Texas A&M University-San Antonio
College of Arts & Sciences
PSYC 3324.601: Culture and Psychology

Term: Summer 2, 2025   Credit hours: 3
Instructor: Dr. Gary Coulton   Office phone: (210) 784-2203
Class Meeting: Online Asynchronous   E-mail: gcoulton@tamusa.edu
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Office hours: MW, 10:00 – 12:00, and **b**y appointment

Welcome to PSYC 3324 – Culture and Psychology

Most of what is presented below concerns your Instructor's policies and requirements specific to this course. Information about University policies and student resources are also posted on Blackboard under Syllabus. **Details about assignments, exams, and quizzes can be found in the Grade Table and Course Schedule (both of which are posted on Blackboard under Syllabus).**

General Goals of this Course
Your instructor's general goals for the class are to both facilitate students' acquisition of knowledge of the subject matter of the course, along with a number of general principles of psychology. An additional goal to assist students in further development of their critical thinking skills. **However, no attempt will be made to influence or change students' existing ideologies.**

Course Catalog Description

PSYC 3324-Culture and Psychology: An examination of the role of culture in the development and validation of psychological theories. Critical discussion of the application of Western theories to other cultural groups, including ethnic minority subgroups. Topics may include identity formation, cognitive and personality development, social and organizational behavior, intergroup relations, psychological assessment, and mental health. TSI Restriction(s): Reading, Math, and Writing. Prerequisite: PSYC 2301

Student Learning Objectives

Students who successfully complete the course will be able to:

-Describe key concepts, principles, and overarching themes in cross-cultural psychology

-Enumerate ways in which culture influences personality and other psychological phenomena

-Use scientific reasoning to interpret psychological phenomena

-Name and describe the research methods commonly used in cross-cultural research

-Enumerate why considering sociocultural factors is important in scientific inquiry

Course Materials
Textbook

Matsumo, D., & Juang, L. (2017). *Culture and Psychology* (7th ed). Cengage.

ISBN-13: 978-0-357-65805-5

Optional Resources

The resources below can be of considerable value to psychology students. The Stanovich book may not be available in the campus bookstore but is easily purchased on-line. Earlier editions of the book may also serve students well.

Stanovich, K. E. (2019). *How to think straight about psychology.* (11th ed.). New York: Pearson.

ISBN-13: 978-0-13-447862-3.

Helpful Websites

International Society for Cross Cultural Psychology

Society for Cross-Cultural Research

Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) – APA Style Guide

Helpful Video Series

Dr. Stephen Chew has created a free video series on study strategies for college students. These are the best videos on the subject I have come across and are a *great* investment of approximately 35 minutes of your time. However, I recommend that you distribute your viewing over at least a week (spaced learning is more effective than massed learning). It is unlikely that every technique Dr. Chew discusses will be of use to you, but I suggest that you view the videos and try a few of the techniques, if the techniques you select first don't work for you - I suggest you try several others.

Important Information about the Course

This course is not intended to promote any particular ideology

This course will expose you to a number of ideas and points of view you likely have not previously considered. Some of these ideas may make you uncomfortable, which is not necessarily a bad thing.

In my opinion, a major goal of a college education is to expand students' horizons and perhaps change their way of thinking about the world. However, whether or not you indeed change your perceptions is ultimately up to you.

Tolerating different points of view

One of the ground rules of the course, and in particular the Discussion Board, is that everyone is allowed to express their points of view openly as long as they do so in a civil manner. Not everyone needs to come away believing the same things, but we may all learn something from being exposed to different points of view.

You are Enrolled is an Asynchronous On-line Course

Online courses can present a number of challenges for students; especially for those who have taken only a few (or perhaps no) online classes before. Please read the following section carefully.

Blackboard (Bb)

Bb is our learning management system. If you are not familiar with Bb, the University offers much information that may be helpful to you. For information on using Bb click here. Blackboard also provides a number of videos online.

Bb issues. If you have difficulties with Bb (e.g., trouble submitting assignments) that you haven't been able to solve yourself, usually the best thing to do is to contact Information Technology Services (ITS); I can seldom be of help with those matters.

Reading Assignments

The format of the course will likely require you to do much more independent learning, and spend more time reading, than you do in traditional face-to-face courses. For the best results keep up with the assigned readings; if you do not understand something please seek clarification from your Instructor.

Computer Resources

The course requires that you have access to a reliable computer and internet connection. The internet browsers Chrome and Firefox are recommended. In addition you will need to access documents in both Adobe Acrobat Reader and Microsoft Word. It is recommended that you use the most recent version of MS Office products.

Format of Assignments

Format of Files

Unless otherwise noted, all written assignments must be submitted as MS Word docx files, **no pdf or Google doc files please!** If the document is not a docx file I probably won't be able to open it, which is problematic. **Assignments submitted as anything but a docx file will be returned to the student and may be resubmitted; however, a late penalty will apply.**

Format of Submissions

Please use the following format when you submit files. Start with the brief name of the assignment followed by the course number (i.e., Assignment 1_Your Name_psyc3324 [the suffix, like docx, will auto fill]).

Communicating with your Instructor

Students are welcome to call, email, or take advantage of office hours (including appointments outside of regular office hours). By federal law (FERPA) faculty may only communicate with students by email via secure networks (i.e., Jaguar email), **not Gmail, Yahoo, etc.** Students are responsible for activating and using their Jaguar email accounts. If you need help with your Jaguar email, call the Information Technology Services (ITS) Help Desk at 784-4357 (784-HELP).

Which email address should you use?

