

PSY 251E Cultural Psychology

Course Description

This course has been designed to offer a comprehensive view of Cultural Psychology with its most important phenomena, theoretical dilemmas, research methodologies and applications. We will approach these issues through a continuous navigating between theoretical developments and specific cases or examples, including those from the everydayness of our daily lives.

Course Goals and Methodology

This course addresses the following goals:

- Understand what cultural psychology consists of, and why it is useful.
- Understand the general dynamics characterizing the relationship between subjects and cultures.
- Understand how these influences take place during the process of development, and become aware of the risk of ethnocentrism.
- Be able to apply what you learn to your daily life, learning to reflect about what is “normal” in relation to your perception of reality, and of yourself.

The topics to work on include cognition, human development, emotions, the self, and cultural values. In the case of each of these topics, a principal focus of analysis will be whether the particular psychological processes and behaviors in question, at both individual and collective levels, can be explained more fully in culture-specific or universalistic terms, and how they are related to the salient characteristics of the cultural-historical context in which they are embedded. Specific research and intervention projects which run in different contexts (education, work-place, immigration policies) will also be presented and discussed. To give the class a relevant outlook, the bibliography studied will include both classic readings in the discipline as well as emergent new trends.

In order to achieve a meaningful understanding of the concepts involved in the subject, we will combine different materials such as teacher expositions, analysis of scientific articles, student’s project presentations, class debates and films. Student’s participation will be fostered and required.

Learning Objectives

After this course you will be able to:

- Understand the dynamic interaction between culture and individuals
- Understand how these dynamics permeate our psychological functions, but also ourselves, our daily lives, and our perception of “normality”.
- Use concrete terms to discuss these dynamics, appropriating theoretical concepts and using them in relation to real-life examples.
- Think critically about different possibilities concerning perceptions of what is normal in terms of development, and of psychological functioning.
- The most important goal is to become able to bring the theory you learn to concrete use, understanding everyday phenomena from the perspective of cultural psychology.

Required Texts

Introduction:

- Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world?. Behavioral and brain sciences, 33(2-3), 61-83.

Unit 1:

- Shiraev, E. B., & Levy, D. A. (2020). Cross-cultural psychology: Critical thinking and contemporary applications. Routledge. Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

Unit 2:

- Shiraev, E. B., & Levy, D. A. (2020). Cross-cultural psychology: Critical thinking and contemporary applications. Routledge. Chapter 4.

Unit 3:

- Shiraev, E. B., & Levy, D. A. (2020). Cross-cultural psychology: Critical thinking and contemporary applications. Routledge. Chapters 6 and 7.
- Ekman, P., & Cordaro, D. (2011). What is meant by calling emotions basic. Emotion review, 3(4), 364-370.
- Cordaro, D. T., Sun, R., Keltner, D., Kamble, S., Huddar, N., & McNeil, G. (2018). Universals and cultural variations in 22 emotional expressions across five cultures. Emotion, 18(1), 75.
- Diener, E., Oishi, S., & Ryan, K. L. (2012). Universals and cultural differences in the causes and structure of happiness: A multilevel review. Mental well-being: International contributions to the study of positive mental health, 153-176.

Unit 4:

- Shiraev, E. B., & Levy, D. A. (2020). Cross-cultural psychology: Critical thinking and contemporary applications. Routledge. Chapter 8.
- Ang, S., Van Dyne, L., & Rockstuhl, T. (2015). Cultural intelligence: Origins, conceptualization, evolution, and methodological diversity. In M. J. Gelfand, C.-Y. Chiu, & Y.-Y. Hong (Eds.), Handbook of advances in culture and psychology, Vol. 5, pp. 273–323). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190218966.003.0006>

Course Requirements and Grading

Students will be evaluated on their ability to articulate and critically apply the terms, concepts and theories from class and readings verbally, during class discussions, as well as in writing, on exams and in written assignments.

