

PSYC394: Cultural Psychology
Fall 2014
University of Delaware Department of Psychology

Dr. Beth Morling

Dr Morling's office hours in Wolf 217

Mondays, 1-3, Thursdays, 12:30-2

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Class meets MWF 11:15-12:05 in ALS228

Course goals for Cultural Psychology involve both content and process. In terms of **content**, this course will introduce you to the perspective and methodology of cultural psychology, which focuses on the cultural constitution of psychological phenomena. In this course we will be alternating between rather abstract discussions of culture, evolution, and psychology and more concrete examples of human cultural variation. Our discussions will revolve around a number of themes: What do cultural psychologists believe about the roles of ecology, biology, culture, and psyche? What role did culture play in human evolution? How is the self made meaningful in different world cultures? To what extent are psychological phenomena such as self-esteem, cognition, mental health, and social cognition universal? How do we apply lessons from cultural psychology, largely based on research between cultures, to the dynamics of multiculturalism within the United States?

In terms of *process*, I plan to give you practice in three **critical thinking goals**. First, this course will help you recognize and challenge your assumptions about "human nature," the "person," and what is "natural." Second, this course will teach you to think like a cultural psychologist as you interact with the modern world. You will get practice in applying cultural theories, perspectives, and empirical reasoning as you react to the world of information. Third, because this is a psychology course, we will devote some time to the empirical methods behind the content—how we know what we know.

This course is NOT a second writing course this semester (Fall 2014). However, we'll do a lot of writing in this class, both formal and informal.

What to read:

Heine, S. J. (2012). *Cultural psychology* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Norton.

Several other readings are also required. You are required to print these readings and bring them to class. You can print them individually from Sakai (they are posted under "Resources.").

Requirements:

- We will have two types of reading **quizzes** to encourage you to do the reading carefully and on time. Quizzes will normally happen on the day a reading is due on the syllabus. Some quizzes are simple multiple choice questions. Other quizzes are "thinking quizzes." Thinking quizzes are designed to give you time to show that you've read the material and focus your thinking about it. I will grade thinking quizzes on a 4-point scale, in which:
 - 0 = Your answer indicates you did not read or understand the material
 - 1 = Your answer indicates that you read the material and can represent some superficial features of it
 - 2 = Your answer indicates that you read the material and understand it well; your response shows clear engagement with the reading, and some original thought about the writing prompt
 - 3 = Your answer indicates that you read the material and understand it well; your response makes me say "wow!" because the thinking is especially insightful, original, connected (note: 3's will be rare!)

I will drop your lowest 3 quiz scores.

- In many classes we will do **low-stakes writing** or small active learning activities which will be graded as “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory.” These assignments cannot be made up for any reason. They are designed to help you process and articulate your own reactions to class material. These form a kind of participation credit, so all of these are counted in your grade.
- You’ll write and revise one paper, which will be graded more traditionally. The assignment will all be posted on Sakai. Late papers will go down by 10% a day (excluding weekends).
- There will be three **exams** (two midterms and a final). The exams will consist of short answer and essay questions, based upon lecture content and class readings. Even if we have not covered a concept in class, it may still appear on an exam, so be prepared. You cannot make up an exam unless you have documentation and make arrangements in a responsible and timely way.
- Class **discussions**, either in small groups or as an entire class, are also important. If you are a Shy Person, you will need to work especially hard to force yourself to participate in class. If you are an Extremely Talkative Person, you may need to concentrate on enhancing your contributions as a Careful Listener.
- Part of your grade will also reflect your **professionalism**: the extent to which you responsibly and respectfully take control of your own learning. If you miss a class, you should contact someone else in the class to get notes or handouts (it is not my responsibility to get these things for you). If you don’t understand an assignment, you’ll contact me well in advance of the due date. Turn your work in on time.

I request that you do not use laptops in my classroom. I will make exceptions for students who use technology to compensate for disabilities. You may use an e-reader or ipad (but not a laptop, please) to bring readings to class. If you do use an ereader, you must refrain from texting and websurfing in class (nothing annoys me more--ask my former students).

