

George Mason University

Applied Cross-Cultural Psychology

SUMMER 2021 | PSYC 379-C01

COURSE DESCRIPTION

We will review major advances in cross-cultural research and discuss how they impact various aspects and domains of the field of psychology. We will start by understanding different theoretical and empirical approaches to cross-cultural study, then investigate how cross-cultural differences enhance our understanding of basic psychological concepts such as emotion, cognition, and social interaction. We will explore how this impacts daily life in a multicultural global society.

Professor:

Steven Zhou



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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Fridays,
5 PM – 6 PM ET (or [by appointment](#))

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, you can expect to

- ✓ Understand the major theories and explanations of cultural differences
- ✓ Articulate empirical and theoretical approaches to researching culture
- ✓ Understand how culture impacts major theories and concepts in cognitive, developmental, social, and health psychology
- ✓ Apply cross-cultural understanding to daily life in a multicultural, global society

This class has a full semester of material condensed into a five-week summer session. Thus, although I have designed the class to be as engaging and interesting as possible (no tests, no textbook!), it will still be a significant amount of work each week. Please expect to invest anywhere between 15 to 25 hours per week in this class; however, note that I will be *extremely available* to help if you ever have trouble keeping up!

OVERVIEW

This course is made up of five modules (one per week). Each module includes videos, readings, a quiz, a short writing assignment, and a discussion board. The modules are:

1. Cross-Cultural Research & Measurement
2. Culture and Cognition
3. Culture and Development
4. Culture and Social Influences
5. Culture and Health

All videos and readings will be provided for *free* on Blackboard; there is no textbook. Quizzes will be open-book and open-note. There will be a final project (not an exam or test) due at the end of Summer Session C (July 24, 2021).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The following are the course activities and assignments.

EACH MODULE INCLUDES:



Videos & Readings

Each module includes required videos and readings; all will be made available for free on Blackboard. Please complete the videos and readings before you do the weekly quiz and writing assignment.



Quizzes

Each module will have an open-book, open-note timed quiz on Blackboard. The quiz will cover the material from the videos and readings. Each quiz will be worth 20 points; there will be five quizzes (one for each module).



Writing Assignments

Each module *except for the final one* includes a short writing assignment. Details will be made available on Blackboard, but you can expect to write about 500 words for each assignment. The assignments will be mostly for reflection and discussion on the module; they are *not* research papers. Each assignment will be worth 50 points, there will be four assignments.



Discussion Board Post

Each module includes a discussion board prompt. You will respond to the question *at the beginning of the week* in a 150-200 word post. By the end of the week, you will then post a response (at least 100 words each) to at least two classmates' discussion board posts. Each initial post is worth 10 points, and each response is worth 5 points each, for a total of 20 points per module.

FINAL PROJECT:



The final project will be an individual assignment. The project details will be announced on Blackboard, but it will be an integrated project designed to take the information learned in the semester and apply it to a real-life situation of your choosing. The goal is to help you understand and articulate the impact of cross-cultural psychology in everyday life. The final deliverable of the project will be *either* a paper or a pre-recorded video presentation with Powerpoint slides. The project will be worth 100 points total.

SUMMARY

Activity	Description	Total Points
Quizzes	5 quizzes x 20 points each	100 points
Writing Assignments	4 assignments x 50 points each	200 points
Discussion Board Posts	5 weeks of posts (1 initial post + 2 response posts) x 20 points each	100 points
Final Project	1 final project x 100 points	100 points

Total: 500 points

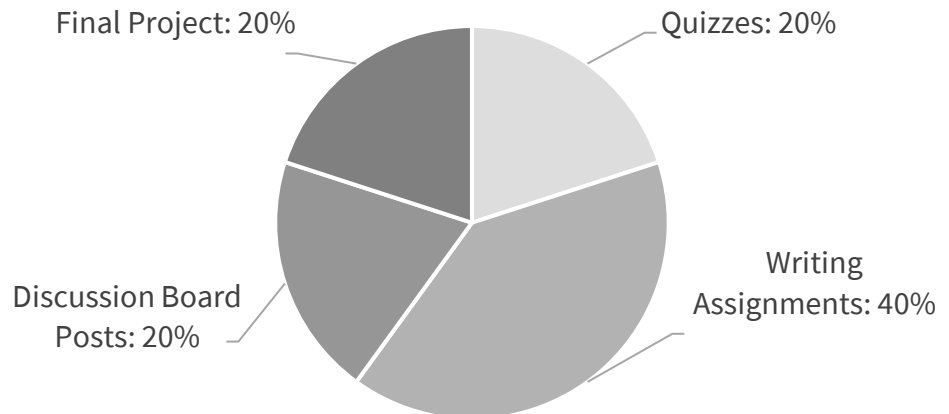
GRADING

The grading scale and points allocated per assignment are shown below.

