

PSY 355: Psychology and Culture – Winter 2021
Wolfgang Friedlmeier
Online
Synchronous sessions: M 10-11 (3), M 11 to 12 (2)

Instructor

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Office hours:

M 12 to 1 pm

W 11 am to 12 pm

W 3 to 4 pm

Meeting ID: 406 828 8089

Passcode: 3UYDhZ

Synchronous Meetings

We will have one weekly synchronous Zoom meeting through Blackboard, namely Mondays 10 to 11 (Section 3) and 11 to 12 (Section 2) for most weeks of the semester. There will be at least two meetings during the last two weeks of classes when you present your group projects. I ask you to open your camera for the meetings to mirror a classroom situation and to make it more a social event than talking to black screens.

The purpose of the meetings is only partly lecturing. Mostly you are asked to work through materials during the week and on Monday, we use the meeting for discussions and conversations about the topic.

Textbook

Gardiner, H. W. (2018, 6th ed.). *Lives across cultures. Cross-cultural human development*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Further Readings

American Psychological Association (2001). *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (Fifth Edition). Washington, D.C.: APA.

Friedlmeier, W., Corapci, F., & Benga, O. (2014). Cultural perspective on emotional development in early childhood. In L. Jensen (Ed.), *Oxford handbook of culture and development* (pp. 127-148). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Horace, M. (1956). Body ritual among the Nacirema. *American Anthropologist*, 58, 503-507.

Markus, H. R. & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, 98, 224-253.

Online Readings in Psychology and Culture. <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/orpc/>

Valsiner, J. (2000). *Culture and human development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

More readings will be announced in class. Most of the readings will be available on Blackboard.

Course Overview

The aim of this course is to acquaint students with basic topics of cross-cultural psychology. Upon completion of this course you should have an understanding of the concept of culture, the relevance of cultural context for psychological research and some insights into universal and culture-specific aspects of psychological phenomena. Beside the basic textbook specific cross-cultural studies will be discussed. The semester schedule and the specific readings will be announced in the first week of the semester.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Describe the concept of culture as used by psychologists.
2. Describe the research methodologies used by cultural and cross-cultural psychologists.
3. Identify and describe the ways in which culture influences psychological phenomena.
4. Explain that cultural variations and universals both characterize the human experience.
5. Think critically about why cultural variations and universals exist.

Prerequisites

PSY 101

General information

This course is subject to the GVSU policies (see <http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies/>).

Withdrawal. The deadline for withdrawing from the class is **April 9, 5 pm**, through one of the Student Assistance Centers.

Special needs. If there is any student in this class who has special needs because of a learning, physical or other disability, please contact me or the Office of Academic Support (OAS) at 331-2490.

Plagiarism. “Any ideas or material taken from another source for either written or oral presentation must be fully acknowledged. Offering the work of someone else as one’s own is plagiarism. The language or ideas taken from another may range from isolated formulas, sentences, or paragraphs to entire articles copied from books, periodical, speeches, or the writing of other students. The offering of materials assembled or collected by others in form of projects or collections without acknowledgement also is considered plagiarism. Any student who fails to give credit in written or oral work for the ideas or materials that have been taken from another is guilty of plagiarism.” (GVSU, Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog 2004-2005, p. 91). **Plagiarism or cheating will result in an F for the course.**

Exams

There will be a midterm and a final exam. Both exams are online. The exam will be available for the whole day from 8 am to 11 pm. Once you start the exam, you have to finish it. The exam is comprised of essay, problem-based, and multiple choice questions. The midterm exam will be on **Wednesday, March 3**. The final exam will be on **Wednesday, April 28**.

If you do not participate in the exams, you have to bring a written confirmation by the head of the department or by a physician. If you do not bring any document, I can decide to give you another written exam (maximal 70% of the points).

Exercises

There will be several in class exercises and your active participation is appreciated.

Assignments

You will be four assignments. All assignments will be submitted through assignment manager on Blackboard. The deadline of assignments will be announced in the semester schedule.

Assignment 1: Developmental niche

Interview a person and write an essay related to the concept of developmental niche.

Assignment 2: Group presentation of a selected topic

Assignment 3: Research paper

Write a research paper about a cross-cultural topic related to the presented paper.

Assignment 4: Gender Interview

Reports

You will be asked to write a short report about a given topic related to the respective textbook chapter. Six of the eight reports will count towards the final grade. Each report has a value of 10 points. The deadline will be announced on Bb.

Extra Credit

An Extra Credit Task will eventually be offered during the semester with a maximum of 10 points.

Grade Distribution

A	94 - 100%	A-	90 - 94.00%		
B+	87 - 90%	B	83 - 87%	B-	80 - 83%
C+	77 - 80%	C	73 - 77%	C-	70 - 73%
D+	64 - 70	D	60 - 64%	F	60% and lower

Evaluation and Grading

Your final grade in this class will be based upon the following achievements. Changes of the assignments and grading may occur during the semester and be announced in time:

Assignment 1: Developmental Niche	40 points
Assignment 2: Presentation of a topic	40 points
Assignment 3: Research paper	40 points
Assignment 4: Gender Interview	30 points
Reports	60 points
Midterm Exam	40 points
Final exam	50 points
Total	300 points



This course is part of GVSU's General Education Program.

The goal of the program is to prepare you for intelligent participation in public dialogues that consider the issues of humane living and responsible action in local, national, and global communities.

The program is designed to increase your knowledge and skills in the following areas:

Knowledge Goals

1. The major areas of human investigation and accomplishment - the arts, the humanities, the mathematical sciences, the natural sciences, the social sciences, and writing.
2. An understanding of one's own culture and the cultures of others.

Skills goals

1. To engage in articulate expression through effective writing
2. To engage in articulate expression through effective speaking.
3. To think critically and creatively.
4. To locate, evaluate, and use information effectively.
5. To integrate different areas of knowledge and view ideas from multiple perspectives.

Ensuring that undergraduate students receive a broad general education has been a primary goal of colleges and universities since their inception. In this era of increasing specialization and growing demand for professional expertise, it is vital that we continue to emphasize the value of general learning.

GVSU maintains that a complete education involves more than preparation for a particular career. A career occurs in the context of a life, and a sound general education helps one "make a life" as well as "make a living." The university is committed to assuring that all undergraduate students, regardless of academic major, receive a broad education rooted in the arts and sciences.

Teaching in the liberal tradition is at the heart of Grand Valley's identity, and this focus is critical in our General Education Program. Liberal education transcends the acquisition of information; it goes beyond the factual to ask important evaluative and philosophical questions. Liberal learning holds the fundamental principles and suppositions of a body of knowledge up to inquiry, question, and discussion. It helps a person recognize the assumptions under which he or she operates and encourages the examination and questioning of those assumptions. Liberal learning begins in the General Education Program and continues through the more specialized studies comprising each student's major and minor areas of study.

Grand Valley State University educates students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies.