class tests

Test #1 October 26, 2016

Test #2 Jan. 25, 2017

Both tests will consist of multiple choice, short answer and essay style questions covering the text, assigned readings, and all powerpoint slides covered to date. The second test is not cumulative.

Paper #1: CULTURAL METAPHORS (2-3 pages typed, double spaced).

DUE OCT. 12: *hard copy in class, e-copy to turnitin (through link on moodle)*

It is often difficult to convey to others exactly what a specific culture is like. Metaphors can allow us to more easily grasp a new concept by framing it in terms of something familiar. Martin J. Gannon (2002) proposes the use of cultural metaphors as a way to easily express a cultural mindset and compare it to that of other cultures. These metaphors involve identifying an activity or phenomenon that most members of a culture would view as important, and then using it as a metaphor for describing key features of the cultural group. While cultural metaphors are generalizations and will not apply to all members of a group, these metaphors can provide a framework for beginning to understand and compare cultural groups

Directions: Construct your own cultural metaphor for a culture with which you are familiar. See assignment guidelines on moodle course page for details

Paper #2: Understanding proverbs from away. 2-3 pages double spaced.

DUE: NOV. 9 *hard copy in class, e-copy to turnitin (through link on moodle)*

With their expressed consent, interview a person from a culture different from your own and ask them to identify a proverb that is common to their culture (e.g., time is money; no man is an island; for every hand there is a glove). Ask them to choose four or five dimensions of their culture to explain its meaning. Be sure to ask for elaboration and clarification to help you grasp its interpretation. Reflect back the meaning as you understand it and ask for feedback. In your paper, present the proverb and identify the culture. Provide a clear and comprehensive written account of its meaning as explained by your informant. Identify three aspects of human nature that are embedded in this metaphor and explain your choices.

Paper # 3: A GLOBAL VIEW OF PSYCHOLOGY approx. 3 pages double-spaced

DUE: NOV. 30 *hard copy in class, e-copy to turnitin (through link on moodle)*

Most of what is published in psychology journals and textbooks takes a Western perspective (or Western indigenous perspective) and ignores the psychologies that

have been developed by scholars across the globe to address concerns relevant to their own cultures. The purpose of this activity is twofold. First, it will acquaint you with some of the research interests of psychologists outside of Western Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Second, it will encourage you to think about some of the influences on what is considered Western psychology.

Directions: For this activity you are asked to search a psychology database (such as PsycLIT or PsycINFO) to locate a journal article reporting on **a specific research study** developed in a "non-Western" context. Such articles are often categorized under the heading of "indigenous psychology". **N:B:** this needs to be a research article, not a literature review or proposed model.

1. Provide the complete citation for your article
2. In two or three paragraphs, summarize this study. Include a description its purpose, the participants, procedures, and results.
3. Identify two underlying assumptions about human nature that are embedded in the article. Explain your choices.

Seminar Presentation February 1 to March 29, 2017

Each student is expected to give a presentation to the rest of the class in the second term. Your one-hour presentation will be done in groups of three. The presentation can include lecture, audiovisual material, class exercises, and guided group discussion. A list of suggested topics will be provided. Feel free to discuss additional topics with the course director. Topics and presentation dates will be established early in the first term. You will need to have your proposed topic approved by the course director. You will be expected to discuss the conceptual and research literature in your area of interest and present the material in a clear and organized manner.

More specific guidelines regarding the expectations for the presentation will be discussed in class.

Final Paper April 5, 2017

The final term paper may be an elaboration of the same topic as the seminar presentation, or students can choose a different topic (with approval of the Course Director). Details will be announced in class. The paper should be written in accordance with the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. Papers should be approximately 10-12 double spaced pages (2500-3000 words).

Participation

Class participation will be evaluated based on active and informed participation and reflection in all class discussions and exercises. Please note, this mark is not based on attendance per se, however, it goes without saying that attendance is necessary in order to participate. It will be helpful to prepare for each meeting by completing the assigned readings prior to each class.

Grading as per Senate Policy

The grading scheme for the course conforms to the 9-point grading system used in undergraduate programs at York (e.g., A+ = 9, A = 8, B+ = 7, C+ = 5, etc.). Assignments and tests* will bear either a letter grade designation or a corresponding number grade (e.g. A+ = 90 to 100, A = 80 to 90, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - calendars.students.yorku.ca/2016-2017/academic-and-financial-information/academic-services/grades-and-grading-schemes)

Late Work/Missed Tests or Exams

Students with a documented reason for missing a course test, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (Attending Physician Statement which can be found at: <http://registrar.yorku.ca/pdf/attending-physicians-statement.pdf>) may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. Further extensions or accommodation will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty.

