

San José State University
Psychology
PSYCH 194, Cultural Psychology, Summer 2026

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Christine Ma-Kellams
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Class Days/Time:	Asynchronous
Classroom:	Canvas
Prerequisites:	Psyc 1 (Intro to Psychology)

Course Description

Psychology 194 is your capstone course in psychology. This section is designed for students who have some background and interest in multicultural and cross-cultural issues.

Course Format: Online & Study Abroad

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

*Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on Canvas Learning Management System course login website at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU on [Spartan App Portal](http://one.sjsu.edu) <http://one.sjsu.edu> to learn of any updates. **For help with using Canvas see [Canvas Student Resources page](http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources)** (http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources)*

Course Goals

How do beliefs associated with one's social milieu change psychological tendencies, and what happens when cultures collide? This course will explore the specific ways one's cultural background shapes your sense of self, emotions, motivation, judgments, and relationships. We will discuss race, politics, God, sex, money, and how you like your coffee. In the process, we will unpack "culture" in all its various forms, including (but not limited to) ethnic, socioeconomic, educational, political, gender and religious culture.

In doing so, the goal of this course is to help you gain a better appreciation for the ways in which human culture and psyche interact, and to enhance your ability to deal with and understand variations in human behavior across populations and groups. In order to achieve these goals, we will review empirical psychological research

on culture, examine theoretical and methodological foundations of cross-cultural research in psychology, and apply them to real-world issues, from whether money makes you happy to how Obama influences White identity. We will discuss the mounting evidence suggesting that much of psychological processes are culture-specific, theory-driven and context-dependent. We will discuss several basic questions of multicultural psychology, such as,

1. What is culture? What is ethnicity?
2. How does culture relate to psychological processes? How human psyche affects human cultures?
3. How to apply cultural psychology to understand and deal with real life cultural conflicts, ethnic tensions, or diversity?

We will focus on applying these principles in the context of South Korea to understand the effects of culture-specific theories of mind, person, self, and social institutions on human cognition, motivation, emotion, and social interaction.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

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

CLO 1: Students will be able to –identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts related to historical and contemporary issues in psychology and multicultural/cross-cultural psychology. Assessment for this will be on midterms, class discussions, and presentations.

CLO 2: Students will be able to –describe, and communicate the major issues and theoretical perspectives associated with culture, its associated schemas, values, and thinking styles. Assessment for this CLO will be conducted in the midterm and class presentations.

CLO 3: Students will be able to –identify, describe, and communicate experimental approaches and associated empirical findings for various methodological approaches in cross-cultural studies. Assessment for this CLO will be conducted primarily in the final paper.

CLO 4: Students will be able to – think critically and creatively about cultural approaches to address issues related to real world outcomes across psychological subfields, including parenting, consumer behavior, and mental health. This CLO will be assessed in exams and the final research paper.

CLO 5: Students will be able to – apply cross-cultural and multicultural principles to individual, interpersonal and group processes. This will be assessed on the final presentation.

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):

Upon successful completion of the psychology major requirements...

PLO1 -- Knowledge Base of Psychology -- Students will be able to identify, describe, and communicate the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

PLO2 -- Research Methods in Psychology -- Students will be able to design, implement, and communicate basic research methods in psychology, including research design, data analysis, and interpretations.

PLO3 -- Critical Thinking Skills in Psychology -- Students will be able to use critical and creative thinking, skeptical inquiry, and a scientific approach to address issues related to behavior and mental processes.

PLO4 -- Application of Psychology -- Students will be able to apply psychological principles to individual, interpersonal, group, and societal issues.

PLO5 -- Values in Psychology -- Students will value empirical evidence, tolerate ambiguity, act ethically, and recognize their role and responsibility as a member of society.

Required Texts/Readings

Ma-Kellams, C. (2025). *Cultural Psychology: Cross-Cultural and Multicultural Perspectives*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Additional readings (i.e., articles) will be posted on Canvas and listed below.

Library Liaison

Christa Bailey, Email: christa.bailey@sjsu.edu

Course Requirements and Assignments

Online course structure

This class will be ASYNCHRONOUS (videos/activities you do on your own online on Canvas). This means you will do activities posted on Canvas on your own time (e.g., videos, exams, assignments).

Activities

Activities are an important part of this class. Activities are meant as a space for you to apply the theories and findings from the psychology of prejudice to the real world.

