



CIEE Prague, Czech Republic

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| Course Name: | Cultural Psychology: Czech and American Perspectives |
| Course Number: | PSYC 3007 PRAG |
| Programs offering course: | CES, CNMJ |
| Language of instruction: | English |
| U.S. Semester Credits: | 3 |
| Contact Hours: | 45 |
| Term: | Fall 2019 |

Course Description

Cultural psychology examines how our psychology (perception, emotion, judgment, attitudes, personality, etc.) and our culture (the distribution of values, practices, beliefs, institutions, and human-made physical environments within which each of us uniquely develops) make one another up. Some of the questions we will explore in this course include: Does our language influence how we think or what we can think about? To what extent are our emotions shared across the species and to what extent do they depend on culture? Why are mental disorders such as PTSD, depression, ADHD, or schizophrenia more highly diagnosed in the U.S. than in other countries around the world, and what role might culture play in mental health and in its diagnosis, and in the conception of mental disorders themselves?

A common tension throughout this class will be the extent to which we can—or should—generalize about psychology across the human species. Arguably, unlike any other species in earth’s history, humans come into the world ill-prepared to survive in any particular physical environment; yet, thanks in large part to social and cultural systems, we are able to adapt across an extreme range of habitats. The basic question to examine here is: To what extent do people in all cultures share the same psychology and to what extent does our psychology differ along with our distinct cultures? We will use our time in the Czech Republic as an opportunity to apply some of these ideas for real-world exploration. Cultural psychology is a comparative science. What are Czechs like? Who are the people living in this country? How has their culture and history shaped their psychology? And what, in turn, does that tell you about American cultural psychology?

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will:

- Assess how a wide variety of psychological processes often thought to be shared across our species—ranging from perception to emotion to personality to mental health to morality—may depend on cultural systems;



- Learn to think more skeptically about the generality of psychological theories based primarily upon Western contexts that fail to take culture into account;
- Better understand how cultural psychological research is conducted and why it is important, and be able to conduct this research at an elementary level themselves;
- Analyze of how culture & psychology make one another up in a specific selection of countries and regions, with a special emphasis on the Czech Republic
- Critically reflect upon how culture might affect their own psychology
- Think critically about Czech people and their culture, and in reflection gain new insights into American people and culture.

Course Prerequisites

While there are no formal prerequisites, this is a demanding course. It requires careful reading, the courage and discipline to put yourself into unfamiliar settings and talk to and observe people you do not know who may not speak English, and extensive class discussion and writing. Although you do not need a background in psychology or anthropology, you will certainly be at an advantage if you are comfortable thinking and discussing high-level psychological, cultural, and social concepts. If you are not looking for a class that will push you to think and talk about big ideas in the social sciences, this class is likely not for you. Students who lack a background in the social sciences or humanities may need to work extra hard to understand the material and to discuss it thoughtfully.

Methods of Instruction

This is a seminar style course. Most of the learning will depend on the students' active engagement with the materials presented. Students will be required to read a selection of texts prior to every class, to do their own thinking and writing about those texts, and to actively engage with other students in discussing them, with guidance from the instructor.

Assessment and Final Grade

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| 1. Summary / critique of the readings: | 20% |
| 2. Participation: | 20% |
| 3. Weekly field research: | 20% |
| 4. In-class presentation: | 10% |
| 5. Midterm Exam: | 10% |
| 6. Final Paper: | 20% |

Course Requirements

Summary / critique of the readings (20%)

Students will have the task to write a summary or critical response to each assigned reading. Directions for submission will be provided in the assignments section of Canvas. Summaries and critical responses should have sufficient depth to demonstrate the text was read carefully.



Critical responses should convey sufficient background from the text such that the response stands on its own without the instructor needing to refer to the original text to understand the student's response. At the same time, the critical responses should be *about* the arguments and evidence in the texts, not about more general issues outside the text that were not a major theme of the text itself. These assignments should NOT be a minimum of 250 words, double-spaced. If there is more than one assigned reading, a separate response should be written for each reading.

