

# Bridgewater State University

PSYC 230 Cultural Psychology

Summer 2020, 3 credits

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**Course Description:** As the world is becoming increasingly globalized and our society increasingly diverse, it is essential that we understand how individuals from other cultures think, feel, and behave, and to understand the forces, beliefs, and motivations that underlie their behavior as well as our own. Students will learn to critically analyze ethnocentric perspectives, understand the sociocultural influences on individual's worldviews, and recognize the factors that establish and maintain cultural norms. Emphasis will be placed on recognizing, understanding, and respecting the complexity of sociocultural and international diversity including the role of power and privilege in shaping human conditions.

## Learning Outcomes:

1. Explain what culture means and how it influences psychological processes
2. Recognize how our own cultural identities influence our experiences and perceptions
3. Increase awareness of the cultural specificity of psychological theory, methodological approaches, ethical considerations, and research findings
4. Discuss how psychological processes can vary by culture and situation
5. Explain how cultures evolve and persist
6. Discuss differences across cultures in human development and socialization
7. Explain how culture influences how we think about ourselves and relate with others
8. Contrast holistic and analytic thinking
9. Explain how culture influences thoughts about morality and fairness
10. Discuss how culture influences our mental health
11. Understand issues and perspectives regarding social categories of ourselves and others such as (dis)abilities, age, religion, race, class, ethnicity, gender, and/or sexual orientation (adapted from BSU Core Curriculum)
12. Understand the role of power and privilege in shaping human conditions (BSU Core Curriculum)
13. Recognize, understand, and respect the complexity of sociocultural and international diversity (APA Goal 8. Sociocultural and International Awareness)
14. Enhance written and oral communication skills
15. Enhance information literacy through reading and reflecting upon scholarly research

**Course conduct:** Due to the nature and content of this course, it is absolutely imperative that we maintain a respectful classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Please keep the following in mind:

- Class participation is required in this course, and I expect all students to help make the classroom atmosphere conducive to discussion. I expect all speakers and potential speakers to be treated with respect, and all who wish to speak are free to voice their opinions as long as it can be done in an educational rather than an abusive or hurtful way. If you feel that a classmate has created a threatening or uncomfortable atmosphere, please come speak to me immediately.

- Do not use your cell phone while in class. Don't forget to silence it before class begins! Research shows that many people think they can use their phone and listen to something else at the same time effectively, but people are actually very poor at this kind of multitasking. Do not keep your cell phone on your desk, as message notifications are irresistible. There is generally no need to use your laptop in class, as it will limit your ability to participate. There may be occasional days where having a laptop is useful, and I will let you know of that ahead of time so that you don't have to bring your laptop to class every day.
- You are responsible for your own learning. You should think of the role of the instructor as a guide and helpful ally, but you must be proactive if you actually want to learn the material and do well in this course. You are also responsible for making sure you understand the expectations of you in this class and asking for clarification if you do not.

**Attendance** Any student who exceeds three unexcused absences will be a candidate for withdrawal from the course as you will have missed a significant portion of our class meeting time. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get in touch with a classmate to find out what you missed. You are responsible for information covered in class. It is recommended that you arrange to get notes from a classmate.

**E-mail** – You are responsible for all e-mail communications sent by your instructor and your classmates to your BSU e-mail account, per the University's [E-mail as an Official Means of Communication to Students](#) policy. It is important that you periodically check your BSU e-mail so that you do not miss important communications from your instructor and classmates.

**Late Assignments** – For each day that an assignment is late, your grade for that assignment will be dropped a full letter grade (ex. If you were to receive a B for an assignment grade, your grade would be dropped to a C).

**Special Circumstances** – Bridgewater State University is committed to ensuring equal academic opportunities and inclusion for students. If you have any special circumstances that might impact your participation, success, and/or comfort in class, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. These may include (but are not limited to) having a documented disability, involvement in upcoming religious observances, speaking English as a second language, etc. Any student who due to a documented disability needs special accommodations to participate in class and/or complete assignments should made to the instructor during the add/drop period so that reasonable accommodations can be made. If you have not done so already, please register with the [Disabilities Resources Office in the Academic Achievement Center](#), which is responsible for coordinating accommodations and services for students with disabilities.