Procedures for the writing assignments for this class:

- You may not turn in papers that you have worked on for another class.
- Turn in assignments on Sakai under Assignments; pay careful attention to how to label your files.

Grading

Reading quizzes (both MC and TQ’s)	10%
High-stakes paper (graded A, B, C, D)	25%
Exam 1, Exam 2	15%, 20%
Final	25%
Low stakes writing, discussion participation, class professionalism and attitude	5%

Grading cutoffs:

A	93%	C+	78%
A-	90%	C	73%
B+	88%	C-	70%
B	83%	D+	68%
B-	80%	D	63%
		D-	60%

Making the most of this class

I sincerely hope that this class will be an exciting, engaging, challenging, and rewarding intellectual experience for you. In order to make the most out of this class for yourself and for the rest of us, I expect you to:

Read the material very carefully and thoughtfully

Come to class every day and *bring the book and readings with you* (Print out extra readings).

Think about the material: what it means, what it reminds you of, what it connects to, whether it makes sense

Grapple with issues that may challenge your current view of the world

Prepare your formal writing assignments carefully and thoughtfully. Use your resources wisely.

Respect others by listening to them, encouraging them, or challenging them

Academic Honesty

Fortunately, in my experience academic dishonesty is rare; however, I do take it seriously. To state the obvious: All work in this class is to be your own. All written work that you hand in for this class should be in your own words, and if the ideas come from another source, they must be appropriately cited in APA style, using quotation marks and page numbers for direct quotes. If I discover that you have copied all or part of any course assignment from a friend, text, or other public source, without attributing your work to the correct person, *you will fail this course with an "F-X"* and I will report your infraction to Judicial Affairs.

Close paraphrasing is plagiarism, too. If, in your formal writing, you **fail to appropriately paraphrase** and cite the ideas of others (specifically, if you use an author's phrase or sentence as if it were your own words and CITE the author, but you do not use quotation marks), I will ask you to redo the assignment and your grade will be reduced by two letter grades. I may also report your infraction to Judicial Affairs. To avoid plagiarizing, you must educate yourself about appropriate citation procedures and follow them carefully. When in doubt, ask—ignorance of this policy is not an excuse that I accept.

ADA Note. Please let me know if you have a documented physical or sensory disability that will make it difficult for you to complete the work as outlined. You should let me know during the first two weeks of class so that we can make appropriate arrangements. It will be your responsibility to set up your own extended time exam appointments in the ADA offices (831-4643).

Order of Reading Assignments (Due dates and readings are subject to change)

Day	Topic	Assignment
August 27	Introduction to WEIRDos...	Optional: Arnett, J. (2008). The neglected 95%: Why American psychology needs to become less American. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 63, 602-614.
August 29		Luhrmann, T.M. (2014, May 13). To dream in different cultures. Retrieve from http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/14/opinion/luhrmann-to-dream-in-different-cultures.html?_r=1 Heine text, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-16)
Sept 3	First examples of cultural research: Culture of honor	Nisbett, R.E. (1993). Violence and U.S. regional culture. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 48, 441-449. <i>Be sure you read the 1993 Nisbett, not the 2009 one.</i>
Sept 5		More on Nisbett (1993)
Sept 8	First examples of cultural research: Culture of food	Rozin, P., Kabnick, K., Pete, E., Fischler, C., & Shields, C. (2003). The ecology of eating: Smaller portion sizes in France than in the United States help explain the French paradox. <i>Psychological Science</i> , 14, 450-454. Beardsley, E., (2012, January 24). Why McDonald's in France doesn't feel like fast food. National public radio news (online edition).

