**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**PSYC 353: PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSONALITY**

**WINTER 2023**

**MONDAY 9:45-11:00 & WEDNESDAY 8:15-9:30 p.m. (W1/W2)**

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**Office hours:** Mondays 11:15-12:00; 1:00-2:00; Tuesdays 11:15-12:00; 1:00-1:45; Wednesdays 9:45-12:00 (or by appointment)

**Web site:** <http://people.stfx.ca/ekoch>

**Textbook Student Web site:** [<https://www.pearson.com/store/p/personality-psychology-understanding-yourself-and-others-canadian-edition/P200000002549/9780136775713>](https://digital.wwnorton.com/puzzle7)

**Required text:**

Twenge, J.M, Campbell, W.K., & Matsuba, M. K. (2023). *Personality Psychology: Understanding Yourself and Others* (Canadian Edition). North York: Pearson.

Additional readings will be available on [Moodle](https://moodle.stfx.ca/login/index.php). (See page 5).

**Course prerequisites:** at least 12 **previous** hours of PSYC courses

# COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to explore the diverse body of contemporary research and theory in personality psychology. Although the course will also present some sense of history of personality psychology, the focus will be on the most recent empirical research. Students will learn various methods of measuring and studying personality. Class time will include lecture, activities, and discussion. Readings will come from a textbook and journal articles. The course will culminate in an APA-style proposal in which students present an original personality scale that they design.

# COURSE OBJECTIVES

* To understand the meaning of the term “personality” and appreciate the breadth and diversity of contemporary personality psychology.
* To learn about the most current personality theory and research.
* To become proficient at thoroughly reading and critically evaluating personality research.
* To understand how personality psychology relates to the “real world,” including personal experiences.
* To connect concepts learned across various subfields in psychology.

# COURSE FORMAT

Classes will include lecture, discussion, and activities. Class attendance is your responsibility, and you must attend class if you expect to succeed in this course. If you choose to provide documentation of an extended absence, all documentation of absences should go to the office of the Associate Dean, Academic Affairs ([ada@stfx.ca](mailto:ada@stfx.ca))**—**not the instructor. If you must miss class, please do not ask me for class notes. **I do not give out class notes.** I recommend that you obtain notes from a classmate. I will be happy to answer specific questions about class notes once you have obtained them. During class, I encourage you to ask questions about concepts that are unclear, or to share examples that you think are relevant. Outside of class, I encourage you to meet with me during office hours (or set an appointment) to discuss any questions or concerns. **Email** is the best way to contact me outside of class. \*Please refer to page 3 of this syllabus for information on appropriate email communication.

The course materials are designed for use in PSYC 353 at St. Francis Xavier University and are the property of the instructor, unless otherwise stated by the instructor. Copying this material for distribution, online posting, or selling of this material to third parties without permission is subject to Canadian Copyright Law and is strictly prohibited.

# CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

I expect that each of you will respect your classmates and me by arriving to class on time, ready to listen and participate. Please turn **off** your cellular phones when you arrive to class, and be sure to put away all phones and other personal devices (e.g., tablets). Devoting class time to non-academic activities such as text-messaging or listening to music is disruptive and creates a negative impression of the students engaging in such activities. In addition, please do not disrupt the class by carrying on private conversations during class time.

# DEPARTMENT LAPTOP POLICY

Students who wish to use a laptop during class time must seek permission from the instructor in advance. If permission is granted, please note that your laptop is to be used only for note-taking, not recreational purposes (e.g., Facebook, web-surfing). Non-academic use of laptops might distract some of your classmates. Inappropriate classroom laptop usage will result in laptop privileges being revoked.

# EXAM AND QUIZ POLICY

Check the course schedule on your syllabus **before** making travel plans (e.g., purchasing airline tickets); exams and quizzes will **not**be rescheduled in the event that they conflict with such travel plans or other personal events. Quizzes and exams will be rescheduled on the basis of valid and documented excuses (e.g., illness, personal emergency) only. I reserve the right to administer a unique quiz or exam for any make-up.

