

College of Social Sciences San José State University

Psyc 139 (80) section 27859

Spring 2026

The Psychology of the Person

Instructor: Naomi Wagner , PhD

Office Location: On Line

Telephone: Please email me.

Email: naomi.wagner@sjtu.edu

Office Hours: Upon request, email me to schedule a zoom meeting.

Class Days/Time: Monday, Wednesday, 9:00-10:15 AM

Classroom: on Line, see link under ZOOM, on the Navigation Table.

Prerequisites: psyc 100

Course on Canvas

Copies of the course materials such as the syllabus, chapter lecture notes, major assignment or handouts and study guides are posted on the class webpage on Canvas, under Modules.

You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through the Canvas in box (or other communication system as indicated by the instructor).

Please send me mail via the Canvas mailbox rather than via the SJSU mail

Canvas:

The course Canvas site is an online resource supplement for this course. Use of this site and the information provided is not a substitute for attending lectures. The site will be updated regularly throughout the semester.

To access the Canvas site go to <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/>

click on “Log in to Canvas”

Username = SJSU 9-digit ID

Password = your current SJSUOne password

For additional information or help with logging in:

Canvas Student Tutorial:

<http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/>

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Course Description

This course introduces the student to theories and research exploring the concept of the “person”—the nature and the sources of our consistent behavioral patterns and intrapersonal processes. We will examine on the one hand historically relevant theories and on the other hand modern-day theories and assess their current status on the basis of research. We will examine the implementation of theoretical concepts introduced in class into applied contexts- such as psychotherapy, job –market decisions, educational setting and child raising practices, and the dating scenes.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

This class is aimed at acquainting the student with the major theories of personality, with the historical factors related to their emergence, and with their current status as established by empirical findings. The current possible applications into a variety of real-life situations and the importance of such applications to better understand human behavior, will also be addressed.

We will follow the textbook sequence of chapters and will allocate two week to each of the theories. The presentation of each theory will introduce its basic concepts, how these concepts are measured, how they are proposed to be applied, and results of studies that evaluated the theoretical concepts.

GE learning Outcomes

Upon the completion of this course students should be able to demonstrate

- GELO 1: A broad understanding of issues related to the social sciences
- GELO 2: An ability to communicate ideas effectively both in speaking and in writing
- GELO 3 :The ability to express critical and creative thinking;
- GELO 4: The ability to assess information
- GELO 5: The ability for creative and critical thinking

Class activities linked to these outcomes are:

- The identification of the main questions asked by researchers in this area
- The examination of the multiple explanations provided to the review questions
- The exploration of yet unknown issues waiting for subsequent research.

Course Content Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

LO1: be familiar with six approaches to understanding personality and individual differences in behavioral characteristics,

LO2: address the strengths and weaknesses of each approach

LO3: critically examine relevant empirical evidence associated with each the theoretical approaches

LO4: recognize the application of theoretical concepts into real life issues and into psychotherapy

Measurement of the course learning outcomes will be achieved via evaluation of the student's performance on chapter review questions, the midterms on-line quizzes, a self-description project, and a final exam.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLO)

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirement:

PLO1 – Knowledge Base of Psychology – Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

PLO2 – Research Methods in Psychology – Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.

PLO3 – Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology – Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.

PLO4 – Application of Psychology – Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

PLO5 – Values in Psychology – Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society

Required Texts: (Previous edition OK)

Jerry Burger: Personality, 10th Edition

ISBN # 978-1337-55901- 0

Cengage Publishers

Please view the calendar at the end of this syllabus for assignments, dues dates, and exams.

NOTE that University policy F69-24, “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

Definition of a Credit Hour

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

As an example, the expectation of work for a 3-credit course is 150-minutes of direct faculty instruction and six hours of out-of-class student work each week.

Attendance:

Your regular attendance and participation are factors contributing to the successful completion of this course. If you do not attend class, you will miss on the opportunity to ask questions and to get clarifications. In addition, please make all effort to come to class on time. Tardiness disturbs the instructor and other students, and also deprives you of the short reviews of the previous lecture that are presented at the beginning of each class.

If you hold a full time job, please make all effort to attend class regularly, and to study each night for at least an hour and a half. Cramming before the test has not been very effective for most students. As you read, take notes and go over the material that has been discussed in class, pay attention to concepts, and examples of these concepts. Be familiar with important studies.

Teacher Availability:

Do not hesitate to e-mail me or to come by with questions. If you have not done so well on any of the tests, please come to see me ASAP, in order to go over test questions that you missed, so we can understand how you interpreted the questions, and devise strategies for doing better on the next test.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](#) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the [current academic calendar](#) web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/Academic_Calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](#) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.Grading Policy>

Chapter Review Questions:

- **At the end of each chapter, we will respond to review questions that are posted as power-points under Modules on Canvas. These questions are aimed at helping you process and retain the information. Part of the questions will be covered in class, as time permits, and the rest please do on your own. This activity is also very important as preparation for the tests.**

On- Line Quizzes: 10% of your class grade: Quizzes are open book

Each quiz deadline is the last day of the instruction, May 11, 2026. However, it is advisable to take each quiz when we finish the chapter on which the quiz is based.

