1.0 CALENDAR Description

This course is designed to be a critical evaluation of contemporary research in personality. Issues to be examined could include the person-situation debate, the idiographic vs. nomothetic study of personality, moderators of behaviour predictability, new methods of personality assessment, evolutionary, sociobiological, genetic, and environmental influences on individual and group differences.

2.0 COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor: S. Paunonen, Rm. 6400 SSC
Office Hours: By appointment, 661-2060, paunonen@uwo.ca
Secretary: Helen Harris, Rm. 7304 SSC
Lectures: Tuesdays 12:30-3:30, SS6319 or TH4185

3.0 TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

There is no one textbook for this course. However, students are required to read several published research articles and book chapters (see Section 8.0). Copies of these materials can be obtained from the instructor or from original sources in the library.

4.0 COURSE OBJECTIVES

In this course, we will evaluate critically some issues and controversies prominent in research in personality with an emphasis on person perception. In general, we will explore the situational and personological factors that determine the perceptions people have of themselves and of others. Topics will include methods of assessing accuracy and bias in person perception, issues involving stranger ratings of personality, the search for moderators of accuracy in person perception, and perceptions of animals and other objects. We will also study the research on facial features of people, and discover how those cues influence our thinking about others.

5.0 EVALUATION

The course grade will consist of a weighted sum of five components. These are (a) a written critique of a review article worth 20%, (b) a class presentation of a research proposal worth 15%, (c) a written version of the research proposal worth 20%, (d) a final examination worth 35%, and (e) class participation worth 10%.
5.0 EVALUATION (CONT.)

The first assignment will be a written critique of a manuscript that will be given to you one week before the due date. You will be required to read some background material and then critically evaluate the data and conclusions of the authors in a 8-page (typed, double-spaced) paper.

The second and third assignments will involve proposing an empirical study in one of the areas of research discussed in class. You will select some issue of interest, do the relevant literature review, and then design a study to test some hypotheses that will help to clarify the issue. The literature review along with the proposed research study will be described to the class orally in a 30-minute seminar. A brief question period will follow the seminar. The formal written proposal (15 pages) will be due the same day. The research topic must be approved by me and cannot be related to a topic you have used for a paper in another course or in your undergraduate thesis work.

The final examination will be 3 hours long and will contain short answer and essay type items. All material from the beginning of the course will be covered. The final will be scheduled for the final exam period.

Your class participation grade will be based in part on attendance, completion of weekly readings, contributions to classroom discussion, and questions asked during the seminars.

6.0 SCHEDULE

The evaluation timetable is as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATION</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written critique</td>
<td>Oct. 23</td>
<td>.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposal seminar</td>
<td>Nov. 13 - Dec. 4</td>
<td>.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written proposal</td>
<td>Nov. 13 - Dec. 4</td>
<td>.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>Dec. 7 - Dec. 19</td>
<td>.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
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7.0 MAKE-UP EXAMS, ETC.

Seminars. Only under special circumstances will a student be allowed to give a make-up seminar. These include medical or compassionate reasons substantiated by the proper documentation (e.g., medical certificate). The instructor must be notified of any such case by the day following the seminar at the latest. A student who misses a seminar for any other reason, who is unable to substantiate a claim, or who fails to notify the instructor by the day following the seminar will be assigned a grade of zero for that evaluation.

Final exam. The same conditions listed above for the seminars apply for a student missing the final exam. However, permission of the Dean is needed to set a special final examination. Ask at the Social Sciences Academic Counselling Office.

Written reports. Written critiques or research proposals handed in late will be assessed a penalty of 5% per day.
8.0 LECTURE TOPICS AND ASSOCIATED READINGS

SEPT. 18: METHODS I


SEPT. 25: METHODS II


OCT. 2: METHODS III


OCT. 9: ACCURACY AND BIAS IN RATINGS OF FRIENDS AND STRANGERS I


OCT. 16: ACCURACY AND BIAS IN RATINGS OF FRIENDS AND STRANGERS II


OCT. 23: MODERATORS OF BEHAVIOUR PREDICTABILITY


OCT. 30: PERCEPTION OF ANIMALS


NOV. 6: FACE PERCEPTION I


NOV. 6:  FACE PERCEPTION I (cont.)


NOV. 13:  FACE PERCEPTION II


NOV. 13 - DEC. 4:  SEMINARS

Note. The seminars will be graded on the following components: (a) style of presentation (composure, speed, enthusiasm, etc.), (b) clarity of presentation (organization, intelligibility), (c) completeness of presentation (literature review, analyses, implications, etc.), (d) interest of presentation (use of slides, blackboard, etc.), and (e) skill at answering questions.

The written proposals will be graded on (a) style of proposal (according to APA requirements, punctuation, etc.), (b) clarity of proposal (organization, intelligibility, flow), (c) completeness of proposal (literature review, analyses, implications, etc.), (d) legitimacy and feasibility of the study for testing the hypotheses, (e) appropriateness of the proposed analyses and their interpretation, (f) originality of the study, and (g) importance of the study.