

Course Website: <http://odtuclass.metu.edu.tr>

Class Time and Location: Wednesday @ 8:40-11:30, B14

Teaching Team:	E-mail	Office Hours	Office Link
Banu Cingöz Ulu	cingoz@metu.edu.tr	Wed 14:40-15:30	Click here for BCU
Albina Sila Akarsu	albina@metu.edu.tr	Mon 10:40-11:30	Click here for ASA

Course Description and Objectives

This course is designed to present a general overview to the field of cultural and cross-cultural psychology that aims to examine a selection of the theoretical, empirical and applied issues of human behavior across cultures.

The rationale is that what may hold true in many contemporary, Western European and North American societies is not necessarily the norm and even the way humans function in other (majority) societies. In order to better understand these variations, we will examine psychological constructs and theories through relativist and universalist perspectives, sometimes referred to as cultural psychology and cross-cultural psychology, respectively. This examination will seek to compare and contrast what is universal in human behavior and what is shaped and interpreted by cultural variations.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- understand and appreciate the importance of culture on human psychology
- distinguish between relativist and universalist approaches and demonstrate its applications to human behavior
- examine and evaluate research in culture and psychology
- develop more systematic and critical thinking skills
- formulate research questions regarding culture and psychology and develop appropriate designs to address that question
- develop oral and written communication skills in English
- improve team work skills (time management, workload management, conflict management, and communication)

Textbook(s):

Friedlmeier's Online Readings in Psychology and Culture (ORPC) at

<https://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/orpc/> (Main resource)

Matsumoto, D. & Juang, L. (2013). *Culture and Psychology*. Canada: Wadsworth Cengage Learning (5th ed). (supplemental)

Kitayama, S. & Cohen, D. (2007). *Handbook of Cultural Psychology*. London: Guilford Press.

Additional readings will be placed on course website (odtuclass).

Instructional Methods:

The classes will be held in a face-to-face format. I expect the students to come to the classes prepared and ready to discuss. However, the necessary equipment for online (hybrid) follow up will also be available in case the classroom space is not sufficient or health issues rise up. I expect that the audio-visual equipment in the classroom will be sufficient to enable following and participating online in a synchronous fashion.

In the first hour, the week's discussion leader(s) will present the article, summarize and answer clarification questions. In the second hour, we give feedback to the discussion leaders and continue our discussion along with the questions the leader(s) posted a day earlier. In this part, each student's comments, criticisms, or questions regarding the assigned readings and the discussions will take place. This second part of the class will be held like a seminar-type course in which student discussions will dominate. Then, in the final part, I will summarize the arguments and conclusions and we will conduct our weekly "blog team" feedback sessions (small group discussions).

Course Requirements and Evaluation:

Participation:20%

This is a course that is based on reading, writing, and discussing. It is essential to your learning in this course that you come prepared to each class to effectively participate in discussions, answer the questions asked to you as well as bring your questions and comments relevant to that week's readings. Each week the students are responsible to complete the required readings and come prepared for discussion.

Discussion Leadership:20%

Each week, a group will be responsible for leading the class discussion regarding the readings for that week. You will cover the basic material regarding the reading: the research question, hypotheses, method, basic findings, contribution to the literature, strengths, and weaknesses (in your opinion). This will take about 20-30 minutes, i.e., the first hour in the class. In addition, you will submit 5 questions (as a group) 24 hours before the class (Tuesdays @ 8:40 am the latest) so that the others may read and think about your questions. The questions should include, but not be limited to, all the elements about the subject matter that is covered in the assigned reading for that week. Your thoughts and critical reflections on the topic (comments, criticisms, illustrative examples or ties to other areas in psychology) are also welcome.

