Title: Cross Cultural Psychology and Early Childhood Development

Description:
Psychology has conventionally situated itself as universally applicable science, however, it can be described as a “modernist” and European-American phenomenon. This course explores the cultural aspects of psychology, examining how biology, psychology, and culture interact in the context of contemporary Spanish and North American societies. One of the key contributions of cultural psychology is thematizing the different filters that moderate how psychological phenomena are understood. These filters, which operate at both conceptual and epistemological levels in large part circumscribe how psychology is studied and applied. This course will provide a conceptual foundation for the understanding of psychology and culture, with a focus on human development, the self, intergroup relations, and cross-cultural communication. The study abroad experience will be used to experientially examine and apply the material covered in class. Finally, wider application of the material in the context of mental health and its care will be explored.

Course objectives:
By the end of the course, students will gain knowledge of:
- The concepts of culture, race, and ethnicity.
- The concepts of absolutism, universalism and relativism, and relate them to the emic-etic differentiation in the context of cross-cultural psychology.
- A bio-psycho-sociocultural approach to human development and mental health.
- Problems and compensating strategies in cross-cultural research
- The relationship between culture, race, and immigration on mental health
- Pitfalls and optimizing strategies related to the study abroad experience, drawing from the cross-cultural psychology literature
- Cultural competence and intercultural communication

Language: English
Total hours: 45 hours
Credits: 3 credits

Methodology:
The course will use a combination of guided lectures, classroom interaction, student presentations and tours of the city as well as emphasis on class debates to integrate and reflect on theories and experiences.

Evaluation:
Attendance to classes and field trips is mandatory; poor attendance will affect the final grade of the student as well as the everyday participation grade.
The final grade consists of six different parts: class participation, class presentation, photo project, a midterm written exam, a final written exam, and a final paper.

The breakdown of grades is made up as follows:

- 15% Class participation (classroom interaction, field studies, and attendance)
- 15% Class presentation
- 10% Journal/forum/Photo Project
- 20% Midterm written exam
- 20% Final written exam
- 20% Final paper

Class participation:
Active class participation includes coming to class prepared and on time, having read the material for that day and show active reflection on that material, answering questions from the professor, generating questions and engaging in group activities using required reading for that day. Students are encouraged to express their opinions in class with the professor and the other students.

Exams:
Both the midterm and the final exams may contain a mix of short answer and essay questions aimed to test the students' full comprehension of facts and the ability to argue his/her opinions based on class material.

The guidelines for exams are as follows-
• Any student found cheating will automatically fail this examination. Additional sanctions may be imposed.
• Talking or communicating with other students during the examination is forbidden.
• Desks must be cleared of all books, notes and papers. All unauthorized materials must be put away and remain out of sight throughout the examination.
• All telephones and electronic devices must be turned completely off during the exam.
• Students arriving later than 15 minutes will not be allowed into the classroom to take the examination, subject to the decision of the instructor.
• At the end of the examination students will remain seated until their papers are collected. No one may leave the room until excused.
• Should assistance be required, students will attract the attention of the instructor.
• Failure to follow these rules will automatically lead to failure of this examination.

Presentation:
Students will be required to "co-teach" a portion of one class along with the professor, in which the student will present the reading in question, note the key concepts or ideas presented, generate questions for class discussion, and provide a brief critical response to the reading.
Students will keep a weekly journal in which they will apply the class materials to their personal experience. Those informal reflections may serve as a foundation for the Photo-project, as well as the Final paper.

**Photo-Project in pairs:**
Students will choose 10 photos to present their personal evolution and experiences during their study-abroad journey. They are required to connect them to and illustrate cross-cultural concepts of their choice seen in class, take perspective from their initial reactions and show critical thinking about themselves. Presentations will take place at the end of the sojourn during the two last classes.

**Final paper:**
Students will write a paper about either the “cross-cultural experience of study abroad” applying class material, or about a topic of their interest relevant to cross-cultural psychology. Whereas the journals can function as “field notes” for the paper, however, the paper is a formal academic endeavour. Students are expected to demonstrate original and critical thinking as well as analytical reflection from scholarly research cited properly. By the middle of the sojourn students are required to submit a brief proposal in which they describe what they will write their paper on along with an “action plan”.

**Academic Integrity:**
SIS programs foster critical thinking and intellectual development of its students. In doing so, SIS requires that students introduce their original thoughts, opinions, and ideas in all of their assignments with the support of cited sources. Any violations of academic integrity—such as cheating, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, academic misconduct, fabrication, misuse or misrepresentation of research, and noncompliance—may result in an automatic F or immediate dismissal from the program if the student falls below the minimum number of credits required for the term; 12 credits during the semester, or 3 hours during the summer.

Cheating- Any action that violates the rules and guidelines given by the instructor for submitting assignments or exams.

Plagiarism- Any action that presents the ideas, opinions, research, etc. of another as your own.
- Directly copying another’s work without citing sources
- Submitting another person’s work into your own without properly citing the source(s) used.
- Paraphrasing another person’s work without providing appropriate citations

Self-plagiarism- Submitting a piece of one’s own work to receive credit for multiple assignments in one or more class.
Academic Misconduct- Any act that impedes or threatens the open exchange, expression, or flow of information or fair evaluation of students. This includes intimidation and complicity in any acts or attempts to interfere with the ethical and fair submission and evaluation of student work.

Fabrication- Providing inaccurate or false information, including research findings, quotes, and cited sources, etc.

Non-compliance- Failure to comply with the values, objectives, and procedures contained in this policy.

**Attendance Policy:**
Students are allowed THREE absences throughout the semester without penalty. Starting with the fourth absence, the student's FINAL GRADE will be lowered by a fraction of a letter (1/3 of a letter grade). For example, if a student has 4 absences and a final grade of B+, the grade will be lowered to a B, if 5 absences the grade is lowered to B-.

There are NO excused absences. If a student misses class because s/he is sick, that counts as one of the allowed absences. No excused absences and no excuses.

Quizzes, exams and participation points that are missed because of an absence cannot be recuperated.

Students that arrive late 5 minutes or more will receive a 0 for participation for the day.

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**Bibliography:**

**Required readings:**


- Sam, D. L., & Moreira, V. (2002). The mutual embeddedness of culture and mental illness. In W. J. Lonner, D. L. Dinnel, S. A. Hayes, & D. N. Sattler (Eds.), *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture* (Unit 9, Chapter 1), [http://www.wwu.edu/~culture](http://www.wwu.edu/~culture), Center for Cross-Cultural Research, Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington USA.


**Recommended Readings:**


