



PSYCHOL 3893F (570)
Theory in Psychology
Fall/Winter 2026 - 2027

Instructor: Dr. Lynne Jackson
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Course Information

Mode of Instruction: in-person

Calendar Description: An examination of theoretical approaches and major systems in psychology. In addition to examining the content of a variety of theories in psychology, this course will emphasize the role of theory in general as part of the scientific process.

Prerequisite(s): [Psychology 2840F/G](#) (or [Psychology 2801F/G](#), [Psychology 2802F/G](#), the former Psychology 2800E, the former Psychology 2820E, [Psychology 2830A/B](#), [Psychology 2855F/G](#) or [Psychology 2856F/G](#)) and third or fourth year Honours Specialization Psychology or Honours Specialization in Applied Psychology status, or registration in third year Psychology with a minimum average of 70% in all courses taken with no mark in any course less than 60%.

Antirequisite(s): [Psychology 3950F/G](#).

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: PSYCHOL

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's and Western University are located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples.

This land acknowledgement reminds us that we are on colonized land. In this course we are asked to consider how coloniality and decoloniality are relevant to theory in psychology. We are also asked to consider how the many forms of diversity that students bring to class is a resource and strength.

1. INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Lynne Jackson

Email: lynne.jackson@uwo.ca

Course website: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/login>

2. OFFICE HOUR

For location and time see the course website.

3. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine and critique the major intellectual frameworks that guide psychology. Students will explore a critical approach to theorizing in the field through an analysis of the social, historical, and cultural context of contemporary psychological knowledge.

4. LEARNING OUTCOMES

By completing this course successfully, students will:

- Appreciate critical, cultural and decolonial psychological perspectives
- understand the major social, historical, and cultural influences on the dominant theoretical models in psychology
- cultivate the capacity to evaluate, compare and critique theoretical assumptions and their implications
- develop the ability to engage actively in a group learning environment
- strengthen the ability to read deeply and thoughtfully

5. MODE OF INSTRUCTION

This is an in-person class and it will follow a seminar format. All class members are required to complete readings each week before class and come to class prepared to engage in discussion. Classes will focus on discussion of themes from the readings.

6. REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

Students are required to read all articles, chapters and other material listed in the course schedule (see item #8 below). All readings are available free of charge through the King's library or on the course website. Readings must be done before class each week.

7. METHOD OF EVALUATION

Item	% of Final Grade
Facilitated discussion	25
Quizzes	25 (Best 10 of 11 @ 2.5% each)
Essays	25 (best 4 of 5 @ 6.25% each)
Exam	25

Please note, Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

Facilitated discussion. Each student will guide the discussion in one portion of one class. The student will (i) present one paper that uses or is related to the theoretical framework assigned for that week and (ii) guide discussion of it. Students must inform the instructor of the paper they will present no later than **one week prior** to the facilitated discussion date. Failure to do so may disqualify the student from giving a facilitated discussion and result in a zero grade. Students must also submit a copy of the article, discussion notes, and slide show (if used) to the instructor before the beginning of class on the day on which the discussion is scheduled. Students may not use an undocumented absence for the facilitated discussion. Any student who misses class on the day of their scheduled facilitated discussion by receiving a formal recommendation for documented consideration from the Office of the Dean will, at the instructor's discretion, either have the assignment rescheduled or write a reweighted final exam. Any student who misses their facilitated discussion without a recommendation for consideration from the Office of the Dean will receive a grade of zero on the assignment. Further details about the requirements of this assignment will be provided on the course website.

Quizzes will be based on the assigned reading for each week and will be written in class. They will have mixed format (e.g., multiple choice, fill in the blank, true-false, short answer). Students will have 11 opportunities to write 10 quizzes and so the policy on undocumented absence does not apply and students must complete at least 10 quizzes to receive full marks on this component of the course grade. Students who complete 11 quizzes will receive the 10 highest marks. Accommodations involving extra time for tests will be granted in class using the principal of universal design. This means that all students will receive the flexibility that some may require. This is done to allow students with time-based accommodations to write the quizzes in class. Any student who has another type of accommodation should consult the instructor as soon as possible.

Essays. Each student will submit four short essays (approximately 625 words each, for a total of 2500 written words). Essays are due by 2:30pm (sharp!) on Oct. 5, Oct. 26, Nov. 9, Nov. 23, and Dec. 7. Late submissions will not be accepted. There are 5 opportunities to write 4 essays and so the policy on undocumented absence does not apply and students must complete 4 essays to receive full marks on this component of the course grade. Students who complete 5 essays will receive the 4 highest marks. Within this course, use of artificial intelligence tools such as Chat GPT is **not permitted** for preparing any written work submitted for evaluation. Unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline. Further details about the requirements for the essays are provided in a handout on the course website.

Exam. The exam will be short answer and/or essay format and will cover all course material (lectures, readings, facilitated discussions). During the final exam period Dec.11-22.

