Syllabus of Record

Program: CET Prague
Course Code / Title: PR/PSYC 350 Perspectives on Cross-Cultural Psychology in Central Europe
Contact Hours: 45
Recommended Credits: 3
Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Psychology / Central European Studies, Cultural Studies, Anthropology
Language of Instruction: English
Prerequisites / Requirements: Prior coursework in Psychology or Anthropology recommended

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Description
The course examines how culture becomes psychologically meaningful: how cultural environments influence perception, cognition, emotion, personality, development, values, morality, language, concepts of self, psychological distress, and the ways psychological phenomena are measured and interpreted. Rather than treating culture as a collection of customs or national stereotypes, the course approaches culture as a system of meanings, practices, institutions, historical experiences, material environments, and learned ways of interpreting the world.

The Czech Republic serves as the course's primary cultural laboratory. Students will encounter Czech culture not only through readings but through direct observation, architecture, food, language, educational institutions, historical sites, media, literature, public spaces, and interactions with Czech residents and students. The course contrasts human universals to the variations of human behaviour across cultures and considers important caveats in experimental psychological research.

Objectives
Through their participation in this course, students will:

- Identify psychological phenomena that show substantial cross-cultural variation.
- Explain methodological problems involved in comparing psychological phenomena across cultures.
- Describe important features of Czech cultural and historical context relevant to psychological development and functioning.
- Analyse the possible cultural assumptions embedded in psychological theories and measurement instruments.
- Evaluate whether a psychological finding established in one cultural setting can reasonably be generalized to another.
- Critically evaluate cross-cultural psychological research and identify problems involving measurement equivalence, translation, sampling, and construct equivalence.
- Integrate psychological literature with locally observed cultural phenomena.
- Recognize one's own culturally learned assumptions.

- Develop evidence-based interpretations of unfamiliar cultural practices.

Teaching Method: Student-Centred Learning (SCL)
In contrast to teacher-centred approaches, SCL engages students as leaders and decision-makers in their own learning. Students plan their own research, propose a solution, communicate their ideas to teachers and community members, and evaluate their own progress as they go. Teachers help guide this process but the content, timing, and motivation is up to students themselves.

Requirements
Active class participation is essential in this course. Students are expected to attend each class and field study course component as outlined in the CET Attendance Policy. Students are expected to read all assigned materials before the relevant class session and come prepared to participate thoughtfully in class discussions. Reading assignments are generally about 15-20 pages per class session. All assignments must be submitted via Canvas.

Participation for mandatory excursions and Traveling Seminar sessions
Participation is required for the day-long excursion and all Traveling Seminar sessions associated with this course – this includes the Traveling Seminar predeparture information sessions and any guest lectures. Absences for these events do not fall under the CET Attendance Policy but are factored into the Participation grade for the course.

Graded assignments include:

- **Class participation:** Participation extends beyond mere attendance. It involves active contribution to role plays, cultural activities, and discussions. Students' participation is assessed twice during the semester: the first assessment midway through the semester is designed to let students know their performance during the first half of the semester, and the final assessment at the end of the semester takes into account students' performance since mid-semester.

- **Cultural reflection journal:** Students will submit a total of four written reflections (500 words each), each involving an observation, initial interpretation, relevant cultural psychological concept/phenomenon, alternative interpretation, and their reflection on cultural assumptions.

- **Traveling Seminar assignment:** This is a required, credit-bearing, field study course component. Students are expected to participate in all components of the travel and complete required assignments (readings, written, oral) related to the Seminar, which are factored into the final grade as outlined below. Students will apply the knowledge from the course to cultural phenomena and concepts linked to the concrete activity conducted during the Travelling Seminar.

- **Individual presentation:** 10-15 minutes oral presentation on a chosen cross-cultural psychological topic, using scholarly literature and leading a follow-up discussion with classmates. A rubric is provided on the course Canvas.

- **Peer reviews:** Critical and constructive peer reviews of other students' presentations.

- **Final synthesis:** Based on themes from the course connected to the student's interest, possibly also as an elaboration of the topic of their presentations, synthesized across the course readings, and feedback in the peer reviews. A rubric is provided on the course Canvas.

