Instructor: Dr. Tuğçe Kurtiş (tkurtis@westga.edu)
Graduate Teaching Assistant: Cymone Bedford (cbedfor1@mywestga.edu)
Class Meetings: Tue-Thu 2:15-3:55 pm in Melson Hall 218
Office: Melson Hall 216
Office Hours: By appointment on Tue-Thu 11:00-2:00 pm, W 11:00-1:00 pm
Phone: 678-839-0698

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Courses that go by the name of "Culture and Psychology" often have two goals. One goal is to describe cultural diversity in psychological experience. Another goal is to test the knowledge base of Psychology "across cultures" to determine whether the patterns it describes are truly universal. This course is different. Rather than examining how psychological experience varies across different settings, the goal of this course is to examine the sociocultural and historical foundations of psychological experience in any given setting.

COURSE THEMES
Diversity in Psychological Functioning: Most studies in psychology are based on a limited range of the world's people: typically young, middle-class, college students of European descent living in Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich, and Democratic (WEIRD) settings. One theme of the course is to consider what happens when the same studies are conducted with more representative samples.

The Cultural Foundations of Psychological Experience: This theme refers to the extent to which patterns of psychological experience—like the fundamental attribution error, teenage rebellion, or romantic love—are not "just natural", but instead are products of particular constructions of reality. A major goal of the course is to make visible this cultural context of experience, not just for exotic patterns of people in "other cultures", but also for the familiar patterns observed in North American settings and routinely reported in Psych textbooks.

The Cultural Foundations of Psychological Science: To what extent is Psychological Science, itself, a cultural product? Although scientists often imagine themselves to be detached, neutral observers of a universal, objective reality, the third theme of the course concerns the extent to which theory and practice in Psychology (and other social sciences) reflect particular—and potentially variable—constructions of reality (e.g., concepts like person, child, and relationship).

Global Social Justice: This course primarily focuses on the conceptual contributions of cultural psychology. However, cultural psychology also has practical, real-world relevance (related to its conceptual contributions). This semester, we will also emphasize this real-world relevance with respect to the theme of Global Social Justice.
ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

Required Textbook:
Heine, S. J. (2008). *Cultural Psychology*. New York: Norton. If you choose to use a newer edition of this textbook, **you are responsible for any differences between your version and the 2008 edition.** In addition to the textbook, required supplemental reading assignments will be available to you via the course website.

Exams:
There will be 2 exams: a midterm exam on October 16th and a final exam on Dec 4th.

**Make up exams.** The examination dates should be considered firm. I expect everyone will take the examinations as they are scheduled. In rare circumstances and with **appropriate documentation**, you may be permitted to take a make-up exam. **In the event that you cannot attend either of the scheduled examination periods, it is your responsibility to contact me in timely fashion (i.e., no later than one week before the exam) to make an alternative arrangement.** Please note that the following events are NOT acceptable reasons for requesting a make-up exam: *participation in a wedding, travel, oversleeping, and minor illness.*

**Missing the final exam.** If you miss your final exam, and prior arrangements have not been made, you may receive a grade of F on that exam, and this may affect your final grade in the class. If you miss your exam due to an emergency, please contact the Psychology office at (678) 839-6510 or go to Melson Room 123 as soon as possible to complete the application: “Missed Final Exam: Verification of Emergency”. This form will need to be approved by the chair for an incomplete grade which may allow you the time to make up your exam or complete your final assignments. This application will require documentation and authorization from you to verify your emergency.

**Exam content.** The format of both exams is the same. They will include both multiple choice items and open-ended items. You will receive a list of 6-8 possible open-ended items a week before each exam so that you have time to research and prepare answers (although you will not be able to bring prepared, written answers to the exam).

**Course Participation:**
Knowledge does not sit there waiting to be discovered; instead we must actively create it. So rather than transmit knowledge to you (and ask you to spit it back on an exam), this course requires you to **participate** in the knowledge-construction process. Class attendance is a form of participation that deserves special mention. Attendance is a requirement. Because I recognize that things happen and people sometimes need to miss class, you can have up to 3 absences without comment or penalty. If you have more than 3 absences, expect to take a hit on your classroom participation grade. Besides class attendance, you will be regularly earning classroom participation points through your involvement in class activities. Students who come to class prepared, make thoughtful contributions to class activities, and show interest in and respect for others’ views will earn the highest possible points for classroom participation. Classroom activities and assignments will not be accepted late except in the case of university approved absences (Extended guidelines and a grading rubric will be available on the course site).
Cultural Encounter Project:
This assignment provides a direct way for you to engage the themes of the course and read beyond the course syllabus about a topic that you find interesting. Specifically, you will be asked to participate in a “cultural encounter” activity and write a term 7-8 page long paper about your experience. Extended guidelines and a grading rubric will be available on the course site.

