

PSYCHOLOGY 250
CROSS-CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY



FALL QUARTER, 2008

M-F 10:30-11:20
Room L221

DR. HELEN TAYLOR, INSTRUCTOR

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TEXTS:

Matsumoto, D. (2008). Culture & Psychology, 4th Edition . Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.

Additional readings will be assigned from Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, Eds. Lonner, W.J., Dinnel, D.L., Hayes, S.A., & Sattler, D. N., Center for Cross-Cultural Research, Western Washington University:
<http://www.ac.wvu.edu/~culture/readings.htm>. (free access) and on the class site on MyBCC.

BACKGROUND:

Before psychological theories can legitimately claim to explain behavior in general, the behaviors must be examined from the perspective of a cross-section of all the world's cultures and not just a select few that are easily accessible to researchers in the highly "psychologized" Western world. The extent to which currently accepted explanations of human behavior can be applied to individuals and groups raised in non-Western, or non-majority American, cultures is a growing area of research. In its broadest sense, cross-cultural psychology is concerned with understanding truth and psychological principles as either universal (that is, true for all people of all cultures) or culture-specific (true for some people of some cultures).

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Cross-Cultural Psychology examines the strengths and weaknesses of the Western social science approach to understanding human behavior. It considers universal components of behavior from a cross-cultural perspective, and explores the influence of differing beliefs and values on human perception, goals and interactions. In addition to

looking at comparative international research, we will also take a close look at U.S. ethnic group psychologies, values, and experiences, with a special focus on identity development and cross-cultural understanding.

SPECIFIC GOALS: Students who complete Psych. 250 will be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which culture, beliefs, values, the environment, and behavior interact.
2. Identify ethnocentrism in psychological thought, theory, and research methods, and to suggest means for reducing bias in the study of human behavior.
3. Develop an appreciation for the wide diversity of human behavior as well as an appreciation for the common threads and values.
4. Understand the mutual relevance of psychology and other disciplines in understanding human behavior from a global perspective.
5. Discover how ways of seeing, knowing, and experiencing the world differ according to our races, ethnicities, classes, and genders.
6. Develop competencies in functioning in a diverse society, making cross-cultural interactions more productive and enjoyable.
7. Develop at least a functional understanding and appreciation of both world events and everyday behavior of people from other cultures.
8. Identify psychological and social sources of ethnocentrism, prejudice, and interpersonal conflict, as well as strategies for cooperation and communication.
9. Appreciate the wide diversity of human identities as well as appreciate common threads and values.

CLASS ACTIVITIES:

Typical class activities will include lectures, discussions, films, learning activities, and occasional speakers.

STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

TESTS:

There will be five unit exams covering material from the reading, lecture, guest speakers, and films. Tests will include a combination of objective (bring a scantron) and essay questions. There will be no comprehensive final exam; the last unit test will be administered on the last class day of the quarter. Each test will be worth 50 points; the total points for tests will be doubled at the end of the quarter for 500 points or 50% of the final grade. Students are expected to take the exams as scheduled. In the case of a legitimate emergency, one make-up exam will be allowed; students will need to contact the instructor to make arrangements.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

. A total of twenty assignments will be collected over the course of the quarter, with a total potential point value of 400 points for 40% of the grade.

READING SEMINARS/ ATTENDANCE/ PARTICIPATION:

Each week, one day will be designated for a discussion of the assigned readings (see Calendar). Students should complete the reading ahead of time, bring the texts and notes on the readings to class, and come prepared to answer questions in small and large groups. In addition, as noted above, assignments will often be discussed in class on the day they are due. Participation in these discussions and activities will be noted and a grade assigned for this portion of the course at the end of the quarter. Because the grading system allows for some missed class sessions without grade penalty, and because it is not realistic to replicate the discussions or activities, it will not be possible to make up missed class sessions. Total possible points for this section of the course are 100, or 10% of the grade.

