

PSY321

Cultural Psychology

Course Syllabus

Online Lectures released Wednesday and In-person sessions Fridays 11:00am-1:00pm - SS1084 (**in person class will typically run no longer than 2 hours** as we will be using a flipped classroom model described under Class Structure below). An Online synchronous option will be available for students that cannot attend in person.



Instructor and Teaching Assistant Information

Instructor:

Amanda Sharples, Ph.D.
amanda.sharples@mail.utoronto.ca

Instructor Office hours:

Online. Please book through the calendar on the Quercus site.

Teaching Assistant:

Joshua Koh, josh.koh@mail.utoronto.ca

Course Description and Learning Objectives

This course will examine the role culture plays in various psychological processes. We will examine how culture intersects with a number of topics in psychology including development, personality, motivation, perception, relationships, morality, and health. Across topics, there will be a focus on practicing critical thinking, gaining an understanding of psychological research methods, and applying psychological findings to everyday life. Students will emerge from the course with an understanding of theory and research in the field of cultural psychology.

Learning Objectives:

1. *Knowledge:* By the end of this course, you should be able to name and apply theories in the area of cultural psychology. Moreover, you should understand key research methods used in the study of cultural psychology.
2. *Application:* By the end of this course, you should understand how culture has impacted your life and you should be able to apply findings in cultural psychology to your life and current social problems.
3. *Scientific Thinking:* By the end of this course, you should have a better understand of common research methods used in psychology, and you should be able to think of ways to empirically examine research questions in the area of cultural psychology.
4. *Communication:* By the end of this course, you should have improved your ability to construct arguments and to communicate your thoughts verbally and in writing.
5. *Professional Development:* By the end of this course, you should have improved your time-management skills and ability to respond appropriately to constructive feedback.

Class Structure: This course will use a flipped classroom approach. This means that students will be provided with lecture videos and readings prior to class (by Monday at 12pm). In class time will be focused on summarizing lectures, question and answer periods, activities, and small group discussions that will allow for a more in depth exploration of the course content. These will all be facilitated by the professor. Online synchronous options will be provided via a zoom link that will be made available before the start of class. Asynchronous videos will be roughly 1 hour of content per lecture and in class or synchronous sessions will be roughly 1.5-2 hours each week. Please note the first lecture (September 9th) will be in person with no online videos.

Discussion Participation: In the class discussions, you will have the opportunity to express your opinion and learn your classmates' opinions on topics and readings. This provides an interactive component of the course that is meant to be engaging for students. During discussions, please remember that some of your classmates may have opinions that are different from your own. Please be respectful of your fellow classmates' opinions, and be respectful in language and when sharing your opinions.

Note about prerequisites: It is your responsibility to ensure that you have met *all* prerequisites listed in the Psychology section of the A&S Calendar for this course. If you lack any prerequisites you may be removed.

Course Resources

Readings: All readings for this course, which include chapters and journal articles, will be made available on the Quercus site under library reading list. The citations for these readings may be found in this syllabus after the lecture schedule. I will provide reading guides for all readings that include the key questions you should be able to answer after completing the reading.

Quercus: All course materials will be made available on the Quercus website, including lecture slides, announcements, and supplementary materials. You are advised to regularly check the announcements section of the Quercus website because you are solely responsible for staying on top of all course announcements made through Quercus.

Ongoing feedback: I've created a survey that students can fill out anonymously after each class to provide me with feedback on lectures. This gives you the opportunity to let me know if I am going through the material too quickly, if there is a particular concept you are really struggling with, if there is something that could be improved about the structure of each class, etc. The link to this survey is available on Quercus. I can't promise that I will be able to touch on every concern expressed in the feedback surveys. I will be looking for common concerns being expressed by students.

