

**Faculty of Health**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**PSYC 4220 6.0 A: THEORIES OF HUMAN NATURE**  
**Mondays/8:30 – 11:30/R S128**  
**Fall/Winter/2017-18**

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**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Tifrah Warner, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: After class or by appointment

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**Please contact me only when it is an issue that cannot be addressed during the class or office hours. (always put course number in the subject line)**

**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 Credit Exclusions**

Please refer to [York Courses Website](#) for a listing of any course credit exclusions.

**Course website:** [Moodle](#)

**Course Description**

This course surveys an array of psychological views on human nature.

- This survey will focus on the theoretical principles that are proposed to describe human behaviour and change.

The first half of the course consists of:

- a review of traditional perspectives on human nature, and
- a review of Systems theory approach.

Special to this half of the course is:

- an introduction of a Vedic-yoga framework that organizes the diverse approaches in terms of strata of existence, and
- a look at successful application of Systems approach principles as exemplified by the clinical work of Milton H. Erickson.

The second half of this course:

- looks at current psychological theories,
- it follows the format of the introduced Vedic-yoga framework, and it
- consists of assigned readings and students' presentations.

The readings for this course:

- comprise of a mixture of material; including original academic articles and chapters from popular books by scientists.
- These readings are meant to give you both the experience of studying primary scientific sources and of stirring up your interest.

The grading scheme aims to create an opportunity for deeper study, thus:

- there is no one all-encompassing exam and class work is distributed throughout the course,
- there is an assignment for every class, quizzes twice a month, a presentation and a paper.

## Program 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

Learning will be accomplished through multiple means, including:

- Weekly analytical summaries of each of the theoretical approach covered.
- Class discussions.
- Writing and presenting an analytic paper.
- Keeping a self-observation journal.
- Working with a team.

## Required Text

- Any Introduction to Psychology textbook
- Course Kit

## Course Requirements and Assessment:

| Assessments                                    | Due date   | Weight |
|--|--|--------|
| <b>Grading Scheme, option 1</b>                |  |        |
| 1. 7 multiple-choice quizzes                   | - Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Dec. 4, Jan. 29, Feb. 26, Mar. 12, Ap. 2 | 40%    |
|  | - Weekly   | 10%    |
| 2. 17 class reading assignments (pass/fail)    | - Nov. 27, March 19  | 20%    |
| 3. Self-observation research journal (2 parts) | - Feb. 12  | 30%    |
| 4. Paper-Presentation, including               |  |        |
| a. team game (pass/fail)                       |  |        |
| b. class presentation (pass/fail)              |  |        |
| c. 1 page handout                              |  |        |
| d. A short essay                               |  |        |
| <b>Grading Scheme, option 2</b>                |  |        |
| 1. 7 multiple-choice quizzes                   | - Oct. 2, Nov. 6, Dec. 4, Jan. 29, Feb. 26, Mar. 12, Ap. 2 | 40%    |
|  | - Weekly   | 10%    |
| 2. 17 class reading assignments (pass/fail)    | - Nov. 27, March 19  | 20%    |
| 3. Self-observation research journal (2 parts) | - Feb. 12  | 30%    |
| 4. Paper-Presentation, including               |  |        |
| a. team game (pass/fail)                       |  |        |
| b. class presentation (pass/fail)              |  |        |
| c. 1 page handout                              |  |        |
| d. A short essay                               |  |        |
| 5. 1 paper                                     | - Jan 22   | 20%    |
| <b>*Note: Fail = 0%, Pass = 80%</b>            |  |        |

## Description of Assignments

### Quizzes

- Each one will cover all the topics scheduled since the last quiz, unless otherwise specified.
- Multiple-choice format
- 15 or 30 minutes (depending on number of questions)

### Assignments

There are weekly assignments, they consist of listing the main point and answering a number of questions about each reading.

#### **Human Nature Self-observation journal.**

The journal consists of recording of your observation of specified aspects of the course material. Part I involves observation of principles of human behaviour as they manifest in daily life. Part II involves observations of various dimensions that make-up a person's life, such as ego, imagination, and environment.

#### **Paper - Presentations**

Consists of (a) an analytical discussion paper on any theory within the specified scheduled topic, (b) a class handout that summaries the paper, (c) a presentation of the paper, and (d) a team organized game on the scheduled topic.

