PSY 297.01W Special Topics
COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer II 2025
Location: Online

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Shifang Tang, Ph.D.
Office Location: Henderson 201A
Office Hours: [Zoom office hours] T/TH: 11:00 am to 1:00 pm
***In-person/Zoom meetings by appointment
Changes to office hours announced on D2L
Email Address: shifang.tang@etamu.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: Email
Communication Response Time: 24-48 hours on weekdays

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Materials – Textbooks and Readings
Additional readings may be uploaded to D2L.

Required Readings:

Jones, J. M, Dovidio, J. F., & Vietze, D. L. (2014). The Psychology of
    Diversity: Beyond Prejudice and Racism 1st Edition. Wiley Blackwell.
    ISBN-13: 9781405162142

Kennedy, V. (2018). Beyond Race: Cultural Influences on Human Social
    Life. **(Click the link below for the free download):**
    https://open.umn.edu/opentextbooks/textbooks/beyond-race-cultural-
    influences-on-human-social-life

American Psychological Association. (2017). Multicultural Guidelines: An
    Ecological Approach to Context, Identity, and Intersectionality.

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Course Description

This course explores the concept of cultural variation in psychological functioning, focusing on how differences in cultural backgrounds impact self-concept and interpersonal understanding. Students will engage with theories and research related to culture, intergroup relations, and the influence of cultural backgrounds on individual and collective experiences.

Course Objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between cultural variation and psychological functioning, with a focus on the impact of cultural differences on understanding oneself and others.

2. To introduce students to key theories and research regarding cultural dynamics in psychology, including topics on culture, intergroup relations, and cultural influence.

3. To encourage critical evaluation of course readings, while fostering awareness of emotional responses and cognitive processes related to one's attitudes and beliefs about cultural inclusivity.

4. To promote self-reflection on personal reactions to course content, including recognizing and learning from emotional responses such as anger, guilt, and frustration.

5. To develop a professional attitude during readings and discussions, emphasizing scholarly analysis while managing emotional responses that may arise during the learning process.

6. To create an open, non-judgmental environment for observing reactions to cultural topics, facilitating personal and intellectual growth throughout the course.

Student Learning Outcomes (Should be measurable; observable; use action verbs)

The student will be able to:

1. Understand and describe key concepts relating to culture, intergroup relations, and the influence of one's own and others' cultural backgrounds for understanding others, oneself, and the world.

2. Develop an understanding of and familiarity with the American Psychological Association's guidance relevant to issues of cultural competence and inclusivity.

3. Demonstrate the ability to critically analyze empirical and theoretical/conceptual literature and communicate the findings and perspectives in a meaningful context.

4. Practice research methods using available electronic databases to seek and access research-based information relating to cultural inclusivity and cross-cultural understanding.

5. Develop writing skills using APA writing style, including the correct usage and formatting of APA Style in-text citations and references.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need to use word processing programs and internet-based course management software to complete course successfully.

Instructional Methods

A variety of teaching strategies will be employed to help students explore cultural influences on psychological functioning and the relationship between cultural variation and self-concept. These strategies include:

1. **Viewing presentations and video segments of individuals discussing cultural dynamics and inclusive perspectives**
2. **Reviewing assigned readings focused on cultural influences and intergroup relations**
3. **Completing assignments online to reinforce concepts of cultural competence and understanding**

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

1. Complete the readings.
2. Complete assignments thoroughly and on time.
3. Actively participate in class discussions.
4. Keep lines of communication open with instructor. Ask for assistance when needed.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%
B = 80%-89%
C = 70%-79%
D = 60%-69%
F = 59% or Below

Assessments

ALL ASSINGMENTS DUE BY THE DAY AND TIME INDICATED IN THE D2L

1. **Papers (Total = 100 points)** All papers must be submitted by Sunday of the given week. Submit your work to the appropriate folder in D2L.
   #1 Introspection on Cultural Perspectives (50 Points)
   During the first week of class, students will write a 1–2-page paper reflecting on what cultural variation means to you. Discuss whether understanding cultural differences is important in psychological contexts (and why or why not). Does the type of cultural background we examine matter? What do you hope to gain from this class?
   #2 Final Reflection Paper (50 Points)
   After reviewing the final week's content, revisit your Week 1 reflection paper and write a 1–2-page final reflection paper (maximum of 2 pages) on what cultural perspectives mean to you now. Have your views on cultural backgrounds evolved since the start of the course? If so, in what ways? If not, why do you think your perspectives remain unchanged? Additionally, feel free to include any further reflections on the course experience.
2. **Weekly Quizzes (20 points per quiz; Total=200 points)**
Students will complete 10 quizzes. Quizzes will be proctored in D2L and must be completed alone (no assistance from classmates). Students can use book and