Course Readings

Readings should be done before each class. Useful discussions follow only when everyone has completed the readings thoroughly and thoughtfully.

Quizzes/exams: To assess your understanding, quiz material will come from the lectures, class activities, and assigned readings.

Cultural Genogram: Students are required to explore an aspect of their cultural background by constructing a Cultural Genogram. Due to the nature of the genogram, it is expected that students will put forth sufficient effort into creating an aesthetically creative genogram. Specific instructions for this assignment will be posted on Canvas.

Final Paper: Scientific understanding of cultural influence is based on empirical research. As a student of this science, it's important that you be able to think critically about published research and think creatively about future directions for existing research. To facilitate this learning, you will choose one topic related to cultural psychology and complete a paper on the topic. The paper will include a thorough review of the existing literature on the topic, your own critical analysis of the research that has been conducted, possible future directions and practical applications. The paper should be 4-5 pages in length (double-spaced), include 3 journal articles or academic books as references, and be in APA style. Additional information will be provided in class.

***ALL written assignments need to use 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, in APA style.

Grading Information

Grading

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Activities/Assignments:	
Cultural Genogram presentation	40 pts
Participation in assignments	80 pts

Quizzes:

Quiz #1	40 pts
Quiz #2	40 pts
Quiz #3	40 pts

Research Project:

Final Paper Topic + references	10 pts
Final Paper	20 pts

Determination of Grades

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>96 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>93 to 95%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>86 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

Classroom Protocol

Late assignments

An assignment turned in after the due date (and time) will receive a 10% penalty per day late. Note the deadlines in the class syllabus and plan accordingly.

Academic Honesty

You are held to the highest standard of academic honesty and integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, generative AI use, and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. You may never use the ideas or work of another person (or AI) without proper citation (i.e. noting the name and source according to APA style). The work you turn in for all assignments should always be your own. I am interested in your original ideas, as well as your

ability to properly cite others' ideas. Keep in mind that plagiarism does not necessarily have to be intentional to be serious. When in doubt, cite!

Contact

I check my email on a daily basis and should respond to most queries within 24 hours. Please feel free to talk to me before/after class, or make an appointment for office hours.

Accessibility

Any student needing academic adjustments or accommodations should talk with me by the end of the second week of the term.

University Policies (Required)

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) at (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page, review and be familiar with these university policies and resources.

In the following pages, you will find an outline of the topics and readings we will be covering. Please note that the syllabus may be updated during the semester to reflect changes in course readings, shifts in lecture topics, etc. You will be notified each time a change takes place.

PSYC 194/Cultural Psychology Course Schedule

Course Schedule (subject to change with fair notice made during class/via Canvas)

Week/Lesson/Module	Topics & Activities (hours in parenthesis)	Reading/Homework
6/2	<i>Introduction & Development</i>	Textbook Ch 1
6/3	<i>East Asian and European-American Culture</i>	Sue, S., & Okazaki, S. (1990). Asian-American educational achievements: A phenomenon in search of an explanation. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 45, 913-920.
6/4	<i>Other American cultures</i>	Textbook Ch. 2

Week/Lesson/Module	Topics & Activities (hours in parenthesis)	Reading/Homework
6/5	<i>Unpacking Identity Politics</i>	<p>Knowles, E. D., Lowery, B. S., Chow, R. M., & Unzueta, M. M. (2014). Deny, Distance, or Dismantle? How White Americans Manage a Privileged Identity. <i>Perspectives on Psychological Science</i>, 9(6), 594-609.</p> <p>Textbook Chapter 3</p>
6/6	<i>Social Class, Gender, and Region as Culture</i>	<p>Nisbett, R. (1993). Violence and US regional culture. <i>American Psychologist</i>, 48, 441-489.</p> <p>Stephens, N. M., Hamedani, M. G., & Destin, M. (2014). Closing the Social-Class Achievement Gap: A Difference-Education Intervention Improves First-Generation Students' Academic Performance and All Students' College Transition. <i>Psychological Science</i>, 25(4), 943-953.</p> <p>Textbook Chapter 4</p>
6/9	<i>Religion as Culture & Human Universals</i>	<p>Quiz #1</p> <p>Cohen, A. B., & Hill, P. C. (2007). Religion as culture: Religious individualism and collectivism among American Catholics, Jews, and Protestants. <i>Journal of Personality</i>, 75, 709-742.</p>

