



PSY 111/Psychology of Personal Growth

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10-10:50am MWF, 124 Harvey
11-11:50am MWF, 124 Harvey
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1-2pm MW

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Available at many other times—drop by!

People, like trees, must grow or die. There's no standing still. A tree dies when its roots become blocked. A human being becomes mentally and spiritually, and eventually physically, dead when the circumstances of his life keep him from achieving. Psychologists and sociologists spend their lives trying to patch up individuals and institutions that have stopped growing.—Joseph Shore

One story can be a different story in the hands of a different reader.—Amy Tan

Psychology has focused on "patching up" people who have gotten stuck or stopped growing, but it also helps people grow and function better. We don't have to just get by in life. Depression and stress, although common, don't have to be daily bedfellows. This course will help you examine your life to make conscious, choiceful decisions about who you are or what you want to become. It will help you identify ways to live, work and relate to others that are more satisfying. In some places this will require different ways of doing things. In others, as Amy Tan suggests, we will need different ways of thinking.

What will I learn in this course?

This course focuses on the roles of values, culture, and context on our life decisions. As a result, this entry-level, non-majors course earns a V flag towards the General Education requirements. We will work towards the following goals:

Departmental goals	Course-related goals	Assessments of Goals
Theory and Content of Psychology	Knowledge of psychological theory. We will study the major approaches, controversies, and contributors to the psychology, especially positive psychology, and you will become more proficient in your use of basic concepts and terminology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple choice exams
Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology	Critical thinking. Throughout this course we will be applying the Critical Thinking Model to encourage you to observe behavior carefully, consider other explanations for behavior, and ultimately develop greater empathy and tolerance for others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay exams • Optional paper
Application of Psychology	Application. This course can help you change your behavior. I encourage you to apply class discussions to your own life and your observations of others' behavior, to learn to handle stress, relationships, and other parts of your life more effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay exams • Optional paper
Values in Psychology	Exploration of values. An important aspect of the Critical Thinking Model is becoming aware of and exploring values (yours and others') in order to make active and intentional choices in your life about relationships, careers, parenting, stress, and differences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAs • Optional paper
Personal	Empathy. As you listen to your fellow students and think about	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EAs

Development	other ways of handling life's problems, many of you will develop more empathy for others and appreciation of their choices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional paper
Career Planning and Development	<i>Career development.</i> This course will ask you to begin to consider your future career and take beginning steps toward making this happen.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCN account • Personality Mosaic • Work interview

How are we going to meet these goals?

Texts. To facilitate these goals, we will use Santrock's (2006) *Human adjustment* and a series of readings. This text is available either as an e-book or in paper and has many resources that will help you learn and grow. Readings are available in the Articles folder under the Content tab on D2L.

D2L. This syllabus, study guides, grades and other useful information will be available on D2L. Please check your D2L site regularly; I post announcements frequently and grades rapidly.

Exams. We will have three exams covering material from the texts, lectures and discussions, handouts, and other materials. These are opportunities to assess your knowledge of the language of our field and to apply your understanding. We will have multiple-choice exams. Make-ups can be taken at a mutually convenient time up until the exam. If you miss an exam without talking to me about this beforehand, you will lose a letter grade on your make-up. This is fair to people who took the exam on time and who, presumably, would have done better with several extra days preparation.

Experiential Assignments (EAs). You have a number of different options to meet the experiential component of this course (25+ pts.). Some of these will help you learn more about yourself, others that you gather some data, generally by observing or interviewing others. These will generally be worth 3 pts. each, although the test review is worth 10). These experiences are designed to help you increase your understanding of yourself and contribute to and enrich class discussions. *Except for EAs due in class, EAs must be turned in by 11:59pm on the due date or they will not be accepted (if you're using Turnitin).* There may also be opportunities for participating in departmental research. Options known at the point of this writing are included in the syllabus. Others will be posted on D2L as I become aware of them. Regularly check the Experiential Assignments folder for the current course unit (under the Content tab).

If you complete all of the available EAs, the extra will count as extra credit. Note that more options are available at the beginning of the semester than at the end. Please don't ask me for others.

