

Psychology 459: Cultural Psychology

4:00 - 5:20 pm MW, 125 McKenzie Fall 2012 CRN: 16945

Instructor: Amber Gayle Thalmayer, 309 Straub, athalmay@uoregon.edu

Office Hours: 15 minutes before and after class in the classroom or by appointment

TEXT: Heine, S. J. (2012). *Cultural Psychology* (2nd ed) NY: Norton. *On reserve in Knight Library*

Additional readings posted to Blackboard.

Course Objectives

The study of cultural psychology explores the fundamentally social nature of human psychology – the ways that groups of humans form cultures and the ways cultures shape our behavior and ways of thinking, feeling, and interacting with others. In addition to the general role of culture in the human experience, we will cover specific variations in psychological phenomena, and methods for how to assess the role of culture in psychology. Knowledge of cultural psychology should be useful to you in any future endeavor that involves interacting with people from different backgrounds.

At the end of the term, I hope that you find yourself looking at your ways of thinking, interacting, and organizing your time with an increased awareness of how your way of life is related to a particular culture. Our cultural point of view motivates us to do certain things instead of others, and to evaluate experiences and persons based on a particular set of values. I hope that you increase in your understanding of what is malleable in persons versus what is fundamentally human, and in your interest in and compassion for people of all backgrounds.

I hope you will ask questions and communicate your interests so the course can be made as relevant to your experiences and goals as possible.

Grading

To earn a B– or better grade

Reading responses – 8 sets of Questions posted, 5 points possible each	40
Participation – attendance, participation, and class activities	30
Paper Proposal	5
Midterm Exam	40
Final research paper	35
Presentation -- drawing on research paper	10
Final exam	40
TOTAL	200

A = 90+% of total points; **B** = 80 – 89%, **C** = 70 – 79%, **D** = 60 – 69%, **F** = > 60%

+/- added to grades in top or bottom third. A+ grades are assigned at instructors' discretion.

To earn a Pass or C grade only

If you desire only to pass the course, the final paper (including proposal and presentation) are not required. Instead, you are only required to keep up with the course (participation and reading responses), and to demonstrate your understanding of course content on examinations. You must earn at least 70% of 150 possible points.

Reading responses – <i>8 sets of questions posted, 5 points possible each</i>	40
Participation in class – <i>attendance, class activities, preparation of class discussion questions</i>	30
Midterm Exam	40
Final exam	40
TOTAL	150

Graded Components

Reading Responses

These are intended to (a) help you develop a personal connection to the subject matter by applying course concepts to your experience, and (b) reward you for keeping up and doing the reading on time.

Questions for reading responses will be posted on the ‘Journal’ section of Bb (under ‘Tools’). These will primarily ask you to draw on your experience and the course reading, but you can sometimes make a better response by using outside sources. Cite them as appropriate (formal APA style not required).

Responses will be graded out of 5 points. A 5 point response will show familiarity with the reading and thoughtful application of the concepts to your own examples. Each response should be only about half a page (single-spaced) of text. Use complete sentences and good grammar. Responses should be spell checked, edited for length and organization, and proofread.

Due the day before the lecture so that I can view prior to the relevant class session. **Submit as a journal entry on Bb NOT as attachment.** May not be turned in late except with prior arrangement.

Participation

Points are based on attendance and on participation in class discussions and activities. Please talk to instructor if shyness or discomfort with class discussions keeps you from participating.

Exams

Exams will mostly be multiple choices. Short answer and mini-essay questions may also be included. Essay questions will be drawn from the study guide available on blackboard. The study guide will be made up of the review questions posted at beginning of each class. No dictionaries, thesauruses, calculators, or electronic devices can be used during exams, except translating dictionaries for those with English fluency issues, with permission.

Research Paper

Content

The research paper should deepen your understanding of cultural psychology by allowing you to explore a question of interest. You must cite at least four peer-reviewed journal articles that address your question. Style may be slightly less formal than a 303 paper (first person ok). An A paper will:

- Effectively identify the topic and why it is of interest.
- Appropriately describe information relevant to the question from the sources.
- Conclude with some kind of an answer to the question (a synthesis of the material). Do NOT just state that more research is needed! Instead be clear what the best available answer is at this time, and perhaps what specific additional research would best shed light on the question.
- Have high writing quality (grammar, sentence construction, coherence).

NOTE: See ‘paper resources’ on Bb for topic ideas, grading rubric, references and citations guidelines.

Format

No more than 5 pages (references can be on page 6).

Title page not needed -- put title, followed by your name, on first page at top.

Header, page #s, references, citations, page layout (double spacing, times new roman 12-point font, 1 inch margins) should all be APA format.