**Getting Help:** I am available during office hours, by appointment, and by email. For responses that may take more than five minutes to respond, please schedule an appointment with me to discuss in person or stop by my office hours.

**Academic honesty** is expected of all students. Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, disruption of teaching or research, dishonest practices in connection with examinations and disruptive classroom behaviors.

**Plagiarism:** copying another person's work (in any form, including images, web pages, textbooks, etc., without giving credit is plagiarism). Copying the exact words and giving credit is still plagiarism unless you indicate which words are yours and which words are the other persons' by means of quotation marks. As a rule of thumb, do not copy more than three

consecutive words. Rephrase any ideas into your own words. A copy machine can duplicate material. You are a scholar who must think about (rephrase) an idea to own it. I check for plagiarism. I most often find copying the author's words without using quotation marks. The most common reason is that "the author expresses it better than I can." You are doing the paper to learn how to express yourself well, not to copy. Rephrase, rephrase, rephrase.

### **Assignments to Evaluate Your Learning:**

**In-Class Activities and Participation (100 points):** throughout the course, we will engage in various discussions, class activities, etc. Such activities provide insight and understanding into the course material that a lecture format cannot necessarily provide. For this reason, I integrate these activities into the class grading format. For these assignments, you will typically be asked to write and speak about a topic. You must be present and participate to get credit. Late assignments will NOT be accepted, so do not forget to turn in and written material when you leave. Every absence over two will result in a 5-point deduction from your participation grade. You will also lose points if you leave early, arrive late, or have to be reminded to not use your cell phone.

**Reading Reflections (100 points):** You will have written reflections to ensure you keep up with the reading and are prepared for class. Reflections should be one page single-spaced. There will often be specific questions associated with each reflection. The instructions for each reflection will be posted on Blackboard. Individuals will take turns throughout the semester (**via random selection**) reading their response papers aloud to the class to begin our discussions. Reflections are due on the day that we discuss that reading. You may not submit a response paper if you are not in class, and they will not be accepted late because they are meant to inform your participation in class discussions. Completing each reflection will earn you five points. The remainder of points will be based on the quality of the papers you read to the class (**chosen randomly**). Check-plus entries will be insightful and reflective on the reading, raising interesting points/questions for discussion, including examples of key ideas, and written clearly. Check entries will be adequate reflections on the reading, clearly demonstrating that you completed the reading and thought about it. Check-minus entries will be sparse reflections on the reading or on only part of the reading.

**Group Research Presentation (100 points).** You will work in groups of four or five to explore a particular culture in greater depth. As a group, you will decide which culture to research. Each group needs to choose a different culture. Each group member will choose one of the following aspects of the culture to research (motivation/self-esteem/agency; mental health; morality/religion/justice; development/parenting/education; interpersonal attraction/dating/marriage; self-concept/personality, cognition/perception). The following assignments are designed to prepare you for your group presentation.

1) Annotated Bibliography (20 points): Find three peer reviewed journal articles on the topic you will be researching. Begin each annotation with a citation in APA style. Summarize in your own words the main purpose of the article. What is the question the authors are answering? Next summarize the methodology. How do they go about answering the question? Do they conduct an experiment, a survey, review the literature, etc. What are the main findings?

2) Topic paper (40 points): Write a 3-page paper that synthesizes the information from your annotated bibliography and concepts from your assigned readings and the lecture material. Be sure to use in-text citations using APA citation style. The more you integrate material from lectures and readings the higher the grade.

3) Presentation (40 points): Working with group members develop a presentation that effectively summarizes the information learned about the culture you and your group members researched.