Sept 10	Mutual constitution of culture and psyche "We make our own gravity to give weight to things..." Ani DiFranco	Shweder, R. (1989). Cultural psychology: What is it? In J. Stigler, R. Shweder, & G. Herdt (Eds.), <i>Cultural psychology: The Chicago symposia on culture and development</i> (pp. 1-46). New York: Cambridge University Press. Focus on pp. 73-77, 84-90, 97-110
Sept 12		More on Shweder
Sept 15	Mind, culture, evolution	Heine text, Chapter 2 (all)
Sept 17		Tomasello, M. (2007, January 13). For human eyes only. <i>The New York Times</i> . Retrieve from http://www.nytimes.com/2007/01/13/opinion/13tomasello.html
Sept 19		Hare, B. (2007). From nonhuman to human mind: What changed and why? <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i> , 16, 60-64.
Sept 22	Cultural transmission and change	Heine text, Chapter 3 (pp. 59-92, 106-108)
Sept 24		Heath, C., & Heath, D. (2007). <i>Made to stick</i> . New York: Random House. Read Introduction : What Sticks?
Sept 26		No new reading
Sept 29	Exam 1	
Oct 1	Varieties of child socialization	Rogoff, B. (2003). <i>The cultural nature of human development</i> . Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. Read Chapter 6 : Interdependence and Autonomy.
Oct 3		No new reading
Oct 6	Child socialization, continued	No new reading
Oct 8	The self concept	Heine text, Chapter 6 (pp. 194-209, 215-232)
Oct 10		No new reading
Oct 13	Motivation	Heine text, Chapter 7 (pp. 259-254, 263-278)
Oct 15	Academic motivation and school contexts	Read or listen to Spiegel, A. (2012). Struggle for smarts? How Eastern and Western cultures tackle learning. Retrieve from http://www.npr.org/blogs/health/2012/11/12/164793058/struggle-for-smarts-how-eastern-and-western-cultures-tackle-learning
Oct 17		Li, J., Fung, H., Bakeman, R., Rae, K., & Wei, W.-C. (2014). How European American and Taiwanese mothers talk to their children about learning. <i>Child Development</i> , 85, 1206-1221.
Oct 20	Cognition	Heine text, Chapter 8 (all)
Oct 22		Gordon, P. (2004). Numerical cognition without words: Evidence from Amazonia. <i>Science</i> , 306, 496-499.
Oct 24	Paper Stage 1 due	No new reading

Oct 27	Cognition, continued.	Nisbett, R. E. (2009). <i>Intelligence and how to get it: Why schools and cultures count.</i> New York, NY: Norton. Read Chapter 5: Social class and cognitive culture
Oct 29	Catch up day	
Oct 31	Exam 2	
Nov 3	Mental health & Physical health	Heine text, Chapters 11 (pp. 423-440, 451-456) and 12 (458-477)
Nov 5		Watters, E. (2010). <i>Crazy like us: The globalization of the American psyche.</i> New York, NY: Free Press. Read Chapter 2: The wave that brought PTSD to Sri Lanka (pp. 65-93, 114-123)
Nov 7	Paper Peer workshop	No new reading: Pay attention to peer workshop format announced in class.
Nov 10	Close relationships	Heine text, Chapter 9 (339-366)
Nov 12	Paper draft due	No new reading
Nov 14		Kim, H. S., Sherman, D. K., & Taylor, S. E. (2008). Culture and social support. <i>American Psychologist, 63</i> , 518-526.
Nov 17	Multicultural U.S.	Heine text, Chapter 10 (383-386, 400-421)
Nov 19		No new reading
Nov 21	Benefits of a multicultural society	Plaut, V.C., Thomas, K.M., & Goren, M.J. (2009). Is multiculturalism or color blindness better for minorities? <i>Psychological Science, 20</i> , 444-446
Nov 24	Social class as culture	Stephens, N.M., Fryberg, S.A., Markus, H.R., Johnson, C.S., & Covarrubias, R. (2012). Unseen disadvantage: How American universities' focus on independence undermines the academic performance of first-generation college students. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 102</i> , 1178-1197.
Dec 1	Final Paper due	
Dec 3	Catch up day	
Finals week	Final exam	