- **Upon the completion of each chapter there will be an on-line quiz. We will cover 10 chapters and we will have 10 quizzes, one for each chapter. Each quiz has 10 questions and each question is worth 1 point, so each quiz can give you maximum 10 points, and the 10 quizzes maximum 100 points. You need to take the quiz on –line at the conclusion of each chapter.**
- **The questions on the quiz will be very similar to the questions on the test. The quiz is NOT timed, but you can take it only once. It is important you read before you respond.**
- **The purpose of this assignment is to help you master the information in a timely manner rather than cramming before a midterm.**

Multiple-Choice Exams: 85 % of your class grade.

We will have 3 midterms and a final. Each midterm will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions and will cover 2-3 chapters. The questions are factual (specific information), conceptual (assigning a concept to a scenario), and applied (use the information to offer solution to a problem). The Final is Non-Cumulative and has 50 questions as well.

- You will receive study guide for each exam.
- EXAMS ARE CLOSE BOOK AND CLOSE NOTES. This is an honor system.
- There is a log attached to each exam, indicating your progress while taking the exam. that may help students and professors communicate issues that may have arisen during exam-taking.

My personality in pictures: 5% of your class grade

- You are requested to prepare a slide show describing yourself. Topics include what you perceive as your traits, strengths, challenges, events that might have shaped your behavior, and future plans. **At the end of the presentation you will discuss the extent to which your future plans are expressions of your personality, and to what extent there are realistic limitations for such expression** (that is, you may not be able to do what comes naturally for you).
 - **You will ask 5 people who know you to provide 5 traits that in their view describe you best, and provide a summary across the five people (see detailed instructions on Canvas.).**
 - **After reading chapter 7, you will rate yourself on the basis of the Big Five. There is an online link for the Big Five test, see in the instructions under Modules.**
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- The slide show needs to contain between 10-13 slides- you may put photos, graphic displays, and of course written material.
 - Just presenting photos is not enough. There needs to be a narrative.
 - A well-designed and well-presented slide show will give you the full 5%.
 - Please submit the slide presentation via Canvas by April 30, 2026

See Canvas for more detailed ideas for your slide presentation.

Table # 1 Grade Composition

Grade Component	Points Available	Percentage of Grade
4 exams (50 pts each)	200	85%
10 quizzes (10 points each)	100	10%
My personality PPT	100	5%

Total	400	100%
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Table # 2 The grading scale:**A+ 97-100%****A 93-96%****A- 90-92%****B+ 87- 89%****B 83-86%****B- 80-82%****C+ 77-79%****C 73-76%****C- 70-72%****D+ 67-69%****D 63-66%****D- 60-62%****Exam dates:****Midterm# 1: Wednesday, February 18, 2026****Midterm # 2: Wednesday, March 25, 2026****Midterm # 3: Wednesday, April 15, 2026****Final Exam:****Friday, May 15, 2026**

All exams will start at 8:00 AM and close at 11:59 PM on the day of the exam. Once you log in you need to take the exam.

Make up exams:

Please note exam dates and plan your trips and events accordingly. You will be allowed to reschedule an exam ONLY upon the presentation of *documented* medical reason, or if you have a mandatory, documented school activity.

University Policies

Academic integrity

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University's Academic Integrity policy](#), located at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/S07-2.htm>, requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](#) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03](#) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

In 2013, the Disability Resource Center changed its name to be known as the Accessible Education Center, to incorporate a philosophy of accessible education for students with disabilities. The new name change reflects the broad scope of attention and support to SJSU students with disabilities and the University's continued advocacy and commitment to increasing accessibility and inclusivity on campus

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](#) at <http://www.at.sjsu.edu/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) and the Peer Mentor Program have merged to become Peer Connections. Peer Connections is the new campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring. Our staff is here to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. Students are encouraged to take advantage of our services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit [Peer Connections website](#) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Suite 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The [Writing Center staff](#) can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/>.

Course Schedule

Please note: The sequence of the topics will remain, though we may allocate different amount of times to some of the topics.

Table 1 Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Chapter 1: Introduction to the study of personality
1		
		Chapter 2 Research
2		Quiz chapter 1
		Chapter 2 cont-d
3		Chapter 3: Psychoanalysis
		Quiz chapter 2
4		

Chapter 3 cont-d

Chapter 4 ONLY the humor section

Quiz Chapter 3

February 24: Midterm # 1 chapters 1,2, 3 (Ch 4 humor only)

5

Chapter 5 The neo- Freudians

6

Quiz chapter 5

Chapter 6 Neo-Freudians research (first two sections only)

Chapter 6 cont-d

7

Chapter 7: The Trait Approach

Quiz Chapter 6

Chapter 7 (cont-d)

8

Chapter 7 (cont-d)

Quiz Chapter 7

March 26: Midterm # 2 Chapters 5, 6 (2 first sections only), and chapter 7

9

Chapter 9: The Biological Approach

Chapter 9 (cont-d)

Con-d

Quiz Chapter 9

Chapter 10: Biology Research

Chapter 10 (cont-d)

Quiz chapter 10

Chapter 10 (cont-d)

April 28: Midterm # 3 Chapters 9, 10

Quiz chapter 11

Chapter 11: The Humanistic Perspective

Chapter 11 (cont-d)

Chapter 13: The Behavioral/Social Learning Approach