

Psychology 459: Cultural Psychology
Spring 2011
8:30-9:50am Monday/Wednesday
146 Straub

Instructor: Janet Ng, M.S.

Office hours: 10-11am Mondays and by appointment on Mondays Tuesdays and Fridays

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Overview

This course will explore current theories and research on how culture influences human psychology. We will examine the main research methods used in cultural psychology and take an in-depth look at psychological processes such as learning, self identity, emotion, cognition, health, and social behaviors from a cultural perspective. A focus of this course is to find out whether and how a cultural perspective can deepen our understanding of the particular psychological processes and behaviors in question, at both individual and collective levels. The goals of the course are to introduce you to research in cross-cultural psychology, stimulate critical thinking and analytical skills generally and help you develop insights about your own culture, the cultures of others, and how culture influences human behaviors. ***This course has extensive readings; you are expected to read everything assigned.***

Class sessions will be a combination of lecture, discussion, and periodic student debates. Throughout this course, we will be discussing a variety of socially sensitive and controversial issues, some about which you may have strong feelings and attitudes. Thus, it will be extremely important to keep an open mind, to listen to others' viewpoints, and to appreciate a different opinion than your own. In order to get the most out of this course and to make this class a rich experience for all of us, it is essential that you treat your classmates with respect.

Required Readings

Matsumoto, D. & Juang, L. (2008). 4th edition. *Culture & Psychology*. Canada: Cengage Learning.
ISBN-10: 0-495-09787-X

Supplemental readings TBA and will be posted on Blackboard throughout the course.

Course Requirements

According to University principles governing credit and contact hours, each credit is equivalent to 30 hours of work. Your 4 credits for this course are equivalent to 120 hours of work over 10 weeks, which is 12 hours per week. You will spend 4 hours in class each week and should expect to spend up to 8 hours engaged in reading, studying, and completing assignments outside of class each week.

Attendance and Participation: Attendance is essential for mastery of the course material. It is unlikely that students will pass the class if they are absent from many class meetings. It is expected that you be on time each day. If you anticipate being absent from class, it is *your* responsibility to get information from another student. It is also your responsibility to be prepared for the following class session to the same level as students who attended class the day you missed. Your participation is part of the course requirements.

Readings: Students are expected to complete the assigned readings *prior* to the date for which they are assigned. The class will make much more sense to you that way and allow you to participate in class more effectively. There is one required textbook, available at the bookstore, along with online readings available on Blackboard. You will not be able to do well on the quizzes if you do not do the reading.

Quizzes: There will be two quizzes. Quizzes will include multiple-choice, true/false, and short answer questions. Material for quizzes will be drawn from required class lectures, textbooks, supplemental readings, and in-class activities. There will be no make-up quizzes given. Quizzes are worth 30 points each.

Reaction Papers/Culture Activities: Short, weekly assignments will be given each week to complete outside of class. These activities are designed to help explore the cultural topics covered in class in a more direct way or to explore questions raised by the reading in a more in-depth manner. Assignments will be due at the beginning of each Monday meeting. Assignments are worth 10 points each.

Papers: There will be two papers required for this course, an analytical paper and a research proposal. All papers must be turned in as a hardcopy at the beginning of class, typed, stapled, and written in APA format. The APA (2010) Publication Manual, 6th edition, which covers APA style, is available in the library and in the bookstore. Papers must be typed using 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with standard margins and no extra paragraph spacing. Reference pages are required and not included in the page count. Statements should be supported by data where appropriate.

Analytical Paper: This paper will be **due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, May 11 and is worth 100 points**. You will need to prepare a concise paper which includes 4 key elements: 1) summary and analysis (e.g., strengths and weaknesses) of a primary-source empirical article related to cultural psychology, 2) relate the article you selected to a concept from class, 3) relation between the article and a recent news story from another country (attach a newspaper clipping or printed version of a reputable [e.g., MSNBC, BBC news] internet source to your paper), and 4) some connection to your own culture, your own life, and personal interests. The article can NOT be from course readings.

This paper requires you to select and digest a study related to culture and psychology and to connect it to the assigned reading, to current events, and to something about your own cultural background. Feel free to be creative about how you meet these objectives. This paper is expected to be thoughtful and well written. It should be 3-5 pages.

Empirical, primary-source articles are original reports of research studies that are published in scholarly journals, such as the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, and/or *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology*. Secondary (second-hand) reviews of original research articles, such as those found in newspapers, news magazines, and psychology-related magazines (e.g., *Psychology Today* and the *APA Monitor on Psychology*) are not appropriate. It is your responsibility to make sure that your article is appropriate. If you are unsure about an article you are considering for one of your papers, it is your responsibility to check with me. You are encouraged to meet with me early in the term to discuss the article/topic you are thinking of. Occasionally, you may find a non-empirical, primary source article, such as a theoretical piece or a scholarly review of an area of research. If you have a question about whether a particular article is appropriate, please contact me at least a week in advance of the paper due date. Be aware that the paper will not be accepted if the research article that is selected is not appropriate or the guidelines for paper length are not followed.

