

Cross-Cultural Psychology
Psychology 142 — Spring 2001

Instructor:

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Course Information:

Section 1 - MW 3:00 - 4:15 PM
MODOC 220
Office hours: M 12:30-3:00 / TR 1:30-4
or by appointment

Course Overview:

This is a General Education course in Cross-Cultural Psychology. It is focused on the effects of culture on the nature and behavior of individuals, their adaptations to institutions and environments, and their relations with others within and outside their culture. These topics will be approached from both the Western and indigenous viewpoints. Knowledge presented in the class is drawn from qualitative and quantitative research. The objective of the course is to provide students with both a theoretical and a practical understanding of the effects of culture on human thinking, values, and behavior. Within the United States, and the world, cultural diversity is becoming increasingly important. The ease of travel, the globalization of business, immigration, and the retention of ethnic and cultural identity of those living in the USA all mean that contact between members of various cultures is inevitable in today's world. Therefore, it is imperative that we understand culture, cultural differences, and the ways that culture influences the thinking and social behavior of every person.

The course will combine reading, lectures, exercises, library research, student presentations, and group discussion to help students better understand the ubiquitous effects of culture. Students will acquire an overview of the various theories and methods in the area of cross-cultural psychology. The successful student will finish the course with a thorough understanding of the concepts and their applications. These concepts will increase the students' understanding of themselves and culturally different others. But more, it is hoped that students will also acquire knowledge and skills that will enable them to better cooperate and communicate with those who are racially, ethnically, and culturally different from themselves.

Required:

Brislin, R. (2000). Understanding culture's influence on behavior, Second Edition. Ft. Worth, TX: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Singelis, T. M., & Vela, E. (2000). Study guide for culture's influence on behavior. Ft. Worth, TX: Harcourt College Publishers.

Note: Copies of the study guide are on reserve in the Library.

Additional readings are required and will be on reserve at the Library.

1. Triandis, H. C., Brislin, R., & Hui, H. C. (1988). Cross-cultural training across the individualism-collectivism divide. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, *12*, 269-289.
2. Singelis, T. M. (1994). Nonverbal communication in intercultural interactions. In R. Brislin & T. Yoshida (Eds.), Improving intercultural interactions: Modules for cross-cultural training programs (pp. 268-294).

Learning Objectives

Knowledge/Skill	Facilitating Activities/Materials	Assessment
1. Acquire a basic understanding of the influence of culture on human behavior	Reading, lecture, class discussion, and exercises	Quizzes, journal reports, presentations, and final exam
2. Gain an appreciation and respect for cultural diversity	Reading, lecture, class discussion, and exercises	Class discussion, journal reports, presentations
3. Develop a tolerance for ambiguity, skepticism of dogma, and respect for the tentative nature of psychological knowledge	Reading, lecture, class discussion, and exercises	Class discussion, journal reports, presentations
4. Develop the ability to summarize and critically evaluate published literature	Reading, lectures, and class discussion	Journal reports, class discussion, and presentations
5. Enhance the ability to present scholarly material verbally	Class discussion and presentations	Presentations, class discussion
6. Enhance the ability to express ideas clearly in writing	Journal reports	Journal reports

Policies:

1. Class attendance is essential. Activities, lectures, and discussions will supplement the reading. Also, class participation is a part of your grade. You can not participate if you do not come to class. Attendance will be taken. Each class attended will count as 1 point towards a student's participation grade. Additional points will be awarded for actively participating in class and small group discussions. Overall participation counts a maximum of 50 points in the final point total. In any case, students are responsible for all material, assignments, and explanations given in class.
2. Plagiarism or cheating on a test will result in an F for the assignment or test. It is the student's job to avoid even the appearance of plagiarism or cheating.
3. Papers, quizzes, and tests **must** follow the scheduled dates. Make-up quizzes will not be given, however the two lowest quiz grades will be dropped. Journal reports **MUST** be handed in on the due date. These reports will be discussed in groups during that class period. Late journal reports will be penalized two points for each day they are late. It is the student's responsibility to contact me within three days of the exam to arrange for a make-up, otherwise the student will receive a zero for the exam. Make-up exams are not automatic and will not be allowed, except under extraordinary, **documented** circumstances.

Course Requirements

Quizzes

Except for the first week, there will be a quiz every Monday at the start of class (13 quizzes in all). Each quiz will consist of 15 multiple choice or true/false questions. Each quiz will cover the reading due that day (5 questions) and material from the previous week's reading, lecture, exercise, and discussion. The majority of the quiz questions will be taken from the multiple choice questions and the definitions in the study guide. Additional questions from lectures, exercises, and discussions will be included. There are no make-ups for missed quizzes. I will, however, automatically drop the two lowest quiz grades and count your best quiz twice, therefore the quizzes will count for **180 points** (15 questions X 12).