Participation (20%)

Active participation is very important in this class. Students are expected to attend every class, to arrive on time and to stay until the end, to present their own—and actively discuss other students'—field notes, and to regularly contribute to discussions about the readings and course content. During class, students will be asked to summarize the readings or to describe their critical responses to them. Students will also selectively read one another's field notes (before class) and actively discuss that material in class. CIEE has its own attendance policies that may affect your final grade (attached to this syllabus), but your participation grade will also be affected by attendance to the extent that missed classes affect your participation in class discussions and activities.

Weekly field research (20%)

During the 2nd class meeting, students will choose one or two cultural or subcultural groups in Prague and a cultural-psychological research question associated with that group. During the semester, students should spend at least 1 hour—ideally 2 hours—each week, observing members of this group, taking field notes, and eventually conducting interviews with members of that community. Field notes and/or interview transcripts for that week—with names and identifying information changed to protect informants' anonymity—should be submitted by Sunday evening and will be discussed during the following week. Directions for submission will be provided in the assignments section of Canvas. The first set of field notes is due at the end of the 2nd week and the last set is due at the end of the 11th week. This leaves a total of 10 sets of field notes.

In-class presentation (10%)

Starting in the fifth week and continuing through the 11th week, each student will have one 15-minute, in-class presentation of his or her cultural or sub-cultural group, explaining the basics of who that group is, why the student finds that group interesting, an initial cultural-psychological question or hypothesis about that group, and why that cultural-psychological question or hypothesis should be meaningful/important to a wider audience.

Midterm Exam (10%)

There will be an essay-style midterm exam during which students will need to write about



important cultural-psychological topics covered in this course, and how those themes connect to the field research and to the students' home culture.

Final Paper (20%)

Students should write a final paper based on their observations and findings from the field research (summarizing key information about their group, describing what's interesting about them from a cultural-psychological perspective), and extending those observations to develop a concrete research question and hypothesis that still needs to be resolved, that was developed in the process of conducting field research, and that could be tested. The paper should include a research proposal, and describe concrete methods that could be used to test the hypothesis (an experiment, a survey, a future field study). The paper should be at least 2500 words long, double-spaced, not including references, cover page, abstract, etc. We will talk about the paper requirements in more detail during class.

THERE IS NO FINAL EXAM IN THIS COURSE.

CIEE Prague Participation Policy

Assessment of students' participation in class is an inherent component of the course grade. Students are required to actively, meaningfully and thoughtfully contribute to class discussions and all types of in-class activities throughout the duration of the class.

Students are responsible for following the course content and are expected to ask clarification questions if they cannot follow the instructor's or other students' line of thought or argumentation.

The use of electronic devices is only allowed for computer-based in-class tests, assignments and other tasks specifically assigned by the course instructor. Students are expected to take notes by hand unless the student is entitled to the use of computer due to his/her academic accommodations. In such cases the student is required to submit an official letter issued by his/her home institution specifying the extent of academic accommodations.

Class participation also includes students' active participation in Canvas discussions and other additional tasks related to the course content as specified by the instructor. If missing a class, the student is expected to catch up on the class content and to submit well-reflected and in-depth contributions to Canvas discussions on the particular topic or reflections to the instructor to ensure that his/her absence from the class will not significantly affect his/her participation grade.

Students will receive a partial participation grade every three weeks.

CIEE Prague Attendance Policy



Regular class attendance is required throughout the program, and **all absences are treated equally regardless of reason** for any affected CIEE course. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursions or events, as well as Internship.

Students who transfer from one CIEE class to another during the add/drop period will not be considered absent from the first session(s) of their new class, provided they were marked present for the first session(s) of their original class. Otherwise, the absence(s) from the original class carry over to the new class and count against the grade in that class.

