PSYC 4350-01: CULTURE AND PSYCHOLOGY
Spring 2018

Instructor: Dr. Tuğçe Kurtiş
Email: tkurtis@westga.view.usg.edu
Office: Melson Hall 205
Office Hours: By appointment via Google Hangouts on Tue & Wed 9:00 am-2:00 pm
Google Hangout Address: tkurtis@westga.edu

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). During the course of this semester, we will also emphasize this real-world relevance with respect to the theme of Global Social Justice.
ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

**Required Reading:** The required textbook is Heine, S. (2011). *Cultural Psychology* (2nd edition). New York: Norton. If you choose to use a different edition of this textbook, you are responsible for any differences between your version and the 2011 edition. In addition to the textbook, required supplemental reading assignments will be available to you via the course website.

**Online Lectures:** In addition to reading assignments, it is your responsibility to “attend” online lectures. These lectures will be available on CourseDen in the form of a powerpoint file with accompanying sound.

**Exams:**
There will be 2 exams: a **midterm exam on March 5** and a **final exam on April 30**.

**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.** Exams will include multiple choice items and open-ended items. Multiple choice items will test your understanding of material from the textbook and will come from a pool created by the textbook publisher. In addition to these, there will be 1-2 short, open-ended response items. I will select these from a list of 6-10 possible items that I will provide to you at least one week before the exam.

**Course Participation:** You will be regularly earning classroom participation points through your timely completion of weekly course modules, active engagement in class activities, thoughtful contributions to weekly online discussions, and attention to netiquette (see Orientation Module for further information).

**Course 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 write a 5-6 page long article (double spaced, 12 font) for a “Psychology and Diversity”
themed newsletter. Your article should reflect your sophisticated understanding of issues regarding culture and psychology, but still tailored for public consumption (i.e., you should write for a non-academic audience). Extended guidelines are available on the course site.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading Scheme:</th>
<th>Grading Scale:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>(possible 400 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>A = 360-400 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>B = 320-359.9 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Participation</td>
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<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>C = 280-319.9 pts</td>
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<td>Course Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>D = 240-279.9 pts</td>
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<td>F = &lt;240 pts</td>
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COURSE POLICIES

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.

Student Conduct. Appropriate classroom behavior is expected from all students.

1. The use of offensive language is prohibited.
2. Appropriate behavior in the online environment is: asking questions, answering instructor’s questions, participating in discussions, being polite, using appropriate language and good netiquette skills.
3. Inappropriate behavior in the online environment is: using bad language, using inappropriate symbols, shouting in all caps, using texting language, using threatening language, harassing others, making insensitive comments related to gender, sexual orientation, social status, ethnicity, race or religion.
4. We are all professional adults and I expect professional, courteous communication.
5. Email me directly with questions or comments not related to our current topic of discussion.

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.” Violations of this policy will be met with sanctions and ignorance of its provisions is not an acceptable excuse. Make sure to read the university policy on plagiarism and academic dishonesty in your student handbook. Plagiarism involves the use of others words’ and/or ideas without giving them proper credit, which includes passing another person’s paper off as your own and failing to cite a source. If you copy a student’s paper, a paper off the internet or a paper you submitted for another class, you will get caught. Plagiarism software can detect copied papers and copied text. Avoid any form of plagiarism, including self-plagiarism. Do not copy or use another person’s words or ideas when constructing your critical reflection. Do not turn in a paper you wrote for another class. If you include quotations or ideas from other sources, make sure to cite your sources using proper APA style citation. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in an automatic failure of the assignment.
**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 notes presented by the instructor are the property of the instructor. Unless explicit permission is obtained from the instructor, course materials 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**

This class calendar is tentative and can be changed as needed by the instructor. Start date is January 8, 2018 and the end date is April 30, 2018.

**Week 1:** Jan 8-Jan 12: Course Orientation

**Week 2:** Jan 15-Jan 19: Course Introduction (Heine, Chapter 1)

**Week 3:** Jan 22-Jan 26: Key Concepts (Heine, Chapters 2 and 4)

**Week 4:** Jan 29-Feb 2: Development and Socialization, Part 1 (Heine, Chapter 5)

**Week 5:** Feb 5-Feb 9: Development and Socialization, Part 2 (Heine, Chapter 5)

**Week 6:** Feb 12-Feb 16: Moral Development (Heine, Chapter 13)

**Week 7:** Feb 19-Feb 23: Self and Identity (Heine, Chapter 6)

**Week 8:** Feb 26- Mar 2: Attraction and Relationship (Heine, Chapter 9)

**Week 9:** Midterm Exam: Mar 5 (available online from 6 am- 10 pm)

**Week 10:** Mar 12-Mar 16: Motivation (Heine, Chapter 7)

**Week 11:** Mar 19-Mar 23: NO CLASSES – Spring Break

**Week 12:** Mar 26-Mar 30: Emotion (Heine, Chapter 14)
Week 13: Apr 2-Apr 6: Perception and Cognition (Heine, Chapter 8)

Week 14: Apr 9-Apr 13: Health (Heine, Chapter 11-12)

Week 15: Apr 16–Apr 20: Racism and Oppression (Adams et al, 2006; Yellowbird, 2004)

Week 16: Course Project Final Papers due by 11:59 pm Mon, Apr 23 (submit via Dropbox)

Final Exam: Apr 30 (available online from 6 am-10 pm)