

Sul Ross State University – Behavioral and Social Science (BASS) Department PSY 4309 Course Syllabus – Spring 2024 (Shortened Semester)

Course Title:	Humanistic Psychology (Readings & Research)
Prerequisites:	General Psychology (PSY 1302)
Contact Information:	Alicia M. Trotman, PhD, alicia.trotman@sulross.edu , 432-837-8147
Office (LH306) Hours:	Mondays and Wednesdays (2:30 to 4:00pm), Tuesdays (1:00 to 4:30pm), & Fridays (1:00 to 2:00pm ONLINE) By appointment: https://calendly.com/amtsulross/office-hours-appointment

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

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 online and in person. Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. We will do our best to embrace the difficulty of fruitfully discussing controversial and sensitive issues. Respect is a basic human characteristic that entitles each person to their own rights 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](#).

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

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.

SRSU Disability & Accessibility Services:

SRSU Disability Services. 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. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Alpine Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartz, LPC, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours), or email mschwartz@sulross.edu. Our office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and our mailing address is P.O. Box C122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine. Texas, 79832

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/356 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](https://www.timelycare.com/sulross). The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

Library Services Statement

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu.

Honoring Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual, prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Other instances of academic misconduct are lying in connection with your academic work, cheating, misrepresenting facts and/or collusion and **using open AI** sources unless *permission is expressly given* for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall All these 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. 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. Further information about *Academic Honesty* can be read in the [SRSU Student Handbook](#).

Marketable Skills:

1. Speaking Effectively: Students will demonstrate competency in public speaking and communicating scientific information to diverse audiences.
2. Describing Feelings: Students will demonstrate empathic or active listening and conversational skills, and/or write clearly about their affective stance, respectfully attuned to the needs of their audiences.
3. Identifying Resources: Students will demonstrate the aptitude to locate, organize and evaluate the credibility of information from multiple sources.
4. Analyzing: Students will demonstrate ability to examine the underlying issues of a scientific problem, attending to the pertinent details and creating a plan of action, recognizing ambiguity and complexity as essential components.

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, reading online/offline, 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 2 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 per diem for unexcused absences. For excused absences (university-authorized, legal or medical issues), speak with me **before the absence** so arrangements can be made.

REGULAR COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PROFESSOR: It is essential that you keep me current on your progress and any difficulties you may be having so that I can respond in real time to support your success. The most efficient way of contacting me is the VIRTUAL OFFICE on Black Board and/or the syllabus which provides you with contact hours for the rest of the semester. **GENERAL QUESTIONS** are to be posted to a discussion board for all. For **PERSONAL or PRIVATE ISSUES** email me at <mailto:alicia.trotman@sulross.edu> or call me at (432-837-8147) or make an appointment with me (<https://calendly.com/amtsulross/office-hours-appointment>) or text me on Microsoft Teams. I strive to respond as soon as possible. If you do not receive a reply within 24 hours during the work week, please resend your email or text me.

COURSE BEHAVIORS - Respect and Disruptions: Watch the VIDEO on NETTIQUETTE - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWMk_Zv7nB8 and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=80uRE972uQ0>. You are encouraged and expected to openly engage in discussions, ask questions, share ideas, and express your thoughts in this web-based course in the same manner as in a face-to-face course, to the extent that we need to return online fully. Please treat

each other with dignity and respect and avoid disruptive behaviors. You are responsible for knowing what behaviors are acceptable versus unacceptable as referred to in the Student Conduct and Discipline section of the SRSU Student Handbook (https://d1mg6ms3faoonj.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/student_handbook_2019-2020_revision_12.7.2020.pdf)

CELL PHONE AND COMPUTER USE: During the entire class period, you should be fully engaged in the class's activity. Laptop computers or phones are welcomed for the academic purposes of note taking or following along with the instructor's lesson. Off-topic activity (e.g., reading texts or posts, checking email, game playing) not directly related to the class is considered extremely disrespectful, and will be noted and can 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 Journal Posts

These are responses to one question that will be asked in each class. You will be asked to answer the questions in Blackboard in your journal. Each post will be worth fifteen (15) points.

Reading Exercises

These are short answer or essay 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 thirty (30) points.

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 **April 1st, 2024**. 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 two 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. This project is due on **Wednesday May 8th**. 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:	1000 points total	Percentage
Journal Posts	150 (10 @ 15 points each)	15%
Attendance/Participation:	280 points total (14 @ 20 points each)	28%
Reading Exercises:	300 (10 @ 30 points each)	30%
Self-Analysis Project:	270 points	27%

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 1: Humanistic Psychology - Roots

Day	Content
Week of March 18th	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
Homework	Chapter from Matson
Week of March 25th	Humanistic theory: the third revolution in psychology
Homework	Chapter from Moss
Week of April 1st	Part 1 – <i>A Way of Being</i> Do we need “A” Reality? What is the ‘psyche’? What is consciousness?
Homework	Part 1 from Rogers
Week of April 8th	The Self and Humanistic Psychology November 3rd – Final decision on self-analysis journaling project
Homework	Chapter from Polkinghorne

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

Day	Content
Week of April 15th	Humanistic psychology and Women The many faces of self... Which face is you?
Homework	Chapter from Schneider, Pierson & Bugental
Week of April 22nd	Part 2 – <i>A Way of Being</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✚ Ellen West – was there growth motivation? ✚ How disconnectedness and separation can prevent growth ✚ Learning encompassing both ideas and feelings – transformation
Homework	Part 2 from Rogers

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

Day	Content
Week of April 29th	An Existential-Integrative Approach to Experiential Liberation
Homework	Work on final presentation
Week of May 7th	The rest of Rogers – <i>A Way of Being</i>
Wednesday December 13th	Final report of self-analysis journaling project due

Bibliography

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