



## PSY 251E Cultural Psychology

Professor: Rubén Díaz  
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Office Hours: Any time by email; appointments preferred to have an online meeting

### Course Information:

Spring 2021

*On-line classes:*

Wed, 4pm – 5:45pm (CET)  
(from Jan, 27<sup>th</sup> to Feb, 25<sup>th</sup>)

*On-site classes:*

Mon/Wed, 11pm – 12:45pm (CET)  
from Mar, 5<sup>th</sup> to Apr, 15<sup>th</sup>

### Course Description

This course aims at exploring a comprehensive approach 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.

This course will be taught both online and on-site (except for those few who will follow this whole course online).

### 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 methodological approaches such lectures, analysis of scientific articles, student's presentations and discussion, both synchronous and asynchronous 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.
- Apply a theoretical framework to understand everyday phenomena from the perspective of cultural psychology.

## Required Texts

There is no textbook required for this course. Therefore, students are not expected to purchase any material. The instructor will post the class material on Blackboard. To log in, you need to sign in on <https://campusvirtual.upo.es>.

The contents of the course are mainly but not only based on the following academic sources:

- Assmann, A. (2006). Memory, Individual and Collective. In Oxford Handbooks Online. Oxford University Press.
- Boesch, E. E. (1996). The seven flaws of cross-cultural psychology. The story of conversion. *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 3(1), 2-10.
- Bruner, J. (2008). Culture and mind: Their fruitful incommensurability. *Ethos*, 36(1), 29-45.
- Bruner, J. S. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Harvard University Press.
- Cole, M. (1996): Cultural Psychology. A once and future discipline. Harvard University Press
- Cole, M. (2009). The illusion of culture-free intelligence testing. Retrieved from <http://communication.ucsd.edu/MCA/Paper/Cole/iq.html>.
- Cole, M., Cole, S. R., & Lightfoot, C. (2005). *The development of children*. Macmillan.
- Cubero, M. de la Mata, M. and Cubero, R. (2008). Activity Settings, Discourse Modes and Ways of Understanding: On the Heterogeneity of Verbal Thinking, *Culture & Psychology*, 14 (4), 403-430.
- De la Mata, ML., Santamaría, A., & Ruiz, M. L. (2016). Toward the Model of Independence The Influence of Formal Schooling Experience on Earliest Autobiographical Memories and Self-Construals. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 47(5), 670-679.
- Hammack, P. (2010). The cultural psychology of Palestinian youth: A narrative approach, *Culture & Psychology*, 16(4)507–537.
- Heine, S. J. (2015). *Cultural Psychology*. International Student Edition. Norton & Company.
- Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Noranyazan A. (2010) The weirdest people in the world. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 1 - 75.
- Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). Most people are not WEIRD. *Nature*, 466(7302), 29-29.
- Keith, K. D. (Ed.). (2011). Cross-cultural psychology: Contemporary themes and perspectives. John Wiley & Sons.

