HON 413. Psychology of Diversity and Multiculturalism

SDSU – Fall 2025 - # 2196

Class Meetings

Class Days: Tuesday and Thursday
Class Times: 12:30 – 1:45 PM
Class Location: Hepner Hall (HH) 128
Mode: Face-to-face
Platform: Canvas

Instructor: Dr. Thierry Devos
Preferred pronouns: He/him
Phone: (619) 594-6911
Email: tdevos@sdsu.edu (best way to reach me)
Office Hours: Thursday 10:00 – 11:00 AM or by appointment
Office Hours Location: Atkinson Hall (ATK) 108

Course Content and Purpose

The goal of this course is, quite simply, to **provide students with a solid training in the psycho-social dynamics coming into play in diverse and multicultural settings**. Increasingly, the notions of diversity and multiculturalism are used to describe important facets of many social environments. In a world characterized by a globalized economy, movements of populations, and new communication technologies, individuals are increasingly immersed in diverse and multicultural settings. These societal changes influence the frequency and nature of intercultural contacts and also shape people's understanding of who they are. The unprecedented degree of social and cultural diversity can be source of both aspirations and concerns. This course prepares students to navigate a diverse and multicultural world. Students will be exposed to a variety of relevant research perspectives and will learn about these topics through multiple instructional methods.

Student Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Use concepts, principles, theories, and research findings to increase your understanding of dynamics coming into play in diverse and multicultural settings;
- Grasp how socio-cultural contexts influence individual thoughts, feelings, and behaviors;
- Consider various perspectives or levels of analysis in your thinking about diversity and multiculturalism;
- Identify ways (actions, behaviors) that emphasize the importance of interacting effectively and sensitively with people of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Among the Honors Minor Student Learning Outcomes, the following are most relevant to this course:

- Contextualize issues and topics within cultural contexts.
- Express ideas with clarity and purpose, both orally and in writing, and demonstrate these communication abilities in multiple contexts to a variety of audiences.
- Apply knowledge and theory toward the solution of "real world" issues or problems.

- Demonstrate awareness of cultural differences and new perspectives on one's own culture, and evidence the development of skills (adaptability, ability to problem-solve, tolerance for ambiguity, independence) to manage the challenges of studying abroad and living in a different culture.
- Demonstrate reflective thinking about their personal identity, sense of self, revealing personal strengths and challenges, personal definitions of success and wellness, and significantly changed perspectives about life experience.

Diversity and Inclusion

As an instructor, my goal is that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives benefit from and feel included in this course. I view the diversity of experiences and perspectives that students bring to this class as a resource and a strength we can all learn from. It is my intention to present course material that is respectful of diversity based on gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, national origin, religion, political orientation, and other background characteristics. Your suggestions on how to improve the value of diversity and inclusion in this course are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know of ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students.

Classroom Atmosphere

We should work together to create a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning. I strongly encourage active participation in the classroom; you should feel comfortable asking questions and contributing to class discussions. Throughout this course, we will be discussing a variety of sensitive and controversial issues. Thus, it will be extremely important to keep an open mind, listen to others' viewpoints, and tolerate a different opinion than your own. I expect everyone to show respect for each other and to refrain from actions that might reduce the quality of students' learning experiences.

Course Structure and Conduct

The course includes a series of **six modules**. Each module is devoted to a different topic (see *Schedule of Topics and Instructional Activities*). We will learn about these topics in several ways including interactive presentations, demonstrations, exercises, individual or group activities, discussions, readings, videotapes, and assignments. Course activities will be delivered through face-to-face instructional time and/or using an online format. Through a mix of instructional methods, students will assimilate and integrate new ideas and develop problem-solving skills.

Typically, each module will include the following:

- **Learning Objectives**: A description of the specific learning objectives;
- **Face-To-Face Class Meetings**: Three class meetings during which we will cover a significant amount of material in an interactive format;
- **Class Discussion**: One class discussion on a specific theme or topic relevant to the module and covered in an assigned reading and videotaped talk;
- **Essay**: One essay on a specific theme or topic relevant to the module. An assigned reading and specific instructions will serve as prompts for this essay;
- **Dig Deeper**: Additional (optional) resources relevant to this module.

