

**CULTURE AND MENTAL HEALTH**  
**WINTER TERM, 2005**  
**MW 10-11:20**  
**146 Straub**

(Check <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu/> for updates)

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**Overview**

*Culture and Mental Health* is a class that explores the role of culture in the definition and maintenance of mental health and “mental illness”. We will be exploring what our culture and various cultures of the world have to say about mental health, mental illness, and treatment of mental illness. We will be addressing questions like the following:

- What is a mental illness? Do different cultures define it differently? What is meant by culture, anyway?
- Are there different kinds of mental illness in different cultures of the world?
- Does depression look different in China than it does here?
- Does Schizophrenia occur all over the world?
- How do different cultures approach the healing of mental illness?

**Contact Hours and Class Attendance**

We will meet each Monday and Wednesday in 146 Straub and your attendance is expected. This is not a course to take if you think you will miss more than one class meeting, as class discussion, exams, and exercises are crucial to your success in the course. Also, you will be working in a small group in class and asked to complete various activities in your small group. Your participation is part of the course requirements. I also recommend that you check the course website at Blackboard at least twice a week, as I may post important course information.

**Required Readings**

Readings are assigned on a weekly basis. Readings are to be completed BEFORE the Monday class meeting for which they are assigned. There is one required text book, available at the bookstore, along with on line readings available on the Blackboard website. This course has a serious amount of reading and you will not be able to do well on the quizzes or essays if you do not do the reading.

**Required Texts:**

Castillo, Richard J. (1997) *Culture and Mental Illness: A Client-Centered Approach*.  
Brooks/Cole.

**Grading:**

Your grade will be computed by combining your scores in the following overall categories for a total of 300:

Points	Course Work
140	Exams (2 exams, 70 points each)
80	Discussion Essays (4 essays; each worth 20 points)
60	Final Paper/Project
20	Participation (in-class small group and email)
300	<b>Total</b>
(EC)	Also up to 20 points extra credit potential (see below)

Final letter grades will be approximately determined from point totals as follows:

points	letter grade
270-300	A
240-269	B
210-239	C
180-209	D
Below 180	F

Based on the actual distribution of final grades, *this criterion might be relaxed, but not stiffened.*

**Exams 140 points**

Two exams will be given. Each exam will be worth 70 points, and will consist of a take-home section (35 points) and an in-class section (35 points). The exams will be structured to assess your knowledge of the readings, in-class films and lectures, and class discussions. They will be essay exams that will primarily pertain to the readings assigned for the weeks in which the exam is given. Other questions will pertain to the previous weeks' readings, classroom discussion, lecture, and/or demonstrations. Sometimes a question will refer to material covered earlier in the course, or issues discussed in our class email discussion. For the in-class section of the exams, a list of study questions will be given.

*The first exam is on February 9, and the second exam is on March 9.*

**Discussion Essays 80 points**

Written essays must be typed (or computer printed) and one essay must be turned in on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Mondays at the beginning of class. If you absolutely cannot type or computer-print your essay, you must write it very neatly on nice paper (e.g.: no pages written from a spiral notebook!). Each essay should show you have put thought into the reading material, and be designed to stimulate thoughtful class discussion about the reading and/or related issues. Think of the discussion essay as an opportunity to think about the readings, to reflect on the meaning of the material to you and your life and how it might affect society in general. I will provide some specific topics to write about for each week. Each essay will be worth up to 20 points. A point will be subtracted for each day late.

**Final Paper/Project: 60 points**

Your final paper/project for this class will be one of two things:

(1) You are working in a community mental health clinic in an area that has a lot of people from a different culture (you get to pick what culture, e.g., Hispanic, Asian, Hmong, Puerto Rican, etc.). The psychiatric staff is not aware of the effect of culture on the patients' mental state. Your project is to design some sort of educational intervention for the staff. It might be a brochure or newsletter; an outline for a workshop; an internet learning experience; etc. Use your imagination! [You can work on this one in pairs, if you prefer.]

OR

(2) Write a 5-7 page paper, with at least 5 references (not the text) on the role of self and culture in a *specific, culture-bound mental illness*. For example, you might choose anorexia, susto, or neurasthenia.

OR

(3) A case study of a person with a culture bound illness, and how the person might be seen from other cultural settings.