- Kitayama, S. & Cohen, D. (2007): Handbook of Cultural Psychology. New York: The Guilford Press
- Kitayama, S., & Cohen, D. (2007). Handbook of cultural psychology. New York: Guilford Press.
- Macías, B., García, J., & Sánchez, J.A. (2008). Cultural identity and immigration. In B. VanOers; E. Elbers; R. Van der Veer and W. Wardekker (Eds.). *The transformation of learning. Perspectives from activity theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Macías, B.; García, J.; Sánchez, J.A; Marco, M.J. (2010). Literacy and the formation of cultural identity. *Theory and Psychology*. 20 (2), pp. 231 - 250.
- Markus, H. R. (2016). What moves people to action? Culture and motivation. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 8, 161-166.
- Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (2010). Cultures and selves a cycle of mutual constitution. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5(4), 420-430.
- Martínez, V.; Sánchez, J.A.; Goudena, P.P.A (2011). Cross-Cultural study of observed conflicts between young children. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*. 42(6), 895-907.
- Matsumoto, D. (2001). Cross-cultural psychology in the 21st century. The many faces of psychological research in the 21st century: Society for the Teaching of Psychology, 98-115.
- Matsumoto, D., & Juang, L. (2016). *Culture and Psychology* (6th edition). Boston, MA, Wadsworth Publishing.
- Nelson, K., & Fivush, R. (2004). The emergence of autobiographical memory: a social cultural developmental theory. *Psychological review*, 111(2), 486.
- Oyserman, D. (2017). Culture Three Ways: Culture and Subcultures within countries. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 68(1), 435 - 463.
- Prinz, J. (2004). Which emotions are basic?. *Emotion, evolution, and rationality*, 69, 88.
- Ratner, C. (2008). Cultural Psychology and Qualitative Methodology: Scientific and Political Considerations, *Culture & Psychology*, 14 (3), 259-288.
- Rogoff, B. (2003). *The cultural nature of Human development*. Oxford University Press.
- Rogoff, B. (2012). Learning without lessons: Opportunities to expand knowledge. *Infancia y Aprendizaje*, 35(2), 233 - 252.
- Rogoff, B. (2012). Learning without lessons: Opportunities to expand knowledge. *Infancia y Aprendizaje*, 35(2), 233 - 252.
- Rosa, A., & Valsiner, J. (2018) *The Cambridge handbook of sociocultural psychology*. Cambridge University Press
- Rosling, H. (2019). *Factfulness*. Flammarion.
- Segall, M. H., Campbell, D. T., & Herskovits, M. J. (1966). The influence of culture on visual perception (p. 184). Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.
- Shweder, R. A. (1999). Why cultural psychology? *Ethos*, 27(1), 62-73.
- Tomasello, M. (2009). *The cultural origins of human cognition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Valsiner, J. (2009): Cultural Psychology Today: Innovations and Oversights. *Culture & Psychology*, 15(1), 5-39.
- Valsiner, J. (2014). *The Oxford handbook of culture and psychology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wertsch, J. V., & Tulviste, P. (1992). L. S. Vygotsky and contemporary developmental psychology. *Developmental Psychology*, 28, 548-557.

## **Course Requirements and Grading**

### *Participation (20%)*

Discussions will be encouraged at all sessions. This portion of the final grade will therefore be assessed according to the students' previous work and reflections about the provided material. In order to prove their preparation, students are required not only to attend all of the sessions but also to participate by asking and answering questions with relevant basis (text-based and not just random personal experience and background), engaging in synchronous/asynchronous discussions and conversations with classmates, and questioning information presented and discussed. Also, students are expected to participate in weekly discussions on Blackboard, which are essential for instructor and students to interact, reflect, and exchange ideas as part of the teaching and learning process. Every unit will be further discussed in specific fora managed by the instructor. Students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of the topic of discussion through critical thinking, higher-order thinking, and uniqueness of contribution. Likewise, students are expected to contribute to community building through collaboration and connection with other students, using proper netiquette and mechanics of writing, and keep timeliness and participation with posts/replies.

### *Mid-term and Final Exams (40%)*

Exams are aimed at evaluating both the students' specific knowledge of the topics covered in class and their ability to analyze and provide insightful reflections on the material presented in the readings. Questions will cover the contents of the related section/s of the syllabus (\*the final will NOT be cumulative) and focus on establishing thematic links between units. Each exam will be worth 20% of your grade. More details will be given about each test closer to the exam date. The final exam's date will be announced in class.

### *Presentation (15%)*

Students are required to prepare 20-minute presentations on one of the readings assigned by the instructor. This presentation will be graded on evidence of preparation (organized presentation, presentation flows well, no awkward pauses or confusion, evidence you did your own research), content (accurate & relevant information, appeared knowledgeable about the case study and the topic discussed, offered strategies for dealing with the problems identified in the case study), delivery (clear and logical organization, effective introduction and conclusion, creativity, relevant transitions between the different parts of the presentation, oral communication skills, well-designed presentation slides, use attractive, relevant and illustrative images), and discussion (presenter initiates questions for discussion concerning the reading, use of visual aids).