Culture Blog:30%

You will keep a "culture blog" where you will create blog entries weekly during the semester. These entries would be in a free format, yet I will post guiding questions in case you wish to use them. You will give and receive feedback from your "blog feedback team" each week; the team consists of 3-4 students. At the end of the semester, I will ask you to submit your journal (with original & revised entries, if you wish) with an introduction as a proof of your learning in this course. It is similar to a portfolio (because it summarizes and attests to your learning) but is more in the form of a personal blog or diary.

Proposal:30%

For this project you will select a culture of your choice. It is preferable to me that this culture is one that is over-studied (e.g., Chinese or Japanese) groups in the culture and psychology literature, but I pose no restrictions. I want you to read and learn about this group and propose a research question as to how they may differ from the mainstream Western culture OR the Turkish culture in terms of your variables of interest. You will need to think about this potential cultural difference you are curious about. You will need to explain to the reader (in your project report) what this difference is (why do you expect such a difference) and why it is important or theoretically interesting to study it (This is an extremely important step.) Then you will tell the reader about a study that would examine this difference in a compelling and interesting way that is rooted in the literature. You don't actually need to conduct the study; you only need to outline it in enough detail so that you can show the reader that the study will convincingly demonstrate what you want to show. The paper (final proposal) will need to have sufficient literature that you cite that will help you describe the phenomenon you are examining, explaining why this phenomenon is theoretically

interesting, showing the evidence as to why and how it can be different in this specific group of your interest, and mapping out a compelling way your idea can be tested.

Tentative Course Schedule and Weekly Topics

WEEK	DATES	TOPIC
1	Oct 20, 2021	Meet & Greet, Course Overview, Introduction
2	Oct 27, 2021	Foundations and History
3	Nov 3, 2021	Theoretical Issues
4	Nov 10, 2021	No Class
5	Nov 17, 2021	Methodological Issues
6	Nov 24, 2021	Culture and Basic Psychological Processes
7	Dec 1, 2021	Language and Communication
8	Dec 8, 2021	Personality and Values
9	Dec 15, 2021	Interpersonal and Intergroup Relations
10	Dec 22, 2021	Developmental Processes and Culture
11	Dec 29, 2021	Families and Older Age Across Cultures
12	Jan 5, 2022	Migration and Acculturation
13	Jan 12, 2022	Health/Clinical Psychology and Culture
14	Jan 19, 2022	Proposal Presentations
Finals	TBA	Journal Submission Proposal Submission

Course Policies:

On Attendance:

I assume that you are responsible adults that can evaluate your priorities; so attendance is only for record keeping purposes. Yet because this is a seminar course, I would really appreciate it that you inform me when you are unable to attend because that influences the discussions and the overall seminar quality. Also, you may not gain participation points without proper attendance. However, attending does not mean gaining participation marks.

On Grading:

I round the final grades up. But I DO NOT change grades under any circumstances; so DO NOT ask for a raise in your grade, please.

On Communication:

The best way to reach me is by email. Please indicate your name and the course code (since I have a number of courses and many students that take those courses) in the email. If you want to have a face-to-face meeting, please make an appointment by email first. Before emailing me with a question, please check the syllabus as well. (If the information is already there, I may not answer.) We will be using odtuclass for this course, please follow announcements from the website.

On Assignment Submission & Lateness:

Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be submitted to the course website before the due date and time. However, I do accept late work, with some penalty. Sometimes life happens, sometimes we get sick, and that's OK. Just submit your work as

soon as you can. For work that is late up until one week, 0.5 marks will be deducted from your final grade for each day late. Work will not be accepted after 1 week of lateness. With discussion questions and presentations, I cannot accept late work, unfortunately.

On Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism:

All assignments and exams must be completed ON YOUR OWN. Note that academic dishonesty includes cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism; and also helping other students commit acts of academic dishonesty by allowing them to obtain copies of your work. Cases of academic dishonesty will be dealt with harshly. If the student is found to be responsible of academic dishonesty, the typical sanction results in a grade of “FF”. More serious instances can result in expulsion from the university (for one semester up to 2 semesters).