The final grade for the course is comprised of the following:

- Student's Engagement (20%)
- Activities (20%)
- Mid-term exam (20%)
- Final exam (20%)
- Research project (20%)

Student's Engagement (20%)

Student's engagement will correspond to the 20% and will include: Attendance, Preparation, Participation, Attentiveness and Respect, and Collaboration and Feedback. Students will receive two engagement grades: a mid-term grade (10%) and an end-of-semester grade (10%).

An engagement rubric is provided to ensure transparent and consistent grading.

Activities (20%)

Students can choose one of the subjects from the four units to delve into it and share it with the class. For each unit, the teacher will suggest several proposals. In order to participate, students must carry out two tasks. Firstly, students must send to the teacher an essay of 1-2 pages with the following content: why the topic has been chosen, schedule of the presentation, and how the presentation is going to help in the understanding of the topic. Secondly, and once the idea is approved by the teacher, this activity will be included in one class. Therefore, students must present to the rest of their classmates, for a minimum of 10 minutes and a maximum of 15 minutes their proposal. To delve into a topic, students have several ways to do so: include a practical case, deeply explain a theory, create a class dynamic, share visual examples (through series, movies, etc.), and other options that can be proposed by students. The rubric that the professor will use to evaluate these presentations, and the presentations of students will be available on the virtual platform. This activity can be done by one student or a couple.

Mid-term exam (20%)

You will have short questions as well as multiple choice questions, about theoretical concepts and chapters of the book presented by the teacher and by the students. Compulsory readings, and presentations used by the teacher and by students in class are study materials for this exam.

Final exam (20%)

You will have short questions as well as multiple choice questions, about theoretical concepts and the research projects and chapters of the book presented by the teacher and by the students. Compulsory readings, and all presentations used by the teacher and by students in class are study materials for this exam.

Research project (20%)

In this project, students will be in groups (max. 3 or 4 students) to conduct any personal project from a Cultural Psychology perspective. This project can take manifold forms, it is open to creativity, and innovative ideas are welcome, although a qualitative methodology based on interviews must be followed and thematic lines will be preferred. The professor will give students feedback on four occasions planned in schedule. Feedback will be about:

1. Groups creation and idea development
2. Method
3. Results
4. Discussion

These projects will be presented in class, during the last classes, in a maximum number of minutes (10-15) followed by some questions.

10% will correspond to feedback sessions whereas the other 10% will correspond to the final presentation. Thus, the first 10% will be individually whereas the second 10% will be share by all components (unless expressly requested by all team members before the final presentation).

General Course Policies

Each student is expected to be familiar with the course syllabus. Students are expected to focus their full attention on the class, arrive on time, and stay until class ends. Leaving the classroom on repeated occasions is disturbing to both your professor and your classmates and may adversely affect your participation grade. Please make use of the 10-minute breaks in between classes to fill up your water bottle, use the restroom, etc.

Students are expected to listen and respect other points of view. Phone calls, social media, email, or Internet browsing at any time during class are not acceptable during class except for specific class-related activity expressly approved by your instructor. You are responsible for any and all course material covered in class, announcements, and/or handouts if you are not present for any reason. Students will be held responsible to be up to date by attending to class regularly and checking both email and the Blackboard site of the course frequently (monitor your email and Blackboard announcements at least once every 24 hours).

Communicating with instructor: Please allow at least 48 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails. The weekend is not included in this timeframe. If you have an urgent request or question for your professor, be sure to send it during the week.

Absences and lack of engagement

Attendance is mandatory at all classes.

Absences during the add/drop period do not count against students' engagement grade but may impact their performance in the course.

As a consistent lack of academic engagement may raise concerns about a student's overall academic performance, the following steps will be taken in order to support students' success:

Initial outreach – after missing 3 classes

E-mail from professor reiterating engagement policy and consequences for additional absences.

Second outreach – after missing 4 classes

E-mail from professor and notification of academic staff at the International office.

