

## Sul Ross State University – Behavioral and Social Science (BASS) Department PSY 4310 Course Syllabus – Fall 2018

Course Title: Humanistic Psychology  
Prerequisites: General Psychology (PSY 1302)  
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Office (LH306) Hours: Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays (12:30 – 1:30pm) & Thursdays (12:30 - 2:30pm)

*There can be no growth without struggle. The temptation to remain within the parameters of the familiar, is the comfort of complacency - Anonymous*

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### Course Description and Goals

Welcome! The aim of this course is to enrich students' knowledge of the theories and practices of humanistic psychology, so students can become increasingly aware of the strengths that human beings possess to nurture their own psychological development. Students will learn about approaches humanistic scholars and practitioners have taken to critique (1) assumptions that psychology should only mirror the philosophy and methods of the natural sciences, (2) the prevalent view that human beings chiefly respond, or are shaped by, the presence (or absence) of external influences, and (3) ways in which we construct our realities, either by intention (phenomenological) or having incomplete control of our actions (existential). Thus, we will cover aspects of human experience that are complex, unsystematic and experiential.

Students will also conduct basic research analyzing themselves in a unique setting. The view of self is crucially important to the humanistic field because it is grounded in phenomenology. Phenomenology is a methodical investigation to study self-awareness and existence. Thus, the goal of these activities is to help students understand humanistic psychology constructs, and how current social and historical events can shape understanding.

### Student Learning Outcomes

- i. Describe and critique the major theories in the field of Humanistic psychology.  
**Method of Assessment:** Reading Exercises and Response Posts
- ii. Convey understanding of humanistic psychology through APA-style writing.  
**Method of Assessment:** Reading Exercises and Response Posts
- iii. Apply humanistic psychology as a lens to understand objectification and subjectification to recognize how they construct our lives.  
**Method of Assessment:** Reading Exercises and Response Posts
- iv. Contrast how humanistic psychological theories differ from existential and phenomenological psychologies, and explain the implications of these differences.  
**Method of Assessment:** Reading Exercises and Response Posts

## Text

*The required text must be obtained (online, offline or older edition is acceptable).*

Required Text: Rogers, C. (1980). *A way of being*. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company.

## Course Requirements

1. *The text must be obtained and can be a physical or digital publication.*
2. Respect for students and lecturer must be maintained at all times when we meet. Respect is a basic human characteristic that entitles each person to their own right and identity. It also helps to nurture a healthy learning environment. If you recognize that respecting others may be a problem, please be courteous and alert me or more suitable personnel (e.g. Sul Ross State University psychologists, family members, lecturers, close friends) and or refer to the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).
3. During the course of this class, you may have strong emotional/psychological reactions to the course material and/or discussions. If you feel that you are having difficulty with the learning environment, please discuss this with me immediately before continuing the course. Counseling and Accessibility Services (<http://www.sulross.edu/section/2408/counseling-accessibility-services>) can provide brief, short-term individual and group counseling or refer you to off-campus providers. You have already paid for these services through your Student Service Fee, whether you use them or not.

## Rationale for Learning Humanistic Psychology

Humanistic Psychology was designed as the epitome of the Human Potential movement that began in the late 1950's. Why learn about humanistic psychology? There is consensus among humanistic psychologists and practitioners that with a positive self-concept, and the willingness to recognize conscious and unconscious realities, one can reach one's fullest potential.

*Transformation is not trying to be another way, pushing for the answer. It is being the answer. Be now who you want to be, even if you think you can't ~ Jacquelyn Small*

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## Course Aims and Objectives

There are five major tenets of humanistic psychology, and each of these will be encountered in this course, and they are:

1. *Humanism is strongly phenomenological or experiential: its starting point is conscious experience.* Phenomenological research is primarily concerned with understanding and exemplifying an individual's experience in ways that enrich and/or are deeply felt by the individual, and informs the intellectual grasp of the said psychological phenomena. Therefore, study of humanistic psychology is mostly descriptive, and starts with what is consciously experienced, and does not traverse to unconscious experiences (e.g. dreams).
2. *Humanistic psychology insists on an individual's essential wholeness and dignity.* Since the experience belongs to the individual, phenomenological understanding does not violate the integrity of the individual's elemental experience.
3. *Humanistic psychology, while acknowledging that there are clear-cut limits inherent in human existence, insists that human beings retain an essential freedom and autonomy.* While the individual is surrounded by good and bad choices, or aspects of real or fake realities, the individual still has the power to choose. The consequences of that choice usually acts as a powerful determinant on whether the individual makes the choice or not.
4. *Humanistic psychology is antireductionist in its orientation.* An individual's experience, as belonging totally to the individual, cannot be over-analyzed or reduced to distinct causes. For example, an individual feeling love cannot be reduced only to the individual having one basic drive such as attraction. Instead, love, as experienced by some individuals can be much more substantial and all-encompassing.

5. *Humanistic psychology, consistent with its strong grounding in existentialism, believes that human nature can never be fully defined. There are no limits to human nature. For example, love can never be fully defined because it belongs to the human experience that can exist differently for each being.*

In acquainting you with these approaches to the humanistic tradition, I plan to help you develop a concise understanding of the application of humanistic psychology and understand how persons create environments for themselves that may appear less perplexing and more directional.

### **AMERICANS with DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT:**

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. **In order to receive accommodations on exams or assignments, you must first provide proper documentation to the Office of Counseling and Accessibility Services.** Please contact Mary Schwartz, Counselor, Accessibility Services Coordinator (Office: 112 Ferguson Hall) to set up an accommodations meeting, call (432) 837-8203 or mail to P.O. Box C-171 Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Students must then present this documentation to the instructor as soon as possible so that accommodations may be arranged.

### **Honoring Academic Integrity**

Any instance of academic misconduct such as (1) turning in an identical written assignment for another course without approval, (2) copying from any source without proper citation, (3) crossing the boundary of what is allowed in a group project, (4) lying in connection with your academic work, (5) cheating, (6) plagiarism, (7) misrepresenting facts and/or collusion are contrary to the purpose of any educational institution and will be dealt with **most severely** to the extent of the university's disciplinary policy and/or through legal action if indicated. You will be held responsible for your actions. Particular attention will be directed to the appropriate use of materials available through the Internet. Whether intentional or not, improper use of materials is a violation of academic honesty and integrity. If you are unsure as to what is permissible, please speak with me. An instructor who determines that a student has been dishonest academically can at a minimum issue no credit for the assignment/exam, and/or pursue more severe penalties, including but not limited to failing the course. Before the penalty is imposed, the student has the right to appeal to the division chairperson or Assistant Provost for the Academic Affairs. Further information about *Academic Honesty* can be read in the [SRSU Student Handbook](#) and procedures for dealing with these acts are outlined in the [Scholastic Dishonesty Policy](#).

### **Observing Class Guidelines**

#### Class Participation

This is a course that requires in class discussion and online experiences. **Class attendance IS REQUIRED and participation is important.** Class participation and attendance will be worth 15% of the final grade, and includes *prompt and regular attendance, active listening, writing, participating via an online poll or quiz, engaging in discussions, volunteering or doodling*. Early departure or late arrival for class (more than 15 minutes) on a weekly basis will lower your participation grade. If you repeatedly leave early or are late to class (**more than twice**), this will be counted as one absence and may result in a failing grade for the course. Besides attendance, all other forms of participation judged subjectively by me that showcases active involvement will increase your participation grade. Excused absences due to established religious observance, or emergency, university-authorized, legal or medical issues and events will not count toward the absence limit but do require written documentation. At your earliest convenience, arrange to make up any missing work as far in advance of your absence as possible. If you are unable to attend a class session for other circumstances, please discuss the reason with me and make arrangements with another student to obtain any notes, handouts or assignments you may have missed. **Excessive unexcused absences (more than 6 missed class sessions) WILL result in a failing grade for the course.**

### Late Assignments/Projects

You are expected to meet assignment deadlines. Late response posts or projects will be reduced by 10% of the overall assignment for the first day of lateness and 20% for lateness beyond that for unexcused absences. For excused absences (university-authorized, legal or medical issues), speak with me **before the absence** so arrangements can be made.