Optional paper. This optional assignment (50 pts) is required for an A, and a place to pull together the ideas of the course and think critically about yourself and others. (Notice that there's a different grading scale if you do not choose to do the paper.) If you are uncomfortable disclosing yourself in writing, focus on less private aspects of your life. Please talk to me if you have concerns about this process; I want to respect your privacy, but also help you learn and grow.

Halonen and Santrock (1997) describe nine critical thinking strategies that help us adjust and grow. These can be summarized as:

- I. Learn to observe yourself and others carefully;
- II. Think critically about claims about influences, seeking multiple explanations;
- III. Recognize and appreciate the contributions of context and culture; and
- IV. Apply these in your interactions with yourself and others.

These critical thinking strategies should be the backbone of your paper (and essay exams). Papers should be *at least* five pages long. Here are two possibilities; other options are posted on D2L in the folder on this paper:

Choosing a major. (I) Pay attention to the things that you do well and that you don't. You might use some of the course handouts to help you with this. (II) What are several possible future work/career options? What are the advantages/disadvantages of these? If you have difficulty identifying what you want to do, can you exclude

some? (III) How does your culture/gender/family affect your possible choices? (IV) What are you doing to take action on your choices – even if you haven't decided "what you want to be when you grow up"?

Stress. (I) How do you handle stress? When are you especially good at handling it? When do you find yourself overwhelmed? (II) What does this tell you about yourself? Are there other ways of looking at yourself? (III) How does your culture/gender/family influence how you handle stress? (IV) What are you doing to improve how you handle stress? How are these working?

Obviously there are other possibilities for how you approach this paper and I will give you others throughout the semester. You can write on your communication patterns, relationships, gender role, the effects of some major event, etc. I will look at your use of the critical thinking strategies, among other things, as I am grading your paper. If you use these ideas consistently, you will become more comfortable with yourself and adjust to life's bumps more successfully and rapidly.

Attendance. This is your class. Your active involvement will enrich your learning and that of your classmates. I expect that you will come to class regularly, read the material carefully before class, actively assist in your classmates' learning, and listen to your fellow students' views of their world. As class participation is an important part of this class, you will lose 2 pts. per class (about 1/2% of your final grade per absence) after your third missed class *for any reason*. In other words, you have three free absences; use these wisely. Coming late or leaving early may cause you to be marked absent for the day.

What is Clarion University's policy on confidentiality?

Clarion University is mandated by federal and state laws to report crimes occurring on campus or in campus-related functions. In order to help Clarion University comply with these laws, I am required to report information about university-related crimes to Public Safety. If you tell me of a crime that meets university criteria (especially assaults, sexual assaults, robbery, or hate crimes), I will report it. I am not required to identify victims or witnesses by name. I will, of course, inform you before making a report.

What about classroom behavior?

This is our class. Please be interested, curious, questioning and observant. If you have questions or comments about anything, talk to me. Be open, honest, and ethical: <http://www.clarion.edu/judicial/ahonesty.htm> I want class to run as smoothly as possible and that you learn as well as possible—which is more difficult when you are distracted. As a result, except for emergencies, cell phones have no place in class. If I see you texting, your phone is mine. ☺ If you need to study for another class, do so, but not during our class.

How do I determine grades?

Grades will be determined as the percentage of the available points earned. These will come from four sources: (a) the sum of the percentages from your tests (300 possible); (b) points earned for EAs (25+); and (c) the number of points earned on the autobiographical paper (50 pts, optional), less (d) two points for each absence over three. Your total earned can be compared with the following scales:

Grade	Percentage earned	# of points earned
A	90 - 100%	338 and up
B	80 - 89%	300 - 337
C	70 - 79%	263 - 299
D	60 - 69%	225 - 262
E	less than 59%	224 and down

Note: Your paper is optional—although you cannot earn an A without it. If you choose not to do the paper, compare your points earned with the following scale:

Grade	Percentage earned	# of points earned
B	80 - 100%	260 and up
C	70 - 79%	228 - 259
D	60 - 69%	195 - 227
E	less than 60%	194 and down

I do not expect that a certain number students will fail and I will be happy if the class receives only As and Bs. To meet this goal I will be happy to help you when you need it. If you want more help, make an appointment with the Academic Support Center (x2249). If you have test anxiety or if this course raises issues for you, call the Counseling Center (x2255).