Academic probation – after missing 6 classes

Student is called in for a meeting with academic staff at the International office. Automatic notification of home institution and further academic consequences.

Any additional absences will result in a failing grade.

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is a guiding principle for all academic activity at Pablo de Olavide University. Cheating on exams and plagiarism (which includes copying from the Internet) are clear violations of academic honesty. A student is guilty of plagiarism when he or she presents another person's intellectual property as his or her own. The penalty for plagiarism and cheating is a failing grade for the assignment/exam and a failing grade for the course. The International Center may also report this to your home university. Avoid plagiarism by citing sources properly, using footnotes and a bibliography, and not cutting and pasting information from various websites when writing assignments.

Learning Accommodations

If you require special accommodations or have any other medical condition you deem may affect your class performance, you must stop by the International Center to speak to the Faculty Coordinator to either turn in your documentation or to confirm that our office has received it. The Faculty Coordinator will explain the options available to you.

Behavior Policy

Students are expected to show integrity and act in a professional and respectful manner at all times. A student's attitude in class may influence his/her participation grade. The professor has a right to ask a student to leave the classroom if the student is unruly or appears intoxicated. If a student is asked to leave the classroom, that day will count as an absence regardless of how long the student has been in class.

About using Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The use of AI tools such as grammar checkers, ChatGPT, etc. and automatic translation tools is prohibited unless expressly permitted by the instructor to enhance the students' learning experience. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the unacknowledged use of these tools to create content submitted as one's own. If the use of any of these tools is suspected, the instructor may request notes and other materials used in preparing assignments. Students must retain these materials until final grades are posted. Failure to produce these materials when requested may negatively impact the student's grades.

Course Contents

- **Unit 1.** Theories of Cultural Psychology.
- **Unit 2.** Cognition.
- **Unit 3.** Emotion & Motivation.
- **Unit 4.** Development and education.



RUBRIC

Criteria	Exemplary (9-10)	Proficient (7-8)	Passing (5-6)	Poor (0-4)
Attendance	Arrives on time and stays for the entire duration of class. No absences, or if absent once, demonstrates knowledge of course material missed.	Misses no more than two sessions or is occasionally late. Demonstrates knowledge of course material missed.	Misses 3 or 4 sessions or frequently arrives late/leaves early; exhibits little knowledge/interest regarding course material missed.	Misses 5 or more sessions and does not demonstrate knowledge of course material missed.
Preparation	Consistently well-prepared; demonstrates deep understanding of readings and completes assignments.	Usually prepared; completes readings with some understanding and usually completes assignments.	Occasionally prepared. Demonstrates limited understanding of materials and occasionally completes assignments.	Rarely prepared; minimal effort to engage with course materials.
Participation	Actively participates in discussions with thoughtful comments/questions; demonstrates knowledge of the material and critical thinking skills.	Participates often demonstrating knowledge of material and critical thinking skills.	Participates once in a while or contributions lack depth or relevance.	Does not participate or is disruptive during discussions.
Attentiveness & Respect	Fully engaged and attentive during all sessions; respectful to professor and fellow students. Use of laptop/tablet for notetaking only; no cellphone use.	Generally attentive, with very infrequent lapses in focus and use of electronic devices for non-class related purposes. Respectful to professor and fellow students.	Occasionally inattentive or disengaged. Use of electronic devices for non-class related purposes thus showing disrespect towards professor and fellow students.	Rarely attentive, focused or responsive. Repeated use of electronic devices for non-class related purposes thus showing disrespect towards professor and fellow students.
Collaboration & Feedback	Effectively collaborates with peers in group or in-class activities following professor's instructions. Incorporates feedback to improve learning & performance.	Collaborates frequently with peers or in in-class activities. Incorporates feedback and makes moderate efforts to improve learning & performance.	Occasionally works well with peers but does not contribute substantially to in-class or group assignments. Responds to feedback inconsistently with minimal improvement.	Does not collaborate with peers, does not complete in-class or group assignments. Ignores feedback.