Grades for reading discussions/attendance/participation will be determined as follows:

90%-100%	sessions attended with active participation = A (90-100 pts.)
80%-89%	sessions attended with active participation = B (80-89 pts.)
70%-79%	sessions attended with active participation = C (70-79 pts.)
60%-69%	sessions attended with active participation = D (60-69 pts.)
less than 60%	sessions attended with active participation = F (0-59 pts.)

GRADE EVALUATION

Grades will be determined on the basis of tests, written assignments, and participation. Points will be assigned as follows:

Tests: 5 @ 50 pts. each x 2	=	500
Written Assignments: 20 @ 20 points each	=	400
Reading Seminars/Attendance/Participation	=	100
Total points	=	1000

Grading scale:

940-1000	A (94-100%)	770-799	C+ (77-79%)
900-939	A- (90-93%)	740-769	C (74-76%)
870-899	B+ (87-89%)	700-739	C- (70-73%)
840-869	B (84-86%)	670-699	D+ (67-69%)
800-839	B- (80-83%)	640-669	D (64-69%)
		Below 640	F

Class Conduct Guidelines

- Please arrive at class on time (attendance will be taken at the beginning of class)
- Please treat each other and the instructor with respect and common courtesy
- Please turn off all cell phones and pagers when entering class and refrain from texting during class

Tell the instructor as soon as possible if you have special learning needs.



COURSE ORGANIZATION

UNIT 1: Core Issues and Self-Concept

Introduction to cross-cultural issues, research methods, self-concept

- Definition of terms and theoretical concepts that aid in understanding culture and behavior— culture, cross-cultural psychology
- Research methods and methodological issues in cross-cultural studies. Problems in studying cultures and behavior across cultures.
- Self-concept: Cultural influence on self-views.

Week 1

Text Reading: Matsumoto, Ch. 1: An Introduction to Culture and Psychology
Matsumoto, Ch. 2: Cross-Cultural Research Methods

Week 2

Text Reading: Matsumoto, Ch. 13 Culture and Social Behavior, I: Self and Identity
Billie Davis, Marginality in a Pluralistic Society

UNIT 2: Thinking, Feeling, and Psychological Processes

Thinking, feeling, intelligence, perception, cognition, dreaming

- Personality, perception, and cognition
- Altered states of consciousness
- Intelligence and learning styles
- Motivation, beliefs, values
- Emotions and emotional expression

Week 3

Text Reading: Matsumoto, Ch. 3, 4, 7 (p. 108-112 only)

Week 4

Text Reading: Matsumoto, Ch. 8
Okun, Ch. 4

Test: Tuesday, Jan. 30

UNIT 3: Cultural Influences on Development and Health

Development, children, parenting, schools, health, mental health

- Child development, education, socialization, and child-rearing
- Relationships, family, and gender roles
- Physical and mental health, psychopathology

Week 5

Text Reading: Matsumoto, Ch. 5, 7 (p. 101-110 only)
Okun, Ch. 6

Week 6

Text Reading: Matsumoto, Ch. 9

No classes: Thursday, Feb. 2

Test: Monday, Feb. 13

UNIT 4: Cross-Cultural Communication and Social Behavior

Communicating across cultures, social psychology applied world-wide

- Culture and communication, language, verbal and non-verbal behavior
- Attributions, stereotypes, attraction
- Aggression, helping, dominance, conformity, obedience

Week 7, 8

Text Reading: Matsumoto, Ch. 6
Okun, Ch. 2, 3

Week 9

Text Reading: Matsumoto, Ch. 10

Holiday: Monday, Feb. 20

No Classes: Friday, Mar. 3

TEST: MONDAY, MAR. 6

UNIT 5: Gender, Race, Diversity, and Intercultural Relationships

Gender as cross-cultural experience, ethnicity in the United States, relating to the "other"

- Diversity; experience of major U.S. ethnic groups; whiteness
- Privilege, prejudice and racism
- Intra- and inter-group relations: expectations, conflict, intercultural communication

Week 10

Text Reading: Okun, Ch. 7

Additional reading to be distributed in class

Week 11

Text Reading: Matsumoto, Ch. 11

TEST: Monday, Mar. 20