Course Materials

This course will use the **Canvas** Learning Management System. To access the site for this course, sign in at canvas.sdsu.edu using your SDSUid. Note: You are responsible for adjusting your notification settings in such a way that you receive ALL announcements regarding this class. All Canvas email notifications will be delivered to your SDSU email address. You can add additional email addresses and sign up for text/mobile app notifications via the settings in your Canvas Profile, and then adjust your notifications in the Notifications Tab. Canvas notifications are system-wide and cannot be adjusted by course. If you have technical issues with Canvas, please contact the SDSU Canvas 24/7 support line at (619) 483-0632.

Slides used as support for class meetings will be available online before class meetings.

All required **readings** are available through Canvas. For each module, you will be assigned one paper (article or book chapter) for the class discussion and one paper (article or book chapter) as a starting point for the essay. There is no required textbook for this course.

Specific additional resources (articles, videos, websites, blogs, etc.) for each module will be provided under "**Dig Deeper**" menus.

IMPORTANT: Material posted on Canvas (slides, videos, activities, articles, etc.) is only for students enrolled in a section of HON 413 - Psychology of Diversity and Multiculturalism taught by Dr. Thierry Devos at SDSU. By accessing or downloading these documents, you agree (1) not to share them with anyone and (2) not to post them on the Internet.

Course Assessment and Grading

Please make sure you pay attention to instructions and deadlines provided on Canvas.

Your final grade will be based on the following components:

Activities (40% = 200 pts)

You will have the opportunity to complete approximately 30 activities including exercises, observations, discussions, analyses, self-reflections, or thought experiments. Each activity is designed to help you assimilate specific course material (this is not "busy work", "participation points", or "grading attendance"). Most activities will be done in small groups during class time, but some of them will be completed individually and/or outside of class. Each activity will be worth 8 pts. To earn maximum credit, you need to address all aspects of the instructions/prompts. Only students who are physically present in class for the duration of the activity will earn credit for it.

To complete these activities, you will always need to access Canvas. This also applies to in-class activities. Please make sure you bring a laptop, tablet, or phone to class so that you can access instructions and submit your work. If for some reason, you are unable to do so, just notify me at the beginning of class.

I encourage you to complete all activities, but I understand that sometimes you have other commitments and/or may miss class (e.g., sickness, work or family commitment, etc.). To ensure that these instances do not negatively affect your grade, only the 25 highest activity scores will count towards your final grade. This means that you can miss up to 5 activities over the course of the semester. Please understand that there will be no option to make up for missed activities.

Essays (40% = 5 x 40 pts = 200 pts)

You will write five essays (5-6 paragraphs). For each essay, you will read a paper (article or book chapter) relevant to the topic of the module. In your essay, you will be asked to address specific questions. These essays are opportunities to demonstrate that you assimilate and can use key concepts and notions covered in this course. For each essay, you will be able to earn up to 40 pts. Please pay attention to the deadlines to complete these essays (see *Schedule of Topics and Instructional Activities*). Unless specified otherwise, the deadline to submit essays is 11:59 PM on the due date. It is your responsibility to make sure that essays were submitted successfully on Canvas. You may submit essays up to one week after the deadline for partial credit (maximum 30 out of 40 pts).

Global Issue Project (20% = 100 pts)

At various points in the semester, you will work on a group project. The goal of this assignment is to explore one global issue (e.g., poverty, hunger, education, inequalities, sustainability, clean water, etc.). that transcends national political borders or has distinct implications in different cultural or national contexts. In a group of 3 or 4 students, you will explore how this issue plays out in different cultural or national contexts. It will be an opportunity to reflect on differences and similarities across cultural or national contexts. Your analyses should be grounded in first-hand experiences, observations, or scientific sources. You can choose to examine specific aspects of the global issue. It is particularly important to demonstrate your ability to analyze psychological processes coming into play and to highlight connections to the theme of this course. The group project will be broken down into three steps each worth up to 20 pts. At the end of the semester, you will also have an opportunity to present your project to the class (worth up to 40 pts).

Grading Scale

In line with University Policies, grades are defined as follows: A (outstanding achievement; available for the highest accomplishment); B (praiseworthy performance; definitely above average); C (average; awarded for satisfactory performance; the most common undergraduate grade); D (minimally passing; less than the typical undergraduate achievement); F (failing). Plus/minus grading is utilized at the discretion of the instructor. Final grades will be based on an absolute scale (not a curve). Thus, your grade will not be affected by how well (or how poorly) other students perform in the course.