Missing classes will lead to the following penalties:

90-minute semester classes:

| <i>Number of 90-minute classes</i> | <i>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</i> | <i>Minimum penalty</i> |
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| one to two 90-minute classes | up to 10% | no penalty |
| three 90-minute classes | 10.1–15% | reduction of the final grade by 3% |
| four 90-minute classes | 15.1–17% | reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning |
| five 90-minute classes | 17.1–20% | reduction of the final grade by 7%; written warning |
| six and more 90-minute classes | more than 20% | automatic course failure and possible expulsion |

180-minute semester classes:

| <i>Number of 180-minute classes</i> | <i>Equivalent percentage of the total course hours missed</i> | <i>Minimum penalty</i> |
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| one 180-minute class | up to 10% | no penalty |
| two 180-minute classes | 10.1–20% | reduction of the final grade by 5%; written warning |
| three and more 180-minute classes | more than 20% | automatic course failure and possible expulsion |



Persistent absenteeism (students approaching 20% of the total course hours missed, or violating the attendance policy in more than one class) will result in a written warning, a notification to the student's home school, and possibly a dismissal from the program.

Missing more than 20% of the total class hours will lead to a course failure, and potential program dismissal. This is a CIEE rule that applies to all CIEE courses and is in line with the Participant Contract that each CIEE student signs before arriving on-site.

Late arrival to class will be considered a partial (up to 15 minutes late) or full (15 or more minutes late) absence. **Three partial absences due to late arrivals will be regarded as one full class absence.**

Students must notify their professor and Program Coordinators (PC) beforehand if they are going to miss class for any reason and are responsible for any material covered in class in their absence.

If missing a class during which a test, exam, the student's presentation or other graded class assignments are administered, **make-up assignment will only be allowed in approved circumstances**, such as serious medical issues. In this case, the student must submit a local doctor's note within 24 hours of his/her absence to the PC, who will decide whether the student qualifies for a make-up assignment. Doctor's notes may be submitted via e-mail or phone (a scan or a photograph are acceptable), however **the student must ensure that the note is delivered to the PC.**

Should a truly **extraordinary situation** arise, the student must contact the PC immediately concerning permission for a make-up assignment. Make-up assignments are not granted automatically! The PC decides the course of action for all absence cases that are not straightforward. **Always contact the PC with any inquiry about potential absence(s) and the nature thereof.**

Personal travel (including flight delays and cancelled flights), handling passport and other document replacements, interviews, volunteering and other similar situations are not considered justifiable reasons for missing class or getting permission for make-up assignments.

For class conflicts (irregularities in the class schedule, including field trips, make-up classes and other instances), **always contact the Academic Assistant** to decide the appropriate course of action.

Course attendance is recorded on individual Canvas Course Sites. **Students are responsible for checking their attendance regularly to ensure the correctness of the records.** In case of discrepancies, students are required to contact the Academic Assistant **within one week of the discrepancy date** to have it corrected. Later claims **will not** be considered.



CIEE staff does not directly manage absences at FAMU and ECES, but they have similar attendance policies and attendance is monitored there. Grade penalties may result from excessive absences.

CIEE Academic Honesty Policy

CIEE subscribes to standard U.S. norms requiring that students exhibit the highest standards regarding academic honesty. Cheating and plagiarism in any course assignment or exam will not be tolerated and may result in a student failing the course or being expelled from the program. Standards of honesty and norms governing originality of work differ significantly from country to country. We expect students to adhere to both the American norms and the local norms, and in the case of conflict between the two, the more stringent of the two will preside. Three important principles are considered when defining and demanding academic honesty. These are related to the fundamental tenet that one should not present the work of another person as one’s own.

The first principle is that final examinations, quizzes and other tests must be done without assistance from another person, without looking at or otherwise consulting the work of another person, and without access to notes, books, or other pertinent information (unless the professor has explicitly announced that a particular test is to be taken on an “open book” basis).

The second principle applies specifically to course work: the same written paper may not be submitted in two classes. Nor may a paper for which you have already received credit at your home institution be submitted to satisfy a paper requirement while studying overseas.

The third principle is that any use of the work of another person must be documented in any written papers, oral presentations, or other assignments carried out in connection with a course. This usually is done when quoting directly from another’s work or including information told to you by another person. The general rule is that if you have to look something up, or if you learned it recently either by reading or hearing something, you have to document it.