### Cell Phone and Computer Use

During the entire class period, you should be fully engaged in the day's activity. Laptop computers or tablets are welcomed at every class meeting for the academic purposes of note taking or following along with the instructor's lesson. Inappropriate computer usage (e.g. checking your e-mail, using instant messaging, accessing Facebook, etc) or off-topic activity (e.g., reading the newspaper, cell phone use) is highly discouraged and very disrespectful to the instructor and your peers. Please be advised that computer or cell phone use not pertaining to the class activity or discussion will be noted and result in being marked "absent" for the day.

### Discussing Evaluation

Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge of the subject matter and understanding of class material and discussions in the following ways:

### Weekly Response Posts

These are responses to one question that will be asked in each class. You will be asked to answer the questions in class. Each post will be worth ten (10) points.

### Reading Exercises

These are short answer or multiple choice questions you'll be asked to answer individual or in pairs in class. These exercises are based on your understanding of the most pertinent concepts from assigned chapters of the readings assigned for each class. These exercises are worth twenty (20) points. These are graded in class so you obtain immediate feedback.

### Self-Analysis Journaling Project

During the semester, each student will maintain an on-going self-project. These projects are not group projects, and must be conducted individually. Each student must identify an activity he/she will be doing for the first time in his/her life on his/her own time. This activity is to promote self-understanding and self-improvement (e.g. going to a restaurant, sitting in a park, walking for at least 20 minutes) that can be monitored on a weekly basis. The purpose of the self-project is to provide a work-in-progress where students apply theory and findings in the course to a concrete, self-relevant situation. Students are expected to pick a project that is meaningful and important to them, and they should select a project that they feel comfortable discussing with others because they will report on their project in three written reports to the professor and in one oral presentation to the entire class. The instructor must approve the topic by **September 12th, 2018**. Projects that are deemed commonplace, immoral, illegal, or distasteful will not be approved (at the instructor's discretion)

For each time students commit to their weekly activity, they must write, draw or create a journal entry. In addition, they must choose **one** concept learned in class and relate it to each journal entry. The concept **must** come from Humanistic Psychology theories.

Throughout the semester, students will prepare three written reports (each will be 3-4 typewritten pages, double-spaced, normal fonts and margins) that present an account of their semester-to-date monitoring (less than a page) and an analysis of how themes discussed in class since the last report are being applied to the current report. For example, your first report will be based on what you learned about the roots of Humanistic Psychology Unit. In your second report, you can write about connections between themes and concepts encountered as we examine self, growth motivation and creativity in Humanistic Psychology. In your third report, you write about connection experienced across all three Units. This project is due on

December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The presentations that are based on this project will be completed during finals week. You will present a couple of slides showing ways you integrated theories and the research findings discussed in class as pertinent to your self-analysis. In other words, you can focus on the concepts and how you may have applied or comprehended them. However, you do not provide explicit details of the activity that you actually conducted. A model of this presentation and the rubric for assessment will be provided to you towards the end of the semester.

## Grading

Students are expected to complete reading assignments prior to class sessions and to engage in thoughtful discussions in light of these assignments. In addition, students will post on a weekly basis and complete a self-analysis journaling project.




Grading:	700 points total	Percentage
Response Posts	100 (10 @ 10 points each)	10%
Attendance/Participation:	150 points total (15 @ 10 points each)	15%
Reading Exercises:	200 (10 @ 20 points each)	20%
Self-Analysis Project:	250 points	25%

*Human beings are so made that the ones who do the crushing feel nothing; it is the person crushed who feels what is happening. Unless one has placed oneself on the side of the oppressed, to feel with them, one cannot understand ~ Simone Weil*

