

# PSYCHOLOGY 366: Culture and Mental Health

University of Oregon – Department of Psychology  
Fall 2015 Syllabus

## INSTRUCTOR:

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Office: Straub 439

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:30-2:30 & Fridays 11-12, or by appointment

## MEETING DAYS/TIMES/LOCATIONS: Mondays & Wednesdays / 12:00-13:20pm / 117 GSH

**DESCRIPTION:** Culture and Mental Health is a class that explores the role of culture in the definition and maintenance of mental health and “mental illness”. Class topics will include a sampling of mental disorders across cultures (e.g., depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, etc.). Additionally, we will also talk about broad cultural factors related to the experience and expression of illness (e.g., discrimination and acculturation). Finally, we will also have special in-depth reviews of mental health in different areas of the world. We will be addressing questions like the following:

- Are there different kinds of mental illnesses in different cultures of the world?
- Does depression look different in China than it does here? Does schizophrenia occur all over the world?
- What cultural factors specific to the United States (e.g. acculturation status) affect mental health?

**OBJECTIVES:** This course should be considered an advanced introductory course, in that we will not have time to study every issue in depth. Instead, we will focus on how culture is deeply intertwined with a few specific disorders, and also spend time considering larger, conceptual issues throughout. Students investing fully in this assignment will be able to...

- Describe cultural and contextual influences on the expression and maintenance of mental illness
- Apply knowledge about cultural issues related to mental health to clinical settings
- Identify and communicate arguments for both sides of controversial issues in culture and mental health

**MATERIALS:** There is no required course text! Readings and remaining course materials (e.g., slides, assignments, announcements, etc.) will be posted on the course Canvas page: [www.canvas.uoregon.edu](http://www.canvas.uoregon.edu). **Check Canvas regularly for announcements and changes.** Readings will include a mixture of chapters, news articles, and empirical articles. You are expected to complete the required reading(s) *prior* to class meetings so that you can (a) better integrate reading material and class contents, and (b) more actively engage in class discussions.

**STRUCTURE:** Typically, class time will consist of a combination of lecture with small group and class discussions and activities.

**REQUIREMENTS:** There are three mandatory course requirements: (1) weekly quizzes \* 8, (2) assignment \* 4, and (3) attendance and participation. Details below.

**(1) Weekly Quizzes (20%)**-----

There will be weekly quizzes on Wednesdays starting Week 3. You will have the first 20 minutes of class to complete the quiz. There will be 8 quizzes in total, of which the 7 highest scores will count towards your final grade. Because the lowest score will be dropped, **no make-up is allowed for these quizzes** in the absence of prior contact (minimum three days before the scheduled quiz) AND appropriate paperwork (e.g. AEC documents, doctor's notes, etc.).

These quizzes are likely to contain matching, short answer, and multiple-choice questions. Contents of the quizzes include all class material (class slides and readings) since the last quiz.

**(2a) Assignment 1: Improving Cultural Awareness in Clinical Settings (20%)**-----

Imagine that you are working in a community mental health clinic in an area that has a lot of people from a different culture (pick one culture of your interest, e.g., Hispanic, Asian, Hmong, Puerto Rican, etc.). The psychiatric staff is not aware of the effect of culture on the patients' mental state and treatment outcome. Your project is to design an educational intervention program for the staff to educate them about this effect. It might be in the form of a paper, a brochure, newsletter, an outline for a workshop, or an internet learning experience, etc. I will walk through this assignment in class. A handout with more details is also available on Canvas.

**(2b) Assignment 2: Controversial Topics in Culture and Mental Health (20%)**-----

Your task is to consider both sides of a controversial issue in culture and mental health. Some issues have been selected on which individuals with mental health expertise disagree, with empirically supported arguments for both sides. There is no "right" answer for any of these issues. You will be choosing one issue, and then producing a 4-6 page paper describing both sides of the controversy, as well as your stance on the issue. I will walk through this assignment in class. A handout with more details is also available on Canvas.

**(2c) Assignment 3: Lecture on Culture and Mental Health (20%)**-----

Your task is to create a lecture on culture and mental health. You need to pick ONE DSM-5 disorder that is not covered in class, and discuss how cultural factors are influencing this disorder. You will start by introducing and describing this disorder from a western point of view (i.e. how it is viewed in the U.S., and how it is described in the DSM-5). Then, topics to cover may include, but not limited to: how does this disorder look like across cultures (e.g. symptoms, diagnosis, prevalence, etc.), how do people from different cultural background view this disorder, how is this disorder treated across cultures, etc. I will walk through this assignment in class. A handout with more details is also available on Canvas.

