



# Cross-Cultural Psychology

## COURSE DETAILS

**Course Designator and Number: MONT 3XXX**

**Number of Credits: 3**

**Language of Instruction: English**

**Contact Hours: 45**

**Instructor: Professor Olga Den Besten**

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course examines core principles of psychology from a cultural perspective. Basic to understanding people and their development in different cultures is the knowledge of their values, beliefs, and attitudes. The course also studies general aspects of clinical psychology as they are applied to different cultures, especially the French and US cultures. Therefore, disturbances and their treatments such as anxiety, mood disorders, eating disorders, and others will be discussed so that cultural differences and similarities can be examined and compared. The concepts of mental wellness and mental illness will be examined using a cultural lens.

Special attention will be paid to cross-cultural approaches to the educational systems in France and in the US and how those influence the different teaching approaches.

## Course Objectives

To recognize the cultural influence on human behavior, socialization and development, communication, attitudes, education, and values in both France and the US. To examine basic principles of psychology, such as development across the lifespan, identity formation, learning, psychopathology, and others across different cultural contexts. To understand differences in mental health services in France and the US. To observe one's own acculturation and the changes that occur in this process, using the participant-observer model.

## Methodology

This class will consist of class lectures and discussions, guest lectures with French professionals, article analysis, individual oral presentations, group projects, and debates.

## Required Readings/Materials

- Cross-Cultural Psychology: Research and Applications. (3rd Edition). Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, Sam. (2011). Selected chapters available in Reader.
- Talk to the Snail, Ten Commandments for Understanding the French. Stephen Clarke (2006) Paperback.
- Cultural Misunderstandings—The French-American Experience. Raymonde Carroll (1987) Paperback.
- Specific articles that will be distributed in class the week before each discussion.

# Grading

## Grading Rubric

Letter grade	Score or percentage	Description
A	93–100	Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
A-	90–92	Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements.
B+	87–89	
B	83–86	
B-	80–82	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C+	77–79	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C	73–76	Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect.
C-	70–72	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
D+	67–69	
D	60–66	
F	0–59	Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the

		student would be awarded an I.
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## Summary of How Grades Are Weighted

Assignments	Percentage of grade
Participation in class	10%
Active Learning Assignments (ALAs)	25%
Film/fiction literature essay assignment	25%
Final essay	40%
Overall grade	100%

## Assessment Details

### Participation in class

Attendance and active participation in class is very important to your success in this course. Students should be present at all classes and come prepared to discuss the readings as outlined in the syllabus. Students will be expected to journal their reactions to the readings and come prepared to debate.

### Active Learning Assignments (ALAs)

These are either short written assignments (approximately half-page-long) to be completed in class for active learning points or a group project. For example, each student may be asked to write out and hand in a brief response to a class film or an article discussed in class. Other ALAs will require discussion with classmates seated nearby.

### **Film/fiction literature essay assignment**

Students will write an essay discussing an issue of cross-cultural psychology as illustrated by a film or a book of their choice. They will give citations from their fiction source and describe at least one scene from it. Students should connect their argument to at least one topic of cross-cultural psychology from the textbook and thus have the discussion based on psychological theory and research. This essay should be 2,5 pages-long. The required number of direct citations and references is 5 each.

### **Final essay**

Students will write a 4-page paper on the topic from the course chosen together with the professor. Each student should find their own angle of dealing with this topic and develop one major storyline/argument. Students are encouraged to find sources from the press, as well as examples from real life (including the cross-cultural diaries they would write during the course). Students should connect this with the textbook/psychological theory and research. The required number of direct citations is 5, references - 10.

## **COURSE CONTENT**

### **Unit 1**

#### **Introduction to Course & Syllabus**

- Behavior and Culture.
- Ethnocentrism and Stereotypes.
- What Is Cross-Cultural Psychology?

### **Unit 2**

#### **Studying Developmental Psych Cross-Culturally**

- Infancy and Early Childhood.
- Parents and Children.
- Child Mental Health Systems.
- Article: A Comparison of Child Mental Health Systems in France and the United States.

## Unit 3

### Education & Social Behavior

- Guest Speaker.
- Adolescence, Adulthood.
- Mating and Partnership. The Couple.
- Article: Why France's Gender Code Makes It Hard for Women.

## Unit 4

### Personality & Culture/National Character

- Adjusting to a Different Culture.
- Article: Adjusting to the French Culture.
- Article: Things that Don't Exist in France.
- Emotions and Language as Universal Concepts.

## Unit 5

### Health

- A guide to French Health Care.
- Mental Health Disorders in France.
- Article: Mental Health Disorders in General Practice in France: A Cross-Sectional Survey.

## Unit 6

### Mid-Term

- Guest Speaker.
- French and American Friendship.
- Article: Move Over, Britain, France Is America's Special Friend.

## Unit 7

### Acculturation & Intercultural Relations

- Article: Acculturation Orientations of French and North African Undergraduates in Paris.
- Article: Ethnic In-Group Evaluation and Adhesion to Acculturation Ideologies: The Case of Moroccan Immigrants in France.

## Unit 8

### Alcohol Use & Drug Abuse in France

- Treatment and Therapy.
- Alcohol Culture in France.
- Comparison of Articles: Alcohol Consumption in France: One More Glass of French Paradox; Alcohol and Health.

## Unit 9

### Eating Disorders in France and USA

- Criteria for Inpatient Psychiatric Admissions in France.
- Fashion Week and Anorexia. Review of France's Ban on Unhealthily Thin Models.
- Article: 27 Things You Need to Know About French Food Etiquette.

## Unit 10

### Student Debates

## Unit 11

### Migrants

- Comparison of Articles of the Migrant Issue in France.
- Comparison of Migrant issue in the US and in France.
- Discussion and Debate.

## Unit 12

### Student Presentations

## Unit 13

### Last Class

- Research Paper Due

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# POLICIES

## Attendance Policy

Students are expected to be on time and attend all classes while abroad. Many instructors assess both attendance and participation when assigning a final course grade. Attendance alone does not guarantee a positive participation grade; the student should be prepared for class and engage in class discussion. See the on-site syllabus for specific class requirements.

## University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

### Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

### Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found on the Learning Abroad Center website.