

Psychology 307: Cultural Psychology

Winter Session 2008/2009

Section 902, 3 Credits

Tuesdays, 6:00 – 8:30 pm

West Mall Swing Space, Room 222

Instructor

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Teaching Assistant

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Course Description: Psychology 307 is an undergraduate course designed to give a broad introduction to theory and research in the area of cultural psychology. The course will provide exposure to topics of contemporary concern to cultural psychologists and the methods they use to investigate these topics. Among the topics that we will consider are: research methods in cultural psychology, cultural transmission and evolution, values, the self-concept, motivation, personality, emotions, groups and relationships, perception, cognition, acculturation, and health.

Prerequisites: Either (a) Psychology 100, (b) Psychology 101 and 102, or (c) 6 credits of 200-level psychology courses (not including Psychology 205 or 263). Note that first year students are not eligible to take this course.

Course Format: The format of this course will be lectures with active, in-class discussion. In addition to attending the lectures and participating in class discussion, students will be expected to complete assigned readings from the textbook. In order to maximally benefit from the lectures, students are strongly encouraged to keep up to date with the assigned readings.

Course Website: The website for this course is www.psych.ubc.ca/~assanand. After each class, I will post the overheads that I presented. Although the overheads will provide a relatively comprehensive review of the lecture material, you may be examined on points that are discussed in class that are not presented on the overheads.

Textbook: Heine, S. J. (2008). Cultural Psychology (1st edition). New York: Norton and Company.

Evaluation: Students will be given three exams and the option of writing one term paper. For those students who do not write the paper, each exam will comprise one-third of their final grade. For those students who write the paper, each exam will comprise one-quarter of their final grade and the paper will comprise one-quarter of their final grade.

Exams: The exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. Please bring an HB pencil and an eraser to each exam to allow for electronic scoring of the multiple choice questions. Details about each exam (i.e., the number and types of questions) will be presented at the start of the class prior to the exam. Each exam will be 2 hours in duration. The exams will not be cumulative.

The exams will cover both lecture material and material from the assigned readings. The purpose of the lectures is to amplify, explain, and expand upon the material presented in the readings. Although there will be overlap between the lectures and the readings, unique material will be presented in the lectures. Students are responsible for both the material presented in the lectures and the material presented in the readings.

Please arrive to the exams on time. Following University policy, students who are more than 30 minutes late will not be permitted to write the exam.

Students must write the exams on the dates indicated in the Schedule of Course Topics. Exceptions will be made in the case of medical problems, in which case a doctor's note is required. Exceptions will also be made for students who have religious obligations that conflict with an exam date. If you are unable to write an exam due to medical problems, please contact me before the exam or within 24 hours after the exam. Students who do not contact me within 24 hours after the exam will be assigned a grade of "0" on the exam. If you are unable to write an exam due to religious obligations, please notify me within the first 2 weeks of class. If you are required to write a makeup exam, you are expected to complete it within the shortest time period possible. Moreover, the content and/or format of the makeup exam may differ from the exam that was administered in class.

Optional Paper: The purpose of the paper is to gain further experience in theory and research related to cultural psychology. For the paper, you may choose from one of the following:

a) Write a literature review on research in cultural psychology related to a topic not discussed extensively in class or in the textbook. In selecting a topic, identify an important question regarding human psychology that you can answer by synthesizing existing research in cultural psychology. The topic should be one for which there is substantial cross-cultural research available. Sources of information for the paper should be limited to scholarly articles published in psychological journals. A minimum of 10 sources of information should be used. Literature reviews are commonly published in the psychological literature; you may consult psychological journals (e.g., Psychological Bulletin) for examples of reviews.

b) Write a paper about a human activity, issue, or need that is of universal psychological importance (e.g., marriage or death rituals, social justice, need for belonging). Explain how this universally important activity, issue, or need is addressed in at least two different cultures. Consider how this activity, issue, or need is related to the underlying value dimensions discussed in class; do cultural values influence the way in which the activity, issue, or need is addressed in each culture? The topic should be one for which there is little cross-cultural research available. Sources of information for the paper may be varied, including books, interviews with people from different cultures, scholarly articles published in psychological journals, and scholarly articles published in other social science journals (e.g., anthropological journals). A minimum of 5 sources of information should be used.

The paper should include an abstract that briefly summarizes all aspects of the paper (e.g., the topic, the primary findings, the implications of the findings). The abstract should not exceed 120 words in length. In addition, the paper should include a reference section listing all sources of information used. Sources of information should be referenced according to the guidelines provided by the American Psychological Association. If you are not familiar with these guidelines, please refer to the American Psychological Association Publication Manual or inquire at the University Library for further information. A title page should be included that contains your name, your student number, the paper option that you selected (i.e., a or b above), and a title for your paper. The paper must not exceed 10 pages in length, typed, and double-spaced, excluding the title page, abstract, and reference section. Please use a 12-point Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins.

The paper will be graded primarily for content. Specifically, 80% of the grade for the paper will reflect how thoughtfully and thoroughly you approached the topic that you selected (e.g., Did you conduct a thorough literature review? Did you effectively integrate your findings? Were you able to relate your findings to existing psychological theory? Did you consider the implications of your findings?). The paper will also be graded for style. Specifically, 20% of the grade for the paper will reflect how well your paper was written (e.g., Was the paper legible? Were there grammatical errors or organizational problems that hindered the reader's ability to interpret your ideas? Were your thoughts communicated clearly and concisely?).

Paper topics must be submitted to the Teaching Assistant via e-mail at least two weeks prior to the due date. Once your paper topic has been approved by the Teaching Assistant, you may begin writing your paper.