How to get help with the course: The fastest way to get help with the course is to attend one of the weekly online office hours. If you have a short question that can be answered via email, then please email myself or the TA. Before emailing, however, please check the course syllabus as most of the important information about the course can be found there. If you have a question that may require a longer explanation, please come to office hours instead of emailing as it will be much easier for me to explain this in person and it will give you the opportunity to ask follow-up questions

Course Evaluation

Component	Date	Weight
Quizzes	Throughout the term (3 total)	15% (5% each)
Participation (In class or discussion board)	Throughout the term	8%
Paper Outline	October 14th	15%
Final Paper	December 2nd	35%
Popular Science Assignment	November 18th	27%

Participation: Part of your grade will be allocated to participating in weekly discussions. You can participate in person *or* online via zoom. Attending each lecture and contributing a thoughtful question or response to a question will help you earn full marks. We will also have 2-3 global classroom sessions where you will have the opportunity to connect with students in classrooms abroad

Paper - Outline and Final Paper 50%: For this course, you will have to complete a final writing assignment. You will have the option of one of two assignments to choose from:

Option 1: (recommended for students interested in research): This will be a funding proposal (also called a program of study), which will be modeled after the funding proposals typically completed for graduate scholarships. In your funding proposal, you will include a program of proposed research (2-3 studies) that addresses an issue in cultural psychology. You can write the proposal on any topic related to the focus of the course.

Outline: Before submitting the final paper, you will submit an outline. This will allow you to get feedback on your research question and study designs before submitting your final proposal. For the outline, you must include a description of the research question, bullet point summary of some past research on this issue, and a brief description of studies you are proposing (design and variables) and the hypotheses for each study. This should be about 1.5-2 pages, double-spaced. Do not go over the 2 page limit – we will stop reading past this point.

Final Paper: The final paper should include an introductory paragraph where you make an argument for the real-world relevance of the research you are proposing, 2-3 paragraphs summarizing past research on the topic, 2-3 paragraphs outlining the studies you are proposing to fill the current gaps in the literature (be clear about the study design and your hypotheses), and 1-2 paragraphs reiterating the theoretical and practical implications of your line of research. This should be a total of 3.5-4 pages, double-spaced. Do not go over the 4 page limit - we will not read past this point.

Option 2: (recommended for students not interested in research): This will be an essay with an argumentative thesis statement where you critically analyze a topic we discussed in the course. Specifically, I want you to think about how cultural lens has been neglected in a particular area (can think of a specific theory and come up with an original thesis (point of view/argument) related to this topic. You must use past research to support your argument.

Outline: Before submitting the final paper, you will submit an outline. This will allow you to get feedback on your thesis and the supporting research. For the outline, you must include your thesis as well as a bullet point summary of some past research on this issue and how you will connect this to your argument. This should be about 1.5-2 pages, double-spaced. Do not go over the 2 page limit – we will stop reading past this point.

Final Paper: The final paper should include an introductory paragraph where you provide some background on what you will be discussing and state your thesis, 3-4 paragraphs summarizing past research on the topic and connecting this research to your thesis, and 1 closing paragraph where you provide a conclusion or take home message for your paper. This should be a total of 3.5-4 pages, double-spaced. Do not go over the 4 page limit - we will not read past this point.

Pop Science Assignment 27%: For this assignment, you will have to select a recently published paper and communicate the findings to a general (non expert) audience. You may choose one of the following three forms - 1. A blog post. No more than 1500 words. 2. A recorded podcast (12-15 minutes long) 3. A YouTube video (also 12-15 minutes long).

Some things you must include: you must include information about one recently published study (years 2021-2022). You must connect these findings to statistics from other (e.g., opinion poll) data. You must include visual elements (for a podcast, this can be a design for your podcast home page). You must include links for any papers or data you discuss (these do not have to be in APA style).

You can be creative with the format and what you decide to discuss (e.g., a fictional interview, applying the work to a real-world issue, etc). I will provide a few concrete examples on the Quercus site under this assignment, so you have a sense of what this might look like. Ultimately, I want you to be creative while also demonstrating an ability to present research and theory in cultural psychology to a lay audience. I will discuss this more in class and provide you with a rubric describing how you will be evaluated.

Quizzes: Throughout the course you will have to complete 3 quizzes using multiple choice/matching/fill in the blank style responses. These quizzes will be completed online and you will have 48 hours from the time they are made available to write the quiz, but once the quiz starts it will be timed and you will have 40 minutes to complete it. These will test your general knowledge of the course material including readings and lectures and are meant to make sure you are keeping up with the course content. They are primarily assessing learning goal 1.

A few important details: For the final paper, when you are summarizing past research, you must include citations for at least 5 papers published in peer-reviewed journals (we will discuss this in class). The paper should be written in APA style. Both the proposal and the final paper should be handed in on Quercus by 11:59pm on the day they are due, and should include a full reference list.

More details on these assignments will be provided in class.

Policy on Lateness: The Covid 19 pandemic has impacted all of our lives in various ways, and I understand that some of you may be facing many additional stressors as a result of this. I understand this and I am happy to support you and work with you so that you can successfully complete this course and have a positive learning experience. For the proposal outline, popular science assignment, and the final paper, **you do not need to contact me** so long as your assignment is submitted within **24 hours of the due date**. Following this, a 2% late penalty may apply. There is no extension for the quizzes. If you are concerned about meeting a deadline or need assistance making a plan for getting work completed, please contact me as soon as you can so we can work this out together.

Ensuring Transparency in Grading: Your proposal, popular science assignment, and final paper will be marked by the TA and I. Marking these types of assignments can be challenging and somewhat subjective. In order to make this process as fair as possible, I will be creating a detailed rubric for myself and the TA to use when grading these assignments. I will provide you with a copy of these rubrics at least one week before the

assignment is due. This should provide you with a clear understanding of how you will be graded before you submit your assignment.

Contesting your grade: Please think carefully before contesting your grade for an assignment or test. Your course instructors and TAs work very hard to mark course assignments and exams as fairly as possible. If you have concerns about how an assignment was graded, you need to submit an official re-grade request form explaining why you think your assignment should be re-graded. This can be found on Quercus under “course materials.” You must send this to the person that graded your assignment (either myself or the TA) within 2 weeks of receiving your grade. We will review your request but reserve the right to remark the entire paper, which means you could lose marks in other sections.

If there has been a calculation error, please just let myself or the TA know and we will re-calculate your grade immediately.

Academic Resources

Accessibility Needs: Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course, and we will do everything in our power to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to succeed in the course. If you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978 8060; accessibility.utoronto.ca.

Writing: One of the key skill-sets you are developing as a student are your communication skills, including written communication. Understanding how to communicate clearly and concisely is essential for many career paths. The university provides its students with a number of resources to help them develop these skills. For more information on campus writing centers and writing courses, please visit <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/>. More info on writing resources available at U of T will be posted on Quercus. I highly recommend that you make use of these. Moreover, I'm more than happy to give you feedback on your writing during my office hours, so feel free to stop by.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: Academic misconduct will be taken very seriously in this class. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported through the official university channels. Please refer to the University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters for more information about what constitutes academic misconduct and how academic misconduct will be dealt with: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf>

Resources for Distressed Students: As a student, you may experience challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation, financial concerns, family worries and so forth. These factors may affect your academic performance and/or reduce your ability to participate fully in daily activities. All of us benefit from support and guidance during times of struggle; there is no shame in needing help or in asking for help. There are

many helpful resources available through your college Registrar or through Student Life (studentlife.utoronto.ca and www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/feeling-distressed). An important part of the University experience is learning how and when to ask for help. Please take the time to inform yourself of available resources and do not hesitate to seek assistance from your Teaching Assistant or from me to help learn what supports are available.

Course Schedule

I will try my best to stick to this outline, but changes may be made. Changes will be announced on Quercus. All readings can be found in the reference list following this page.

Lecture	Date	Topic	Notes
L1	Sept 9	Introduction	
L2	Sept 16	Research Methods in Cultural Psychology	
L3	Sept 23	Cultural Learning and Evolution	
L4	Sept 30	Development and Socialization	
L5	Oct 7	Self, Personality, Motivation	Quiz 1 available online Available Wednesday at 12:00pm and due Friday by 2:00pm
L6	Oct 14	Cognition and Perception	Proposal Due
L7	Oct 21	Multiculturalism	
L8	Oct 28	No lecture - in person session focused on assignments.	
	Nov 4	Interpersonal Attraction and Close Relationships	Quiz 2 available online Wednesday at 12:00pm and due by Friday at 2:00pm
	Nov 11	<i>No Lecture - Reading week</i>	
L9	Nov 18	Morality and Religion	<i>Scientific communication piece due</i>

L10	Nov 25	Physical and Mental Health	
	Dec 2	No Class - work on final paper and quiz	<p>Quiz 3 Available Wednesday at 12:00pm and due Friday by 2:00pm</p> <p><i>Final Paper Due (remember you have the automatic 24 hour extension)</i></p>

Course Schedule

L1.