One make-up test will be held for students who have a documented absence. It is the student's responsibility to attend that test. Undocumented late papers that are late will be deducted 20% per day

Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Important Dates](#)

Important dates	Fall (F)	Year (Y)	Winter (W)
Last date to add a course without permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Sept. 21	Sept. 21	Jan. 18
Last date to add a course with permission of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)	Oct. 5	Oct. 19	Feb. 1
Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)	Nov. 11	Feb. 10	March 10
Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a "W" on the transcript – see note below)	Nov. 12 - Dec. 5	Feb. 11 - Apr. 5	March 11 - Apr. 5

Information on Plagiarism Detection

The University has subscribed to the Turnitin service which helps professors identify internet plagiarism and helps students maintain academic integrity. The work submitted by students in this course will be submitted to Turnitin. Students who do not want their work submitted to this plagiarism detection service must, by the end of the second class, consult with the instructor to make alternate arrangements

Electronic Device Policy

Electronic devices are to be used in class for course work only. In respect for other students, refrain from using electronic devices in class for personal or entertainment purposes.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all seminar classes. While participation depends being in class, the grade for participation is not based on attendance per se.

Academic Integrity for Students

York university takes academic integrity very seriously, please visit [an overview of Academic Integrity at York University](#) from the Office of the Vice-President Academic.

The following links will assist you in gaining a better understanding of academic integrity and point you to resources at York that can help you improve your writing and research skills:

- [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#)
- [Online Tutorial on Academic Integrity](#)
- [Information for Students on Text-Matching Software: Turnitin.com](#)
- [Beware! Says who? A pamphlet on how to avoid plagiarism](#)
- [Resources for students to help improve their writing and research skill](#)

Test Banks:

The use of test banks is not permitted in this course and may be considered a potential breach of academic honesty. This includes but is not limited too; buying or selling test banks.

Electronic Devices During a Test/Examination:

Electronic mobile devices of any kind are not allowed during a test or examination. Students are required to turn off and secure any electronic mobile device in their bag which is to be placed under the chair while a test/exam is in progress. Any student observed with an electronic devise during a test/exam may be reported to the Undergraduate Office for a potential breach of Academic Honesty.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

While all individuals are expected to satisfy the requirements of their program of study and to aspire to do so at a level of excellence, the university recognizes that persons with disabilities may require

reasonable accommodation to enable them to do so. The [York University Accessibility Hub](#) is your online stop for accessibility on campus. The [Accessibility Hub](#) provides tools, assistance and resources. Policy Statement

Policy: York University shall make reasonable and appropriate accommodations and adaptations in order to promote the ability of students with disabilities to fulfill the academic requirements of their programs.

The nature and extent of accommodations shall be consistent with and supportive of the integrity of the curriculum and of the academic standards of programs or courses.

Provided that students have given sufficient notice about their accommodation needs, instructors shall take reasonable steps to accommodate these needs in a manner consistent with the guidelines established hereunder.

For Further Information please refer to: [York university academic accommodation for students with disabilities policy](#)

Course Materials Copyright Information:

These course materials are designed for use as part of the PSYC 4220 6.0B course at York University and are the property of the instructor unless otherwise stated. Third party copyrighted materials (such as book chapters, journal articles, music, videos, etc.) have either been licensed for use in this course or fall under an exception or limitation in Canadian Copyright law.

Copying this material for distribution (e.g. uploading material to a commercial third-party website) may lead to a violation of Copyright law. [Intellectual Property Rights Statement](#)

Course Schedule:

Sept. 14	Introduction The history of psychology. Volume 1, Mind, self & soul DVD 11111
Sept. 21	Chapter 1: Confucianism Family Values: The Chinese Family in Transition [electronic resource]
Sept. 28	Chapter 2: Upanishadic Hinduism Eastern mystics [electronic resource]
Oct. 5	Chapter 3: Buddhism Film: When the iron bird flies [electronic resource]
Oct. 12	Chapter 4: Plato Due: Paper #1 creating a cultural metaphor

Oct. 19	Chapter 5: Aristotle Born to be good? DVD 14352
Oct. 26	Test #1:
Nov. 2	Chapter 6: The Bible Humanity in relation to God No rest for the wicked [electronic resource]
Nov. 9	Chapter 7: Islam The rise and flourishing of Islam (electronic resource) Due: Paper #2: Proverbs from away
Nov. 16	Chapter 8: Kant Speak It! From the Heart of Black Nova Scotia [electronic resource]
Nov. 23	Chapter 9: Marx Film: People like us: Social class in America
Nov. 30	Chapter 10: Freud Due: Paper #3 – Indigenous psychology
Jan. 11	Chapter 11: Sartre Griefwalker [videorecording]
Jan. 18	Chapter 12: Darwin The Monkey in the Machine and the Machine in the Monkey [electronic resource]
Jan. 25	Test #2:
Feb. 1	Student presentation
Feb. 8	Student presentation
Feb. 22	Student presentation
Feb. 29	Reading week
March 1	Student presentation
March 8	Student presentation
March 15	Student Presentation
March 22	Student presentation
March 29	Student presentation
April 5	Final paper due.