

Psychology 459/559: CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGY

12 - 1:20 pm, Mondays and Wednesdays, 166 Lawrence Hall

Professor: Gerard Saucier, Ph.D.

Office: 425 Straub Hall

E-mail: gsaucier@uoregon.edu

Phone: 346-4927

Office Hours: Mondays 1:30 - 3 pm (come in person or come on Zoom, either will work)

Course TA: Cameron Kay, ckay@uoregon office hours Wednesdays 9-11 am (see Canvas for zoom link)

Text: Heine, Steven J. (2020). *Cultural psychology* (4th ed.). New York: Norton (*plus a few other readings made available via canvas*)

Course Objectives (Purpose of Course), Expected Learning Outcomes, Estimated Student Workload

Welcome to cultural psychology! This course explores the way that groups of humans form and maintain shared, transmittable bodies of the norms, beliefs, values, practices, and the like, and how such ‘cultural models’ affect individual thought, feeling, and behavior. It conveys a high-validity knowledge-base, taking a *global, international* perspective on culture and psychology, though with some applications to cultural differences within the USA. The course format is primarily a series of talks (i.e., lecture), with some discussion opportunity and/or in-class exercises at *every* session. *This course has extensive readings; you’re expected to read everything assigned.*

Expected learning outcomes include: (a) knowledge useful to you in any future endeavor that involves interacting with people from different backgrounds, and (b) insight into your own ways of thinking, interacting, and organizing your time with an increased awareness of how your mindset and your way of life reflects particular cultural models as well as a certain few cross-cultural universals. Moreover (c) you will likely increase your appreciation for what is variable or malleable in persons around the world, both within and across cultures, but also your appreciation for what humans have in common, increasing capacity for useful critical thinking about human behavior, but also increasing interest, respect, and compassion for people from all backgrounds.

When you complete this course, you will earn 4 credits toward your degree. Four credits are the equivalent of 120 hours of work across the term, or 12 hours per week for 10 weeks. You will spend 3 hours engaged with class sessions each week. The other 9 hours will be spent completing reading assignments, researching and writing for papers, and studying for quizzes and exams. Most weeks you should plan to spend about 6 hours on reading and quiz preparations. Your workload will increase when you are studying for the midterm and the final exam, and when you are working on your written assignments.

Assignments and Grading

Your ***final course grade*** is based on the following (percentage of final grade, then maximum points shown):

- 8% ...credit for four “advance-reading responses” (40 points, 10 for each credited response)
- 6% ... discussion-group credit (30 points) (9 each for the 1st and 2nd, and 6 each for the 3rd and 4th participated in)
- 2% ...class attendance credit (10 points)
- 6% ...grade on early-in-term exploration paper (30 points)
- 4% ...grade on outline/abstract of your research paper (20 points)
- 20% ...grade on final version of research paper (100 points)
- 20% ...score on the midterm quiz (100 points)
- 34% ...score on final exam (170 points)

This point system is designed to make the credit totals show well online on Canvas. Maximum total for course: 500 points. What follows is more detail on each of these components (a guide to doing well in the course).

The ***exams*** – both midterm quiz and final – consist of a multiple-choice-and-true-false section (80% of the point total for the exam) concentrating on key concepts (definitions and examples of them), followed by a set of open-ended ‘three-sentence-response’ questions (20% of the point total for the exam). Open-ended questions come from among the “rather big questions” listed at the end of this syllabus. They are these exact questions, though they may be revised during the term to increase clarity. Open-ended questions on the ***midterm exam*** will be drawn from among the earlier set of the big questions; those on the ***final exam*** will be from the later set. Open-ended responses have a three-sentence limit. Multiple-choice and true-false items especially emphasize

material covered both in assigned readings and in class. A study guide is issued about a week before each exam.