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

weekly PowerPoint lessons to complete the quizzes. All quizzes must be submitted by the due date. Students can work ahead but **cannot** submit late work unless they have an excused absence. Submit your work to the appropriate folder in D2L.

3. **Discussion (20 points per submission+5 points for replying to one of your classmates; Total=100 points)**

Students will complete 4 discussion sessions. Students must write 1 paragraph (4-6 sentences) about the given topic of that module. All discussion points must be submitted by the due date. Students can work ahead but **cannot** submit late work unless they have an excused absence. Submit your work to the appropriate folder in D2L.

Students must write 2-3 sentences in response to one of their classmates' discussion points. Your response can be either supportive or one of a differing viewpoint of your classmate. Remember to maintain etiquette and have respect for all classmates. It's ok to have different viewpoints! That's how we learn and grow from one another. All responses must be submitted by the due date as well. Students can work ahead but **cannot** submit late work unless they have an excused absence. Submit your work to the appropriate folder in D2L.

Additional assignments may be given, which could alter the total number of possible points to be earned for this course. Students are encouraged to discuss the assignments through discussions in D2L. Assignments will be online and once assigned, students will have several days to complete them. All assignments will be completed in D2L. Students may discuss assignments with each other, but each student is responsible for her/his/their own responses. Each student is encouraged to consider the opinions of peers but arrive at one's own conclusions.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:
https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements

LMS Browser Support:
https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool
https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a East Texas A&M campus open computer lab, etc.

Technical Support
If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor.

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Typically, I will respond to your emails within 24 hours from Mon to Fri. It will take longer during the holidays and weekends. I can also meet with you via Zoom. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at https://www.tamuc.edu/student-code-of-conduct/.

 If you believe someone has engaged in behaviors that do not align with the Code of Student Conduct or you have other concerns, please visit the File a Report page at https://www.tamuc.edu/office-of-student-rights-and-responsibilities/concerns-incident-reporting/

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette

Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

Undergraduate student academic dishonesty policy
[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Graduate student academic dishonesty policy:
https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesproceduresstandardsstatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf

Graduate student academic dishonesty form:
https://inside.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateSchool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf

East Texas A&M Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage.

Artificial Intelligence

East Texas A&M acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, Chatbots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors 'guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Services
Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Phone (903) 886-5930
Fax (903) 468-8148
Email: StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
Website: http://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/campusServices/StudentDisabilityServices/default.aspx

Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit **www.tamuc.edu/counsel**

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:
http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week		Topic(s)	Reading/Media
Week 1	July 7-13	Syllabus; Course Overview; The Psychology of Diversity: Challenges and Benefits; Central Concepts	Syllabus; See D2L Week 1 Module; Jones Chapter 1
Week 2	July 14-20	Central Concepts (cont'd); APA's Multicultural Guidelines; Historical Perspectives on Diversity in the United States	Jones Chapter 2; APA Guidelines pgs. 1-15; Jones Chapter 3
Week 3	July 21-27	Social Identity, Roles, and Relations; Personality and Individual Differences; Social Cognition and Categorization	Jones Chapter 6; Kennedy Module 4 pgs. 36-62; Jones Chapter 4; Jones Chapter 5
Week 4	July 28-August 3	Is Bias in the Brain?; Coping and Adapting to Stigma and Difference; Intergroup Interactions	Jones Chapter 7; Jones Chapter 8; Jones Chapter 9

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Week 5	August 4-7	Cultural different: Preferences, Meaning, and Difference; Social Roles and Power in a Diverse Society; The Challenge of Diversity for Institutions; Final Reflection Paper	Jones Chapter 10; Kennedy, pgs. 1-12; Jones Chapter 11; Jones Chapter 12

The *syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*