Grading
The final grade is determined as follows:

Class participation *(see rubric below)* (2 at 10%)	20%
Cultural reflection journal (4 at 5%)	20%
Traveling Seminar assignment	10%
Individual presentation	20%
Peer reviews (5 at 2%)	10%
Final synthesis	20%

Class Participation Grading Rubric

	A – 90-100% Exemplary	B – 80-89% Proficient	C – 70-79% Developing	D – 60-69% Unacceptable	F – 0-59% Missing
Frequency of class participation	Actively contributes 2+ times per meeting	Actively contributes at least 1 time per meeting	Actively contributes at least half of the time during term	Actively contributes less than half of the time during term	Does not contribute
Quality of class participation*	Contribution is always thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, frequently interacting with peers	Contribution is mostly thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, usually interacting with peers	Contribution is somewhat thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, sometimes interacting with peers	Contribution is rarely thoughtful, accurate, and constructive, rarely interacting with peers	Does not contribute or interact with peers
Level of class preparation	Always fully prepared and on task	Mostly prepared and on task	Somewhat prepared and on task	Rarely prepared and on task	Consistently unprepared and not on task

Readings / Resources

American Psychiatric Association — *DSM-5-TR, Cultural Formulation Interview*.

Bennett, M. (2014). A developmental mode of intercultural sensitivity. IDRI Institute. https://www.idrinstitute.org/dmis/

Berry, J. W. (2022). The Forgotten Field: Contexts for Cross-Cultural Psychology. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 53,* 993-1009. DOI: 10.1177/00220221221093810.

Broesch, T., et al. (2020). Navigating cross-cultural research: methodological and ethical considerations. *Royal Society Proceedings B 287:* 20201245. http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rspb.2020.1245

Chasiotis, A. (2011). Evolution and Culture. Online Readings in Psychology and Culture, Unit 9. http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/orpc/vol9/iss1/1

Cirelli, L.K., Trehub, S.E. & Trainor, L.J. (2018). Rhythm and melody as social signals for infants. *Ann. N.Y. Acad. Sci. 1423,* 66–72. doi: 10.1111/nyas.13580

Currie, T. E. (2013). Cultural Evolution Branches Out: The Phylogenetic Approach in Cross-Cultural Research. *Cross-Cultural Research 47,* 102-130. DOI: 10.1177/1069397112471803

Filippova, E. (2014). Developing appreciation of irony in Canadian and Czech discourse. *Journal of Pragmatics 74*, 209-223. Elsevier Science. DOI: 10.1016/j.pragma.2014.09.003

Filippova, E. (2014). Irony production and comprehension. In: Matthews, Danielle (Ed). *Pragmatic development in first language acquisition.* John Benjamins Publishing Company

Genkova, P., Herbst, J., Schreiber, H., Rasticova, M., Poor, J., Veresne, K. V., Suhajda, C. Viszetenvelt, A., Bjekic, J. (2022). A comparative study on culture-specific and cross-cultural aspects of intercultural relations in Hungary, Serbia, Czech Republic, and Germany. *Frontiers in Psychology, 13*, DOI 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.886100 https://genocideeducation.org/resources/modern-era-genocides/

Huwae, S. & Schaafsma, J. (2016). Cross-cultural differences in emotion suppression in everyday interactions. *International Journal of Psychology 53*, 176-183.

Khukhlaev O., Novikova, I. & Chernaya, A. (2022) Interpersonal Mindfulness, Intergroup Anxiety, and Intercultural Communication Effectiveness Among International Students Studying in Russia. Frontiers in Psychology, 13: 841361. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.841361

Miller, J., Goyal, N. & Wice, M. (2017). A Cultural Psychology of Agency: Morality, Motivation and Reciprocity. Perspectives on Psychological Science 12:867-875 DOI: 10.1177/1745691617706099

Nielsen, M., & Haun, D. (2016). Why developmental psychology is incomplete without comparative and cross-cultural perspectives. Phil. Trans. *R. Soc. B 371*: 20150071. http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2015.0071

Nisbett, R. E., Peng, K., Choi, I., & Norenzayan, A. (2001). Culture and Systems of Thought: Holistic Versus Analytic Cognition. *Psychological Review, 108*: 291-310. doi: 10.1037/0033-295x.108.2.291.

