

Culture and Cognition (Psychology 442, 2019 F)

Instructor: Li-Jun Ji, 306 Craine, lijunji@queensu.ca

Office hour: by email or appointment

Class time: Wednesdays 11:30am – 2:30pm

Classroom: [Hum 223](#)

This course will examine a wide range of social cognitive topics (e.g., self, choice, motivation, emotion, reasoning, education and socialization) from a cultural perspective by drawing on a wide range of cross-cultural and sometimes within-cultural studies.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Review, explain and evaluate primary and secondary sources to gain conceptual knowledge of theory and analyze empirical findings in the field of culture and cognition
- Engage in critical discussion of topics by applying research findings to defend claims
- Adopt professional conventions of communication to convey arguments/proposals to a variety of audiences

Thought Questions

You are required to turn in 2-3 thought questions (**half page only, single spaced**) after reading for each topic. The thought questions should include ideas of yours that **GO BEYOND** the material presented in the readings. You can discuss future directions for research, how the material relates to other material that you know, criticism of the readings, life experiences that may be explained by the reading, underlying big questions and assumptions, any questions or concerns you may have about the major points in the readings, etc. Do **NOT** summarize the readings in your reaction papers.

In your thought questions, you need to cover all the readings for the topic. E.g., you can write one question for each paper you read, or you can comment on two/three papers at the same time.

Thought questions should be emailed to both the discussion leaders **and submitted via onQ** before the deadline (see details in the timetable) so that the discussion leaders can have time to incorporate your questions/comments into the discussions. Submit your questions in a **word** document with your name included as part of the file name (e.g., ****your name***** thought questions on Emotion).

Topic Presentation and Leading Class Discussion

Each student (together with one or two others) will be responsible for leading a class discussion during one class period. Group members are expected to work together on the presentation. Except in rare circumstances, each person's individual mark will be the same as the group mark. Be creative. Feel free to do demonstrations, organize a debate, show brief videos, etc. At the very least, you should prepare an outline of how and where you want the discussion to proceed as well as a list of issues or questions you want the class to discuss. The class will evaluate the leaders immediately after the discussion, and your grade will be based primarily on these ratings and my own evaluation.

I will be available, if needed, to help you prepare your presentation and discussion.

Participation

You are expected to actively participate in class discussions. Be prepared with questions and comments before coming to class. Many of you are taking this course because you have had significant cross-cultural experiences. Learning about cultural experiences from other students is central to this course, so I expect each of you to contribute.

Video Project (Due by 11:59pm on Nov 23th)

Think about yourself and the way you have become the person you are now. Think of all the cultural influences that may have impinged on you: your parental milieu, your ethnic group, your religion, the areas/countries you lived in, your gender, the schools you went to and the school ideology, your peers and their backgrounds, etc. Use pictures/videos to capture one or two of these environmental and cultural factors.

This is not about merely a history of yourself. Focus on the forces in your life that made you the way you are *now*. Explain briefly how those forces shaped you: what would have been different without them. Try to emphasize cultural influences, rather than merely individual influences. Make it a story in a video, like a mini-documentary.

Final Paper

You will submit a research paper (8-10 page long) by 4pm on Dec 10th. Details will be provided later.

Tentative Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Deadline	Discussion Leaders
1	Sept 11	Syllabus, Introduction		
2	Sept 18	Lecture: Research Methods	Discussion questions due by 21 st 11:59pm	
3	Sept 25	Discussion1: Self Video	D questions due by Sat 11:59pm	
4	Oct 2	Discussion2: Reasoning Lecture	D questions due by Sat 11:59pm	
5	Oct 9	Discussion 3: Relationship video	D questions due by Sat 11:59pm	
6	Oct 16	Discussion 4: Emotion Lecture	D questions due by Sat 11:59pm	
7	Oct 23	Discussion 5: Morality Video		
8	Oct 30	No Class.	D questions due by Sat 11:59pm	Work on the video project and final paper
9	Nov 6	Discussion 6: Multiculturalism Video	D questions due by Sat 11:59pm	
10	Nov 13	Discussion 7: Cultural change Video	D questions due by Sat 11:59pm	
11.	Nov 20	Discussion 8: Ecocultural Perspective	Video due Nov 23th	
12	Nov 27	Video Project Presentation	Final paper due Dec 10th	