In cases where you miss a quiz, please inform me of the absence and the reason for your absence as soon as possible prior to the quiz. Make-up quizzes will only be given if the quiz was missed for medical or other legitimate reasons. In cases where a quiz has been missed, a make-up quiz must be written within **7** calendar days following the date of the missed quiz. If the quiz cannot be written within this period for medical or other legitimate reasons, the final cumulative grade will be pro-rated.

In cases where you miss a Registrar-scheduled Final exam, you must report the absence and the reason for the absence to the Deans’ Office. In these cases, the Deans’ Office will inform your professors of the absence. A make-up exam will be required within a time frame specified by the Deans’ Office.

## PAPERS

You will receive additional information in class and on Moodle.

Thought papers: You are required to submit a minimum of **two** brief (i.e., at least **one** full page but not more than **two** pages) Thought Papers. These short papers have several purposes: 1) to ensure that students complete the reading, 2) to stimulate critical thinking in preparation for discussion, and 3) to sharpen writing skills. You will have **three** opportunities to submit Thought Papers. Thus, you may write three papers and drop your lowest grade, or you may opt to skip one paper. I will consider late Thought Papers as “dropped” and therefore will not grade late Thought Papers.

Final paper: The final paper for the course will involve using guidelines that you will learn in class to design your own **original** measure of a personality variable. The paper must be in APA style for research proposals. The final paper is due **March 29 at 4:00pm**.

# UNIVERSITY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

St. Francis Xavier values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of such academic offences as plagiarism, cheating, tampering, and falsification under the St. Francis Xavier University Policy on Academic Integrity. You are responsible for knowing and following this policy; please refer to the *Academic Calendar* (section 3.8) for details. You may find this site helpful: <https://www.mystfx.ca/registrars-office/academic-integrity>

**I WILL NOT TOLERATE PLAGIARISM OR CHEATING OF ANY SORT.** The University’s *Academic Calendar* (section 3.8) notes that “Plagiarism is the misrepresentation of another’s work—whether ideas or words… as one’s own,” and that cheating includes “sharing papers” and “collaboration… on an assignment which an instructor did not specify was to be completed collaboratively.” Any student found to have plagiarized or cheated will be reported to the Chair of the Psychology Department, the Registrar’s office, and—when appropriate—the Academic Discipline Committee.

**APPROPRIATE EMAIL COMMUNICATION**

You are expected to maintain a working St. FX email account; please check on that account regularly to ensure that it is not “full.” Important notices may be sent to these email addresses. Writing to a course instructor is not the same as writing to a friend. Although the communication is not on paper, email still means that you are communicating with others who deserve consideration and respect. In addition, you may be expected to use email in future employment situations, and it might be helpful to develop good habits now. The guidelines below are NOT listed in order of priority but in the order in which you would need the information while writing an email or other electronic message.

1. Please do not email questions about the course that could easily be answered by referring to the syllabus or other course materials.
2. Please do not email requests for your grades, as email is not secure.
3. When writing an email, please write something in the “subject” line. If your email is about a specific topic, write the name of it (e.g., “normal distribution question”). I am likely to assume that an email without a subject line is spam and consequently may delete it.
4. Begin the communication with a salutation such as “Dear Dr. Koch.”
5. Use Proper English. Write complete sentences, which include the correct use of capital letters to begin a sentence and a period to end a sentence. Every email message should be properly spelled and punctuated, and it should be grammatically correct. A poorly written and misspelled message reflects poorly on the author.
6. Do **not** write in all capital letters or all lower-case letters.
7. Delineate separate ideas by using paragraphs.
8. RE-READ the message before sending and check for spelling errors, poor grammar, unclear sentences, or other organizational errors that happened during the first draft.
9. Sign the communication with **your first and last name** and the course in which you are enrolled. It is helpful (though optional) to have your email address and ID number underneath your name.
10. Politeness is important even in email. Demands such as “write back” are unnecessary and even rude. If your message requires a response, I will respond at my earliest convenience.