Park, J., Kitayama, S., Miyamoto, Y., & Coe, C. L. (2019). Feeling bad is not always unhealthy: Culture moderates the link between negative affect and diurnal cortisol profiles. *Emotion, 20,* 721–733. https://doi.org/10.1037/emo0000605

Quesque, F., Coutrot, A., Cox, S., de Souza, L.C. et al. (2022). Does culture shape our understanding of others' thoughts and emotions? An investigation across 12 countries *Neuropsychology 36,* 664-682. doi: 10.1037/neu0000817

Trehub, S.E., Becker J., Morley, I. (2015). Cross-cultural perspectives on music and musicality. *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. B* 370: 20140096. http://dx.doi.org/10.1098/rstb.2014.0096

Van de Vijver, F. J. R., & Tanzer, N. K. (2004). Bias and Equivalence in Cross-Cultural Assessment: An Overview. *Review for Applied Psychology, 54*, 119-135. doi:10.1016/j.erap.2003.12.004

Van Hemert, D. A., Poortinga, Y. H., & Van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2007). Emotion and Culture: A Meta-Analysis. *Cognition and Emotion*, 21, 913–943.

Winkler, P., Csémy, L., Janoušková, M., Mladá, K., Motlová, L. B., & Evans-Lacko, S. (2015). Reported and intended behaviour towards those with mental health problems in the Czech Republic and England. *European Psychiatry, 30,* 801–806.

Content

Topic 1 – Intersection of mind, behaviour and culture

- Core concepts: cultural psychology, cross-cultural psychology, universalism, relativism, enculturation, cultural transmission, WEIRD psychology
- Activities: Lecture + discussion of novel cultural observations regarding food, language, leisure, public behaviour, religion, emotional expressions, etc.

Topic 2 – Research methodology in comparative psychological research

- Core concepts: sampling, cultural equivalence, construct equivalence, measurement equivalence, translation, ecological validity, etic and emic approaches
- Activities: Lecture + group activities and discussion of the limitations of psychological research and data

Topic 3 – Experiencing the world: Perception, attention and environment

- Core concepts: visual perception, attention, context effects, environmental cognition, cultural influences on perception
- Activities: Lecture + discussion of physical context and related psychological interpretation

Topic 4 – Thinking across cultures

- Core concepts: analytic cognition, holistic cognition, categorization, causal reasoning, attributional reasoning, folk concepts, indigenous knowledge
- Activities: Lecture + discussion of specific interpretative frames vs. deliberately culture-neutral frame

Topic 5 – Language and thought

- Core concepts: linguistic relativity, categorization though language, emotion words, special language, grammatical gender, bilingualism
- Activities: Lecture + discussion of a set of psychologically interesting Czech concepts and expressions

Topic 6 – Personality, autonomy and personhood

- Core concepts: self-concept, personality, autonomy, agency, motivation, identity, cultural models of ontogenetic stages
- Activities: Lecture + discussion of personal space, privacy, silence, modesty, competence, entitlement across cultures

Topic 7 – Values, morality and good life

- Core concepts: human values, moral development, moral reasoning, autonomy, tradition, achievement, hedonism, moral emotions
- Activities: Lecture + workshop on cultural stories and narratives on values and morality

Topic 8 – Development across the life span

- Core concepts: childhood, parenting, attachment and caregiving, adolescence, aging, life transitions, cultural models of independence
- Activities: small group discussions of cultural experiences throughout ontogenetic stages

Topic 9 – Education, intelligence and the cultural mind

- Core concepts: intelligence, IQ, cognitive development, educational achievement, school readiness, standardized testing, cultural bias, educational psychology across cultures
- Activities: Guest speaker + discussion of grading, oral examinations, entrance examinations, teacher authority, etc.

Topic 10 – Emotion, emotional regulation and the meaning of distress

- Core concepts: basic emotions, emotion concepts, emotional appraisal, emotion regulation, display rules, shame/guilt/pride/embarrassment, culture & emotional experience
- Activities: possible visit of the Invisible exhibit in Prague

Topic 11 – Culture, mental health and psychological distress

- Core concepts: culture and psychopathology, psychotherapy, DSM-related cultural considerations, indigenous concepts of distress, psychological counselling, stigma
- Activity: small group activities and subsequent presentations

Topic 12 – Living between cultures: acculturation

- Core concepts: acculturation, adaptation, bicultural identity, cultural humility, identity reconstruction
- Activity: lecture and discussion of the DMIS model of intercultural sensitivity

Topic 13 – Integration and phylogenetic considerations

- Course wrap up and integration of the concepts with students' first-hand experience living and studying abroad
- *How did we become unique cultural species? Or did we?*

Field study and experiential learning components may include:

- Guest lectures: Scholars and experts from the specific domains of Czech cultural experience
- Excursions or field trips:
    - Public park
    - Hospoda (local pub)
    - Municipal library
    - Invisible Exhibition
    - Primate exhibit in the Prague Zoo

Syllabus of Record is subject to minor changes in Term-specific Syllabus at faculty's discretion.