#### **Paper for grading scheme option 2**

This is an 8 to 12 pages paper that gives an analytical comparison of three perspectives on human nature.

## 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 89, B+ = 75 to 79, etc.)

(For a full description of York grading system see the York University Undergraduate Calendar - [Grading Scheme for 2017-18](#))

## 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://myacademicrecord.students.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.

**Assignment Submission:** Due dates and times are specified on the class schedule. Earlier submissions may be made to the course secretary (BSB 281) and have to be date stamped.

**Late Assignments:** Late assignments are not accepted without an officially satisfactory reason. Technical problems involving computer and printer are not acceptable reasons for missing these due dates.

## Eligibility for a make-up quiz

- The student has to contact the CD or secretary within 48 hours of the missed quiz (unless circumstances do not allow). Circumstances preventing contact within 48 hours must be accompanied by documentation.

- If the student expects to miss a quiz in advance, he or she has to apply for a make-up exam before making arrangements to be elsewhere.

## Important New Information Regarding Missed Tests

For any missed tests or late assignments, students MUST complete the following online form which will be received and reviewed in the Psychology undergraduate office.

[HH PSYC: Missed Tests/Exams Form](#). Failure to complete the form within 48 hours of the original deadline will result in a grade of zero for the test/assignment.

## Add/Drop Deadlines

For a list of all important dates please refer to: [Fall/Winter 2017-18 - Important Dates](#)

|   | <b>FALL<br/>(F)</b> | <b>YEAR<br/>(Y)</b> | <b>WINTER<br/>(W)</b> |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Last date to add a course <b>without permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)            | Sept. 20            | Sept. 20            | Jan. 17               |
| Last date to add a course <b>with permission</b> of instructor (also see Financial Deadlines)               | Oct. 4              | Oct. 18             | Jan. 31               |
| Drop deadline: Last date to drop a course without receiving a grade (also see Financial Deadlines)          | Nov. 10             | Feb. 9              | March 9               |
| Course Withdrawal Period (withdraw from a course and receive a grade of "W" on transcript – see note below) | Nov. 11 -<br>Dec. 4 | Feb. 10 -<br>Apr. 6 | March 10 -<br>Apr. 6  |

**\*Note:** *You may withdraw from a course using the registration and enrolment system after the drop deadline until the last day of class for the term associated with the course. When you withdraw from a course, the course remains on your transcript without a grade and is notated as "W". The withdrawal will not affect your grade point average or count towards the credits required for your degree.*

## Information on Plagiarism Detection

All written assignments and papers are uniquely tailored to this course.

## Electronic Device Policy

### Use of laptop and other electronics in the classroom

is acceptable for special needs situations only.

Some references about the impediment this may cause for successful learning are:

- Carrie B. Fried, (2008). Computers & Education.
- Josh Fischman, March 16, 2009. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Students Stop Surfing After Being Shown How In-Class Laptop Use Lowers Test Scores.
- Linda Stone, September, 2009. Continuous Partial Attention and email Apnea.
- York University newspaper, yFile 13.03.2013 Study finds multitasking on a laptop impedes classroom learning
- *Psychological Science*, online, 2014. Taking notes by hand and conceptual understanding

## Attendance Policy

Attendance is not required, but... you are responsible for the content covered in class in addition to required readings.

## **Academic Integrity for Students**

York University takes academic integrity very seriously; please familiarize yourself with [Information about the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty](#).

It is recommended that you review Academic Integrity by completing the [Academic Integrity Tutorial](#) and [Academic Honesty Quiz](#).

### **Test Banks**

The offering for sale of, buying of, and attempting to sell or buy test banks (banks of test questions and/or answers), or any course specific test questions/answers is not permitted in the Faculty of Health. Any student found to be doing this may be considered to have breached the Senate Policy on Academic Honesty. In particular, buying and attempting to sell banks of test questions and/or answers may be considered as “Cheating in an attempt to gain an improper advantage in an academic evaluation” (article 2.1.1 from the Senate Policy) and/or “encouraging, enabling or causing others” (article 2.1.10 from the Senate Policy) to cheat.

### **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 device 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 A 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.

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