Advance-Reading Responses are responses to assigned readings. They should be sent electronically to the course TA, via submission on Canvas. They are due at 2 pm on class days, thus the reading response is due, essentially, at the beginning of the class meeting (that meeting associated with a given reading). The purpose of advance-reading responses is manifold: to stimulate students to actively engage with readings *in advance*, to be earlier and better prepared for class (and exams), and also to provide important raw material for educative group discussions. The length for an advance-reading response is exactly one (full, can be single- or double-spaced) page of text for each. Each reading response must be based on the assigned readings for an *upcoming* due date for the reading response. For each reading response, you must refer to the content in the assigned reading for that due date (citing specifically one or more pages in the reading). Here is a guiding framework:

After a sentence or two or three describing some relevant point(s) in what you have read (thus demonstrating accurate knowledge of some content in the reading), use one of these three ‘magic phrases’:

- i. ‘*But here is an important question.*’ Then describe an important question or controversy (related to the relevant point[s]) that has not been (and perhaps will not be easily) answered or settled, OR
- ii. ‘*But here I found something I must question.*’ Describe something -- an idea or finding or inference or assumption or over-simplification or way of labeling or summarizing things -- that you found in the reading (related to the relevant point[s]) that you think is questionable -- and what makes it questionable, OR
- iii. ‘*And here is the most important point in the entire reading for today.*’ Describe something (an idea or finding, related to the relevant point[s]) you think is very important and explain why you think it is more important (has priority over) than one or more other things emphasized elsewhere in the reading. Identify clearly what these other things are, it is *not* enough to just say something is important, say also *what* is *less* important.

To get full credit, your response must address an *upcoming* reading in the class, not something listed for a past date (as of when you submit it). It should include one of the ‘magic phrases’ (or something close). To get full credit for this part of the course, you must complete four advance-reading responses satisfactorily during the term, *and they must be distributed across four time-divisions of the class* (one for each section indicated at the end of the syllabus by code [a] through [d]). You have some freedom in deciding which class sessions or readings to submit reading responses for. But the (a) through (d) distribution does require that you spread them across the term instead of (kind of a bad habit!) waiting till the end of the term to do them all. Reading responses are not accepted late, or for wrong readings for a date. Good idea to try an (a) response in the first two weeks of term.

Structured **discussion-group** exercises will occur in the latter part of some class sessions. Groups turn in the outcome of their discussions/considerations on a topic; aggregate (never identified individual) responses get typically fed back into class content at a subsequent session. These opportunities will arise for each student at six class sessions; they can’t be done outside class sessions. To get full credit for this part of the course you need participation in four of these six. There’s a bit of benefit/reward for participating in all six, though (see next).

There is a bit of **credit for attendance** (2% of grade; 10 points). Not demanding: You automatically get all this credit, unless you are observed to be missing at a *majority* of class sessions. Should you be documented as participating in all six (rather than just the required four) discussion-group opportunities, you automatically get all this credit, but missing one/two of these doesn’t necessarily mean you can’t get all the attendance credit.

The **exploration paper** in this course is intended to help you learn how to notice cultural aspects in everyday behaviors, applying concepts learned in the course to subject matter that is “potentially cultural.” Instructions for this paper will be posted within a week from the start of the course. The paper should have complete sentences, good grammar, reasonable organization, and from 1 ½ to 2 ½ double-spaced pages of text.

The **research paper** is designed to better traditional term papers in terms of advancing student learning, in a couple of ways. *First*, students learn more from the writing experience when they have the opportunity to make use of feedback. *Second*, this research paper involves a structure designed to promote reflection, thoughtfulness, and critical thinking involving the contrast of easily-gotten answers with higher-quality answers in a search for truth. The structure involves identifying easy, common, or merely intuitive answers to important questions, contrasting these answers with better ones identifiable from scientific sources (including one article that is assigned and provided to you), and arriving at a conclusion, perhaps nuanced, that recognizes the complexity of

issues of psychology and/or culture. Here next is the recommended structure for the final version:

1. This short section (2-3 paragraphs) is a kind of introductory preamble. In a sentence or two, identify why the question is important. Then, to set up an interesting background for further investigating your topic, do one of the following three things (whichever seems to you most applicable, no need to do more than one of these):
 - Give an intuitive (typical or commonsense) response and identify its possible inadequacies
 - Give your own initial subjective response (reflecting your own previous relatively uninformed attitude or opinion) response and also identify its possible inadequacies
 - Give a response that a (very much) non-Western person might presumably give, likely not applying here in a Western context (that is, an answer that represents a “a culturally different response”)
2. (in paragraph or two) Describe one or two specific points from course content found in readings or class-session slides, that you believe pertains most to the topic. Mentioning one specific point is usually enough, but if you find the first specific you would mention seems like a minor point, it would be useful to mention a second. What you describe can be from readings OR slides, need not be both. Feel free to look ahead (e.g., via index) to readings we have not yet gotten to in class.
3. (In as many paragraphs as you need) Now look at the assigned article for your topic question, identify how it answers the question, how it goes beyond course-content you just described (in section 2), consider how it *also* (as in section 1) might be wrong as well as right
4. (In as many paragraphs as you need) Identify another article that comes closest to correcting something(s) wrong on the first one, or otherwise adds something different; identify how it helps answer the question and consider how it *also* might be wrong as well as right
5. (In a paragraph or two) Draw a conclusion, including (a) an indication of the degree to which one particular answer is better than the alternative (or all alternatives), and (b) an identification of what more one would need to know in order to arrive at a more definitive answer to the topic question.

Note: In the paper, please number your five (1), (2), (3), (4), (5) but do not reproduce the rest of the instructions above.

The topic for the paper is chosen by you, within the constraints that you must choose a topic from a limited “menu”; there will be 6-10 different topics done by members of the whole class. *Research-paper topics will be focused on some issue on which there are likely to be different points of view.* For each topic, one article will be assigned, and one additional article is chosen by you. Multiple students will be working on the same topic, but there is no joint or group product and no group grade for the research paper. Papers on one topic are evaluated simultaneously, so be sure that, if you are influenced by the thoughts of other students, that contribution is acknowledged accurately and openly (so as to avoid “plagiarism” – see note below). Originality is one of the grading criteria.

A good first step is to come up with some initial reasonable responses for the short section 1 above (you can revise these initial responses later, of course), and explore to find some content for section 2. A good next step would be to then read the assigned article. You might develop a very carefully thought-out response to it – what you agree with and don’t, what you think is well-supported by evidence and what isn’t, what seems logical or illogical, what might be left out – in other words, a first provisional response to section 3 above. At this point you are in a good position to prepare a *research-paper outline or abstract*. The next step would be to find another source (article), and do the same for it; you could do this step before preparing the outline or abstract, but it may be easier to do this afterwards. The research-paper outline/abstract must all fit on one side of one sheet of paper. For the outline/abstract only (not the main research paper) it is OK to use single-spacing if you wish. It should give us (instructor and TA) an idea of the direction you are planning for your paper; the more specific and/or thoughtful the outline/abstract is, the more likely we are going to be able to give you a high quantity of useful feedback. Extremely vague and overly general outlines/abstracts don’t get full credit.

As for the *final research-paper*, the aim is to create a paper that packs a lot of valuable thinking into a relatively brief space. It should be a minimum of five full double-spaced pages in length (not counting reference list), and at a maximum it should not exceed eight full double-spaced pages in length, not counting reference list. It must be double-spaced throughout, and with a size-12 font. You should include (cite, discuss) also the best additional journal article you could find; you’re free to change what you identify as the best additional article after you turn in the outline (in case you identify one there). It must be a journal article, not a book, book chapter, or internet site or page. (Why? Because you should identify a scientifically peer-reviewed source. Otherwise, what you use

may better qualify for section 1 above, rather than section 3!) You are free to cite and reference more than one additional journal article if you wish to. Note that this paper is not an assignment to report or to “critique the article” in all possible ways – instead you are to use these articles in the course of trying to answer in the best possible way the basic question posed by the research-paper topic. Keep focus on that question, that topic.

The final research-paper is graded on the following main criteria:

- A. Is typed, readable, free of gross spelling and typographic errors
- B. Is well-organized and focused (not rambling, or with irrelevant sections)
- C. Has all five sections identified above (your numbering these helps us identify how it does this)
- D. Does a good job of identifying divergent potential points of view regarding the question
- E. Provides a concise description of what main points each article makes that is highly relevant to the topic question. (Not a summary of the article overall, but of details most importantly relevant to the topic question.)
- F. Applies critical thinking to the research approaches described. For example: identifies unwarranted assumptions and faulty premises, failures to define key concepts, opinions treated as evidence, conclusions drawn without evidence or other inappropriate conclusions, discusses how good (relevant, reliable, large effect size, large sample, etc.) is the supporting evidence (or rationale) is, whether some other reasonable interpretation of findings is plausible but has not been ruled out..
- G. Originality – indications are that (at least) the thinking is your own and (at best) it goes beyond and even challenges the “conventional wisdom” or “commonsense view” on aspects of the topic
- H. Includes use of the assigned article(s) and one additional journal article
- I. The citations and reference list in APA style; search <https://library.uoregon.edu> for ‘APA citing style’ to access help on APA styles. *Note:* On paper or abstract/outline: no title page necessary, no binders or covers.