All papers must be scanned by "TurnItIn" prior to submission on the due date. TurnItIn is a service designed to detect and deter plagiarism. Through this service, students' papers are scanned and compared to over 5 billion pages of content located on the Internet or in TurnItIn's own proprietary databases. The results of comparisons are compiled into customized "Originality Reports" that contain several measures of plagiarism. These reports are forwarded to instructors. Details regarding the use of TurnItIn will be provided

in class the week prior to the due date. Papers that have not be scanned by TurnItIn prior to submission on the due date will not be graded and will receive a grade of "0."

Students are expected to submit the paper on the due date indicated in the Schedule of Course Topics. Exceptions will be made in the case of medical problems, in which case a doctor's note is required. Exceptions will also be made for students who have religious obligations that conflict with the due date. If you are unable to submit the paper on the due date as a result of medical problems, please contact me before the due date or within 24 hours after the due date. Students who do not contact me within 24 hours after the due date will not be permitted to submit a paper at a later date. If you are unable to submit the paper on the due date as a result of religious obligations, please notify me within the first 2 weeks of class. If, for any other reason, you are unable to attend class on the day the paper is due, please have someone hand it in for you during class time. Do not leave your paper in my mailbox or the Teaching Assistant's mailbox. Papers submitted via e-mail will not be accepted.

If you have any further questions regarding the paper, you are welcome to meet with me or the Teaching Assistant.

Participation: I strongly encourage and appreciate student participation. Participation may be in the form of questions or comments posed during class amongst your classmates or after class in discussion with me. At the end of the course, I will give students who have demonstrated consistent and thoughtful participation up to 5% in "participation credits." These participation credits will be in the form of bonus credits, added to students' grades after the target grade distribution for the class has been met (see "Department Policy on Distribution of Grades in Psychology Courses" below). In order to encourage students to participate in discussion during class, I ask that all students respect and support their classmates.

Reporting of Grades: Students' grades on the exams and the paper will be posted on the course website by student number. I will notify the class via e-mail when I have posted the grades on the website. If you prefer that your grades not be posted on the website, please notify me within the first 2 weeks of class.

You may review your exams and/or paper with the Teaching Assistant. Requests for the adjustment of a grade must be made within 4 weeks of the posting of the grades. Most requests for adjustment can be settled directly with the Teaching Assistant. In cases of a dispute that cannot be satisfactorily resolved with the Teaching Assistant, please contact me.

Department Policy on Distribution of Grades in Psychology Courses: Courses offered by the Psychology Department are required to meet a target grade distribution. This is done in order to ensure that all students are assessed fairly in relation to students

in other sections of the same course and to students in other courses. The target grade distribution for 300-level psychology courses requires that the mean for the class fall between 66% and 70%, with a standard deviation of approximately 13%. Accordingly, students should note that the Department may scale the final grades in this course up or down if the distribution of grades deviates substantially from the target. A student's grade is not official until it appears on his or her academic record.

Academic Misconduct: Cheating and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Psychology Department has taken steps to alleviate them. The Department employs software that can reliably detect cheating on multiple choice exams by analyzing the patterns of students' responses. This software will be used to analyze students' responses to the multiple choice questions on the exams in this course. In addition, as noted above, the Department employs TurnItIn in order to detect and deter plagiarism. In all cases of suspected academic misconduct, the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Evidence of cheating may result in a "0" credit for the work in question. According to the University Act (section 61), the President of UBC has the right to impose harsher penalties including (but not limited to) a failing grade for the course, suspension from the University, cancellation of scholarships, or a notation added to a student's transcript. For details on pertinent University policies and procedures, please see Chapter 5 in the UBC Calendar (available at www.students.ubc.ca/calendar) and University Policy 69 (available at www.universitycounsel.ubc.ca/policies/policy69.html).

Academic Accommodation: The University accommodates students with disabilities who have registered with the Disability Resource Centre. Please let me know in advance, preferably within the first 2 weeks of class, if you require any accommodation on these grounds.

Academic Concession: During your time in this course, if you encounter medical, emotional, or personal problems that affect your attendance or performance, please notify me. You may obtain academic concession from the Dean of your faculty. Please refer to the UBC Calendar for a more thorough discussion of academic concession.

Withdrawal Dates: If you wish to withdraw from this course without any record of the course on your transcript, you must do so by January 19, 2009. If you wish to withdraw from this course with only a withdrawal standing of "W" on your transcript, you must do so by February 13, 2009.

Schedule of Course Topics

The schedule provided below is for general reference. The schedule may be changed to accommodate class interest and discussion. Any changes to the schedule will be announced in class.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Required Reading</u>
January 6	Introduction	
January 13	Basic Concepts and Research Methods	Chapters 1 and 3
January 20	Cultural Transmission, Socialization, and Cultural Evolution	Chapters 2 and 4
January 27	Cultural Evolution, continued (Film)	
February 3	Midterm 1	
February 10	Values, the Self-Concept, and Motivation	Chapters 5 and 6
February 17	Midterm Break: Class Cancelled	
February 24	Values, the Self-Concept, and Motivation (Film) Personality	Chapter 5
March 3	Personality Emotions	Chapter 8
March 10	Emotions (Film)	
March 17	Midterm 2	
March 24	Group Processes, Relationships, Interpersonal Attraction, and Love Paper topics due, submit to Teaching Assistant via e-mail	Chapter 11
March 31	Perception and Cognition	Chapter 9
April 7	Acculturation and Health Paper due	Chapters 10 and 12

April Exam: Date Scheduled by the Registrar's Office