8. CLASS SCHEDULE

PART 1: CRITICAL AND DECOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES	
Sept. 14	<i>Topic:</i> Course organization and introduction <i>Reading:</i> Handouts on OWL
Sept. 21	<i>Topic:</i> Critical Theory (Quiz #1) <i>Reading:</i> Grzanka, P.R. & Cole, E.R. (2021). An argument for bad psychology: Disciplinary disruption, public engagement, and social transformation. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 76 (8), 1334-1345.
Sept. 28	<i>Topic:</i> Cultural & De-Colonial Theories (Quiz #2) <i>Reading:</i> Blume, A.W. (2020). <i>A new psychology based on community, equality, and care of the earth: An Indigenous American perspective</i> . Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger. Introduction, Chapters 1 and 2
Oct. 5 *Essay 1 due*	<i>Topic:</i> Neo-liberalism and Psychology - Student Guided Discussions (Quiz #3) <i>Reading:</i> Merhej, R. (2025). The impact of neoliberalism on psychological research and practice. <i>Theory and Psychology</i> , 35(1), 78-97.
Oct. 12	THANKSGIVING & READING WEEK, NO CLASS
PART 2: CLASSIC THEORIES & CURRENT TRENDS	
Oct. 19	<i>Topic:</i> Psychodynamic theories (Quiz #4) <i>Reading:</i> Gaztambide, D. (2020). From Freud to Fanon to Freire: Psychoanalysis as a liberation method. In L. Comas-Diaz & E.T. Rivera (Eds.), <i>Liberation psychology: Theory, method, practice and social justice</i> (pp. 102-126). American Psychological Association.
Oct. 26 *Essay 2 due*	<i>Topic:</i> Current trends in psychodynamic theory - Student Guided Discussions (Quiz #5) <i>Reading:</i> Friedman, C. (2025). A gay old time: Evolving psychoanalytic paradigms of (homo) sexuality. <i>Psychoanalytic Inquiry</i> , 45(10), 908-922.
Nov. 2	<i>Topic:</i> Behaviourism & Humanism (Quiz #6) <i>Reading:</i> Martin, J. (2017). Carl Rogers' and B.F. Skinner's approaches to personal and societal improvement: A study in the psychological humanities. <i>Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology</i> , 37 (4), 214-229.
Nov. 9 *Essay 3 due*	<i>Topic:</i> Current trends in behaviourism and/or humanism - Student Guided Discussions (Quiz #7) <i>Reading:</i> Harris, R. & Hayes, S.C. (2019). <i>ACT made simple: An easy-to-read primer on Acceptance and Commitment Therapy</i> . Chapters 1 and 2 (pp. 10-36).
Nov. 16	<i>Topic:</i> Social Theories (Quiz #8) <i>Reading:</i> Ellemers, N. (2025). The missing link: Theory in social psychology as key contribution to transdisciplinary research. <i>European Review of Social Psychology</i> , 36(2), 268-297.
Nov. 23 *Essay 4 due*	<i>Topic:</i> Current Trends in social theory – Student Guided Discussions (Quiz #9) <i>Reading:</i> Tropp, L.R. (2025). Ambivalence about social relevance? How we can reframe academic research and reaffirm our commitment to the public good. <i>European Review of Social Psychology</i> , 36(2), 366-390.
Nov. 30	<i>Topic:</i> Evolutionary theories (Quiz #10) <i>Reading:</i> Narvaez, D. et al. (2022). Evolving evolutionary psychology. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 77(3), 424-438. https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000849
Dec. 7 *Essay 5 due*	<i>Topic:</i> Current Trends in evolutionary psychology – Student Guided Discussions (Quiz #11) <i>Reading:</i> Cooke, L. (2022). <i>Bitch</i> . New York: Basic Books. (Introduction, pp ix – xxi)

Note: Changes to the above schedule will be announced in class and on the course website.

Course content created by the course instructor is the instructor's intellectual property. It must not be distributed, shared in any public domain, or sold by a student or other third party without prior written consent of the faculty member.

Department of Psychology Policies Related to AI Tools

1. Policy on the Use of Generative AI Tools

The Department of Psychology expects that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial).

The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) is not permitted for any submitted coursework unless express permission has been granted by your instructor.

Students should not have AI tools write any part of their assignments or papers, either by copying and pasting or by paraphrasing the output. Unauthorized use of AI constitutes an academic offence and will be subject to academic discipline.

Additional information: Students can use AI tools to clarify questions they have about course content (e.g., you can ask ChatGPT about a course concept to help with your understanding), but students should be aware that the response may be inaccurate or inconsistent with the course content. Asking your instructor is a more effective strategy. Students should note that information provided by AI tools such as ChatGPT can include mistakes, inaccuracies, biases, and outdated information. Whenever these tools are used, students should cross-verify the information provided to them. This means verifying that the sources used by AI exist and have been accurately summarized, consulting multiple original and reputable up-to-date sources to verify information, and being cautious of bias that could be present in the information provided.

2. Policy on Use of Translation Tools*

The Department of Psychology views the unapproved use of translation or language applications as an academic offence.

Any usage of translation applications or language generation by students to complete specific assigned work for this course **must be approved** by the instructor **prior** to submitting the work **and noted by the student in the submitted work** itself.

Writing text and then feeding it into a computer application to improve or translate your own words, changing a few words, and then submitting this text as if it was your own **constitutes plagiarism**. You must compose text, choose words, construct logic flow, structure sentences and paragraphs to organize, synthesize, interpret information with your own mind. When you borrow language or ideas from another person or from a machine this must be acknowledged with quotation marks and/or citations.

Why do we have this policy?

- Translation is intellectual work and produces intellectual property, thus any text which is translated must cite the translator.

- Psychology endeavors to advance students' linguistic, analytic, and reasoning competencies – this can not happen outside of specific language competencies.
- Earning a university degree signals that an individual has advanced literacy and communicative skill in the language of instruction at the university; this is English at King's University College at Western University. If translation machines are used by students without regulation, we will have no way of certifying whether these competencies exist and fewer mechanism for encouraging students to do the hard work to develop them.

** Based on the policy developed by the Department of Child and Youth Studies*

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found at [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>.

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the “Special Examination” (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a multiple exam situation (i.e., you are scheduled to write more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

3. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:
<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

Good2talk is an online and phone resource for students, available 24/7, with services in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options on how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a Social Worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see https://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

6. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. **Check with you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

7. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

8. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

9. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.