GRADE	DESCRIPTION	4-POINT EQUIVALENT	100-POINT
A	Superior	4.0	90 - 100
B	Good	3.0	80 - 89
C	Satisfactory	2.0	70 - 79
D	Poor	1.0	60-69
F	Failure	0.0	0-59

Day	Date	Topic	Assignment
1		What is Cultural Psychology?	
2		Cultural Evolution <b>Choose Groups</b>	<a href="#">Biswas-Diener, R., &amp; Thin, N. (2017).</a> Culture. In R. Biswas-Diener & E. Diener (Eds), Noba textbook series: Psychology. Champaign, IL: DEF publishers.  <b>Reading reflection 1 Due</b>
3		Methods and Ethics	<b>Find journal article</b>
4		Methods and Ethics	Cohen, D., Nisbett, R. E., Bowdle, B. F., & Schwarz, N. (1996). Insult, aggression, and the southern culture of honor: An experimental ethnography. <i>Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 70</i> (5), 945-959.  <b>Reading reflection (article review) 2</b>
5		Development and Socialization	<b>Bring Journal article to class</b> <a href="#">Chen, C.S., &amp; Farruggia, S. (2002).</a> Culture and adolescent development. Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 6(1). <a href="#">Eyetsemitan, F. (2002).</a> Life-span developmental psychology: Midlife and later years in western and non-Western societies. Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 6(2). <b>Reading reflection 3</b>
6		Self, Personality, & Motivation	Heine, S. J., & Buchtel, E. E. (2009). Personality: The universal and the culturally specific. <i>Annual Review of Psychology, 60</i> , 369-394. <b>Reading reflection 4</b>

Day	Date	Topic	Assignment
7		Self, Personality, & Motivation	<b>Work on synthesizing articles</b>
8		Gender	<a href="#">Brown, C.S., &amp; Jewell, J.A. (2017). Gender. In R. Biswas-Diener &amp; E. Diener (Eds), Noba textbook series: Psychology. Champaign, IL: DEF publishers.</a> <b>Reading reflection 5</b>
9		Culture and Relationships	Rattan, A., & Ambady, N. (2013). Diversity ideologies and intergroup relations: An examination of colorblindness and multiculturalism. <i>European Journal of Social Psychology, 43</i> (1), 12-21. <b>Reading reflection 6</b>
10		Culture and relationships	<a href="#">Georgas, J. (2003). Family: Variations and changes across culture. <i>Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 6</i>(3).</a> <a href="#">Karandashev, V. (2015). A cultural perspective on romantic love. <i>Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 5</i>(4).</a> <a href="#">Baumgarte, R. (2016). Conceptualizing cultural variations in close friendships. <i>Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 5</i>(4).</a> <b>Reading reflection 7</b>
11		Work on topic paper	<b>APA Style</b>
12		Cognition and Perception	Nisbett, R. E., Peng, K., Choi, I., & Norenzayan, A. (2001). Culture and systems of thought: holistic versus analytic cognition. <i>Psychological Review, 108</i> (2), 291-310. <b>Reading reflection 8</b>
13		Cognition and Perception	In class work on topic paper
14		Morality, Religion, and Justice	<a href="#">Cohen, A.B. (2011). Religion and culture. <i>Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 4</i>(4). (https://doi.org/10.9707/2307-0919.1108)</a> Haidt, J., & Joseph, C. (2004). Intuitive ethics: How innately prepared intuitions generate culturally variable virtues. <i>Daedalus, 133</i> (4), 55-66. <b>Reading reflection 9</b>
15		Group work	<b>Topic Paper Due</b>
16		Mental Health	<a href="#">Suh, E.M., &amp; Oishi, S. (2002). Subjective well-being across cultures. <i>Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 10</i>(1).</a> <a href="#">Marsella, A.J. (2003). Cultural aspects of depressive experience and disorders. <i>Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, 10</i>(2).</a>

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
			<b>Reading reflection 10</b>
<b>17</b>		Mental Health	<b>Group work</b>
<b>18</b>		<b>Presentations</b>	
<b>19</b>		<b>Presentations</b>	
<b>20</b>		<b>Presentations</b>	