Syllabus

L2.

Leung, A. K. Y., & Cohen, D. (2011). Within-and between-culture variation: individual differences and the cultural logics of honor, face, and dignity cultures. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 100*, 507-526

L3.

Muthukrishna, M., Shulman, B. W., Vasilescu, V., & Henrich, J. (2014). Sociality Influences cultural complexity. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of London B: Biological Sciences, 281*, 20132511.

Santos, H. C., Varnum, M. E., & Grossmann, I. (2017). Global increases in individualism. *Psychological Science, 28*, 1228-1239.

Talhelm, T., Zhang, X., Oishi, S., Shimin, C., Duan, D., Lan, X., & Kitayama, S. (2014). Large-scale psychological differences within China explained by rice versus wheat agriculture. *Science*, *344*(6184), 603- 608.

L4.

Coard, S. I. (2022). Race, discrimination, and racism as “growing points” for consideration: attachment theory and research with African American families. *Attachment & Human Development*, *24*(3), 373-383.

Keller, H. (2018). Universality claim of attachment theory: Children’s socioemotional Development across cultures. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *115*, 11414-11419

Fu, A. S., & Markus, H. R. (2014). My Mother and Me: Why tiger mothers motivate Asian Americans but not European Americans. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *40*, 739-749.

L5.

Boucher, H. C. (2021). Social class and self-concept consistency: Implications for subjective well-being and felt authenticity. *Self and Identity*, *20*(3), 406-422.

Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, *98*, 224 – 253

Ruby, M. B., Falk, C. F., Heine, S. J., Villa, C., & Silberstein, O. (2012). Not all Collectivisms are equal: Opposing preferences for ideal affect between East Asians and Mexicans. *Emotion*, *12*, 1206-1209.

L6.

Varnum, M. E., Grossmann, I., Kitayama, S., & Nisbett, R. E. (2010). The origin of cultural Differences in cognition: The social orientation hypothesis. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 19*, 9-13.

de Oliveira, S., & Nisbett, R. E. (2017). Culture changes how we think about thinking: From “Human Inference” to “Geography of Thought”. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 12*, 782-790.

Kung, F. Y. H. & Grossmann, I. (in press). Wisdom across cultures. In O. Braddick (Ed.), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press.

L7.

Berry, J. W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation, and adaptation. *Applied Psychology, 46*, 5-34.

Benet-Martínez, V., Lee, F., & Cheng, C.-Y. (2021). Bicultural identity integration: Components, psychosocial antecedents, and outcomes. In M. J. Gelfand, C.-y. Chiu, & Y.-y. Hong (Eds.), *Handbook of advances in culture and psychology* (pp. 244-284). Oxford University Press.

L8.

Schug, J., Yuki, M., & Maddux, W. (2010). Relational mobility explains between-and within-culture differences in self-disclosure to close friends. *Psychological Science, 21*, 1471-1478.

Balzarini, R. N., & Muise, A. (2020). Beyond the dyad: A review of the novel insights gained

from studying consensual non-monogamy. *Current Sexual Health Reports*, 1-7.

L9.

Feinberg, M., & Willer, R. (2015). From gulf to bridge: when do moral arguments facilitate Political influence? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 41(12), 1665-1681.

Podcast: Creating God, *Hidden Brain*:

<https://www.npr.org/2018/07/16/628792048/creating-god>

L10.

Dere, J., Sun, J., Zhao, Y., Persson, T. J., Zhu, X., Yao, S., ... & Ryder, A. G. (2013). Beyond "somatization" and "psychologization": Symptom-level variation in depressed Han Chinese and Euro-Canadian outpatients. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4, doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00377

Lehman, B. J., David, D. M., & Gruber, J. A. (2017). Rethinking the biopsychosocial model of Health: understanding health as a dynamic system. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 11, e12328.