

**PSY 355: Psychology and Culture
Fall 2025**

**Wolfgang Friedlmeier
Lake Huron Hall 103**

**Section 1
MWF 12-12:50**

**Section 2
MWF 11–11:50**

Instructor

Wolfgang Friedlmeier
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331-2415
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Office Hours

Monday 1 to 2 pm
Wednesday 1 to 2 pm
Friday 1 to 2 pm
Virtual Office Hours: by appointment
Meeting ID: 406 828 8089
Passcode: 3UYDhZ or 490450

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.

Friedlmeier, W., Corapci, F., Susa-Erdogan, G., Benga, O., & Kurman, J. (2019). Cultural variations of maternal emotion regulation of toddler's emotions in a delay of gratification context. *Culture and Brain*, 7, 1-27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40167-018-0076-0>

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.

Mesquita, B. & Albert, D. (2008). The cultural regulation of emotions (pp. 486-503). In J. Gross (Ed.), *Handbook of emotion regulation* (pp. 486-503). New York: Guilford.

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

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

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 **November 7, 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.**

IMPORTANT: AI USAGE

You may use AI for improving your created papers regarding wording, grammar, and spelling.

However, when you use ChatGPT or similar devices to CREATE text you are asked to cite these passages. Here is some information how to do this. <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt> . Failing to mark such text as citation counts as plagiarism and will be graded as Failed.

Example:

When prompted with “Is the left brain right brain divide real or a metaphor?” the ChatGPT-generated text indicated that although the two brain hemispheres are somewhat specialized, “the notation that people can be characterized as ‘left-brained’ or ‘right-brained’ is considered to be an oversimplification and a popular myth” (OpenAI, 2023).

In References Section

OpenAI. (2023). ChatGPT (Mar 14 version) [Large language model]. <https://chat.openai.com/chat>

Psych Friends Peer-to-Peer Mentors

Psych Friends mentors are upper-level psychology and behavioral neuroscience students who are trained to provide support in many areas, such as: effective studying and time management techniques, exam preparation and reflection skills, understanding the PSY and BNS major requirements, potential jobs and careers in the field, the process of applying for graduate school, and how to maintain physical and mental health as a student. Visit <https://www.gvsu.edu/navigate> to schedule an online or in-person meeting today!

Presence

The class presence will be recorded. You can miss about 3 classes without excuses. After that, you need to bring documentation for absences. In general, let me know by email if you are not able to come to class.

Assignments

You will be asked to fulfill six 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 (40 points)

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

Assignment 2: Article presentation (partner with another student) (40 points)

Present a cross-cultural study in APA style with focus on culture. Write a research paper about a cross-cultural topic related to the presented paper.

Assignment 3: Research paper (30 points): Select a similar article as presented in AS2 and discuss the commonalities and differences regarding the conceptual and the methodological approach. (30 points)

Assignment 4: Group presentation of a selected cultural group (40 points) plus internal evaluation (20 points)

Assignment 5: Reports: Short essay related to discussed topics based on the textbook. The report should reflect the ideas and arguments given in the textbook and should include some personal perspective and arguments. Six of the nine reports go into the final grade (60 points).

Assignment 6: Reflect about cultural characteristics in Media (30 points). Write an essay along critical questions related to the three-generational story in Georgia.

Reports

You need to submit 6 out of 9 offered report topics. The reports will refer to the ideas and arguments presented in the textbook. You are also asked to add a personal comment to each report. See also under Assignment 5

Quizzes

There will be 9 short online multiple-choice quizzes for each chapter with five questions. The quiz will test the content of the related chapter in the textbook. You will have about ten days to answer. The answer time will be limited to 10 minutes. Eight of the nine quizzes will go into your final grade (40 points). If you miss the deadline of the quiz, 0 points will be in your record for the respective quiz.

Exams

There will be a midterm exam in class. The exam is a multiple-choice test with 30 questions. The midterm exam will be on **October 15**.

The final culminative experience will consist in group presentations about various cultural groups from a psychological perspective. We will use the exam time for presentation. As more presentation time is needed, we will already start in the last week of classes (see Schedule).

Wednesday, December 10 at 10 to 11:50 am (Section 2).

Wednesday, December 10 at 12 to 1:50 pm (Section 1)

If you do not participate in the exams or group presentations, you must bring written confirmation from the head of the department or from a physician. If you do not bring any document, I can decide to give you another written exam (max. 70% of the points) and request a recorded version of your part of the group presentation (max. 70% of the points).

Active Contributions

As this class is partly interactive, you can play an important role regarding the liveliness of the class by getting involved in the discussions, asking questions, and especially commenting on student presentations throughout the semester. There will be several in- class exercises and your active participation is appreciated.

Extra Credit

An Extra Credit Task will be offered during the semester. You get 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

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: Article Presentation	40 points
Assignment 3: Research paper	30 points
Assignment 4: Presentation of a topic (as group)	60 points
Assignment 5: Reports	60 points
Assignment 6: Reflection about cultural characteristics	30 points
Midterm Exam	40 points
Quizzes	40 points
Active contribution	30 points
 Total	 370 points
Extra credit	max. 10 points



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

The General Education Program prepares students for informed citizenship, leading to responsible participation in local, national, and global communities.

