

Spring Semester 2001

Syllabus

Psychology 3301: Introduction to Cultural Psychology

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MW 1:25-2:15 Smith 231

F 1:25-2:15 WulIH 140 & WulIH 220

Instructors:

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Section Leaders:

Mera M. Atlis - see above

Paul Bagdade
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Prerequisites

This class is open to undergraduates who have completed Psychology 1001 and one additional lab course. This course is designed to meet the College of Liberal Arts Cultural Diversity Theme requirement.

Course Description

In this course, we will consider current theories and research on culture, race, and ethnicity. Students will gain a better understanding of the ways in which sociocultural context influences psychological processes, learn about empirical methods in cultural psychology, and achieve a better appreciation of cultural groups within and outside of the United States. Students will also learn how to consider issues of culture in interpretation of personal experience and in application of cultural diversity issues to various settings.

The class meets twice a week (on Mondays and Wednesdays). Class meetings will be comprised of lecture, discussion, and class exercises. In addition, students must sign up for one discussion section (on Fridays).

Required Text

Matsumoto D. (2000). Culture and Psychology: People around the world (2nd Ed). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth (Thomson Learning).

Note: Additional readings (e.g., scientific articles) will also be distributed in class.

Class Web Site

The class web site contains this syllabus in its most current form, the instructors' notes, course grades, and other noteworthy information for the course. If you experience problems with the web site (e.g. broken links, missing content, etc.), please contact instructor Mera Atlis (atlis001@tc.umn.edu).

Expectations

Attendance. Students are expected to attend each class meeting and their assigned discussion sections. At random times throughout the semester, attendance sheets will be passed around to ensure that students are attending class regularly.

Weekly Preparation. Before each class meeting, students are expected to have: (1) read the course readings for that week and (2) completed class assignments.

Active Participation. The purpose of this course is to encourage thinking about race, ethnicity, and culture. In order to achieve this goal, students must take active roles in their education. Students are expected to think actively and participate during class discussion and class exercises.

Student Conduct. Students are expected to listen to and interact with each other in a respectful manner. Malicious racism, sexism, homophobia, classism, ageism, and other forms of bigotry are inappropriate to express in class. Because students in the class are very diverse, they will have different values, beliefs, and opinions. Students are expected to maintain open minds to the differences among themselves. Students may argue with others who hold opinions different from their own, but must maintain respect for all students at all times. Scholarly misconduct (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, etc.) will not be tolerated and will be punished accordingly.

Student Feedback. Students are encouraged to provide feedback about their experiences of the course. Office hours are designed for students to contact the instructor and section leaders individually with their concerns or suggestions.

Special Circumstances. We learn in different ways and with varying degrees of success. If students know of any factors in their lives that hinder their abilities to learn up to their potential in this course, they must notify one of the instructors at once. If these factors are recognized disabilities, under the ADA, please provide the instructor with appropriate notification. Specifically, students will need to present the instructor with a letter from the Office of Disability Services. If students do not already have contacts there, they should call them at 624-1666 as soon as possible. If these factors fall outside official categories, students should stop by the instructor's office to discuss them.

Grading

Grades will be given based on the quality of the student's coursework, the extent to which the coursework adheres to the goals of the class, and the time it was submitted. Students will be penalized for incomplete and late coursework.

Grades will be based on four criteria (Total 200 points):

1. Thought paper (Total = 15 points)
2. Ethnographic interview paper (Total = 25 points)
3. Three non-cumulative examinations (50 points each; Total = 150 points)
4. Discussion Section Grade (Total = 10 points)

Grading Scale

Points Earned	Percent	Grade		Points Earned	Percent	Grade
200-186	100-93%	A		153-146	76.9-73	C
185-180	92.9-90	A-		145-140	72.9-70	C-
179-174	89.9-87	B+		139-134	69.9-67	D+
173-166	86.9-83	B		133-126	66.9-63	D
165-160	82.9-80	B-		125-120	62.9-60	D-
159-154	79.9-77	C+		119 or below	59.9 or less	F

Thought Paper

Students will be asked to write a thought paper based on one of the two movies shown in class. Thought paper should be 6-8 pages in length. It will be graded based on clarity and quality of writing as well as creativity of ideas. More information about the content of the paper will be provided during class and discussion sections. Two weeks before the final version is due, the students will have an option to hand in their draft and receive feedback about their writing.

Ethnographic Interview Paper

For the ethnographic interview you will be asked to interview a person who is culturally different from you (e.g., age, race/ethnic background, socioeconomic and/or occupational status, etc.). You will need to conduct your interview in a specific format. You will have to prepare a set of questions prior to meeting with your interviewee. During the interview, you will keep notes, which will be handed in prior to writing an 8-10 page paper about your interviewing experience. More information about the content of the paper will be provided during class and discussion sections.

Examinations

There will be three non-cumulative exams, 50 point each. Each exam will include material covered up to the date of that exam, including readings, lectures, and material presented in discussion sections. The exams will be multiple choice. Any questions you may have about the grading of your exam MUST be brought within two weeks of the date of its administration. Since you will not be allowed to take the test booklets out of the classroom, you will need to make an appointment if you would like to go over your test results.

There are few acceptable reasons for missing an exam. Make-up exams will be offered only to those who obtain permission IN ADVANCE from the instructor and who have one of the following: a significant illness documented by a letter from a physician (or doctor's office); an extremely serious family problem (e.g., death of a family member), or another very serious impediment (e.g., jury duty, delivery of a baby, National Guard call-up, etc.). Students who miss an exam without satisfying one of these conditions will receive a ZERO for that exam. Arrangements to take a missed exam MUST be made within ONE WEEK prior to the exam date.

Discussion Sections

Discussion sections will be held on Fridays. They are designed to provide students with the opportunity to explore course material in greater depth than in class. During discussion sections, students will discuss individual course readings, participate in small group activities related to the lectures, and explore how their own experiences are related to issues in cultural psychology. Throughout the semester, speakers and movies will also be scheduled. Your discussion section grade will be based on attendance and written assignments completed during the discussion section.

Difficulties; Withdrawing from the Course

Failing assignments or exams will NOT be considered sufficient cause to drop this course. If you choose to withdraw, do so before the date on which the instructor's signature is required (see the University Course Schedule for this deadline). Incompletes ("I" grades), followed by retaking the course during another term to finish, will NOT be given. If you are experiencing difficulties in the course, talk to one of the instructors as soon as you realize it, and, if at all possible, BEFORE you get a poor score back on your assignments. Overall, the earlier you share with us your concerns, the more likely we'll be able to help you.


Deadlines (tentative)


January 31	Hand out Ethnographic Interview Paper assignment
February 12	Exam 1
February 26	Hand out Thought Paper assignment
March 19	Exam 2 & Copies of the Ethnographic Interview Field Notes due
March 16	Thought Paper draft due (optional)
April 2	Thought Paper due
April 27	Ethnographic Interview Paper due
May 2	Exam 3

Tentative Lecture Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Readings
1	Jan 17	Introduction to the course.	Chapter 1
	Jan 19	Discussion: What is culture? Introductions	
2	Jan 22	What is cultural psychology?	Chapter 2
	Jan 24	Cultural issues & psychological theory	
	Jan 26	Discussion: Culture and psychological theories	
3	Jan 29	Methods	Chapter 5
	Jan 31	Ethnographic interviewing, Hand out Ethnographic Interview Assignment	
	Feb 2	Discussion: Introduction to interviewing techniques	
4	Feb 5	Ethnic identity	Chapter 3
	Feb 7	Cultural conceptions of self.	
	Feb 9	Discussion: Culture and self	

5	Feb 12	Exam 1 (non-cumulative)	Chapter 7
	Feb 14	Culture and human development	
	Feb 16	Discussion: Child rearing practices & culture	
6	Feb 19	Culture and human development (cont.)	Chapter 15
	Feb 21	Culture and personality	
	Feb 23	Speaker	
7	Feb 26	Cultural adaptation and acculturation; Hand out Thought Paper Assignment	TBA
	Feb 28	Movie 1	
	March 2	Movie 1 (cont.)	
8	March 5	Culture and emotion	Chapter 11
	March 7	Movie 2	
	March 9	Movie 2 (cont.)	
9	March 12	Culture and social behavior	Chapter 16
	March 14	Culture and social behavior (cont.)	
	March 16	Discussion: Culture & interpersonal relationships, Thought Paper draft due (optional)	
10	March 19	Exam 2, Copies of Ethnographic Interview Field Notes due	Chapter 6
	March 21	Culture and perception and cognition	
	March 23	TBA	
11	March 26-30	SPRING BREAK - NO CLASSES	
12	April 2	Culture and industrial organizational psychology; Thought Paper due	Chapter 17 Chapter 12
	April 4	Culture and language	
	April 6	Speaker TBA	
13	April 9	Stereotypes and ethnocentrism	Chapter 4
	April 11	Movie 3	
	April 13	Movie 3 (cont.)	
14	April 16	Culture and psychopathology	Chapter 10
	April 18	Culture and psychopathology (cont.)	
	April 20	Speaker TBA	
15	April 23	Cultural issues in treatment of psychopathology	Chapter 8
	April 25	Culture, gender, and sexuality	
	April 27	Speaker TBA, Ethnographic Interview Paper due	
16	April 30	Catch up	Chapter 18
	May 2	Exam 3	

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