Grading Scale

Grade	%	Points
A+	97% +	485 +
A	93%	465-484
A-	90%	450-464
B+	87%	435-449
B	83%	415-434
B-	80%	400-414
C+	77%	385-399
C	73%	365-384
C-	70%	350-364
D	60%	300-349
F	< 60%	< 300

Breakdown of Assignments



Deadlines and Late Work

- You will complete one module per week in this five-week course. All assignments for each module (readings, quizzes, writing assignments, and discussion board posts) will be due by Sunday night at 11:59 PM Eastern for each week. Please do not wait until the weekend to start working on the weekly assignments! I highly recommend you work on assignments throughout the week, to spread out the material and workload. The exception is the final module; module 5 assignments will be due by Saturday night, July 24, which is the last day of Summer Session C. The final project is due on this day as well. Please see the schedule for details.
- If you are falling behind, please let me know as soon as possible. Because this is a condensed class, it will be very difficult to catch up if you miss an assignment. I will accept late work only if you contact me *before the due date*. Late work will receive a 5% grade penalty for each day that it is late. I will not be able to accept any work after July 24, 2021, since that is the end of the summer session.

Grading Philosophy

I believe that education is about obtaining and applying knowledge. The information presented throughout this course is designed to be helpful and impactful to your future success in the field of psychology, regardless of which specific job you end up in. I also believe that mistakes are part of learning, and education should not be about losing points – rather, you should be gaining them just as you are gaining knowledge. Thus, throughout the course, I will be grading from an “upward” perspective – my goal is not to take points away from you, but to *give you points* when you demonstrate (on quizzes, writing assignments, projects, etc.) that you have grasped the material. This may seem like a small and insignificant distinction, but it is an important one. Education is all about practicing and gaining skills, not about memorizing or regurgitating knowledge. Throughout the course, the focus will be on *skill development*. I hope that you will see this throughout the assignments and the grading!

POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS

The following describe various policies that will be in place this semester.

Technology: Blackboard, Zoom, & Email

All course materials and assignments will be distributed and collected via Blackboard. Any *optional* live sessions or meetings will be conducted via Zoom. I will also be frequently communicating with you via your assigned school email. Given the condensed nature of the course, **please check your email daily** to ensure that you don't miss any important announcements. Please ensure that you have the necessary technology (e.g., computer, audio connection, internet) to participate fully in the class. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out.

Withdrawal and Refund Dates

It is the student's responsibility to drop a course. Non-participation or failure to pay does not constitute official withdrawal. To view specific drop deadlines, log into your MyMason account: 1) Click on "My Class Schedule" under Student Quick Links 2) Select the current term 3) Click on "View Drop Deadline Dates" at the bottom of the page.

Student Privacy Statement

At times, students may disclose personal information in class. It is expected that the class will respect the privacy of classmates. The personal information disclosed in this class should not be repeated outside of the course.

Accommodations

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you are seeking accommodations for this class, please visit <http://ds.gmu.edu/> for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Then discuss your approved accommodations with me. Disability Services is located in The Student Union Building I (SUB I). Email: ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474.

Academic Misconduct

George Mason University has an honor code, which requires all members of this community to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing are all prohibited. It is every student's responsibility to familiarize himself or herself with the honor code. The honor code is available [HERE](#). In the event that a student cheats by plagiarizing, the instructor may assign an F grade for the assignment, and/or for the course.

Civility (Non-Academic Misconduct)

Please remember that as members of this class and university, we are members of a larger learning community where excellence is achieved through civility. Our actions affect everyone in our community. You are to be respectful of others regardless of gender, age, race, culture, religion, or sexual orientation. In all online communication, it is expected that all students will follow rules of online "netiquette," which is a set of rules for online behavior that all members of this class are expected to follow. Review some of the general rules at <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>.

Individuals who violate this policy in class or engage in disruptive online behaviors such as flaming (posting disrespectful or hostile comments), posting inappropriate comments, or shouting (posting messages using all capitals) may have their online access privileges revoked and/or may receive an F for the class.

Title IX: George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. [University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct](#) speaks to the specifics of Mason's process, the resources, and the options available to students. Any faculty or staff member at Mason is required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason's Title IX Coordinator, but please know that such reports will result only in someone reaching out to you directly to let you know about available services and to determine if you wish to take any action. That said, you can also contact the Student Support and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434) or Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380) to speak to someone confidentially, as individuals who work in those offices are not required to report disclosures. You may also seek assistance directly from Mason's Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; titleix@gmu.edu).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Below is our tentative course schedule. Please note that any modifications to the schedule will be announced in advance via Blackboard.

Module	Topic	Assignments*
1 (June 21 – June 27)	Cross-Cultural Research & Measurement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Intro to Cross-Cultural Psych ➤ Theories in Cross-Cultural Research ➤ Methods in Cross-Cultural Research 	Quiz 1 Discussion Board Posts Writing Assignment 1
2 (June 28 – July 4)	Culture and Cognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Sensation & Perception ➤ Intelligence ➤ Emotion 	Quiz 2 Discussion Board Posts Writing Assignment 2
3 (July 5 – July 11)	Culture and Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cognitive ➤ Psychosocial ➤ Moral 	Quiz 3 Discussion Board Posts Writing Assignment 3
4 (July 12 – July 18)	Culture and Social Influences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Social Cognition ➤ Communication ➤ Relationships 	Quiz 4 Discussion Board Posts Writing Assignment 4
5 (July 19 – July 24**) ** note that the Summer Session ends on a Saturday, not a Sunday!	Culture and Health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Psychological Disorders ➤ Mental and Physical Health 	Quiz 5** Discussion Board Posts** Final Project**

* All practice sets and projects are due at 11:59 PM ET on Sunday the week that they are listed. For example, Quiz 1 will be due Sunday June 27 at 11:59 PM ET. All submissions will be through Blackboard.

** All assignments for module 5 are due Saturday July 24 at 11:59 PM ET.