Percentage	Grade
93-100	A
90-92.99	A-
87-89.99	B+
83-86.99	B
80-82.99	B-
77-79.99	C+
73-76.99	C
70-72.99	C-
67-69.99	D+
63-66.99	D
60-62.99	D-
< 60	F

Student Academic Success

For essential information about student academic success, please see the SDSU Student Academic Success Handbook. This document includes important information and resources about campus deadlines, advising, tutoring, well-being, as well as rights and responsibilities.

Communication

The best way to reach me is via email (tdevos@sdsu.edu). I will try to respond within 24-48 hours to emails. For quick questions, the turnaround time may be much shorter. Of course, you are welcome to talk to me after class, during office hours, or to schedule a meeting at a time convenient for both us. My preferred gender pronouns are he/him. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name. Please let me know early in the semester if you would prefer an alternate name and/or gender pronoun.

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is one of the fundamental principles of a university community. San Diego State University expects the highest standards of academic honesty from all students. Cheating and plagiarism represent violations of academic integrity and will not be tolerated in this class. Please click here to read the University policy.

San Diego State University defines **cheating** "as the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work by the use of dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to copying, in part or in whole, from another's test or other examination; discussing answers or ideas relating to the answers on a test or other examination without the permission of the instructor; obtaining copies of a test, an examination, or other course material without the permission of the instructor; using notes, cheat sheets, or other devices considered inappropriate under the prescribed testing condition; collaborating with another or others in work to be presented without the permission of the instructor; falsifying records, laboratory work, or other course data; submitting work previously presented in another course, if contrary to the rules of the course; altering or interfering with the grading procedures; plagiarizing, as defined; and knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above."

San Diego State University defines **plagiarism** "as the act of incorporating ideas, words, or specific substance of another, whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained, and submitting same to the university as one's own work to fulfill academic requirements without giving credit to the appropriate source. Plagiarism shall include but not be limited to: submitting work, either in part or in whole, completed by another; omitting footnotes for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions that belong to another; omitting quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, sentence, or part thereof; close and lengthy paraphrasing of the writings of another; submitting another person's artistic works, such as musical compositions, photographs, paintings, drawings, or sculptures; submitting as one's own work papers purchased from research companies; submitting as one's own work papers purchased from research companies; representing work produced by generative artificial intelligence (AI) as one's own."

The California State University system requires instructors to report all instances of academic misconduct to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities. Academic dishonesty will result in disciplinary review by the University and may lead to probation, suspension, or expulsion. Instructors may also, at their discretion, penalize student grades on any assignment or assessment discovered to have been produced in an academically dishonest manner.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

Many tools that rely on generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies to produce content (text, images, videos, etc.) are now available (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, Meta AI, Claude, etc.). Below is my position regarding the use of these tools in the context of this course.

Assignments (including essays, group projects, and activities) are designed to help you assimilate the course material. The process of completing these assignments is one of the ways in which you will understand and master the material. With that in mind, if the AI tools expand your knowledge, skills, and perspectives, using them is probably appropriate. However, if these tools provide "shortcuts" in the sense that they make you think less, they do the work for you, using them is not appropriate. In other words, if the tools help you clarify a point, improve your writing, consider alternative perspectives, understand the limitations of some ideas, etc., that is consistent with the goal of this course. Anytime you feel like using the tools conflicts with the learning goals, take it as a clue that you are fooling yourself.

A major limitation of most of these tools is that they do not provide the specific sources used to generate the content. In addition, depending on how you frame the question/prompt, the tools will produce very different outputs. Thus, always critically assess the outputs and do not take them as scientific evidence.

Often the assignments will ask you to reflect on personal experiences. AI tools do not have access to these experiences. You have this rich cultural knowledge and expertise. Rely on it rather than let a machine dictate or shape your thinking.

For some activities, you will explicitly be asked to use an AI chatbot such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, Meta AI, or Claude. Depending on the chatbot you want to use, you may be asked to create an account or to log in using your email address. The FREE version of these tools will always be good enough in the context of this course.

For assigned readings, you are welcome to use an AI chatbot for help or assistance (e.g., extract main ideas, ask questions or clarifications, etc.). This might be particularly useful if, for some reason, you find the readings challenging.

Please understand that what is stated here only applies to this course and that I may change my position over the course of the semester if I realize that it interferes with the learning goals.