Journal Reports

Each student will prepare three (3) journal reports for the dates listed in the class schedule. Each of the three reports will count 50 points (**150 points total**) and will be graded as described below. Reports are based on research presented in scholarly journals (**a list of acceptable journals is attached**). If in doubt, check with me). Students must first locate an article that is relevant to the material being covered in class around the time the report is due (three weeks before or after). After reading the article, students will write a report of not less than 850 words nor more than 1000 words. The report must be typewritten and should be approximately evenly divided into the following sections: a summary of the article, a section relating the article to class material, a section relating the article to personal experience. Each section must be clearly numbered as below and marked with a heading that names the section. On the due date, students will break into small groups and tell their group about the article they read. Each group will then select the most interesting / relevant paper and the author of that paper will then share it with the whole class. In this way, students will be exposed to approximately ten articles in each round of papers. Papers **and a copy of the article** will then be handed to the instructor who will grade and return them.

The structure and grading of the papers is explained below. **Choosing an appropriate article is critical for the successful completion of this assignment.**

Part 1 -- Summary:

1. This section should contain the main idea of the study, including a succinct statement of any relevant theories or hypotheses.
2. This section gives a brief description of the sample used and the methods of the study. Who did they study? How did they study them? What tests were used?
3. The final part of the summary is a statement of the reported findings and their implications. Evaluate the findings in your own words. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the study? Do you believe the authors claims?

Part 2 -- Relevance to class:

This section should include specifics of how the article relates to readings, lectures, and/or class discussions.. Articles might add new information, substantiate (or conflict) with information given in text and class; they might also present a new, but related topic. Describe specifically how and why the article relates to class.

Simply saying this is about culture (or stereotypes or whatever) is not sufficient. You must be clear about how the article adds information to what we have learned in class. This section should demonstrate that the student understands both the class material and the article that is reported.

Part 3 -- Relevance to personal experience:

In completing this section students may draw on experiences they have had, situations they have observed, or the experiences reported to them by friends or relatives. If necessary, students may also draw on movies or readings of which they have first hand knowledge, although this is not as desirable as direct personal experience. Remember that we take culture broadly in this course so a person born and raised in Northern California may notice cultural differences when visiting LA.

This section must clearly show how the article is relevant to the thinking or experience of the student. What is the experience and how exactly is it related to the findings or methods of the study reported?

Grading of Journal Reports:

Each of the three sections of the papers will be graded according to its content and completeness according to the guidelines above (ten points for each section for a possible 30 points total). It is expected that feedback on early papers will be used to improve performance on subsequent papers so that the grades on these should improve throughout the semester.

	Basic Description	Points
Excellent	Fulfills all requirements above and its relevance to class or text is made clearly and specifically.	9-10
Good	Fits the assignment nicely, but relevance not precisely explained.	8
Average	Appropriate but relevance not clearly explained.	7
Poor	Not appropriate or relevance not at all explained.	0-6

In addition, the overall quality of writing and clarity of expression will be graded out of 20 points as follows:

	Qualities and requirements	Points
Excellent	No errors in grammar spelling or usage. Excellent expression and clarity of ideas. Excellent transitions and continuity. Superior writing.	19-20
Good	No errors in grammar or spelling. Good usage and good expression of ideas.	17-18
Average	Occasional grammar or spelling error. Usage and expression adequate.	14-16
Poor	Grammar, spelling, and usage errors. Vague or unclear expression	0-13

Final Exam

A final exam is required. The final will be comprehensive. That is, it will cover all of the material in the course. It will consist of 50 multiple choice or true/false questions similar to those in the quizzes given during the semester. The final exam will count **50 points** towards the final point total.

Group Presentation

Groups will be formed to work together to provide the rest of the class with information and ideas which may not be covered in the assigned material. Topics for presentations will be discussed in class and must be approved by the instructor. Groups are encouraged to be creative and innovative in their choice of topic and presentation methods. The presentation should last about 15 minutes with an additional 10 minutes devoted to discussion. The presentation does *not* need to be comprehensive and should not simply be a set of quotes taken from readings. The purpose of the presentation is to give students an opportunity to express, in their **own terms** (please do not read), what they feel are the important, interesting, or difficult aspects of topics related to cross-cultural psychology. The presentation should show that the group has researched the topic and thought about it. **Each group should prepare a brief outline** (including references) for their classmates. You do not have to have all the answers; good questions are perhaps more important. The presentations will serve as a taking off point for general discussion. **Group members are expected to lead discussion as a part of their presentation. It is up to group members to decide how to organize the presentation.**

All the members of a group will receive the same grade for the presentation which will count **50 points** of the final point total. I understand that people's willingness to speak publicly varies and that there are many different styles of presentation. Therefore, groups are urged to assess their members' talents and make best use of them. Grading will follow the guidelines below:

- 40-44 — shows good comprehension of material and thought in presentation. Provides material for adequate discussion. Good outline.
- 35-39 — Shows average understanding of the material. Presentation is somewhat unclear. Discussion is difficult. Weak outline.
- 30-34 — shows inadequate understanding of the material and/or poor presentation. Discussion is inadequate. No outline.
- 29 and below — no preparation, no discussion, confusion reigns.