***THE FINAL PROJECT IS DUE ON MONDAY, MARCH 7 AT CLASS!***

**Participation 20 points**

Participation is crucial in this course. Participation includes in class discussion and on-line discussion on Blackboard. You are not *required* to post anything on the on-line discussion, although you may earn extra credit by posting valuable contributions. You are required to read the Discussion boards at least twice a week. In-class participation will largely be in the form of small groups. You will work with a group throughout the quarter and assigned activities will be turned in to track attendance.

**On-Line discussion**

We will have an electronic discussion as part of this course. On-line discussions will be Blackboard discussion forum. You are expected to read the on-line discussions. Posting your own messages is optional. You may earn extra credit for thought-provoking messages. However, in order to avoid having the on-line discussion become unmanageable, each student will also have a maximum number of posted messages (enforced if necessary) of 2 per week. Also any given message should be no longer than 50 lines of text. The on-line discussion will be an open-ended discussion based on student interests and class discussions.

**Extra Credit Up to 20 points**

Extra Credit can be earned in a variety of ways up to 20 extra points total. If you make especially valuable contributions to class discussion, or if you make especially valuable contributions to the email discussion, you may earn extra points. Or you can get extra credit for a particularly terrific project. This might include a special presentation, if you are interested. In general, if you do something creative, special, contributive, and above-and-beyond the course requirements, you may earn extra credit.

## Weekly Schedule: Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines

- Week 1 readings are to be completed before the January 5 class. Week 2-9 readings are to be completed *before* the Monday class that week.
- *RC is the Castillo text*

Week 1: Introduction: Why Culture? What is Mental health and Mental Illness?		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
Jan 3		Introduction: What is Culture? What is Mental health? How do they interact?
Jan 5	<i>RC</i> : Chapter 1 <i>On-line readings</i> : Troubled Minds: Madness and Culture <a href="http://www.abc.net.au/science/features/minds/default.htm">http://www.abc.net.au/science/features/minds/default.htm</a> Challenged by Life: Story of Premadasa <a href="http://www.mentalhealthanddevelopment.org/lifest01.pdf">http://www.mentalhealthanddevelopment.org/lifest01.pdf</a> Frank, A. (1995). Chapter 1 of <i>The Wounded Storyteller</i> .	What is a psychiatric diagnosis? Modernism and Postmodernism
Week 2: How culture interacts with clinical reality		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
Jan 10	<i>RC</i> : Chapter 2 and 3 <i>On-line readings</i> : INDIVIDUALITY IN A RELATIONAL CULTURE: A COMPARATIVE STUDY <a href="http://web.rollins.edu/~hedge/Individualism.html">http://web.rollins.edu/~hedge/Individualism.html</a> Kleinman, A. (1988) Chapter 5 from <i>Rethinking Psychiatry</i> . Nisbett, R. (2003) Chapter 3 from <i>The Geography of Thought</i> .	Social relations and cultural meanings
Jan 12		Personality and Self: Independent or Relational?
Week 3: Clinical assessment across cultures		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
Jan 17	<i>NO CLASS</i> <i>MLK DAY!</i>	<i>NO CLASS!</i>
Jan 19	<i>RC</i> : Chapter 4 <i>On-line readings</i> :	The psychiatric interview: Expert

	<p>Lewis-Fernandez and Kleinman (1994). Culture, Personality, and Psychopathology. <i>J. of Abnormal Psychology</i>.</p> <p>Altarriba, et al. (2003). <i>Emotion representation and perception across cultures</i>.</p> <p>Marcus (1996) <i>The Mutual Interactions of Culture and Emotions</i></p> <p><b>Essay #1 due</b></p>	opinion or individual lived experience?
<b>Week 4: Treatment and Healing</b>		
<b>day</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Topics and activities</b>
Jan 24		
Jan 26	<p><b>RC:</b> Chapter 5</p> <p><b>On-line readings:</b> A cross cultural comparison of four healing methods-- <a href="http://www.alternative-therapies.com/at/pdfarticles/9503-krippner(pages).pdf">http://www.alternative-therapies.com/at/pdfarticles/9503-krippner(pages).pdf</a></p> <p>Epstein (1998) <i>Emptiness</i>.</p> <p>Japanese Approaches at <a href="http://www.todoinstitute.org/index.html">http://www.todoinstitute.org/index.html</a></p>	What does culture have to say about healing and distress? Healing and healing professions across cultures; the role of symbols in healing
<b>Week 5: Personality; Gender and sexuality</b>		
<b>day</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Topics and activities</b>
Jan 31	<p><b>RC:</b> Chapters 6 and 7</p> <p>Helliwell (2001) <i>Engendering Sameness. Intersections</i>.</p> <p>Paris (1994). <i>Rites of Passage and the Borderline Syndrome</i>.</p> <p>Peters (1991) <i>Personality Disorders, Parasuicide and Culture</i>.</p> <p><b>Essay #2 due</b></p>	Gender Identity “Disorder” and Two-spirit people; Borderline personality disorder as cultural artifact
Feb 2		Gender Identity Disorder and Transgenderism
<b>Week 6: Eating disorders and Substance Abuse</b>		
<b>day</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Topics and activities</b>
Feb 7	<p><b>RC:</b> Chapters 8 and 9</p> <p><b>On-line readings:</b></p> <p>Miller and Pumariega (2001). <i>Culture and Eating Disorders: A Historical and Cross-Cultural Review. Psychiatry</i>.</p> <p>Jilek (1994). <i>Traditional Healing in the Prevention and Treatment of Alcohol and Drug Abuse. Transcultural Psychiatric Research Review</i>.</p>	Anorexia and Bulimia as culture-bound disorders
Feb 9	<b>Exam 1</b>	

