

Cultural Psychology	
Psychology 488	Spring, 2010
Wed. 3:10-5:45	108 Kildee

Instructor

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Required Texts and Coursepack

- Heine, S. (2007). *Cultural Psychology*. NY: W. W. Norton.
- A coursepack of required readings is available at the MU Bookstore. Other required readings are on reserve at the library or are available on the course website on WebCT.

Prerequisites. Social Psychology (Psychology 280) and Research Methods (Psych. 301 or its equivalent).

Course Overview. As our world becomes smaller, it is very important that we understand how individuals in other cultures think, feel, and behave, and to understand the forces, beliefs and motivations that underlie their behavior. Unfortunately, psychology as a field has tended to focus on the behavior of members of North American and Western European countries. Recently, cross-cultural research in psychology has demonstrated that many psychological processes once assumed to be universal (i.e., shared by members of all cultures) are actually quite culture-bound. Although a few topics on psychology have a relatively long history of cross-cultural investigation, psychologists are becoming more aware that all of the topics on psychology must be examined from a broad cultural perspective. In this course we will focus on topics in personality, social, developmental and health psychology, examining them in light of various cultural backgrounds and orientations.

Course Goals:

- To introduce the field of cultural psychology and to examine the concepts and processes necessary for cross-cultural research.
- To introduce students to empirical research in cultural psychology
- To encourage an appreciation for the diversity of cultures and how culture influences behavior.
- To encourage students to think culturally about psychology and everyday behavior.
- To help students understand the dynamics of cross-cultural experiences.
- To help students understand their own cultural backgrounds and the ways that cultural perspectives relate to their lives.

Student Expectations and Evaluation

There are three questions that guide class participation and evaluation:

- Am I prepared for this class with the necessary work, materials, and mental preparation?
- Do I pay attention to the words offered by the instructor and my fellow students?
- Do my words and actions demonstrate respect for others and myself?

Ideally, we will each be able to say "Yes" to each of these questions after each class. To facilitate that, you are asked to read the required readings before class each week, and to come to class ready to discuss them. Discussion questions for the readings (excepting the text) are either in the coursepack or will be made available a week in advance. Students should be prepared to discuss the study questions in class. This course heavily relies on the quality of discussion, and everyone loses out when others are not well prepared. Pop quizzes may be given without notice. Course participation will be worth 75 points.

To facilitate the active involvement of all the students, please turn off cell phones during the class period. You are welcome to take notes on a laptop, but do not surf the web, play games, or send messages, etc. during

class. Please let the instructor know in advance if you must come to class late or leave early. Students who are not actively involved in the lectures and discussion or who do not show respect to the rest of the class through their behavior will be asked to leave.

Exams and Assignments: There will be two exams, one at midterm (**March 3**) and a second exam during finals week. Each exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Each exam will be worth 80 - 100 points.

There are two writing assignments for this class, and one oral presentation. The assignments are described later in the syllabus. Plagiarized papers will result in a grade of "F" for the course. Additional short writing assignments may be made during the semester.

Evaluation summary:

Participation	75 points
2 exams	80-100 points each
Assignment #1	25 points
Assignment # (Written & oral book report)	75 points

Disability Statement: If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon. Please request that a Disability Resources staff send a SAAR form verifying your disability and specifying the accommodations you will need.

Grading Policy

On the papers and presentations, a person who does the minimum required will earn 60-70% of the points available for that assignment. Only truly exceptional papers or projects will be given the full credit. If you would like to contest a grade on one of your papers or exams, please put in writing what you think was mis-graded and why you believe you deserve additional credit.

Final course grades will be based on the total number of points a student has accumulated during the class. The highest number of points earned by a student in the class will be counted as 100%. Each person's percentage score will be his or her total number of points earned divided by the highest total. The assignment of letter grades will approximate the following ranges:

90% of the top score total	=	A
80-89%	=	B
70-79%	=	C
60-69%	=	D

Plus and minus grades, such as A- and B+ will be assigned as appropriate. Using this grading system, there is theoretically no upper limit on the number of As or Bs in the class and there do not have to be any Ds or Fs. You are competing only with yourself and not with other class members.

