Course Description:
The doctoral level elective course surveys the major theoretical developments in psychoanalysis from Freud’s introduction of the tripartite model until the development of object relations theory. The material focuses primarily on the American ego psychologists and their attempt to meld psychoanalysis with a more general psychological theory and ends with the technical implications of modern compromise formation theory. It builds on the structure of Psychoanalytic Theories One by examining concepts introduced in more depth, particularly the structure and function of the ego, the adaptation to reality, defense, the development of the autonomous ego functions and their inevitable relationship to conflict. Research in cognition and neuropsychology that elucidate the ego psychologist’s notions of the autonomous ego functions are included in the reading. Another central tenet is that psychoanalysis, as conceived by the ego psychologists included an adaptive viewpoint. This serves as an entry point for thinking about the environment, culture and intersubjectivity, rather than an isolated “one person” psychology. Thus, the second section of the course focuses on the superego and how culture and the environment are internally experienced. A third section is focused on the concept of mental representation, both within classical theory and as a substitute for a model based on conflict and structure. A final section will consider how these concepts affect our understanding of the technical handling of the transference and of the psychoanalytic relationship.

Course Objectives:
To promote critical thinking about theory construction, to understand the observation of clinical phenomenology as a source of data and to integrate current research. To provide a basis for thinking about comparative models of treatment and the influence of theory (both hidden and overt) on the construction of treatment models. To integrate knowledge from prior courses on psychological assessment into a dynamic model of the ego.

Required Texts:
There are no required texts. Required papers are posted on the course web site accessible through the Cohen library. Alternately, most of the papers are also available on the PEP database available through the Graduate Center Library.
Recommended Readings:
Students should review the material from the The Ego and the Id (1923) and Inhibitions, Symptoms and anxiety (1926), where the ground plan of psychoanalytic ego theory was introduced. The main elements of the plan were:
1) the tripartite theory of mental structure of id, ego and superego: a systematic and coordinated conceptualization of various mental activities grouped together by virtue of their similar aims and behavioral manifestations especially associated with delay or control of instinctual discharge on the one hand and adaptation to reality opportunities and danger on the other. (Levy and Inderbitzen, 1996)
2) dual drive theory: libido and the destructive aggressive drive
3) the points of view of metapsychology: dynamic, economic and topographic/structural points of view
4) a developmental view of drives, affects and structure that combines with a genetic conception of conflict and conflict resolution
5) the Oedipus complex as the nuclear complex of the neurosis.
Students are expected to be familiar with this material prior to beginning the course.


Requirements and Grading:
• Students will be required to write a 1-page response paper to weekly readings (10%)
• Attendance (5%)
  Leading class presentation and discussion (35%) Two students will take primary responsibility for the discussion each week. They are responsible for doing all the additional reading for the week.
• For a final paper students may choose to focus on either a research or clinical topic (55%)
  o Clinical option can include reconceptualizing a clinical case using the lens of compromise formation and integrating notions of the autonomous functions and adaptation to your understanding of the case. Alternately, a current testing case can be used to demonstrate the integration between specific ego functions and the dynamic content of the test material.
  o Theory/Research Option: Students will write a research proposal on one of the topics discussed in this course. Alternately, a theoretical paper clarifying one of the topics in the course (for example, clarifying the notion of mental representation from a cognitive as well as a dynamic point of view) would be acceptable. As this is an advanced level course, papers are expected to be of a potentially publishable quality. An upper limit of 20 – 25 double spaced pages is suggested.

Policy for late papers:
Late papers will not be accepted.
Weekly Reading Assignments and Class Topics:

Week One: Introduction


Week Two: The Adaptive Viewpoint and the Question of Reality


Additional Assignment: Book: Primo Levy: *Survival in Auschwitz*

How did Primo Levy survive in Auschwitz? Describe the adaptive mechanisms were mobilized by various inmates of the lager. What was it about Levy’s preexisting personality that allowed him to survive?

Week Three: The Concept of Defense

Week Four: Modern Understandings of Defense


Assignment: Write a summary of the tape, thinking only in terms of defense.

Week Five - Six: Close Reading: The Psychoanalytic Theory of Thinking


Week Seven: Memory


Additional Assignment: Film: Memento. How do the film makers demonstrate the relationship between conflict and memory?

Week Eight: Language


Alternately, take one word and trace the evolution of word meaning through the novel.

Week Nine: Attention


Week Ten: the Superego


*Additional Assignment:* Initial episode of *The Sopranos* and Patricia Highsmith: *The Talented Mr. Ripley.*

Which main character (*Tony Soprano* or *Mr. Ripley*) would qualify as a sociopath? Compare and contrast the level of object relations and antisocial activity in order to reach your conclusion.

*For Fun:* *The Swedish version of Insomnia (film)*

Or any of the following stories of latency age children, to better understand processes of superego internalization in development:

- Philip Roth: *The Conversion of the Jews*
- James Joyce: *Araby*
- Isaac Babel: *The Story of My Dovecote*
- Donald Barthelme: *Me and Miss Mandible*

*These stories will be emailed to interested class participants.*

**Week 11: Introduction to the Concept of the Object**


Film: *Bunuel: That Obscure Object of Desire*

**Week 12 – 13: Critiques of the Representational Concept**


Week 14 - 15: The Psychoanalytic Relationship and Technical Implications of Conflict Theory


Additional Papers to be Distributed: Panel on What is a Relationship? APA Meetings June 1998