PSY 355 Psychology and Culture

Cultures - Global Perspectives

Knowledge Student Learning Outcomes

1. Explain how culture affects people's efforts to understand, use, and survive in their environments, and how these efforts, in turn, affect culture.
2. Explain within a cultural context the worldviews, language, or ways of life of societies, nations, regions, or peoples located outside of the United States.

Skills Student Learning Outcomes

1. Critical Thinking: Comprehensively evaluate issues, ideas, artifacts, or events before forming a conclusion.
 - a. States an issue clearly and describes it comprehensively.
 - b. Uses appropriate evidence that includes relevant context(s), which facilitates a comprehensive analysis or synthesis of the issue.
 - c. Develops a position that thoroughly takes into account the complexities of an issue, limits of the position, and synthesizes others' points of view.
 - d. Develops conclusions, implications, and consequences that are logical and reflect an informed evaluation based on strength of evidence.
2. Collaboration: Effectively work on a team. (Students must participate in a group project conducted over a significant portion of the semester.)
 - a. Helps the team move forward by articulating the merits of alternative ideas or proposals.
 - b. Engages team members in ways that facilitate their contributions to meetings by both constructively building upon or synthesizing the contributions of others as well as noticing when someone is not participating and inviting them to engage.
 - c. Completes all assigned tasks by the deadline; work accomplished is thorough, comprehensive, and advances the project; proactively helps other team members complete their assigned tasks.
 - d. Actively promotes a constructive team climate.

Semester Schedule

Date	Readings	Topic
Week 1		
8/25	Overview and Organization of the course	
8/27	Introduction – Presenting examples for AS2, AS3, AS4	
8/29	Ch. 1 Culture I	
	What is culture?	Read Breast Cancer Paper
Week 2		
9/1	<i>Labour Day</i>	
9/3	Ch. 1 Culture II	Report 1, Quiz 1
	Why culture matters?	Discussion: Breast Cancer
9/5	Ch. 1 Interdisciplinary Perspectives	
Week 3		
9/8	Ch. 2 Theories and Methodology I Bronfenbrenner Model	
9/10	Ch. 2 Theories and Methodology II Harkness/Super: Developmental Niche	AS1
9/12	Ch. 2 Theories and Methodology III Vygotsky	Report 2, Quiz 2 Read Breastfeeding Article Deadline: Report 1/ Quiz 1
Week 4		
9/15	Ch. 3 Socialization and Culture I Breastfeeding, Walking	Read CoSleeping Article
9/17	Ch. 3 Socialization and Culture II Sleeping, Crying	Report 3, Quiz 3
9/19	Ch. 3 Individual Presentations (3)	Deadline Report 2/Quiz 2
Week 5		
9/22	Ch. 4 Family in cultural context I Forms of Marriage	Exercise: Forms of Marriage
9/24	Ch. 4 Family in cultural context II Ch. 4 Family structure (Kagitcibasi)	Report 4, Quiz 4
9/26	Ch. 4 Individual Presentations (3)	Deadline Report 3/Quiz 3 Deadline AS1

Week 6

9/29	Ch. 4	Example of family dynamics 1
10/1	Ch. 4	Example of family dynamics 2
10/3	Ch. 5	Culture, Language, and Cognition I

AS6**Report 5, Quiz 5
Deadline Report 4/Quiz 4****Week 7**

10/6	Ch. 5	Culture, Language, and Cognition II
10/8	Ch. 5	Individual Presentations (3)
10/10	Ch. 6	Culture, Self and Personality I

Report 6, Quiz 6**Week 8**

10/13	Ch. 6	Individual Presentations (3)
10/15	Midterm Exam	
10/17	Ch. 6	Culture, Self and Personality II
10/17	Ch. 7	Culture and Social Behavior I

**Deadline Report 5/Quiz 5
Deadline AS6****Week 9****10/20 FALL BREAK**

10/22	Ch. 7	Culture and Social Behavior I
10/24	Ch. 7	Culture and Social Behavior II Attachment and Culture

Preschools in Three Cultures
Read attachment articles
Report 7, Quiz 7**Deadline Report 6/ Quiz 6****Week 10**

10/27	Ch. 7	Culture and Social Behavior IV Attachment culture (Rothbaum/Van IJzendoorn)
10/29	Ch. 7	Individual Presentations (3)
10/31	Ch. 7a	Culture and Emotion I

Deadline Report 7/Quiz 7**Week 11**

11/3	Ch. 7a	Culture and Emotion II
11/5	Ch. 7a	Individual Presentations (3)
11/7	Ch. 8	Culture and Gender I

Report 8, Quiz 8**Week 12**

11/10	Ch. 8	Culture and Gender II
11/12	Ch. 8	Culture and Gender III
11/14	Ch. 8	Individual Presentations (3)

**You will be a boy
Deadline Report 8/Quiz 8****Week 13**

11/17	Ch. 9	Culture and Health I
11/19	Ch. 9	Culture and Health II
11/21	Ch. 9	Individual Presentations (3)

Report 9, Quiz 9

Week 14**11/24 Group Presentations****Quiz 9****11/26 *THANKSGIVING*****11/28 *THANKSGIVING*****Week 15 (Group 3: no topic – should be ready to jump in if time allows!)****12/1 Group Presentations****12/3 Group Presentations****Deadline: AS 3****12/5 Group Presentations****Week 16 Exam Week****12/10 10 to 11:50 (Section 2)****Group presentations (if necessary)****12/10 12 to 1:50 pm (Section 1)****Group presentations (if necessary)**