**GRADING**

Grades will be based on the scale presented below. You may wish to record your grades here. Your final grade will be based **ONLY** on these elements. Please do **NOT** contact me once the course is complete to ask for an “extra assignment” to boost your grade.

**Assignment Value Grade**

Midterm quiz 20%

Final paper 30%

Final exam 35%

Thought papers 15%

# DEPARTMENTAL POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

As I do not accept late thought papers, this policy applies to final papers **only.** Students will be penalized **5%** for each calendar day that a paper is late. Once 10 days after the due date have passed, a mark of **zero** will be assigned. Only valid excuses, such as illness or personal emergency (for which you must provide documentation though the Dean’s office), can effect a renegotiation of the due date with the professor. Technical failures, computer crashes, etc. are not valid excuses for failing to turn assignments in on time, nor are they valid excuses for turning in substandard work. **Back up your work!!!**

#### COURSE SCHEDULE

*Note*: The following is a tentative schedule. Readings are due on the date assigned, and Thought Papers are due **at the beginning of class** on the last day of a topic. Class topics and order are subject to change. However, **quiz** and **exam** dates and **paper** due dates will not change, except under unusual circumstances such as class cancellations due to inclement weather.

*Note:* Chapter numbers refer to chapters in the primary text (Twenge et al., 2023). Please refer to the article list below for information on where to find additional readings.

\* = Thought Paper due and class discussion

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| **DATES** | **TOPICS** | **READINGS** |
| Wed., Jan. 4  Mon., Jan. 9 | Introduction to Personality Psychology | Ch. 1 |
| Wed., Jan.11  Mon., Jan. 16 | Assessment and Methods | Ch. 2 |
| Wed., Jan. 18  Mon., Jan. 23  \*Wed., Jan. 25 | The Big Five Personality Traits | Ch. 3  \*Pfeiler & Egloff, 2018 |
| Mon., Jan. 30  Wed., Feb. 1 | Motivation | Ch. 7 |
| Mon., Feb. 6 | How Learning Shapes Behavior | Ch. 8 |
| **Wed., Feb. 8** | **MIDTERM QUIZ** | **will cover chapters 1 – 3, 7, article** |
| Mon., Feb. 13 | How Learning Shapes Behavior (cont.) | Ch. 8 |
| Wed., Feb. 15 | Personality Across the Lifespan | Ch. 9 |
| **Mon., Feb. 20**  **Wed., Feb. 22** | **STUDY BREAK – NO CLASSES** |  |
| Mon., Feb. 27 | Personality Across the Lifespan (cont.) | Ch. 9 |
| Wed., March 1  Mon., March 6 | Gender and Personality | Ch. 10 |
| Wed., March 8  Mon., March 13  \*Wed., March 15 | Culture and Personality | Ch. 11  \*Talhelm et al., 2018 |
| Mon., March 20  Wed., March 22 | Personality and Relationships | Ch. 13 |
| Mon., March 27  **Wed., March 29**  \*Mon., April 3 | Personality and Physical Health | Ch. 15  **FINAL PAPER DUE**  \*Naidu et al., 2022 |
| Wed., April 5 | Wrap-up/Review |  |
| **TBA** | **FINAL EXAM** | **will cover all material** |

**Article List**

Articles are listed below in alphabetical order—not in the order in which we will cover them. Be sure to read the correct article(s) assigned for class! All articles are available on the course Moodle site. As a backup, all readings below are also available via the library’s web site.

Naidu, E. S., Paravati, E., & Gabriel, S. (2022). Staying happy even when staying 6 ft apart: The relationship between extroversion and social adaptability. *Personality and Individual Differences, 190*, 111549.

Pfeiler, T. M., & Egloff, B. (2018). Personality and attitudinal correlates of meat consumption: Results of two representative German samples. *Appetite*, *121*, 294–301. https://doi-org.libproxy.stfx.ca/10.1016/j.appet.2017.11.098

Talhelm, T., Zhang, X., & Oishi, S. (2018). Moving chairs in Starbucks: Observational studies find rice-wheat cultural differences in daily life in China. *Science Advances*, *4*(4), eaap8469