Approximate weekly schedule:*

CP= Coursepack;

Week	Topic	Readings (to be read before class each week)
Week 1 Jan. 13	Introduction and perspectives on culture	
Week 2 Jan 20	Methods of cross-cultural research	Carroll, " <i>Conversation</i> " (e-reserve/WebCT) Text, Chapter 1, 2, 3
Week 3 Jan 27	Socialization & Development Assignment #1 due	Text, Chapter 4
Week 4 Feb. 3	Development & Socialization cont'd	Gottlieb, " <i>Luring your child into this life...</i> " (e-reserve)
Week 5 Feb. 10	Education and Intelligence	Lewis " <i>Roots of discipline</i> " (WebCT) Greenfield, " <i>You can't take it with you</i> " (CP)
Week 6 Feb. 17	Self, Personality, & Motivation	Text, Chapter 5, 6 Markus et al., <i>Going for the gold: Models of agency...</i> (CP)
Week 7 Feb. 24	Cognition	Text. Chapter 9 Peng & Nisbett, <i>Culture, dialectics, and reasoning about contradiction</i> (CP)
Week 8 Mar. 3	Exam #1; begin Social Psychology	
Week 9 Mar. 10	Social Psychology	Text chapter 11 Kitayama et al, " <i>Is There Any "Free" Choice?: Self and Dissonance in Two Cultures.</i> " (CP)

Mar. 17	Spring Break	
Week 10 Mar 24	Social Psychology: Relationships	De Munck, "Love, lust, and arranged marriages..." (e-reserve)
Week 11 Mar 31	Emotion	Text, Chapter 8 Butler, Lee & Gross, <i>Emotion regulation and culture</i> (CP)
Week 12 April 7	Health & Well-being	Text Chapt. 10
Week 13 April 14	Presentation of book reports	Book Reports due
Week 14 April 21	Cross-cultural contact and acculturation	Text, Chapter 12
Week 15 April 28	The future of cultural psychology	Reading TBA
Week 16	Final Exam	Time and date to be announced

* These dates are subject to change.

Readings (CP = coursepack)

- Carroll, R. (1987). Conversation. In *Cultural misunderstandings: The French-American experience*, (chapter 2, pp. 22-39). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (e-reserve/WebCT)
- Gottlieb, A. (2000). Luring your child into this life: A Beng path for infant care. Chapt. 3 in J. DeLoache and A. Gottlieb (Eds.), *A world of babies* (pp. 55-89). Cambridge, UK; Cambridge University Press. (e-reserve)
- Lewis, C. C. (1995). The roots of discipline: Community and commitment. *Educating hearts and minds: Relections on Japanese preschool and elementary school*. (Chapters 5, pp. 101 -123). NY : Cambridge University Press. (WebCT)
- Greenfield, P. M. (1997). You can't take it with you: Why ability assessments don't cross cultures. *American Psychologist*, 52, 1115-1124. (CP)
- Markus, H. R., Uchida, Y., Omoregie, H., Townsend, S. S. M., & Kityama, S. (2006). Going for the gold: Models of agency in Japanese and American contexts. *Psychological Science*, 17, 103-112. (CP)
- Peng, K., & Nisbett, R. E. (1999). Culture, dialectics, and reasoning about contradiction. *American Psychologist*, 54, 741-754. (CP)
- Kitayama, S., Snibbe, A. C., Markus, H. R. & Suzuki, T. (2004). Is there any "free" choice? Self and dissonance in two cultures. *Psychological Science*, 15, 527-533. (CP)
- de Munck, V. C. (1998). Lust, Love, and arranged marriages in Sri Lanka. In V. C. de Munck (Ed.), *Romantic Love and Sexual Behavior* (pp. 285-300). Westport, CT: Praeger. (ereserve).
- Butler, E. A., Lee, T. L., & Gross, J. J. (2007). Emotion regulation and culture: Are the social consequences of emotion suppression culture-specific? *Emotion*, 7, 30-48. (CP)

Homework Assignment #1

25 points; Due Weds., Jan. 27

The paper "Measuring helping behavior across cultures" by Robert Levine describes many of the methodological problems researchers may encounter when conducting cross-cultural research. This paper may be found online at

http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~culture/contents_complete.htm (Unit 15, chapter 9).

In this paper, please do the following:

- Describe how the author addresses each of the forms of equivalence (linguistic, conceptual, sample, methodological, and metric) discussed in class. You may not find examples of each form, and you may have to read between the lines to draw conclusions regarding some forms of equivalence. Be sure to explain and justify your claims. (Pay attention to the ways that some of the terms are used differently in our class discussion than in the article. Be sure to use the class definition of the forms of equivalence prevail in your thinking!)
- Answer questions **#2 and #5**, which can be found at the end of the article.
- In light of the description of good cross-cultural methods described in the textbook, how does this paper stack up? What are some strengths and weaknesses of this research?

Your paper should be 3-4 pages typed, double-spaced, with 1 inch margins and 12 point fonts.