## Unit I: Humanistic Psychology - Roots

Day	Content
August 27 <sup>h</sup> & 29 <sup>h</sup> (EARTH)	Roots of Humanistic Psychology What is humanistic psychology? How humanistic psychology is in current dialogue with other psychologies Overview of major themes in humanistic psychology (Aug. 30 <sup>th</sup> – Last day for late registration and schedule changes)
Homework	Chapter from Matson
September 5 <sup>th</sup> (MARS)	Humanistic theory: the third revolution in psychology
Homework	Chapter from Moss
September 10 <sup>th</sup> & 12 <sup>th</sup> (MERCURY)	Humanistic theory: the third revolution in psychology Roots and Genealogy of Humanistic Psychology (Sept 12 <sup>th</sup> – Last day to drop classes without creating an academic record) <b>September 12<sup>th</sup> – Final decision on self-analysis journaling project</b>
Homework	Chapter from Moss (Begin reading Carl Rogers – <i>A Way of Being</i> )
September 17 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> (VENUS)	Roots and Genealogy of Humanistic Psychology
Homework	Chapters from Rogers

Unit 2: Introduction to Humanistic Psychology - The self, motivation and creativity

Day	Content
September 24 <sup>th</sup> & 26 <sup>th</sup> (URANUS)	Part 1 – <i>A Way of Being</i> Do we need “A” Reality? What is the ‘psyche’? What is consciousness?
Homework	Chapter from Schneider, Pierson & Bugental
October 1 <sup>st</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> (CALLISTO)	The Self and Humanistic Psychology
Homework	Chapter from Satir
October 8 <sup>th</sup> & 10 <sup>th</sup> (NEPTUNE)	Humanistic psychology and Women The many faces of self... Which face is you? First report of self-analysis journaling project due
Homework	Chapter from Maslow
October 15 <sup>th</sup> & 17 <sup>th</sup> (MOON)	Deficiency Motivation and Growth Motivation - Achieving self-actualization
Homework	Chapter from Rogers
October 22 <sup>nd</sup> & 24 <sup>th</sup> (JUPITER)	Parts 2 and 3– <i>A Way of Being</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Ellen West – was there growth motivation</li> <li> How disconnectedness and separation can prevent growth</li> <li> Learning encompassing both ideas and feelings – transformation</li> </ul>
Homework	Chapter from Valle and Halling and Schaffer

Unit 3: Introduction to Humanistic Psychology, Existential Psychology and Phenomenological Perspectives

Day	Content
October 29 <sup>th</sup> & 31 <sup>st</sup> (HALLOWEEN)	An Introduction to Existential-Phenomenological Thought in Psychology - Basic Existential Concepts of Humanistic Psychology
Homework	Chapter from Bühler
November 5 <sup>th</sup> & 7 <sup>th</sup> (SUN)	Existential and Humanistic Psychology: Responses to Contemporary Challenge - What Psychology can learn from the Existentialists? Second report of self-analysis journaling project due
Homework	Chapters from Spinelli
November 12 <sup>th</sup> , 14 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> (THANKS)	An introduction to phenomenological theory Phenomenological and humanistic psychologies: similarities and contrasts (November 12 <sup>th</sup> : Last day for instructor initiated drop for excessive absences; November 16 <sup>th</sup> : Last day to drop a course with a ‘W’ by 4pm)
Homework	Chapter from Schneider, Pierson & Bugental
November 26 <sup>th</sup> & 28 <sup>th</sup> (SATURN)	An Existential-Integrative Approach to Experiential Liberation
Homework	Work on final presentations

December 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 5 <sup>th</sup> (HOLIDAY)	Review and obtain feedback for presentations Final report of self-analysis journaling project due
Homework	Work on final presentation
December 11 <sup>th</sup>	Final Presentations: 3:00 to 5:00 pm

## Bibliography

- Elliott, A. (2014). *Concepts of the self*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
- Greening, T. C. (Ed.). (1971). *Existential humanistic psychology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing. Maslow, A. (2014). *Toward a psychology of being*. Floyd, VA: Sublime Books.
- May, R. (1975). *The courage to create*. New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Satir, V. (2009). *Your many faces: The first step to being loved*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Schneider, K. J., Fraser Pierson, J., & Bugental, F. T. (Eds.). (2015). *The handbook of humanistic psychology: Theory, research and practice*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Shaffer, J. B. P. (1978). *Humanistic psychology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Spinelli, E. (2002). *The interpreted world: An introduction to phenomenological psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Valle, R. S. & Halling, S. (Eds.). (1989). *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology*. New York, NY: Plenum Press.