Week/Lesson/Module	Topics & Activities (hours in parenthesis)	Reading/Homework
6/10	Catch-up	brainstorm topic for Cultural Genogram
6/11	<i>Orientation & Education in Korea: Revisiting Asian Achievement</i>	Online activities: TST & Your Two Selves
6/12	<i>Individualism & Collectivism: Where's the Evidence?</i> <i>Unpacking "chemyeon" (social face)</i>	Complete What Changes the Self? activity Hong, Y., Morris, M., Chiu, C, & Benet-Martinez, V (2000). Multicultural minds: A dynamic constructivist approach to culture and cognition. <i>American Psychologist</i> , 55, 709-720.

Week/Lesson/Module	Topics & Activities (hours in parenthesis)	Reading/Homework
6/13	<i>Politics & Identity</i>	<p>FINAL PAPER TOPIC & REFERENCES DUE</p> <p>Lee, E., Suh, E. M., Chu, T., Kim, H. S., & Sherman, D. K. (2009). Is emotion suppression that bad? Comparing the emotion suppression and subjective well-being link in two cultures. <i>Korean Journal of Social and Personality Psychology</i>, 23, 131-146.</p>
6/16	<i>Class (SES)</i>	Complete All Look Same; Citizenship Test
6/17	<i>Gender</i>	Caste in America

Week/Lesson/Module	Topics & Activities (hours in parenthesis)	Reading/Homework
6/18	<i>Within cultural variation: Regional Differences</i>	Birthday Boy vs. Girl Kim, H. S., Sherman, D. K., Mojaverian, T., Sasaki, J. Y., Park, J., Suh, E. M., & Taylor, S. E. (2011). Gene–culture interaction: Oxytocin receptor polymorphism (OXTR) and emotion regulation. <i>Social Psychological and Personality Science</i> , 2(6), 665-672.
6/19	Presentations	Cultural Genogram presentations
6/20	<i>Stereotypes, Prejudice & Self-Stereotyping</i>	Complete Self-stereotyping; Cultural Products Park, J. Y., & Johnson, R. C. (1984). Moral Development in Rural and Urban Korea. <i>Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology</i> , 15(1), 35–46.
6/23	<i>Religion & Culture</i>	Complete Money & Morality Survey; Everyday Manichaeism

Week/Lesson/Module	Topics & Activities (hours in parenthesis)	Reading/Homework
6/24	<i>Attitudes towards Diversity</i>	Take the IAT & Design Your Own Itinerary
6/25	<i>Catch-up</i>	Complete Social Media Posts & Privilege “Walk”
6/26	<i>The Future of Culture & Change</i>	Submit Final Paper Yang, W. (2011). Paper Tigers. New York Magazine. http://nymag.com/news/features/asian-americans-2011-5/
6/27	<i>Intergroup Conflict: Stereotypes, Prejudice and Discrimination</i>	Textbook Chapter 5- 7 Take Quiz #2
6/30	<i>Ingroup derogation & self-stereotyping</i>	Textbook Ch. 8, 9 Bell, A. C., & Burkley, M. (2014). “Women Like Me Are Bad at Math”: The Psychological Functions of Negative Self-Stereotyping. <i>Social and Personality Psychology Compass</i> , 8(12), 708-720.

Week/Lesson/Module	Topics & Activities (hours in parenthesis)	Reading/Homework
7/1	<i>Acculturation; Biracial/Multiracial Identities; & Diversity</i>	<p>Textbook Ch. 10-12</p> <p>Sue, D.W., Capodilupo, C.M., Torino, G.C., Bucceri, J.M., Holder, A.M., Nadal, K.L. & Esquilí, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. <i>American Psychologist</i>, 62, 271-286.</p> <p>Take Quiz #3</p>
7/2	<i>Distal & Proximal Explanations for the Origins of Culture/Frontiers in Cultural Neuroscience</i>	<p>Quiz #3</p> <p>Textbook Ch. 13</p> <p>10 Big Ideas in 10 Years of Brain Science: http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/10-big-ideas-in-10-years-of-brain-science/</p> <p>Kamble, S., Shackelford, T. K., Pham, M., & Buss, D. M. (2014). Indian mate preferences: Continuity, sex differences, and cultural change across a quarter of a century. <i>Personality and Individual Differences</i>, 70, 150-155.</p>