Option for Analytical Paper: In lieu of writing a paper, students may opt to do a presentation on an article(s) that relates to one of the class session topics and to lead a class discussion on that topic for part of that class session. The discussion may include the sections covered in the paper (e.g., linking to a news event, personal experience, etc.) but does not need to do so and should not exclusively do so. Students may present this in groups of 2-3 or individually (effort is expected to be comparable for each student; that is, each student is expected to contribute as much as he/she would if giving an individual presentation). Each student in the group is expected to present one article each. In this case, a review paper may be considered for joint presentation with prior approval from the instructor. If you want to choose this option, you must let me know by the end of week 3.

Research Proposal: This paper is **due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, June 1 (last day of class) and is worth 100 points**. This paper will allow you an opportunity to apply what you are learning in this class by proposing an experiment to study a cultural difference about which you are curious. Below are some suggestions of topics, but feel free to select a topic that is not on the list. Students are *highly encouraged* to meet with me early in the term to decide on a topic. *Topics must be determined by week 6 and need to be approved by the instructor.*

Addictions from a cultural perspective
Cognitive style
Culture-specific psychological disorders
Grandparenting styles
Interpersonal attraction and love
Achievement motivation
Locus of control
Infant temperament
Attachment
Conformity

Aging and self-esteem
Intelligence
Psychotherapy from a cultural perspective
Caring for the elderly
Child-rearing styles
Responses to emotions
Gender roles
Parenting styles and family structure
Self-perception
Attributions concerning academic success/failures

This is an 8-10 page paper and should follow the paper guidelines above. At least 5 references from peer-reviewed journals must be included and can be found using PsychInfo. One of the references can be from the supplemental readings, but the other 4 must be found through PsychInfo or another scientific database. Simply rehashing material from the textbook or lectures is not adequate. Begin with an **Introduction** section that 1) describes the purpose, theoretical basis, and significance of your proposed study, 2) reviews relevant studies, 3) identifies gaps in the literature, 4) establishes how your proposed study addresses a gap(s) in the literature, and 5) describes research questions and/or hypotheses to be tested, which should be stated clearly, should be testable, and should be grounded in existing theory and research. The **Methods** section should describe 1) participants, 2) operational definitions and measures of the variables, and 3) procedures of the study. Next, include a **Data Analysis** section that 1) describes your data analysis plans and 2) discusses expected results. Include a **Discussion** section that 1) identifies limitations and 2) discusses implications of your proposed work if your hypotheses are supported and if they are not.

This paper is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your critical thinking in the intriguing points or questions raised. Assume that the reader is not familiar with every study so you should provide sufficient details about the study. These may include descriptions of the sample, measures/methods, strengths and limitations. Statements should be supported by data and the majority of your paper should not be about your opinion if it is not supported by data. No quotes should be used and papers will be marked down for use of quotes.

Late Assignment Policy

Except in extreme cases, contacting the instructor after the due date for an exception of the due date policy is not acceptable. All assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments should be turned into the psychology department office. Anything submitted to the psychology department office after 8:30am on the due date will be considered one day late. One point per day will be deducted for late reaction papers/cultural activities. For the two paper assignments, 10% of the earned grade will be deducted for each day that it is late.

How to Prevent Computer Problems: Computer problems are not allowed as an excuse for late submissions of assignments in this course. Because of the availability of computers in campus labs (e.g., library, EMU, psychology department, etc.) you are expected to submit assignments printed clearly and on time. Your greatest insurance policy against computer problems is to avoid completing your work at the last minute. If you are finishing a paper with only moments to spare, you are out of backup options if something goes wrong. If, for some reason, you have tried *everything* and you are still stuck, contact the instructor BEFORE the deadline. Some steps (this is not an exhaustive list) you can take to eliminate the possibility of a computer mishap making your assignment late are as follows:

1. "I lost my file." Save your work every 5 minutes. Find an autosave function in your word processing program and set it to automatically save your document every 3 minutes or so. This way your recovered document will not be more than 3 minutes of rewriting. Always back up your work (frequently) on a disc, separate drive, or electronically by a) storing on a remote server (go to Computing Help Center to learn how to do this) or b) sending files to yourself by email attachment.
2. "My printer jammed." "I ran out of toner." First allow at least a half-day in advance to print your paper (while a computer lab is open). Have a backup plan for printing your document. By sending your file to yourself by email, you can pick it up on a school computer and print in a computer lab. While expensive, Kinko's is a 24-hour option for printing documents. Make arrangements with a friend, family member, or neighbor for getting help with printing. Ask them in advance: "If I were to have computer problems, would it be okay if I came over and used your printer? Is 2:30 in the morning okay with you? You could do the same at my house." Have a second toner cartridge on hand if you haven't changed yours recently.

