



Boston University, Department of Psychology

PS 560 Cross-Cultural Psychology

Time. Mon, Wed, Thurs 1:30-4 **Summer 2007**

Place. Psychology Dept. B53 (basement)

Instructor. Catherine Caldwell-Harris

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Course Description. Cross-Cultural research in psychology is the systematic comparison of psychological variables under different cultural conditions in order to identify universal aspects of human behavior, and to identify the causes of behavior differences. This course will examine sociocultural variation in social behavior, personality, psychopathology, child development, emotion and cognition. Multiple theoretical perspectives and applications to health care and international relations will be considered.

Prerequisites. Six courses in psychology, a course in experimental psychology, and a course in statistics at the level of MA 116 or higher. Requirements waived for students with graduate standing.

Course Requirements

The class will be conducted as a seminar. Students will complete all reading, participate in class discussion, and will lead class discussion for one or two half-hour time slots during the 6 week term. Students will participate in online discussion boards and provide feedback on classmates' work. In collaboration with 1-3 classmates, students will conduct an original study and present their final project as a powerpoint presentation to the class.

Course grades will be based on participation during class discussions (20%), leading class discussion (30%), the final project (40%) and the discussion board comments (10%).

Sources for your cross-cultural data. Because you are being asked to conduct original research, you will need to think about your access to members of a different culture. Below are some possibilities.

- Immigrants and bicultural individuals who are residents of Boston
- Americans who have returned from sojourn overseas
- Ask a friend who is living overseas to collect data following a procedure (or survey) that you designed
- Post internet surveys (using, e.g., surveymonkey.com)
- Consult archival sources such as HRAF, Human Relations Area Files, www.yale.edu/hraf
- Analyze artifacts of a different culture. Advertisements, internet sites, written materials (books, novels, speeches, oral histories, movies).
- Investigate Boston residents' views of members of another culture.
- Use Boston residents as participants and compare to published work using non-Americans.

Reading

Weekly reading. Assigned from the textbook, and from journals articles available via download.

Textbook. Berry, J.W., Poortinga, Y.H., Segall, M.H., Dasen, P.R. (2002). *Cross-Cultural Psychology. Research and Applications, 2nd Edition.* Cambridge University Press.

Optional, supplemental reading:

Wexler, B.E. (2006). *Brain and culture: Neurobiology, ideology and social change.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. This book and the textbook are available at BU Barnes and Noble.

Book groups. Students will choose to join one of the "book groups" (with 4-5 students in each

group). Six recommended books are listed below as examples. Students can also recommend books. Post your book-group ideas to the discussion board. Include a description of how the book is relevant to cross-culture themes. If 3 people want to read your book, that will be your book group. Book groups will meet either once or twice during class time or outside class time at an agreed-upon time and location. The instructor will attend part of each book group meeting. Book groups will summarize the results of their discussion to the rest of the class.

Kleinman, A. (1991). *Rethinking Psychiatry: From cultural category to personal experience*. New York: Free Press.

Pedersen, P, et al. (Eds.) (2002). *Counseling across cultures (5th Ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Suvakamur, N. (2006). *Debugging Indian computer programmers*.

Nazario, S. (2006). *Enrique's journey: the story of a boy's dangerous odyssey to reunite with his mother*. New York: Random House.

Lareau, A. (2006). *Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race, and Family Life*. University of California Press.

Films. Students will suggest movies with significant cross-cultural themes to be watched and discussed during one class meeting. Post your film suggestions to the course discussion board (with description of cross-cultural themes and potential for stimulating discussion). *Sources for films.* Peruse Krasker memorial film library website for movies that can be obtained for this class at no cost, or volunteer to rent your movie from netflixs or a video store.

Schedule of Topics and Readings for 6 Week Summer Term 1 2007

Students are expected to do the reading before class.

Week 1. Course Introduction

May 23. Chapter 1. Similarities and differences in behavior across cultures

- We will discuss course topics and students' interests and goals.

May 24. Chapter 2. Cultural transmission and individual development

Recommended supplemental reading

Quinn, N. (2005). *Universals of child rearing*. *Anthropological Theory*, 5, 475–514.

