

## PSY 560 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

### Overview

The final project for this course incorporates key elements required in your role as an emerging professional in the field of psychology: demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of the subject matter of psychology; provide a nuanced, critical analysis of this subject matter; and illustrate the theory's relevance in the field by defending its use for real-world problems.

You will accomplish these tasks in the final project by producing a theoretical analysis in which you develop and support a position statement regarding the ways the theory you select fits into the larger scope of personality theory. To this end, you will argue the use of your theory in a contemporary theoretical context. To accomplish this, you will do the following: provide a detailed description of a selected theory using appropriate source material as the basis of your description; 2) provide a critical analysis of the theory that addresses the validity of the theory drawing on published research, establishes the contemporary relevance of the theory, identifies strengths and weaknesses of the theory, examines the cultural utility of the theory, and considers the theory within the larger context of personality psychology; and propose an application of the theory to a contemporary issue or phenomenon.

The project is divided into **three milestones**, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure quality final submissions. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules Three, Five, and Seven**. The final product will be submitted in **Module Nine**.

Refer to the [Project Theorists](#) document for a list of preapproved theorists and resources.

In this assignment, you will demonstrate your mastery of the following course outcomes:

- Evaluate the use of personality theories in published research for validity and contemporary relevance
- Analyze contemporary theories in personality psychology for their changing roles in the field over time
- Defend the use of personality psychology theories by assessing them against alternative theoretical perspectives
- Illustrate the applicability of theories in personality psychology to contemporary issues and different cultural perspectives
- Formulate conclusions on the contemporary use of theories in personality psychology based on theoretical analysis

## Prompt

Specifically, the following critical elements must be addressed:

- I. **Background:** In this section, you will analyze the key concepts and background of your theory. Select your theory and theorist from the list of preapproved theorists.
  - A. Provide a **historical overview** of your selected theorist, including relevant biographical information and historical events that influenced the theorist.
  - B. Analyze the **historical development of the theory** based on the context of the theorist. Support your response with relevant research. For example, how did your chosen theory compare with the prevailing theory/theories of psychology in practice during this time period? How does the theory relate to the work of earlier theorists?
  - C. Articulate the **key concepts** of your chosen theory as conceived by the theorist. Support your response with relevant research.
  - D. Discuss **how the theory is used today**, identifying key differences from its initial application. What key concepts in the theory have changed over time, and how has the theory's role changed?
  
- II. **Evaluation:** In this section, you will state your position regarding the continuing relevance of the theory in the field of personality psychology. Then, you will be tasked with defending that position in a number of ways, including evaluating its current use, defending it against alternative theoretical positions, and showing its value for real-world problems.
  - A. Position Statement
    - i. Develop a **position statement** regarding your theory's continued relevance in personality psychology today. Your statement must be supported with logical rationale.
    - ii. Evaluate the **validity and accuracy** of secondary research using your theory, explaining how effectively it supports your position statement. Be sure to cite specific examples from the research in your response.
    - iii. Evaluate your theory's appropriateness for a range of **cultural perspectives** in its contemporary use, and explain how effectively this supports your position statement. Be sure to cite relevant sources in your response. In other words, how well does this theory make testable predictions about human behavior across a range of cultural perspectives, including those of special populations?
  - B. Alternative Theoretical Positions: For this section, you will select two or more alternative theories in personality psychology and address the following:
    - i. Compare the theory to **alternative theoretical positions** that are currently used by researchers in personality psychology. For instance, how do their key concepts compare?
    - ii. Assess the extent to which these alternative positions **challenge** the validity, weaknesses, or biases of your chosen theory. Be sure to cite specific examples from published research in your response.
    - iii. **Defend** the contemporary use of the theory **against the challenges** you identified. Be sure to support your defense with relevant research.

C. Application

- i. **Apply** your selected theory in explaining a real-world problem (e.g., PTSD) or phenomenon (e.g., social media use). How would your theorist understand this problem or phenomenon in terms of its root cause and key characteristics? Be sure to cite relevant research in your response.
- ii. Assess published secondary research for **solutions** with the potential to address this problem or phenomenon. Does the contemporary use of your theory provide viable approaches to this problem? What are they?
- iii. Explain how this application relates to the theory's larger **contemporary relevance**. In other words, how does this application demonstrate your theory's potential to advance knowledge in personality psychology?