3. "Something happened to my computer and I don't know how to fix it." "My computer crashed." Allow at least a half-day while computer labs are open to finish your work. Computer lab staff can help you if something breaks down. If you work at home, go to the computer help desk when you're on campus to ask questions about functions on your computer you don't understand. If you are unfamiliar with computers, make arrangements to work in a lab until you understand your home system better. (And see #1 and #2).

No Electronic Submission

Written assignments may NOT be submitted electronically, except by prior permission of the instructor. All assignments must be clearly typed and printed, stapled, and turned in during class.

Academic Honesty

All work submitted in this course must be your own work, produced exclusively for this course. The use of ideas, quotations, and paraphrases MUST be properly documented. If you use someone else's ideas or especially their words without acknowledgment, it is called plagiarism. Plagiarism will result in failing the class. Violations are also noted on student disciplinary records. A student will avoid being charged with

plagiarism if there is an acknowledgment of indebtedness. Additionally, unauthorized collaboration with others on papers or projects can inadvertently lead to a charge of plagiarism. If you are in doubt regarding any aspect of these issues, please consult with the instructor before you complete and submit the relevant assignment.

Changes to Syllabus

This syllabus might be liable to changes as the class progresses. The most recent version of the syllabus will be posted on the class Blackboard site. In the event that the syllabus does change, the instructor will send out an email alerting you to the fact.

Grades

Attendance and participation	30 points
Reaction Papers/Activities, 10 pts. each	80 points
Analytical Paper or Presentation	100 points
Research Proposal	100 points
2 Quizzes, 30 points each	60 points
Total possible points	370 points

Letter grades will be calculate as follows: 90% and above = A; 80% and above = B, 70% and above = C; 60% and above = D; below 60% = F. Pluses and minuses may be used. Depending on the final distribution of grades, these values may be decreased, but will not be increased.

Note for Students with Disabilities and International Students

If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the instructors immediately. Also please request that the Office of Disability Services send a letter verifying your disability. Contact: Disability Services, 164 Oregon Hall, 346-1155, disabsrv@uoregon.edu.

This class will require a large amount of reading, writing, and speaking. If for any reason you anticipate difficulties with these course requirements, please speak with the instructor as soon as possible. Your entire grade is based on reading, writing, and speaking. There are several campus resources to help students in all three areas. A good place to start is Academic Learning Services, 346-3226. You may also wish to contact Academic English for International Students, 346-3945.

Blackboard

You **MUST** have an email address and be registered for the class in order to log on to Blackboard. It is essential that you are able to receive notices and emails via Blackboard, as that will be the main method of communicating changes and updates for this class. If you are registered, then you should have received an email letting you know that you are registered for the site. If you do not have an email address, go to the information Technology Center (ITC) in the Knight Library.

(approximate) Weekly Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week 1: March 28 and March 30 – Introduction, Culture and Definitions

Read: Chapter 1 Matsumoto & Juang (M&J)

Week 2: Apr 4 - Methods

Read: Chapter 2

Due: Reaction/Activity #1

Apr 6 - Enculturation

Chapter 3, 58-71; Rothbaum et al. 2000

Week 3: Apr 11-Enculturation

Read: Chapter 3, 72-84

Due: Reaction/Activity #2

Apr 13 –Developmental Processes

Chapter 4, 85-95

Week 4: Apr 18-Development

Read: Chapter 4, 96-106

Heubner & Garrod, 1993

Due: Reaction/Activity #3

Apr 20 - Cognition

Chapter 5, 108-129; 134-144; Chua et al., 2005

Week 5: Apr 25-Gender

Read: Chapter 6

Due: Reaction/Activity #4

Apr 27 – Quiz 1

may go into Chapter 7

Should have picked article for Analytical Paper

Week 6: **May 2-Health**
Read: Chapter 7
Borrayo & Jenkins, 2003
Due: Reaction/Activity #5

Week 7: **May 9-Abnormal Behavior**
Read: Chapter 11
Due: Reaction/Activity #6

Week 8: **May 16 – no class**

Week 9: **May 23- Interpersonal/Intergroup** **May 25 – Quiz 2**
Read: Chapter 14
Due: Reaction/Activity #8

Week 10: **May 30 – no class**
Memorial Day

May 4- Language and Communication
Chapter 9; Molinsky et al. 2005

Final date for approval of Research Proposal topic

May 11- Abnormal Behavior and Treatment
Chapter 11 and Chapter 12, 310-321
Analytical Paper Due

May 18- Self and Identity
Chapter 13; Kim & Markus, 1997
Due: Reaction/Activity #7

June 1
Research Proposal Paper Due