

**Course Syllabus**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**The University of British Columbia**

**PSYC 307 (Cultural Psychology)**  
**SummerTerm2 2015**

**Instructor:** Sayyed Mohsen Fatemi, Ph.D.

**Day & Time:** Monday and Wednesday 9:00 a.m. to 12 p.m.

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Contact Information :**

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**Course Description**

Culture is inextricably tied to our lives. Our phenomenological experiences are culturally constructed and the wide ranges of our verbal and non-verbal interactions are embedded within our cultural context. This course provides a rigorous understanding of cultural influences and cultural implications. The course explores the role of experimental psychology in analyzing our cultural experiences. We will discuss and examine cultural implications in cognitive, emotional, motivational and behavioral realms. Our discussions will demonstrate the role of culture in our thoughts, feelings, behaviors and decision making. We will study both conscious and unconscious manifestations of cultural phenomenology in intrapersonal and interpersonal domains. Our examples will scrutinize how culture is ineluctably linked to our mental health, treatment strategies, familial problem solving, societal issues, educational and research oriented approaches. Furthermore, the course will elucidate how cultural psychology is related to international disputes. The journey is meant to be exciting, illuminating, inviting and interesting.

**Course Aims and Objectives**

- Help students understand the implications of cultural psychology in dealing with personal, social, organizational and political issues.
- Describe the role of experimental psychology in analyzing our cultural experiences.
- Demonstrate the role of culture in understanding underlying cultural values.
- Apply interdisciplinary knowledge on cultural evolution, mental health, physical health and morality
- Examine the role of experimental research in cultural psychology

- Explain observation studies and ethnographies in understanding cultural issues.
- Learn the implications of cultural psychology in cognitive, emotional, motivational and behavioral realms.
- Describe the relationship between culture and emotion, culture and modes of expressiveness, culture and thinking, culture and personality, culture and perception, culture and attraction and culture and world view
- Explain the implications of living in a multicultural world
- Discuss the role of culture in negotiations, international disputes and family problems.

### **Expected Student Learning Outcomes**

Students will be able to:

- Appreciate the importance of how culture influences our thoughts, emotions, feelings and behaviors
- Understand the role of mindfulness in enhancing cultural and intercultural competencies
- Explain the practical implications of cultural psychology in different realms including international disputes.
- Be familiar with successful cultural methodology in various populations
- Demonstrate knowledge and skills for cultural phenomenology
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- Facilitate in themselves and others the goal of cultural psychology

### **Course Policies and Expectations**

The course is meant to be exciting, inviting, engaging and thought provoking. Your participation in the class will increase your rigorous understanding of the course materials. It is expected that you attend classes regularly. Missing more than four classes will deprive you of passing the course.

**Required Text Book:**

Heine, S. J. (2012). *Cultural Psychology (2nd edition)*. New York: W. W. Norton.

**Recommended Readings:**

The Encyclopedia of Cross-Cultural Psychology

by Kenneth D. Keith (Editor)

Cultural DNA: The Psychology of Globalization

by Gurnek Bains

**Assignments and Grading Procedures****1) Class Participation and Attendance- 15%**

Your thoughtful responses and your reflective questions to each meeting's readings and presentations will substantiate your active participation.

**2) Mid-Term Exam/ Quiz/group activity: Details to be discussed- 35%****3) Final Exam 50%**

### Course Schedule

DATE	DAY	TOPIC
July 6	MON	Lecture: Introduction to the course/ What is cultural psychology? Implications?
8	WED	Culture and Human nature?
13	MON	Cultural evolution/ Mindfulness and its implications for cultural psychology
15	WED	Methods for studying culture and psychology/ experimental psychology/observation studies, ethnomethodology/ phenomenology
20	MON	Culture/ development and socialization
22	WED	Culture/self and personality
27	MON	Culture and motivation/culture and physical/ mental health
29	WED	Culture/ cognition and perception/ Culture/ Interpersonal Attraction, Close Relationships, and Groups
Aug 3	MON	Statutory Holiday
5	WED	Living in multicultural world/ culture and emotion/ Culture/ Morality, Religion, and Justice
10	MON	Culture/ physical health/ mental health/group activity
12	WED	Culture/ Morality, Religion, and Justice/group activity
		<i>Final exam TBA ( to be announced)</i>

## Other Useful Information

The course is meant to be exciting, inviting, engaging and thought provoking. Your participation in the class will increase your rigorous understanding of the course materials. Please make sure that you attend classes regularly.

## Resources

- APA Division of Cultural Psychology
- <http://www.indigenoupsych.org/>

## Psychology Department's Policy on Grade Distributions and Scaling

In order to reduce grade inflation and maintain equity across multiple course sections, all psychology courses are required to comply with departmental norms regarding grade distributions. According to departmental norms, the mean grade in a 300-level class is 70 for a good class, 68 for an average class, and 66 for a weak class, with a standard deviation of 13. The corresponding figures for 100- and 200-level Psychology courses are 67, 65, and 63, with a standard deviation of 14. Scaling is likely to be used in order to comply with these norms; grades may be scaled up or down as necessary by the Professor or Department.

## Psychology Department's Position on Academic Misconduct

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are very serious concerns of the University, and the Department of Psychology has taken steps to alleviate them. In the first place, the Department has implemented software that can reliably detect cheating on multiple-choice exams by analyzing the patterns of students' responses. In addition, the Department subscribes to TurnItIn--a service designed to detect and deter plagiarism. All materials (term papers, lab reports, etc.) that students submit for grading will be scanned and compared to over 5 billion pages of content located on the Internet or in TurnItIn's own proprietary databases. The results of these comparisons are compiled into customized "Originality Reports" containing several, sensitive measures of plagiarism; instructors receive copies of these reports for every student in their class.

In all cases of suspected academic misconduct, the parties involved will be pursued to the fullest extent dictated by the guidelines of the University. Strong evidence of cheating or plagiarism may result in a zero 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.

All graded work in this course, unless otherwise specified, is to be original work done independently by individuals. Do not use Google/Yahoo/MSN Search/etc. to find articles for assignments in this course. Do use any of the indexes and databases listed under Indexes and Databases, Subject Resources, OneSearch or Metasearch on the Library's website at <http://www.library.ubc.ca>. (Not sure which index to use? Click HELP on the library homepage at [www.library.ubc.ca](http://www.library.ubc.ca) or try Subject Resources.)

If you have any questions as to whether or not what you are doing is even a borderline case of academic misconduct, please consult your instructor. For details on pertinent University policies and procedures, please see Chapter 5 in the UBC Calendar (<http://students.ubc.ca/calendar><http://www.library.ubc.ca>).

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