III. **Conclusion:** In this section, you will synthesize your analysis and discuss key takeaways. Your conclusion should accomplish the following:

- A. **Summarize** the changing use of your theory over time, including how its use compares with other theories in personality psychology. How does this theory fit within the spectrum of theories in personality psychology?
- B. Based on your previous analysis, draw conclusions on the **relevance of the theory** moving forward. What can we learn from applications of this theory in contemporary research?

## Milestones

### Milestone One: Background

In **Module Three**, you will submit an outline of the background section of the final project. List the principle background ideas such as relevant biographical information and historical events that may have influenced the theorist. Identify the key concepts of your theory. Begin to formulate your ideas on how the theory is used today. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone One Rubric.**

### Milestone Two: Position Statement

In **Module Five**, you will create a draft of Section II, Part A of the final project. You will create a position statement of your selected theory and the theory's relevance in personality psychology today. Make sure to cite your sources. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone Two Rubric.**

### Milestone Three: Alternative Theoretical Positions and Application

In **Module Seven**, you will write a draft of Section II, Parts B and C of the final project. This draft will have you begin to compare and contrast your selected theory with the diverse range of theories you have explored throughout this course. Then, you will apply contemporary uses of the theory to real-world problems. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone Three Rubric.**

### Final Submission: Theoretical Analysis

In **Module Nine**, you will submit your final project. It should be a complete, polished artifact containing **all** of the critical elements of the final product. It should reflect the incorporation of feedback gained throughout the course. **This submission will be graded with the Final Project Rubric.**

### Deliverables

Milestone	Deliverable	Module Due	Grading
One	Background	Three	Graded separately; Milestone One Rubric
Two	Position Statement	Five	Graded separately; Milestone Two Rubric
Three	Alternative Theoretical Positions and Application	Seven	Graded separately; Milestone Three Rubric
	Final Submission: Theoretical Analysis	Nine	Graded separately; Final Project Rubric

### Final Project Rubric

**Guidelines for Submission:** Your theoretical analysis should be 10 to 15 pages in length with double spacing. Use APA style for formatting and citations. Your paper must utilize a minimum of ten scholarly resources, including primary resources from your selected theorist.

Critical Elements	Exemplary (100%)	Proficient (90%)	Needs Improvement (70%)	Not Evident (0%)	Value
<b>Background: Historical Overview</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and the overview shows keen insight into historical details that were influential for the theorist	Provides a historical overview of the selected theorist, including relevant biographical information and historical events that influenced the theorist	Provides a historical overview of the selected theorist, but the overview is cursory or contains inaccuracies	Does not provide a historical overview of the selected theorist	6.4
<b>Background: Historical Development</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and analysis demonstrates a nuanced understanding of the development of the theory	Analyzes the historical development of the theory based on the context of the theorist and supports with relevant research	Analyzes the historical development of the theory based on the context of the theorist, but analysis is not supported by relevant research, is cursory, or contains inaccuracies	Does not analyze the historical development of the theory	6.4
<b>Background: Key Concepts</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and shows a keen ability to clearly articulate the key concepts of the personality psychology theory as conceived by the theorist	Articulates the key concepts of the theory and supports response with relevant research	Articulates the key concepts of the chosen theory, but response is unclear, is not supported with relevant research, or contains inaccuracies	Does not articulate the key concepts of the theory	6.4

