The Course

Cultural psychology research focuses on the psychological processes involved in individuals’ interactions with their cultural surroundings. This course introduces students to the most up-to-date research topics in cultural psychology through in-depth discussions of empirical and theoretical articles. Such discussions aim to provide students with the intellectual training of critically evaluating current research trends in cultural psychology. Research methodological issues specific to conducting cultural psychological research will also be covered in this course.

The course is divided into two parts. Part 1 will explore theoretical and methodological issues in culture and psychology research. Part 2 will focus on specific research topics such as cognition, emotion, and social behavior. Discussions in part 1 should aid students in their understanding and critical analysis of the current state of research on the specific topics covered in part 2.

The readings
Each week, there will be assigned readings taken mostly from academic journals. You are expected to complete the readings BEFORE class. We will discuss the readings during class and your performance in the discussion will count towards your class participation grade. You are expected to be able to provide 10-minute verbal summaries for the articles. Your verbal summaries will also count toward your course grade.

Assessment
Your final grade will be a composite of your class participation, critical analysis, project work, and quiz performance in the following percentages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Critical analysis</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group project</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quiz</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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**Class participation**

During each class, students will be chosen to discuss the assigned readings in class. Class participation also includes active participation in the class discussion of research articles.

**Critical analysis (due November 16 noon)**

Submission is via Turnitin in Edventure.

The critical analysis is an individual assignment. You will choose one of the weeks from Part 2 (Specific Research Topics) of the course. Then, write a critical analysis of the current status of research on this particular topic by applying the theoretical and methodological issues discussed in Part 1 (Theoretical Perspectives and Methodological Issues) of the course.

The critical analysis should not be longer than 5 double-spaced pages. There is no particular format to the critical analysis. However, you should make sure to include appropriate citations and references.

**Group project**

All submissions are via Turnitin in Edventure. Late submissions will NOT be accepted unless with legitimate excuse and proof (e.g., hospitalization of all group members).

You will work in a 2- to 3-person group for the project.

The project has two parts: cultural analysis and empirical study proposal.

**Cultural analysis (due September 28 noon)**

The goal of the cultural analysis is to increase your awareness of cultural phenomena happening in people’s everyday life. Through the increased understanding, you should be able to identify an interesting cultural phenomenon to be examined in a more systematic manner in the second part (empirical study proposal) of the project.

Choose EITHER ONE of the following:
1. Unobtrusive observation for one hour at a public space
2. Semi-structured interview of an informant for one hour

The above should be done with the goal of gaining an understanding of the culture of your choice without bringing your preconceptions about the culture to the analysis.

The cultural analysis should be a 5-page double-spaced essay on the findings. Through this analysis, you should identify a phenomenon that you consider to be of interest for further empirical investigation in cultural psychology. Focus on one cultural phenomenon in your essay. Provide succinct but detailed analysis of that phenomenon based on the information that you have gathered in your observation/interview.

You should also attach the notes that you have taken during the observation/interview as appendix.
Empirical study proposal (**due November 23 noon**)

You will identify a testable hypothesis that examines the cultural process that you have identified in your cultural analysis. Design an empirical study to test the hypothesis.

As a group, you will submit a group proposal at the end of the semester. The group proposal should be of no more than 15 double-spaced pages of main text. The proposal should include the following:

(a) comprehensive but succinct description of the relevant literature
(b) the theoretical contribution of the proposed research to the advancement of culture and psychology research
(c) clear description of the hypothesis and elaboration of the rationale for the hypothesis
(d) detailed description of the proposed method
(e) clear presentation of the expected results
(f) discussion of the implications of the proposed research


**Quiz (November 16 in class)**

The quiz will be in essay format. It covers all assigned readings and the content of the class discussions. The quiz will require your thorough understanding of the content covered in the course and the ability to integrate and analyze information from different sources.
Academic Integrity

Detailed description of NTU’s academic integrity policy can be found in the following website: http://academicintegrity.ntu.edu.sg/

Originality of work and appropriate acknowledgement of reference sources are extremely important in the academic context.

As a psychology student, you are expected to follow the guidelines of the American Psychological Association on referencing and citation (see APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition).

As a student of NTU, you are expected to uphold the Honor Code against plagiarism and collusion. Plagiarism and collusion are defined as the following in the Honor Code:

- Plagiarism: “To use or pass off as one’s own, the writings or ideas of another, without acknowledging or crediting the source from which the ideas are taken.”

- Collusion: “Submitting an assignment, project or report completed by another person and passing it off as one’s own; Preparing an assignment, project or report for a fellow student who submits the work as his or her own.”

Committing plagiarism and/or collusion in any course in NTU warrants serious penalty, ranging from failing an assignment to expulsion from the university.
**Class Schedule**

Each week, students will be chosen to verbally summarize the articles to the class. The article summaries will be restricted to 10 minutes per article. In other words, it will be a succinct summary of the article. The remaining time will be reserved for class discussion on the topics raised by the articles.

**Part 1: Theoretical Perspectives and Methodological Issues**

**Week 1 (August 17) – What is Culture?**


**Week 2 (August 24) – Indigenousness to Universalism**


**Week 3 (August 31) – Causality: Cultural Dimensions**


**Week 4 (September 7) – Causality: Cultural Priming**


**Week 5 (September 14) – Source of Cultural Influence**


**Week 6 (September 21) – Emergence and Perpetuation of Culture**


Part 2: Specific Research Topics

Week 7 (September 28) – Cognition


RECESS (October 1 – 5)

Week 8 (October 12) – Social Behavior


Week 9 (October 19) – Emotion


Week 10 (October 26) – NO CLASS (Hari Raya Haji)

Week 11 (November 2) – Choice and Agency


Week 12 (November 9) – Multiculturalism


Week 13 (November 16) – QUIZ