

Psychology 344
Psychology and Culture
Fall 2008

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Course Description and Learning Objectives

This course will explore how culture influences fundamental aspects of human psychology. We will address basic questions about the nature of culture—and more far-reaching questions about the profoundly cultural nature of human behavior—by drawing from the most up-to-date and scientifically sound research in cultural psychology.

You will learn what cross-cultural research has said about what we traditionally know to be truth in psychology in a wide variety of topic areas. You also will learn about the meaning of cross-cultural psychology in the larger picture of psychology as a discipline. A major goal of this course is for students to become better at understanding and dealing with intercultural contacts, conflicts, and adjustments in their personal lives.

Meetings and Format

We will meet Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 4:45 a.m. in GMCS 214. Course meetings will be primarily lecture format, although there will be occasion for demonstrations, in-class exercises, and guided discussion relevant to course content.

Material will be presented and discussed in class that is not contained in the textbook. In order to perform well on course exams, it will be necessary to attend all lectures and to take thorough notes.

Required Reading

Heine, S.J. (2007). *Cultural psychology*. New York: Norton.

Prerequisite

Introductory Psychology (PSY 101) is a required prerequisite for this course.

Class Requirements and Grading

The final grade in this course will be based on three in-class exams (30% each), an optional final exam (30%), and a number of in-class exercises (10%). All exams will be multiple choice.

1. *In-class exams (90% of final grade)*. Each of the three in-class exams will focus on material from just one third of the class (see schedule). Each of these exams is worth 30% of your final grade. Exam content will cover all assigned readings, lecture, and class discussion, and will emphasize understanding rather than rote memorization.
2. *Optional final exam (may count for 30% of final grade)*. The final exam is optional, but your score on the final exam can be used to replace your lowest exam score. The final exam will be cumulative, covering the entire content of the course, and is scheduled for exam week (Tuesday, May 13). You are strongly encouraged to take all exams.
3. *In-class exercises (10% of final grade)*. Throughout the semester, you will have the opportunity to participate in a number of in-class exercises designed to illustrate course concepts. These exercises will not be graded, but you will gain points for completing them in class on the days they are assigned. Because we will be taking about the exercise in class, there will not be an opportunity to make up for missed exercises. If you miss an exercise because you are absent or late, you will not get credit for that exercise.
4. *Attendance and diligence of note taking*. Attendance will be assessed by the in-class exercises (administered periodically) and by the thoroughness of your lecture notes.

Exam Procedures

Materials. You will need to purchase the red ParSCORE test form in order to answer multiple choice questions on exams. Please also remember to bring a #2 pencil.

Use of notes. Exams will be closed-book and closed-notes for their duration. Laptops, cell phones, and electronic devices must be off and stowed during the exam. If you need to ask a clarification question during the exam, please stay in your seat, raise your hand, and I will come to your seat to assist you.

Plagiarism / cheating. Plagiarism is defined at SDSU as “the act of incorporating ideas, words, or specific substance of another, whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained, and submitting same to the University as one’s own work to fulfill academic requirements without giving credit to the appropriate source.” Cheating on an exam counts as plagiarism. If you cheat on an exam, you will receive 0 points for that exam. The SDSU Office of Judicial Affairs will be consulted in cases of cheating, and disciplinary action may be taken that may result in failure of this course or suspension or expulsion from the university.

Challenges to exam grades. If you believe there was a clerical error in scoring your exam, you must report this problem within two weeks of the exam in order to request a rescoring. Similarly, if you believe the stated answer to an exam question is incorrect, you must register a challenge to this question within two weeks, and you must provide written, empirical evidence supporting your challenge. In this context, “empirical evidence” includes citation from the textbook (with page and paragraph number) or data from a published empirical article in a peer-reviewed psychology journal. Note that I may disagree with your interpretation of the evidence.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments

<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading</i>
Unit 1: An Introduction to Cross-Cultural Psychology			
1	9/2	Culture and Human Nature: An Introduction	Chapter 1
	9/4	Culture and Human Nature	
2	9/9	Cultural Evolution: On Change and Continuity	Chapter 2
	9/11	Cultural Evolution	
3	9/16	Research Methods: How Do We Study Culture?	Chapter 3
	9/18	Research Methods	
4	9/23	Development and Socialization: Culture's Early Impact	Chapter 4
	9/25	Development and Socialization	
5	9/30	EXAM 1	Chapters 1 to 4
Unit 2: Personal Experiences in Cultural Contexts			
	10/2	The Self	Chapter 5
6	10/7	The Self	
	10/9	The Self & Motivation	Chapters 5 & 6
7	10/14	Motivation	Chapter 6
	10/16	Motivation	
8	10/21	Emotion	Chapter 8
	10/23	Cognition: Attention & Awareness	Chapter 9

<i>Week</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading</i>
9	10/28	Cognition: Concepts and Categorization	Chapter 9
	10/30	Cognition: Logic, Reasoning, and Intelligence	
10	11/4	EXAM 2	Chapters 5, 6, 8, & 9
Unit 3: Implications			
	11/6	Physical and Mental Health	Chapter 10
11	11/11	<i>Veteran's Day Holiday: Class will not meet.</i>	----
	11/13	Interpersonal Attraction and Relationships	Chapter 11 (pp. 462-487)
12	11/18	Interpersonal Attraction and Relationships	
	11/20	Groups	Chapter 11 (pp. 487-505)
13	11/25	Morality, Religion, and Justice	Chapter 7
	11/27	<i>Thanksgiving Holiday: Class will not meet.</i>	----
14	12/2	Living in Multicultural Worlds	Chapter 12
	12/4	Living in Multicultural Worlds	
15	12/9	EXAM 3	Chapters 10, 11, 7 & 12
Wrapping Up			
	12/11	Final Exam Review	Chapters 1 to 12
16	12/18	FINAL EXAM 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.	Chapters 1 to 12