Students Concerns, Problems, and Complaints

If at any time there are issues with the conduct of this course, including lectures, activities, and assignments, please contact me immediately. We will work together to address your concerns. If this does not satisfy your concerns, please contact the Director of the Weber Honors College, Dr. Stacey Sinclair (stacey.sinclair@sdsu.edu). If your concerns remain unresolved, you may contact the University Ombudsman. Failure to follow University procedures in registering complaints may be considered a violation of the Student Conduct Code.

Land Acknowledgement

For millennia, the Kumeyaay people have been a part of this land. This land has nourished, healed, protected and embraced them for many generations in a relationship of balance and harmony. As members of the San Diego State University community, we acknowledge this legacy. We promote this balance and harmony. We find inspiration from this land, the land of the Kumeyaay.

Schedule of Topics and Instructional Activities

In-Class	*Instructional Activity*	*Due Date*[+]
Module 1. Mapping and Understanding Cultural Diversity		
Tuesday 8/26	Setting the Stage: What Is this Course About?	
Thursday 8/28	Cultural and Psychological Variations	
	Introduce Yourself - Create Student Profile	Tuesday 9/2
	Personal Growth and Career Readiness (Part 1)	Tuesday 9/2
Tuesday 9/2	Psychological Universals and Dimensions of Culture	
Thursday 9/4	Discussion – Interpretative Power of Culture – Dr. Stephanie Fryberg	Thursday 9/4
Tuesday 9/9	Cultural Evolution	
	Essay – What Is Culture For?	Friday 9/12
Module 2. Socio-Cultural Perspectives on the Self		
Thursday 9/11	Self-Definitions	
	Interests in Global Issues	Tuesday 9/16
Tuesday 9/16	Self-Motives	
Thursday 9/18	Discussion – Understanding Culture Clashes – Dr. Hazel Markus	Thursday 9/18
Tuesday 9/23	Acculturation and Multicultural Identities	
Thursday 9/25	Global Issue Project – Step 1	Tuesday 9/30
	Essay – Identity Dynamics and Multiculturalism	Friday 10/3

Module 3. Lay Theories of Social Relations and Behaviors		
Tuesday 9/30	Morality and Ethics	
Thursday 10/2	Global Perspectives Symposium	
	International Student	Thursday 10/9
Tuesday 10/7	Discussion – Cultural Stereotypes as Gatekeepers – Dr. Sapna Cheryan	Tuesday 10/7
Thursday 10/9	Interpersonal Relations	
	Essay – Social Influences on Educational Interests	Tuesday 10/14
Module 4. Experiencing and Managing Diversity		
Tuesday 10/14	Categorization in Diverse Settings	
	Mid-Semester Teaching Evaluation	Thursday 10/16
Thursday 10/16	Intergroup Ideologies	
Tuesday 10/21	Discussion – Pitfalls and Promises of Diversity – Dr. Jennifer Richeson	Tuesday 10/21
Thursday 10/23	Intercultural Contact	
Tuesday 10/28	Global Issue Project – Step 2	Thursday 10/30
	Essay – Multiculturalism and Colorblindness	Friday 10/31
Module 5. Prejudices in Multicultural Settings		
Thursday 10/30	Implicit Biases	
Tuesday 11/4	Discussion – Microaggressions and LGBTQ Community – Dr. Kevin Nadal	Tuesday 11/4
Thursday 11/6	Contemporary Prejudices	
	Essay – Socio-Psychological Perspectives on Black Lives Matter	Thursday 11/13
Module 6. Thinking in a Multicultural World		
Tuesday 11/11	**VETERAN'S DAY (campus closed)**	
Thursday 11/13	Culture and Cognitive Processes	
Tuesday 11/18	Multicultural Minds	
Thursday 11/20	Global Issue Project - Step 3	Tuesday 11/25
Tuesday 11/25	Personal Growth and Career Readiness (Part 2)	Tuesday 12/2
Thursday 11/27	**THANKSGIVING (campus closed, no class meeting)**	
Presentations of Global Issue Projects		
Tuesday 12/2	Preparation of Group Presentations	
Thursday 12/4	Preparation of Group Presentations	
Tuesday 12/9	Global Issue Project Presentations	
Thursday 12/11	Global Issue Project Presentations	

[+] Unless specified otherwise, the deadline to submit outside-of-class activities and google docs for the group project is 12:30 PM on the due date. The deadline to turn in essays is 11:59 PM on the due date. The deadline to upload in-class activities (not listed on the schedule) is 30 minutes after the end of the class meeting.