Grading Scheme:  
\begin{align*}
\text{Midterm Exam} & : 100 \\
\text{Final Exam} & : 100 \\
\text{Course Participation} & : 100 \\
\text{Course Project} & : 100
\end{align*}

Grading Scale:  
\begin{align*}
A & = 360-400 \text{ pts} \\
B & = 320-359.9 \text{ pts} \\
C & = 280-319.9 \text{ pts} \\
D & = 240-279.9 \text{ pts} \\
F & < 240 \text{ pts}
\end{align*}

Accessibility. Students with a documented disability may work with UWG Accessibility Services to receive essential services specific to their disability. To make an appointment, please contact Counseling & Career Services in 123 Row Hall, or call 678-839-6428. For additional information, visit the following website: http://www.westga.edu/counseling/index_8884.php. Any student in this course who has a disability that prevents the fullest expression of abilities should also contact me as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Civility. We should work together to create a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning. While we may sometimes disagree with each other on topics discussed in class, it’s important that we remember that appreciating diversity in perspectives is an important part of the learning process. With that said, all opinions are welcome. However, disagreements should be directed at an argument and not the person. It is expected that everyone will be treated with respect. **If you ever feel that you are not being treated with respect in the classroom, please let me know.**

Cell phones and other noisy things. Cell phones, pagers, iPods, headphones, etc are not to be in use while in class or during exam days. Please refrain from texting, instant messaging, gaming, and emailing while in class. It is distracting to the instructor as well as to those around you. If you require an exception to this rule, come and talk to me about your situation asap. If any of these issues becomes a problem, you will be excused from the class.

Academic and Personal Integrity. As outlined by the University of West Georgia Honor Code, “West Georgia students pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity.” Such acts of misconduct include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing. Please do not put yourself or me in the position of dealing with such misconduct.

Communication Policy. As the instructor, I will endeavor to reply to all messages that conform to conventional standards of polite, respectful correspondence within 48 hours. I will reply to other (i.e., less than polite) messages as circumstances permit. Please note that I reserve the right (and have the responsibility) to purge offensive or excessively aggressive posts to Course Den. Although it should go without saying, please refrain from attacking, harassing, or threatening either fellow students or instructors via the Course Site (or any other means, for that matter).
**Intellectual Property Rights.** Course materials prepared by the instructor, together with the content of all lectures and review sessions presented by the instructor are the property of the instructor. Video and audio recording of lectures and review sessions without the consent of the instructor is prohibited. On request, the instructor will usually grant permission for students to audio tape lectures, on the condition that these audio tapes are only used as a study aid by the individual making the recording. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, recordings of lectures and review sessions may not be modified and must not be transferred or transmitted to any other person, whether or not that individual is enrolled in the course.

Note: The syllabus contains a lot of essential information about the course so please make sure to read it carefully and revisit it regularly during the semester. In addition, all students must review the following information about university policies: [http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf)

**WEEKLY READING ASSIGNMENTS**

Aug 26-28: Course Introduction (Heine, Chapter 1)

Sept 2-4: Key Concepts (Heine, Chapter 3)

Sept 9-11: Development and Socialization, Part 1 (Heine, Chapter 4)

Sept 16-18: Development and Socialization, Part 2 (Heine, Chapter 4)

Sept 23-25: Development and Socialization, Part 3 (Heine, Chapter 7)
   Course Project Descriptions due Sep 23 (submit in class)

Sept 30-Oct 2: Self and Identity (Heine, Chapter 5)

Oct 7-Oct 9: Attraction and Relationship (Heine, Chapter 11)

Oct 14-Oct 16: MIDTERM EXAM WEEK
   Oct 14: Midterm Exam Review, Oct 16: Midterm Exam

Oct 21-Oct 23: Motivation (Heine, Chapter 6)

Oct 28-Oct 30: Emotion (Heine, Chapter 8)

Nov 4-Nov 6: Perception and Cognition (Heine, Chapter 9)
   Course Project Bibliographies due Nov 6 (submit in class)

Nov 11-Nov 13: Health (Heine, Chapter 10)


Nov 25-Nov 27: Thanksgiving Break-No Class
Dec 2-Dec 4: FINAL EXAM WEEK
   Dec 2: Final Exam Review; Dec 4: Final Exam

Dec 9: TERM PAPERS DUE

*The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus at any time. Changes may occur at the instructors discretion based upon the speed at which we progress through the material and the possibility of new, timely topics that may arise throughout the term.*