Papers (exploration paper, research paper, also outline/abstract) turned in **late** lose 7% of their points for each weekday not turned in (starting with the due date). With *some* course requirements, alternative arrangements for due dates may be possible but *only when* an authoritative excuse (regarding university-sponsored events, accessible education, religious accommodation, etc.) are made available to instructor before the absence. No late work is accepted after 5 pm on the last day of final-exam week; incomplete-grades are only possible if requested by then and you have extenuating circumstances beyond your control arising after week 7 of the term, and when the work to be made up involves the final paper and/or final exam and nothing previous to that.

Your **final grade** in the course is based on the total of your points (papers, exams, participation, etc.) **A** range is exactly 90.00% or better, **B** range is 80% to 90%, **C** range 70% to 80%, **D** range 60% to 70%, **F**s are less than 60%. ‘+’ and ‘-’ are added to grades if they fall *exactly* in the top 1/3 or bottom 1/3, respectively, of A, B, C, and D range. In terms of points, A is 450-500, B is 400-450, C is 350-400, D is 300-350, and F is under 300. For department standards see: <https://psychology.uoregon.edu/undergraduates/academics/grading-standards>

Special Requirements for Graduate Students (Psychology 559)

There are special requirements for graduate students taking the course as Psychology 559. Psy559 students will engage specifically with each other several times. This will include a joint graduate-student-and-instructor meeting somewhat early in the quarter (typically by about the third or fourth week of the term).

Academic Integrity

This instructor takes academic integrity seriously. Insuring the "validity" of grades requires seeing that they reflect honest work and learning rather than cheating. **Cheating** is defined as providing or accepting information on an exam, plagiarism or copying anyone's written work. Students caught cheating will be given an "F" for the course, and UO's student conduct coordinator will be informed. The instructor retains the right to assign seats for tests, to change individual's seating for test security purposes, to require and check ID for admission to tests. **"Plagiarism"** is basically a form of theft: putting your name on work that is (in any part) not yours, where you have not fully identified the source from which you borrowed. Even taking someone else's ideas or paraphrasing their expression, without acknowledgment, is plagiarism. "Your responsibility, when you put your name on a piece of work, is simply to distinguish between what is yours and what is not, and to credit those who in any way have contributed" (quoting Nancy Cotton of Wake Forest U.).

List of Psych. 459/559 additional readings (in APA style), these will be made available via canvas.

Saucier, G. (2022). *Culture, personality, and the psychology of religion*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill. (pages 1-26, 55-65 only)
Schwartz, S. H. (2012). An overview of the Schwartz theory of basic values. *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2 (1).
Wallace, A. F. C. (1956). Revitalization movements. *American Anthropologist*, 58, 264-281.