Week 2. Continue childhood and developmental topics; Language and Emotion

May 30 Continue discussing topics from Chapters 1 and 2; Selections from Wexler, *Brain and Culture*, to be assigned

May 31 Chapter 6. Language.

- Ross, M., Xun, W.Q.E., & Wilson, A.E. (2002) Language and the Bicultural Self. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 28(8), 1040-1050.
- Harris, C.L., Gleason, J.B., & Aycicegi, A. (2006). When is a first language more emotional? Psychophysiological evidence from bilingual speakers. In A. Pavlenko (Ed.), *Bilingual minds. Emotional experience, expression, and representation*. Clevedon, United Kingdom. Multilingual Matters.
- Friday June 1 Chapter 7. Emotion (Monday sched due to Memorial Day Holiday May 28)

Week 3. Social behavior and personality

June 4 Chapter 3. Social behaviour

June 6-7 Chapter 4. Personality

- Caldwell-Harris, C.L., & Aycicegi, A. (2006). When personality and culture clash. The psychological distress of allocentrics in an individualist culture and idiocentrics in a collectivist culture. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 43, 331–361.

Week 4. Cultural anthropology, and Biology and culture

June 11 Chapter 9. Approaches from cultural anthropology (see information about HRAF, p. 236).

- Browse the HRAF website and list of exercises (<http://www.yale.edu/hraf/teaching.htm>). Students will assist in selecting exercises for in-class activity.

June 13 Henrich, J., et al. (2005). "Economic man" in cross-cultural perspective. Behavioral experiments in 15 small-scale societies. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 28, 795-855.

June 14 Chapter 10. Biology and culture

- Selections from Wexler, *Brain and Culture*, to be assigned
- Film or Book group meeting 1

Recommended supplemental reading

- Haidt, J., Joseph, C. (2004). Intuitive ethics. How innately prepared intuitions generate culturally variable virtues. *Daedalus*, Fall, 55-66.
- Murray, S.O. The will not to know: Islamic accommodations of male homosexuality. In S. O. Murray and W. Roscoe (Eds.), *Islamic homosexualities: Culture, history and literature*. New York: New York University Press.

Week 5. Combining Method and Theory and Applying Research Findings across Cultures

June 18 Chapter 11. Methodological concerns

June 20 Chapter 12. Theoretical issues in cross-cultural psychology

- Selections from Cole, 1996, *Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline*.

June 21 Chapter 13. Acculturation and Intercultural Relations

Recommended supplemental reading

- Schmitz, P. (1994). Acculturation and adaptation process among immigrants in Germany. In A.M. Bouvy et al. (Eds.), *Journeys into cross-cultural psychology* (pp. 142-157). Swets & Zeitlinger.
- Pettigrew, T., & Tropp, L. (2000). Does intergroup contact reduce prejudice? Recent meta-analytic findings. In S. Oskamp (Ed.), *Reducing prejudice and discrimination* (pp. 93-114). Erlbaum.
- Film or Book group meeting 2

Week 6. Well-being and health; and International perspectives on psychology

June 25 Chapter 16. Health behavior

- Oishi, S. (2000). Goals as cornerstones of subjective well-being. Linking individuals with cultures. In E.F. Diener & E.M. Suh (Eds.), *Subjective well-being across cultures* (pp. 87-112). Cambridge, MA. MIT Press.

June 27 Kitano, HHL, & Maki, MT (1996). Continuity, change, and diversity: Counseling Asian Americans. In *Counseling across cultures*. (See supplemental readings.)

June 28 Chapter 17. Psychology and the majority world.

Recommended supplemental reading

- Wilkinson, R. (1996). *Unhealthy societies: The application of inequality*. London: Routledge. (pages TBD).

Academic conduct. Students are expected to be familiar with the CAS Academic Conduct Code. Writing and ideas that represent the work of other individuals, including class mates, must be given proper attribution. Failure to adhere to the Academic Conduct Code will be reported to the CAS Academic Conduct Committee.