Class Participation

Participation in class discussion and exercises will count a maximum of **50 points** towards the final point total. Exercises and discussions are an important aspect of the course. Each week will have a portion of class time devoted to some exercise, activity, and/or discussion that will enable students to better understand cross-cultural psychology. Students are expected to become involved in these, rather than just going through the motions or having private conversations. Participation points will also be awarded according to attendance (one point per class).

Research Participation

Research is an important aspect of the work that psychologists do. Participation will enable students to better understand the process and pitfalls of research. Participation in research conducted in the Psychology Department can earn students up to **20 points**. Ten points will be given for each study in which the student participates and returns to me the receipt given by the experimenter. Students may **NOT** receive credit in more than one course for participation in a single study. Students not wishing to participate can earn their credit by writing a one or two page paper on a topic of their choice as approved by the instructor. **Other options and special arrangements can be made for students not wishing to follow either of the possibilities above – students need not participate in research to receive these points.**

Cross-Cultural Psychology Class Schedule*

- Subject to change with prior notice!
- Note: Many of the exercises are from: Singelis, T. M. (Ed.) (1998). Teaching about culture, ethnicity, and diversity: Exercises and planned activities. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

<u>Week 1: 1/22</u>	<i>Introduction</i>
Mon: Course Introduction Exercise: Cultural informant	Wed: Iron and Silk Video
<u>Week 2: 1/29</u>	<i>Getting a Grip on Culture</i>
Mon: Chapter 1; Quiz 1	Wed: Exercise: Culture is shared
<u>Week 3: 2/5</u>	<i>Concepts Basic to Cross-Cultural Psychology</i>
Mon: Chapter 2; Quiz 2	Wed: Exercise: Distribution of Rewards
<u>Week 4: 2/12</u>	<i>Methodological Issues</i>
Mon: Chapter 3; Quiz 3	Wed: <u>Journal Report 1 Due</u> Exercise: Etics and Emics
<u>Week 5: 2/19</u>	<i>Socialization</i>
Mon: Chapter 4; Quiz 4	Wed: Exercise: Childhood Experiences
<u>Week 6: 2/26</u>	<i>Formal Education</i>
Mon: Chapter 5; Quiz 5	Wed: Video: Pre-school in Three Cultures
<u>Week 7: 3/5</u>	<i>Intergroup Relations</i>
Mon: Chapter 6; Quiz 6	Wed: Exercise: Stereotypes
<u>Week 8: 3/12</u>	<i>Interpersonal Relations</i>
Mon: Reading 1; Quiz 7	Wed: <u>Journal Report 2 Due</u>
<u>Week 9: 3/19</u>	<i>Spring Break – No Class</i>
<u>Week 10: 3/26</u>	<i>Conflict and Negotiation</i>
Mon: Chapter 7 ; Quiz 8	Wed: Exercise: Critical Incidents
<u>Week 11: 4/2</u>	<i>Interpersonal Relations – Nonverbal Behavior</i>
Mon: Reading 2; Quiz 9	Exercise: Nonverbal Behaviors
<u>Week 12: 4/9</u>	<i>Culture and the Workplace</i>
Mon: Chapter 8; Quiz 10	Wed: FOOD DAY Exercise: Sex, Gender, and Evolution
<u>Week 13: 4/16</u>	
Mon: No Class – Travel day	Wed: <u>Journal Report 3 Due</u>

Mon: Chapter 9; Quiz 11

Wed: Group Presentations

Week 15: 4/30***Culture and Health***

Mon: Chapter 10; Quiz 12

Wed: Group Presentations

Week 16: 5/7***Predictions for the Future***

Mon: Chapter 11; Quiz 13

Wed: Group Presentations

Final Exam : Monday 5/14 2-3:50***Grading Summary:***

180 pts	Quizzes	50 pts	Final Exam	50 pts	Class Participation
150 pts	Journal Reports	50 pts	Group Presentation	20 pts	Research Participation

Final Grades awarded according to the following point totals:

	438-449	B+	388-399	C+	338-349	D+	
470-500	A	413-437	B	363-387	C	313-337	D
450-469	A-	400-412	B-	350-362	C-	300-312	D-
						Less than 300	F

Keep track of your points:

Quiz	Points
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	
11.	
12.	
13.	
Drop worst 2	
add best	
Total	

Journal Report	Points
1.	
2.	
3.	
Total	

Total of 12 quizzes =	
Total of journal reports =	
Presentation points =	
Research Participation =	
Class Participation =	
Final Exam =	
Grand Total =	