PSYCHOLOGY 459 (559) SCHEDULE: What's Happening When

- April 3 Syllabus; overview of the course and introduction to what is ‘cultural’
✓ Reading Assignment (i.e., for session listed on next line below): Heine chs. 1-2
- April 5 (a) Universality and cultural specificity; culture and human nature
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 3, pp. 71-100
- April 10 (a) Cultural learning and cultural evolution; *discussion groups*
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 3, pp. 100-115; Wallace (1956)
- April 12 (a) Cultural innovation, tradition, crisis, revitalization; “unpackaging” culture
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 4
- April 17 (a) Considerations and methods for good cultural-psychology research
EXPLORATION PAPER is due April 19!
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 5
- April 19 (b) Development and socialization in cultural perspective; *discussion groups*
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 6
- April 24 (b) The self in cultural perspective
✓ Reading Assignment: Saucier (2022) pages 1-26 only
- April 26 (b) Personality in cultural perspective; distributive model of culture
May 1 **MIDTERM QUIZ**
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 7
- May 3 (b) Acculturation, multiculturalism; *discussion groups*
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 8; Schwartz (2012)
- May 8 (c) Motivation in cultural perspective
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 9, pp. 335-356
- May 10 (c) Values; cultural effects on (and cultural styles in) cognition and perception
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 9, pp. 357-379
- May 15 (c) Cultural cognition and language; linguistic relativity; *discussion groups*
OUTLINE/ABSTRACT OF RESEARCH PAPER is due (on Canvas) May 17!
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 10
- May 17 (c) Language and emotions from a cultural standpoint
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 11
- May 22 (d) Emotions, happiness, and interpersonal attraction
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 12
- May 24 (d) Relational mobility; ethics and morality; *discussion groups*
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 13 and also ch. 15 pp. 582-595
- May 31 (d) Morality and justice in cultural perspective; culture and physical health
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 14, pp. 533-556
- June 5 (d) Culture and (mental, physical) health
FINAL VERSION OF RESEARCH PAPER is due June 7 (submit on Canvas)
✓ Reading Assignment: Heine ch. 14, pp. 557-565 and Saucier (2022) pages 55-65 only
- June 7 Universals/culture-specifics in mental health, disorder-treatment; integration; *discussion groups*

June 15 (Thursday), 10:15 am, FINAL EXAM

Letters in parentheses: you are expected to turn in one reading response for any one of the (a) sessions, any one of the (b) sessions, and so on for (c) and (d) sessions. See syllabus above for details.

Some rather big questions: Potential '3-sentence response' items for midterm and final exams

1. What is the best way of defining 'culture'?
2. What aspects of human life are most 'cultural' and what aspects are least cultural?
3. When does 'culture' mean the same thing as 'nation' or 'society' or 'ethnicity' or 'a particular group of individuals'?
4. How is culture in humans most different from culture as it is found represented other species?
5. What is the best way to discover and/or measure the cultural aspects of human behavior?
6. What research methods help prevent or correct for cultural bias in psychology research?
7. What are the ways in which change most often occurs in a cultural system?
8. How do societies maintain their cultural system, and what do individuals do that contributes to that?
9. Which aspects of culture are learned especially early in child development?
10. How is the nature of 'the self' most different when one compares cultures?
11. What are universals with regard to the self (what is true of the self in all cultures)?
12. What are examples of a culture (or cultural system) having a particular personality characteristic that it molds and socializes individuals to develop, in distinction from many other cultures that emphasize other characteristics? (If there are no good examples, explain why such examples are hard to find.)
13. What evidence supports the idea that all cultures have the same basic array of personality characteristics, with cultural differences not being large?
14. How do values vary most across cultures?
15. How do motivations vary most across cultures?
16. What is (apparently) true of values in all cultures?
17. What is (apparently) true of human motivation in all cultures?
18. With regard to cognition and perception – what are the most important differences between Eastern and Western cultures?
19. With regard to cognition and perception – what are the most important differences between cultures found in indigenous and small-scale societies, and those found in large-scale societies?
20. What are the most important cultural differences in those aspects of culture that most impact the nature of social relationships and family relations?
21. What are the most important cultural differences in those aspects of culture that most impact relations between in-groups and out-groups?
22. With respect to emotions: What are the most important cross-cultural differences?
23. Which emotion-related phenomena are most universal across cultures?
24. With respect to mental health: What are the most important cross-cultural differences?
25. Which mental-health phenomena are relatively universal across cultures?
26. Where does one observe the most cross-cultural variability (and in what way) with respect to matters of morality or justice?
27. How is justice conceived differently according to which culture one is in?
28. How is morality conceived differently according to which culture one is in?
29. In regard to morality and justice, which phenomena are relatively universal – found similarly across cultures?
30. What are the best examples of how human culture has an effect on human biology (genetics, physiology, brain)?
31. What evidence most impressively indicates how culture has an impact on health?
32. (An integrative question:) What does the body of knowledge gained so far in cultural psychology tell us about human nature, that is, about what humans are basically like from a psychological perspective?

Numbers 1-13 are candidates to be on the midterm, and the remaining questions 14-32 are candidates to be on the final exam. But note: number 32 in particular may draw on material from before as well as after the midterm. And for ones that do appear on your exam: *Responses to above questions should include **no more than 3 sentences overall.***