**(2d) Assignment 4: Your Perspectives on Culture and Mental Health (10%)**-----

This assignment asks about YOUR perspectives on the topic of culture and mental health. There are three components of this assignment: (a) 1-2 double-spaced page(s) at the beginning of this course describing your initial thoughts on culture and mental health; (b) 1-2 double-spaced page(s) toward the end of this course describing your thoughts on culture and mental health; and (c) 1-2 double-spaced page(s) at the end of this course comparing your before and after perspectives, describing the differences and changes if there are any (or pointing out that there are no changes). When describing any differences or changes (or not), you should apply course content in explaining your answer. Finally, you should also discuss how the knowledge you gained from the course may be applied in your daily life. I will walk through this assignment in class. A handout with more details is also available on Canvas.

### **(3) Attendance and Participation**

It's my expectation that you will attend all class meetings. **I expect you to arrive on time and stay for the duration.** If you leave early, you will not receive any credit for attending (although you will still receive a grade for your quiz on Wednesdays). Your presence is important!

In class, please participate by asking questions and engaging in class activities! Many of the topics covered in the class are controversial, and are best understood through discussions by the members of the class. **All students are expected to be respectful of all opinions, comments, and questions.** Discussions are meant to be student directed and all comments will be listened to and respected; however, **students are responsible for ensuring that their comments are appropriate for a classroom environment.** If there is any time in which any student feels uncomfortable, offended, or confused by classroom discussions, please bring this to my attention so I can appropriately address the issue. There are no "incorrect" answers.

Attendance and participation will be actively tracked. If you attend every class and participate throughout class, you will receive full credit.

**GRADING POLICY:** Your grade will be computed by combining your scores in the following categories.

(1) 20%	Weekly Quizzes
(2) 20%	Assignment 1
20%	Assignment 2
20%	Assignment 3
10%	Assignment 4
(3) 10%	Attendance and Participation
<b>100%</b>	<b>Total</b>

Final letter grades for the course will be calculated as follows. If you are on the border, I will not bump you up to a higher grade in order to be fair to the entire class.

A 93-100%	A- 90-92.9%	B+ 87-89.9%
B 83-86.9%	B- 80-82.9%	C+ 77-89.9%
C 73-76.9%	C- 70-72.9%	D+ 67-69.9%
D 63-66.9%	D- 60-62.9%	F < 59.9%

A+ grades are reserved for exceptional performance, usually with a final grade above 98%.

If taking the class Pass/No Pass,  
N less than 70  
P 70 or higher

**COURSE LATE WORK POLICY:** If you have to turn in your assignment(s) late, please contact me, **with appropriate paperwork** (e.g. AEC documents, doctor's notes, etc.), at least **three days** prior to the assignment due date. Without prior arrangements, all late work will be marked 5 points down for each day the assignment is late. No assignment will be accepted after three days after the due date.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** The University Student Conduct Code (available at [conduct.uoregon.edu](http://conduct.uoregon.edu)) defines academic misconduct. Students are prohibited from committing or attempting to commit any act that constitutes academic misconduct. By way of example, students should not give or receive (or attempt to give or receive) unauthorized help on assignments or examinations without express permission from the instructor. Students should properly acknowledge and document all sources of information (e.g. quotations, paraphrases, ideas) and use only the sources and resources authorized by the instructor. If there is any question about whether an act constitutes academic misconduct, it is the student's obligation to clarify the question with the instructor before committing or attempting to commit the act. Please contact me with any questions you have about academic conduct. Additional information about a common form of academic misconduct, plagiarism, is available at <http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html> **Academic misconduct will be met with disciplinary action (a typical result is an "F" for the course).** Guidelines for how to avoid plagiarism: <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>. Guidelines for how to format APA style citations: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/664/01/>

**STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS:** Appropriate accommodations will be provided for students with documented disabilities. **Please make arrangements to meet with one of the instructors as soon as possible.** For more information, please see: <http://aec.uoregon.edu>