Basic outline

- I. Introduction – must include a clearly stated question. This paragraph should introduce the topic and make a compelling case for why we should want to know the answer to question.
- II. Perspective #1 – how one researcher approached the question, and what they found.
- III. Perspective #2 – how another group approached it or built on first group, what they found.
- IV. Perspective #3 “ “
- V. Perspective #4 “ “
- VI. Summary and synthesis – at minimum, what you have taken away from your reading as an answer to your question, and how this relates to the case you made in introduction.

Timeline

Week 6 (Wednesday 10/31 before class): Paper Proposal

Propose topic by writing a clearly stated question on “Journal” in Blackboard.

- Follow this with about half a page describing why it is of interest to you and why it might be of interest to psychologists and/or the public.
- List at least four articles you plan to use, in APA reference format.
- Note any questions or concerns you are having in planning your paper.

NOTE: Instructor may give advice or ask questions in the Journal. You are responsible for checking and replying. When you have received points in the Bb gradebook, the instructor views your proposal as complete. This process is intended to provide support for your project, but you are solely responsible for the quality of your final paper. Please make use of office hours or email the instructor with questions on your project.

Week 10: Final Paper due 10 a.m. Weds., 11/28. *Paper components lose 10% of points each day late.*

Week 9-10: 5 minute presentation in class. State your paper’s question, describe something interesting you learned while writing your paper, perhaps draw connections to class content. NOT a summary of your whole paper. Ideally it will be more like leading a class discussion. Don’t present for more than 4-5 minutes – leave time for questions or discussion from the class. (Audience will earn points for participating!) You may use Powerpoint if you wish –email to instructor 12 hours prior to presentation.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity will be taken seriously. Insuring the validity of grades requires that they reflect honest work and learning. **Cheating** is defined as providing or accepting information to or from another student on an exam or copying anyone's written work. Students caught cheating will be given an **F** for the course, and the student conduct coordinator will be informed. **Plagiarism** is putting your name on work or even ideas that are in any part not your own, where you have not fully identified the source from which you borrowed. In writing, always distinguish between your own ideas and those you have from others, and be sure to appropriately cite and credit.

Important course information may be communicated by email through Blackboard. You are responsible for checking your UO email and making sure you receive emails sent via Blackboard.

COURSE SCHEDULE¹

Week	Day/Date	Topic	Read (before class)	Due
1	1 M 9/24	Syllabus & Introduction	-	-
	2 W 9/26	Culture and Human Universals	Heine ch. 1	
2	3 M 10/1	Is culture unique to humans? <i>Discuss paper assignment</i>	Heine ch. 2 (+ start 3!)	RR #1 due Sunday 9/30 3 p.m. ²
	4 W 10/3	Cultural Evolution	Heine ch. 3 see Guns, germs, & steel ³	Discussion Qs in class
3	5 M 10/8	Methods in Cultural Psychology	Heine ch. 4 BB: Spoiled Rotten	RR# 2
	6 W 10/10	Development and Socialization	Heine ch. 5	Discussion Qs in class
4	7 M 10/15	Motivation	Heine ch. 7	RR #3
	8 W 10/17	Personality across cultures	Heine ch. 6	Discussion Qs in class
5	9 M 10/22	Self & Personality	Bb: Kondo	RR #4
	10 W 10/24	MIDTERM EXAM	-	-
6	11 M 10/29	Cognition and Perception	Heine ch. 8	RR #5
	12 W 10/31	Interpersonal relationships	Heine ch. 9	Paper Proposal due
7	13 M 11/5	Multicultural worlds	Heine ch. 10	RR #6
	14 W 11/7	Physical health	Heine ch. 11	
8	15 M 11/12	Mental Health	Heine ch. 12	RR#7
	16 W 11/14	Morality, Religion, Justice	Heine ch. 13	-
9	17 M 11/19	Alcohol use + Presentations	Bb: Drinking games	RR# 8
	18 W 11/21	Emotions + Presentations	Heine ch. 14	-
10	19 M 11/26	Presentations	-	PAPER
	20 W 11/28	Presentations	-	-
11	R 12/6	3:15 pm FINAL EXAM	-	-

OPTIONAL readings and videos associated with certain lectures are also posted on Bb. These are sources that I recommend, and would love to hear you bring up in discussion, but they are not required.

¹ SUBJECT TO CHANGE! You will be notified by email via Blackboard of any changes.

² **Reading responses are due the day before the lecture** with which they are associated so that I can view comments/questions prior to lecture. Questions for responses detailed in 'journal' on Bb.

³ Links for watching videos online are posted to Bb.