<b>Background: How the Theory Is Used Today</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and discussion draws cogent connections between the initial application of the theory and its current use	Discusses how theory is used today, identifying key differences from its initial application	Discusses how theory is used today, identifying differences from its initial application, but response is cursory or contains inaccuracies	Does not discuss how theory is used today or identify differences from its initial application	6.4
<b>Evaluation: Position Statement</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and rationale establishes especially pertinent support for position on the theory’s continued relevance in personality psychology	Develops a position statement regarding the theory’s continued relevance in personality psychology today, supported by rationale	Develops a position statement regarding the theory’s continued relevance in personality psychology today, but statement is cursory or rationale contains gaps in logic or accuracy	Does not develop a position statement regarding the theory’s continued relevance in personality psychology	6.4
<b>Evaluation: Validity and Accuracy</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and examples are especially well-suited to supporting evaluation of the validity and accuracy of secondary research	Evaluates, using specific examples, the validity and accuracy of secondary research that uses the theory, explaining how research supports position statement	Evaluates the validity and accuracy of secondary research that uses the theory, but explanation is illogical or evaluation contains gaps in accuracy or support	Does not evaluate the validity and accuracy of secondary research that uses the theory	6.4
<b>Evaluation: Cultural Perspectives</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and sources cited are especially well-suited to supporting the evaluation of the theory’s appropriateness for a range of cultural perspectives in its contemporary use	Evaluates, using relevant sources, the theory’s appropriateness for a range of cultural perspectives, explaining how this supports position statement	Evaluates the appropriateness of the theory for a range of cultural perspectives, but explanation is illogical or evaluation contains gaps in accuracy or support	Does not evaluate appropriateness of the theory for a range of cultural perspectives	6.4
<b>Evaluation: Alternative Theoretical Positions</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and draws nuanced connections between the chosen theory and alternatives	Compares the theory to alternative theoretical positions currently used by researchers in personality psychology	Compares the theory to alternative theoretical positions currently used by researchers in personality psychology but comparison is cursory or contains inaccuracies	Does not compare the theory to alternative theoretical positions	6.4

<b>Evaluation: Challenge</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and examples are especially well-suited to supporting assessment of challenges posed by alternative positions in personality psychology	Assesses, using specific examples from published research, the extent to which alternative positions challenge the validity, weaknesses, or biases of theory	Assesses the extent to which alternative positions challenge the validity, weaknesses, or biases of the chosen theory, but assessment is illogical, lacks support, or contains inaccuracies	Does not assess the extent to which alternative positions challenge the theory	6.4
<b>Evaluation: Defend Against the Challenges</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and research incorporated is especially supportive of theory defense	Defends the contemporary use of the theory against the specific challenges identified, supporting with relevant research	Defends the contemporary use of the theory against the specific challenges identified, but does not support claims with relevant research or defense is cursory or illogical	Does not defend the contemporary use of the theory against the challenges identified	6.4
<b>Evaluation: Apply</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and research is especially well-suited to illustrating the applicability of the theory to the problem or phenomenon	Applies selected theory in explaining a real-world problem or phenomenon, citing relevant research	Applies selected theory in explaining a real-world problem or phenomenon, but does not cite relevant research or response is illogical or contains inaccuracies	Does not apply selected theory in explaining a real-world problem or phenomenon	6.4
<b>Evaluation: Solutions</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and assessment shows a sophisticated grasp of the solutions offered by published secondary research	Assesses published secondary research for solutions with the potential to address the chosen problem or phenomenon	Assesses published secondary research for solutions to address the chosen problem or phenomenon, but assessment is cursory or contains inaccuracies	Does not assess published secondary research for solutions to address the chosen problem or phenomenon	6.4
<b>Evaluation: Contemporary Relevance</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and explanation draws cogent connections between the application and the larger contemporary relevance of the theory	Explains how this application relates to the theory’s larger contemporary relevance	Explains how this application relates to the theory’s larger contemporary relevance but explanation is cursory or illogical or contains inaccuracies	Does not explain how this application relates to the theory’s larger contemporary relevance	6.4
<b>Conclusion: Summary</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and summary masterfully places the theory’s use in context	Summarizes the changing use of the theory over time, including how its use compares with other theories in personality psychology	Summarizes the changing use of the theory over time, but summary is lacking in detail or contains inaccuracies	Does not summarize the changing use of the theory over time	6.4

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<b>Conclusion: Relevance of the Theory</b>	Meets “Proficient” criteria and conclusions drawn demonstrate an especially well-supported synthesis of the theoretical analysis	Draws conclusions on the relevance of the theory moving forward based on the analysis	Draws conclusions on the relevance of the theory moving forward, but conclusions are not based on analysis or contain inaccuracies	Does not draw conclusions on the relevance of the theory moving forward	6.4
<b>Articulation of Response</b>	Submission is free of errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, and organization and is presented in a professional and easy-to-read format	Submission has no major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization	Submission has major errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that negatively impact readability and articulation of main ideas	Submission has critical errors related to citations, grammar, spelling, syntax, or organization that prevent understanding of ideas	4
<b>Total</b>					<b>100%</b>