Evaluation breakdown

Thought questions (4% x 7)	28 %
Topic Presentation	20 %
Video project	7 %
Final Paper	25 %
Class Participation (regular attendance, keeping up with the readings, participating in class discussions)	20 %

Late policies:

No late assignment is accepted for thought questions or the picture project. For the final paper, you will get a 2% deduction, out of the course final, for each day that your paper is late. (Special considerations may be given for medical emergency.)

Additional tips for thought questions:

I'm looking for your own thoughts in these questions. It's important to elaborate your questions to show what and how you think about them. You may apply the findings to other topics/fields, predict what would happen and explain **why**. You may suggest following-up studies, including predictions and major procedures. Your questions should be in some way an extension of the reading. Critically analyze the reading. Take issue with the theory, the generalizations, or the way the idea was tested. Avoid quotes, especially long ones.

Ideally, some of your thought questions will lead to a testable hypothesis. State it explicitly if you can. Be brave enough to take a stance and argue for it.

For any questions you ask, try to answer them yourself first – so that I can see how you think about this. Again, the thoughts you put into every question will show themselves.

Discussion Leaders

1. Use 1-2 slides to summarize each assigned paper if needed. Spend no more than 5 minutes in total for summarizing all papers. Leave most time for discussion.
2. Do research on at least some of the questions raised by the class, and feel free to introduce research that we are not reading in this class, esp. if it's highly relevant and addresses students' questions. It'll be beneficial if you have done some research on some questions so that you can back up the discussion with some empirical evidence.
3. It is good to incorporate fun activities/videos etc, but it should be made clear how they are relevant /related to the discussion topic.
4. It will be nice to have a summary in the end of the presentation if you can.
5. Prepare additional questions as backups in case you run out of topics for discussion.

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Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information on academic integrity is available in the Arts and Science Calendar (see Academic Regulation 1 <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academic-calendars/2011-2012-calendar/academic-regulations/regulation-1>), on the Arts and Science website (see <http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academics/undergraduate/academic-integrity>), and from the instructor of this course. Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

Letter grades

In this course, some components will be graded using numerical percentage marks. Other components will receive letter grades, which for purposes of calculating your course average will be translated into numerical equivalents using the Faculty of Arts and Science approved scale (see below). Your course average will then be converted to a final letter grade according to Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale (see below).

Arts & Science Letter Grade Input Scheme

Assignment mark	Numerical value for calculation of final mark
A+	93
A	87
A-	82
B+	78
B	75
B-	72
C+	68
C	65
C-	62
D+	58
D	55
D-	52
F48 (F+)	48
F24 (F)	24
F0 (0)	0

Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale

Grade	Numerical Course Average (Range)
A+	90-100
A	85-89
A-	80-84
B+	77-79
B	73-76
B-	70-72
C+	67-69
C	63-66
C-	60-62
D+	57-59
D	53-56
D-	50-52
F	49 and below

Turnitin

This course makes use of Turnitin, a third-party application that helps maintain standards of excellence in academic integrity. Normally, students will be required to submit their course assignments to through onQ to Turnitin. In doing so, students' work will be included as source documents in the Turnitin reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism.

Turnitin is a suite of tools that provide instructors with information about the authenticity of submitted work and facilitates the process of grading. Turnitin compares submitted files against its extensive database of content, and produces a similarity report and a similarity score for each assignment. A similarity score is the percentage of a document that is similar to content held within the database. Turnitin does not determine if an instance of plagiarism has occurred. Instead, it gives instructors the information they need to determine the authenticity of work as a part of a larger process.

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