I may send you messages via Bb, but I **do not** monitor it, so messages sent to that account will not be read. To contact me by email, send messages to gcoulton@tamusa.edu. I typically respond to emails in

less than two weekdays. (Please don't send messages after midnight or on weekends and expect a quick reply.)

Format of e-mail messages

Please use the following format for emails. In the Subject line - write your name as the lead, followed by the course and section number (i.e., Subject: Your Name PSYC 3324.section #). **Emails not formatted in this way will be returned unread**.

Evaluation of Student Performance

Point values of all assignments are provided in the Grade Table, which is an appendix to this syllabus.

Discussion Questions (DQs)

DQs will be posted on the "Discussion Board" section of Bb. They will allow you to interact with your Instructor and fellow students in a way that more or less mimics conversations in a face-to-face class. Typically, DQs will center on questions posed by your Instructor about readings in the textbook. However, some DQs may be based on outside readings or videos.

The requirement for each DQ is one original post and one response to other's (including another student's posts). Be thoughtful and factual in your DQ posts. Some DQs may call for your opinion; however, most responses should be based on knowledge gained in the course (and perhaps other courses).

Responses to DQs should be one or two paragraphs long, and have a beginning (introduction), middle (body), and end (conclusion).

Student posts must be thoughtful and substantive (involving matters of major or practical importance) to earn an average or higher score. Simple 'good job' or 'I agree' type responses are *not* substantive and will earn less than an average score. Average responses will earn the equivalent of a 'C' (which is, of course, an average grade).

Other Assignments

Other assignments may include but are not limited to reaction papers, essays, video presentations, and article write-ups. Due dates, details about the assignment, and point values will be posted on the Course Schedule, which is an appendix to this syllabus.

Exams and Quizzes

There will be several exams and, perhaps, quizzes in the course. The questions may be multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and/or short essay. Details will be provided on Bb.

Time Limits

Exams and quizzes will be given on Bb and will be timed. Unfortunately, since on-line exams are not proctored, *some* students are tempted to cheat on them (i.e., consult course or on-line materials-which constitutes academic misconduct). To reduce the temptation to cheat, exams will be administered on a rather tight time schedule (one minute per objective exam item). That time frame may sound very short, but it will be adequate if you are well prepared.

Exams/quizzes will be taken in a single sitting. Time counts down from when you begin; you cannot stop and start. Any questions you have not responded to when time is up will be counted as incorrect. **Students may not work together on exams (that would constitute academic misconduct)!**

Exams/quizzes will be available over a period of several days. All exams and quizzes are due by 11:59 PM on the designated date.

Navigation Tabs

Failure to use the in-exam navigation tabs may result in you being kicked-out of the exam and it being auto-submitted. In this case the exam will not be re-opened for you. If you are kicked out of a quiz or exam, log back on as soon as possible and work as quickly as you can; the timer does not stop when you are kicked out. **Remember, use the Navigation Tabs within the exam!**

Recommendations for Taking Exams

If at all possible, please take exams using an on-campus computer, they are hardwired and thus very dependable. Additionally, if you run into problems, you will have ready access to help (i.e., ITS). **Do not attempt to take exams on your smartphone; doing so is very likely to result in technical difficulties!** Students who go this route, and experience technical problems, will not be considered for a re-take.

Content of Exams/Quizzes

Exams and quizzes will cover assigned chapters in the textbook and perhaps topics raised by Discussion Questions, PowerPoints, videos, and supplemental readings. It is imperative that you read the text and other assigned readings and study all assigned materials to prepare for exams. **Please note that the PowerPoint slides (PPTs) do not substitute for reading the textbook.**

As in most classes you will be expected to know a number of terms. However please note, your Instructor is more interested in students *understanding concepts and being able to apply what they've learned* (so expect a number of questions that present brief scenarios that illustrate relevant constructs).

For a number of reasons, Study guides will not be provided.

Missed Examination Policy

Opportunities to take missed exams will *not* made available without a legitimate excuse. If you have a medical or family situation that will prevent you from meeting an exam deadline, contact your Instructor (or have someone else contact him) *before* the exam deadline. Students who miss exams due to unforeseen circumstances must contact their Instructor by 5:00 PM the day following the close of the exam. With proper documentation students may be permitted to take an exam after the deadline. Students who miss an exam and who did not contact the Instructor as described above will not be considered for a make-up exam.

Other Sources of Course Credit

Participation

Participation in class is reflected in the submission of assignments, quality of participation on discussion boards, and communication with the professor. Students are not formally scored on participation;

however, your Instructor may award a few bonus points to raw score totals of students who end up a few raw score points short of the next higher letter grade.

Extra Credit Points

Students may earn the equivalent of 5% (the equivalent of one-half a letter grade) of the total raw score points of extra credit. Extra credit points may be earned in three ways: (a) Participation in research studies conducted by faculty or students [The number of credits earned varies by study depending on the time commitment]; (b) by attending relevant university sponsored events (e.g., the Psychology Speaker Series, the College of Arts & Sciences Speaker Series, or talks at academic conferences; when available); and/or (c) submission of short papers on TED talks or other videos from a list provided by the Instructor. Students may accrue up to the maximum number of extra credit raw scores points using any combination of the activities above.

What is SONA and why should I care?

SONA is the software platform that the Psychology Program uses to schedule and keep track of research participation. All students in the course will be enrolled in SONA. Those who wish to participate in experiments or get credit for attendance at sponsored speaker events will need to *create an account* and monitor the opportunities posted there.

Submission of Written Work Produced Generative AI is Strictly Prohibited
Your Instructor will assume that all work submitted by students has been generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students shall not have another person/entity write of any portion of an assignment, which includes hiring a person or company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity. Consequences for submitting AI generated work will be taken very seriously.

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