### *Final paper + Final paper presentation (25%)*

Students are required to write and present a paper of 6-8 pages that tackles a specific topic related to the field of knowledge of the course from a list of prompts provided by the instructor. Students will receive feedback and direction from the instructor by both email and online meetings. This paper is to be typed, double-spaced, using black 11-point Arial font, or 12-point Times New Roman. Please abide by the deadline set by your professor. If you submit your paper after the due date, then you should expect to be penalized (5% for every working day that your paper is late). Your papers should be clear and concise using proper concepts, correct spelling, and appropriate attribution for all sources. All writing is to follow the American Psychological Association (APA) Style for citations.

Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

- Participation (20%)
- Mid-term Exam (20%)
- Final Exam (20%)
- Presentation (15%)
- Final paper + Presentation (25%)

Final Grade Expectations: The instructor will use the Spanish 10-point grading scale. The grades that will appear on your final transcript are also Spanish grades.

- Grade A/A- (9-10) — Outstanding performance showing a thorough knowledge and understanding of the topics of the course. The best possible grade.
- Grade B+/B (8-9) — Remarkable performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics. Next highest.
- Grade B/B- (7-8) — Good performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics. Indicates high average performance.
- Grade C+/C (6-7) — Fairly good performance showing an understanding of the course on a basic level. Indicates low average performance.
- Grade C/C- (5-6) — Passable performance showing a general and superficial understanding of the course's topics. Lowest passing grade
- Grade F (0-5) — Unsatisfactory performance in all assessed criteria. Failing grade.

Please be aware that anything below a 5 (i.e. a C- on the U.S. scale) is a failing grade. There is no pass/fail option at UPO. If you do not officially withdraw from a class by the withdrawal deadline, a failing grade will appear next to the course name. Check out the Student Handbook for the grade conversion table (some universities may use a slightly different scale).

### **Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory at all classes, both online and on-site. All absences must be justified by a doctor's note (signed, stamped and dated). More than one unjustified absence will adversely affect your final grade. Professors will keep track of each student's attendance and active participation during the course. Students are expected to have their webcams turned on during the online sessions.

### **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 Rubén Díaz (rdialop@acu.upo.es) to either turn in your documentation or to confirm that our office has received it. The deadline is January 29. Rubén 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.

### **Course Contents**

Unit 1. Introducing Cultural Psychology  
 Unit 2. Biocultural Foundations  
 Unit 3. Cultural Learning and Human Development  
 Unit 4. Culture and Cognition  
 Unit 5. Emotion and Motivation  
 Unit 6. Culture and Gender  
 Unit 7. Culture and Health

### **Class Schedule**

#### Week 1 (Jan, 27)

##### *Introducing Cultural Psychology*

Course presentation. An Introduction to Culture and Psychology

What are we talking about when we talk about *Cultural Psychology*?

Origins of the field: Wundt's *Völkerpsychologie* and Vygotsky's cultural-historical psychology

#### Week 2 (Feb, 3)

##### *Biocultural Foundations*

Biological and Cultural Inheritance: the nature-nurture debate

Week 3 (Feb, 10)

*Cultural Learning and Human Development (1)*  
Culture and Developmental Processes

Week 4 (Feb, 17)

*Cultural Learning and Human Development (2)*  
Enculturation  
Culture, Language, and Communication

Week 5 (Feb, 24)

*Culture Cognition (1)*  
Attention, Sensation, and Perception  
Mid-term review + Mid-term exam

Week 6 (Mar, 3)

*Culture Cognition (2)*  
Thinking, Consciousness, and Intelligence  
Culture and Memory

Week 7 (Mar, 8 & Mar, 10)

*Emotion and Motivation*  
The Cultural Construction of Emotional Experience  
Culture and Organizations: Motivation and Productivity

Week 8 (Mar, 15 & Mar, 17)

*Culture and Gender*  
Culture, Gender Roles, and Stereotype

Week 9 (Mar, 22 & Mar, 24)

*Culture and Health*  
Cultural Differences and Health

Week 10 (Apr, 5 & Apr, 7)

Final paper presentations + Final exam review

***Final exam period: April, 13-15***

*This syllabus is subject to change.*