The penalty ranges from an F grade on the assignment, failure in the course to dismissal from the program. The Academic Director is consulted and involved in decision making in every case of a possible violation of academic honesty.

Weekly Schedule

NOTE: Readings for individual classes are specified and available on the Canvas course site.

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| Week 1 | <p>Class 1 INTRODUCTION, cross-cultural, intercultural psychology, definition of basic concepts.</p> <p>Class 2 Designing cross-cultural research, sampling and interpretation. How to choose your field research group.</p> |
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| <p>Week 2</p> | <p>Class 1 Similarities and differences in behavior across cultures, Individual development: Infancy and early childhood. <u>Reading: Cross cultural psychology, page 20-31</u></p> <p>Reading response 1 due</p> <p>Class 2 Adolescence and adulthood, mating and partnership, parenting and the family, clinical examples. Weekly field research notes 1 due on Sunday, 11:59 Prague time</p> |
| <p>Week 3</p> | <p>Class 1 Social behavior, culture as a social psychological construct, how to study a culture. <u>Reading: Cross cultural psychology, page 40-50</u> Reading response 2 due</p> <p>Online course: Class 2 Social representations, social values and culture, collectivistic and individualistic cultures. Weekly field research notes 2 due on Sunday, 11:59 Prague time</p> |
| <p>Week 4</p> | <p>Class 1 Personality, big five dimensions, the national character, does that exist? <u>Reading: Article Ivana Markova, the making of social representations</u> Reading response 3 due</p> <p>Class 2 Comparison of Czech Republic and America, some non-western concepts, updates on field research. Weekly field research notes 3 due on Sunday, 11:59 Prague time</p> |
| <p>Week 5</p> | <p>Class 1 Cognition, general intelligence, comparative studies. <u>Reading: Cross cultural psychology, page 112-125</u> Reading response 4 due</p> <p>In-class presentation 1</p> <p>Class 2 Language, linguistic relativity, universality. Weekly field research notes 4 due on Sunday, 11:59 Prague time</p> |
| <p>Week 6 Midterm Exam Period</p> | <p>Class 1 Emotion, emotional components, culture and its influence on emotions. <u>Reading: The intercultural mind, cognition and language, page 172-189</u></p> |

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| | <p>In-class presentation 3 Reading response 10 due</p> <p>Class 2 Facial expressions, an excursion into human ethology, updates on field research.</p> <p>In-class presentation 4 Weekly field research notes 5 due on Sunday, 11:59 Prague time</p> |
| <p>Week 7 Midterm Exam Period</p> | <p>Class 1 Revision and Test</p> <p>Class 2 Acculturation, definitions and framework. <u>Reading: film on youtube about emotions from Yale professor</u></p> <p>In-class presentation 5 Weekly field research notes 6 due on Sunday, 11:59 Prague time</p> |
| <p>Week 8</p> | <p>Class 1 Guest speaker</p> <p>Class 2 Acculturation process, dimensions of acculturation and assessment of acculturation. <u>Reading: Acculturation psychology, page 11-25</u></p> <p>In-class presentation 6 Weekly field research notes 7 due on Sunday, 11:59 Prague time</p> |
| <p>Week 9</p> | <p>Class 1 Cultural differences and suffering of identity, clinical examples, personal stories <u>Reading: Acculturation psychology, Acculturation in the US, page 311-329</u></p> <p>In-class presentation 7 Class 2 The false self, how to find roots in a multicultural world? Preparing the field research for the final presentation.</p> <p>In-class presentation 8 Weekly field research notes 8 due on Sunday, 11:59 Prague time</p> |
| <p>Week 10</p> | <p>Class 1 Health and illness, psychopathologies across cultures. <u>Reading: Acculturation psychology, acculturation stress, page 43-55</u></p> <p>In-class presentation 9</p> <p>Class 2 Psychotherapy, cross-cultural psychotherapy, multicultural psychotherapy.</p> |