Week 7: Anxiety, Somatoform Disorders, and Depression		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
Feb 14	<b>RC:</b> Chapter 10, 11 and 12 <b>On-line Readings:</b> Kirmayer (2001). <i>Cultural Variations in the Clinical Presentation of Depression and Anxiety: Implications for Diagnosis and Treatment</i> Kirmayer (1995). <i>The Cultural Context of Anxiety Disorders</i> Marsella: <i>Cultural Aspects of Depression</i> O’Neill (2001) <i>Culture and Pathology: Flathead Loneliness Revisited</i> <b>Essay #3 due</b>	The role of the body in “mental” illness
Feb 16		Depression and social stress; powerlessness and social roles
Week 8: Dissociation and PTSD		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
Feb 21	<b>RC:</b> Chapter 13 Castillo (2003). <i>Trance, Functional Psychosis, and Culture</i> Kirmayer (1994) <i>Pacing the Void: Social and Cultural Dimensions of Dissociation.</i>	The role of fear inducing trauma and social betrayal?
Feb 23		
Week 9: Psychosis and Schizophrenia		
day	Readings	Topics and activities
Feb 28	<b>RC:</b> Chapter 14 On-Line readings: Bentall (2003). <i>Them and Us</i> Barrett (2003). <i>Kurt Schneider in Borneo</i> Barrett (2001). <i>Cultural Formulation of Psychiatric Diagnoses: Sakit Gila in an Iban Longhouse</i> <b>Essay #4 due</b>	What is psychosis, and how does it differ from schizophrenia?
March 2		

<b>Week 10:</b>		
<b>day</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Topics and activities</b>
March 7	<b>RC:</b> Chapter 15 <b>On-Line Readings:</b> Fernando (2002). <i>Mental Health for All</i> . Abranovitch and Kirmayer (2003). <i>The Relevance of Jungian Psychology for Cultural Psychiatry</i> . <b>Final Projects Due!</b>	
March 9	<b>Exam 2</b>	

### ***Additional Notes***

#### **Using Blackboard**

The web site for this course was constructed using "Blackboard" software. This allows the web site to be extensive and interactive. On the web site, you will find general announcements for the class, all documents for the course (including this syllabus), lecture notes, on-line discussions, links to relevant web sites, and more. We hope that this web site will be a useful tool for you in learning the material for this class, and in further exploring topics you find interesting. You can get to the course web site by going to <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu>. If you need help logging in or using Blackboard, see <http://blackboard.uoregon.edu/local/usingbb/>. Also you can get help starting by going to the library [Information Technology Center](http://libweb.uoregon.edu/kitc/faq/blackboard.html#help) (ITC) and/or see <http://libweb.uoregon.edu/kitc/faq/blackboard.html#help>.

#### **Academic Honesty**

All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues as they pertain to this course, please consult with the instructor before you complete any relevant requirements of the course. (Text adopted here as recommended from the UO web site regarding academic honesty at: <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~conduct/>).

#### **Students with Directory Restricted Access**

This course includes required on-line participation (electronic mail and World Wide Web). If you have restricted access to your directory information and wish to have special arrangements made for this course, please notify the instructor immediately.

#### **Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the instructor soon. Also please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability. [Counselor for Students with Disabilities: Hillary Gerdes, 346-3211, TTY 346-1083, [hgerdes@oregon.uoregon.edu](mailto:hgerdes@oregon.uoregon.edu)]