If you need accommodations for a documented disability

If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, you must be registered with the university's Office of Disability Support Services (DSS). You must provide current documentation to DSS that identifies your disability and need for accommodation(s), meet with DSS to discuss requested accommodations, and provide instructors with appropriate notification from DSS of the approved accommodation as early in the semester as possible. The Office of Disability Support Services is located in 102 Ralston Hall (x2095).

Tentative Schedule of Dates, Readings, and Assignments

The context for looking at ourselves and others:		
8/27-8/29	<i>What is adjustment and valuing behavior?</i> Santrock: Chapters 1, 3 (pp. 95-103) 8/29: Reiss (2001)	
8/31-9/7	<i>Critical thinking: Learning to look at the world in more than one way</i> Santrock: Chapters 1 (pp. 8-11), 6 (pp. 172-174)	
9/10-9/14	<i>The self: How do we choose to be who we are?</i> ❖ Possible selves: Discrepancy theory ❖ Self-attributions ❖ What is optimal functioning? Santrock: Chapters 2 (pp. 49-59), 3 (pp. 81-87) 9/12: Seligman (1998) pp. 75-83 9/14: Peck (1978)	EA: Announced and committed values (9/10) EA: Preferred birth order (9/14)
9/17-9/24	<i>The self in context</i> ❖ Race and culture ❖ Gender Santrock: Chapters 1 (pp. 6-8), 6 (pp. 172-174, 186-191), 12 (pp. 366-380) 9/17: Goode (2000)	EA: Self-assessment (work, school, living situation, social) (9/26)
<i>Test 1 – 9/24; Chaps. 1, 2 (pp. 49-59), 3 (pp. 81-87, 95-103), 6 (pp. 172-174, 186-195), & 12 (pp. 366-380)</i>		
Problems in living and ways to move beyond these:		
9/26-10/1	<i>Problems in living</i> ❖ What is a problem? ❖ Stress ❖ Depression Santrock: Chapters 4, 14 (pp. 423-432, 438-447) 9/28: Ohio Public Images (n.d.)	EA: Improving your test score (10/1)
10/3-10/19	<i>Ways to live life more fully</i> ❖ Coping strategies ❖ Stressors: Challenge or crisis? ❖ Loci of control and responsibility ❖ Patterns in thinking ❖ Creating resilience ❖ Building your sense of power and self-efficacy Santrock: Chapter 5 10/10: Sugarman & Freeman (1993), 10/12: Peck (1978) 10/15: Seligman (1998) 10/17: Csikszentmihaly (1990, pp 193-201)	EA: Gratitude (10/10) EA: A beautiful day (10/19, bring to class) EA: ABC (10/22)

Growing points:		
10/22-10/31	<i>Choosing/enjoying/maximizing work. Think about career goals as influenced by values, goals and personality.</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Holland's model ◆ Job satisfaction 	EA: Holland personality mosaic (10/24, bring to class) EA: Create or update a CCN account (10/26) EA: Work interview (10/29)
<i>Test 2 – 10/31; Chapters 4, 5, 10, and 14 (pp. 423-432, 438-447)</i>		
11/2-11/9	<i>Communication: Listening & disagreeing better</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Unconditional positive regard and empathy ◆ How to become a more effective listener ◆ How to disagree more effectively ◆ Becoming more assertive 	EA: Attraction Survey (11/7) Optional paper (11/9)
11/12-11/19	<i>Loving others and ourselves. What is a healthy relationship?</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Different kinds of love ◆ Intimacy: Obstacles and benefits ◆ Self-love 	
11/20-12/5	<i>Families, parenting, sexuality, & sexual values. How do we learn our values? How can we change parts that aren't working?</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sexual values and scripts: How do these develop? ◆ Sexual abuse: What is it? How to grow in spite of it ◆ Effective and ineffective types of parenting 	
12/7	Pulling it all together	EA: What did you learn? (12/7) Test 3 essay (12/10)
<i>Test 3 – 12/12, 8 or 10am; Chapters 2 (pp. 55-59), 7, 8, 9, 13 (pp. 397-407, 414-421), and 15 (p. 482)</i>		