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| | <p>In-class presentation 10 Weekly field research notes 9 due on Sunday, 11:59 Prague time</p> |
| Week 11 | <p>Class 1 Intercultural relations, multiculturalism, multiculturalism hypothesis. <u>Reading: Eating disorders, Eating disorders East and West, page 1 - 13</u></p> <p>In-class presentation 11 Reading response 18 due</p> <p>Class 2 Group discussion about immigration based on all acquired knowledge. Weekly field research notes 10 due on Sunday, 11:59 Prague time</p> |
| Week 12 | <p>Class 1 Final project presentation <u>Reading: Intercultural mind, Interculturality, page 191-205</u></p> <p>Class 2 Final project presentation</p> |
| Week 13 Final Exam Week | <p>Class 1 Final paper submission</p> <p>Class 2 End-of-course discussion</p> |

Course Materials

Course Readings

Berry, J. & Poortinga, Y. (2011). *Cross Cultural Psychology*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press

Eibl-Eibesfeld, I. (2004). *Die Biologie des menschlichen Verhaltens*. Munich : Blank media

Hofstede, G. (2002) *Exploring Culture*. Boston : Intercultural Press

Juan, L. & Matsumoto, (2017) D. *Culture and psychology*. Boston : Cengage Learning

Kaes, R. & et al. (2012). *Différence culturelle et souffrances de l'identité*. Paris : DUNOD

Shaules, J. (2015). *The intercultural mind*. Boston : Intercultural Press

Nasser, M., Katzman, M. (2001). *Eating disorders and Cultures in Transition*. New York : Brunner Routledge

Sam, D., Berry, J. (2006). *Acculturation psychology*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press



Further readings

- Bennis, W. & Medin, D. (2010). Weirdness is in the eye of the beholder: Comment on Henrich et al. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 33, 85-86.
- Colapinto, J. (2007). The interpreter. *The New Yorker*, April 16.
- Fiske, A.P. (1992). The four elementary forms of sociality: Framework for a unified theory of social relations. *Psychological Review*, 99, 689-723.
- Geertz, C. (1972). Notes on the Balinese cockfight. *Daedalus*, 101, 1-37.
- Geertz, C. (1984/1974). "From the native's point of view": On the nature of anthropological understanding. In R.A. Shweder & R.A. Levine (Eds.), *Culture Theory: Essays on Mind, Self, & Emotion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gladwell, M. (2008). *Outliers: The Story of Success*. New York: Little, Brown and Co.
- Haidt, J. (2001). The emotional dog and its rational tail: A social intuitionist approach to moral judgment. *Psychological Review*, 108, 814-834.
- Hašek, J. (1995/1923). *The Good Soldier Švejk: and His Fortunes in the World War*. New York: Penguin Classics. [literary source for film]
- Henrich J., Heine S.J., & Norenzayan A. (2010). The weirdest people in the world? *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 33, 61-83.
- Kolman, L., Hofstede, G., & Dienes, E. (2003). Cross-cultural differences in Central Europe. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 18, 76-88.
- Medin, D., Bennis, W., & Chandler, M. (2010). Culture and the home-field disadvantage. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 5, 708-713.
- Miller, J.G. (1984). Culture and the development of everyday social explanation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 961-978.
- Nisbett, et al. (2001). Culture and systems of thought: Holistic versus analytic cognition. *Psychological Review*, 108, 291-310.
- Norenzayan, A., & Heine, S.J. (2005). Psychological universals: What are they and how can we know? *Psychological Bulletin*, 131, 763-784.
- Rosaldo, R. (1989). Introduction: Grief and a headhunter's rage. *Culture & Truth*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Watters, E. (2010). The Americanization of mental illness. *The New York Times Magazine*, January 8.
- Wetzler, B. (2000). Is just like Amerika! *Outside*. November 1.

Films



Český mír

Online Resources

- [https:// HYPERLINK "https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT0kzF4A-WQ"www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT0kzF4A-WQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BT0kzF4A-WQ)