**DIVERSITY AND RESPECT FOR OTHERS:** It is the policy of the University to support and value diversity. To do so requires that we respect the dignity and essential worth of all individuals and promote a culture of respect throughout the University community. Course content, including class discussions, projects and activities, and assignments, rests on the assumption that human diversity is normative and is an appropriate focus of attention. The course requires and expects critical thinking about, and sensitivity to, the impact of diversity (culture, religion/faith, gender, ethnicity, race, socioeconomics, physical and cognitive ability, sexual orientation, and other considerations) both in relation to mental health in society, and in the classroom. Students are encouraged to develop and expand their respect for and understanding of diverse identities and experiences. If you believe you have been the target of or a witness to harassment, bias, or a hate crime, you may report this (anonymously, if desired) to the Bias Response Team at 541-346-2037 or <http://bias.uoregon.edu>. **Additionally, if you do not feel comfortable in the class, or believe there is more we could do to promote a better learning environment, we would really appreciate you telling us (even if the instructors are the people making you feel uncomfortable). We will always listen to your concerns with respect, and we will make adjustments whenever appropriate.** For additional assistance and resources, we encourage you to contact the following campus services, as appropriate for your concerns:

- *Office of the Vice President for Equity and Inclusion:* This Office promotes inclusive excellence by working to ensure equitable access to opportunities, benefits, and resources for all faculty, administrators, students, and community members. Web: <http://diversity.uoregon.edu/> - Phone: 541-346-3175
- *Bias Response Team (BRT):* The BRT works to gather information about bias incidents and to support those who have witnessed, or have become a target, of an act of bias. The BRT provides targets of bias a safe space to have their voices heard, to promote civility and respect, to effect change around these important issues in a quick and effective manner, and to ensure a comprehensive response to bias incidents. Web: <http://bias.uoregon.edu> - Phone: 541-346-1134
- *Center on Diversity and Community (CoDaC):* CoDaC promotes cross-cultural knowledge, skills, and awareness in order to build the capacity of individuals and units across campus to advance the university's goals of equity and inclusion. It sponsors a range of programs for faculty, staff, and alumni, and capacity building initiatives with departments, colleges, schools, and research institutes across campus. Web: <http://codac.uoregon.edu/> - Phone: 541-346-3212

**MANDATORY REPORTING:** UO employees, including faculty, staff, and GTFs, are mandatory reporters of child abuse and prohibited discrimination. This statement is to advise you that that your disclosure of information about child abuse or prohibited discrimination to a UO employee may trigger the UO employee's duty to report that information to the designated authorities. Please refer to the following for detailed information about mandatory reporting: <http://around.uoregon.edu/mandatoryreporting>

**SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SURVIVOR SUPPORT:** The University of Oregon is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking or bullying. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware that all UO employees are required to ensure that you have resources. This means that if you tell me about a situation, I may have to report the information to my supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need. **If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO's 24-hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit the SAFE website at <http://safe.uoregon.edu/>.**

**SCHEDULE AND TOPICS** (subject to revision):

Week	Date	Topic	Assignment
1	9/28	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>Assignment 1</b>  10/5 1a: Format and Culture choice 10/11 1c: Rough draft 10/18 1d: Final draft
	9/30	<b>Assessment and Diagnosis</b> Introduce Assignment 1	
2	10/5	<b>Discrimination and Microaggression</b>	
	10/7	<b>Discrimination and Microaggression cont.</b>	
3	10/12	<b>Acculturation</b>	
	10/14	<b>Anxiety</b> Weekly quiz 1	
4	10/19	<b>Depression</b> Introduce Assignment 2	<b>Assignment 2</b>  10/25 2a: Paper topic 11/1 2b: Rough draft 11/8 2c: Final draft
	10/21	<b>Special Topic: Africa</b> Weekly quiz 2	
5	10/26	<b>ADHD</b>	
	10/28	<b>Autism</b> Weekly quiz 3	
6	11/2	<b>Case Study</b>	
	11/4	<b>Dissociative Identity Disorder</b> Weekly quiz 4	
7	11/9	<b>Schizophrenia</b> Introduce Assignment 3	<b>Assignment 3</b>  11/13 3a: Disorder choice and reference list 11/18 3b: Rough draft 11/25 3c: Final draft
	11/11	<b>Special Topic: China</b> Weekly quiz 5	
8	11/16	<b>Alcohol and Substance Use</b>	
	11/18	<b>Eating Disorder</b> Weekly quiz 6	
9	11/23	<b>Healing and Treatment</b>	
	11/25	<b>TBA</b> Weekly quiz 7	
10	11/30	<b>Special Topic: Lao PDR</b> <b>Guest speaker: Dr. Jeffrey Measelle</b> Introduce Assignment 4	<b>Assignment 4</b>  10/4 4a: Before 12/2 4b: After 12/9 4c: Final draft
	12/2	<b>Multicultural Models of Mental Health/Wrap Up</b> Weekly quiz 8	