

The Philosophy and Psychology of Encultured Minds

PHIL 432-11 (philosophy CIS), PSYC 432-01 (psychology CIS), PHIL 491-04 (philosophy elective)

Locations:

First two weeks: <https://gonzaga.zoom.us/j/98730845770>

Rest of the semester: College Hall 128

Days/Time: Tuesday and Thursday 12:25-1:40 pm

Instructors: Charles Lassiter & Vinai Norasakkunkit

Offices:

Lassiter: Robinson 104, [Zoom office](#)

Norasakkunkit: CH 306D, Zoom Office (please email in advance for link)

Office hours: Lassiter: Mondays and Tuesdays 8:30-10:30, and by appt

Norasakkunkit: Mondays 10-2 or by appt

Email: lassiter@gonzaga.edu, norasakkunkit@gonzaga.edu

Phone: x6761 (Lassiter), x 5788 (Norasakkunkit)

Philosophy and Psychology of Encultured Minds

Course Description: This course will expose students to findings discussing how culture affects our mental lives and offer philosophical resources for thinking about the implications. For example, when explaining behavior, Westerners tend to focus on features of the agent, like her character or dispositions, as opposed to the circumstances. East Asians, on the other hand, tend to focus on circumstances rather than features of the agent. For Westerners, people behave as they do because behavior manifests something about the acting agent. For East Asians, people behave as they do because they find themselves in circumstances that propel them to behave in that way. In light of such findings, how do we think about the nature of mind and belief?

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will develop an understand of psychological differences among members of different cultures
2. Students will develop a set of philosophical concepts for situating these findings within a wider framework of naturalistic and normative commitments
3. Students will learn how to think about some culture with which they are familiar as a culture.

Required Texts: Readings will be made available online

Assignments:

1. “Understanding the Other” paper and presentation: Students will write a 10-12 page paper describing the beliefs and history of a group to which the student *does not* belong. This group might espouse beliefs the student will find offensive, or it might be a group with a very different belief system. Students will research the beliefs espoused by the group as well as the wider cultural context in which the group has emerged. Students will reflect on whether the beliefs of the target group are reasonable to hold (even if the student disagrees with them) by reflecting on (1) empirical and metaphysical relationships between mind and culture and (2) the relativity (or not) of rationality. Finally students will reflect on how they believe their findings will inform their future reactions to people with very different cultural and belief systems.

Discussion: In this paper, students are to analyze some group with which he or she does not identify. This group could be an opposing political party (e.g. if you are a liberal you might learn about Tea Party Republicans) or a hate group (e.g. the Proud Boys) or a racially-affiliated group (e.g. the Black Panthers). The aim of the project is to contextualize your findings about the group in the wider science of cultural psychology and then to use our philosophical tools to reflect on the nature of mind and culture as well as your own reactions to the group and its members. This assignment is worth **40%** of the final grade. *Satisfies learning outcomes 1, 2, & 3*

2. Journal assignments: Students will complete four 3-page journal entries about course readings. In each entry, students will:
 1. Describe findings and concepts from the philosophy and psychology readings for the theme. *Do not merely reiterate the readings*, “e.g. X talked about this, and then this and then this other thing.”
 2. Reflect on how the philosophical and psychological content relate to one another: does one shed light on the other? do they suggest compatible insights? incompatible insights?
 3. Reflect on how the finding shapes their own understanding of mind and culture as well as their relationship: how do the readings shape your own ideas on philosophical and psychological aspects of mind and culture?
 4. Reflect on how the material ties into their own majors. This latter component may take many forms, e.g. connecting disciplinary knowledge with the content of the course, or using the content of the course to better understand how to communicate with others.

Discussion: The goal of the readings is for students to process material from the readings and offer opportunities on how it relates to their interests and understanding of the encultured mind. This assignment is worth **40%** of the final grade. *Satisfies learning outcomes 1, 2, & 3.*

3. Discussion leaders: Student groups will lead *one week* (i.e. two consecutive classes) of class discussion once per semester. This will involve [following the Jesuit pedagogical cycle of: context, experience, reflection, action, and evaluation](#). (There are other, more detailed sources but this is short and to the point. Google around for more details.) Students will confer with the faculty to ensure a quality class session. Students will be expected to have read and understood the readings and prepared discussion questions to get the class thinking about the issues. We expect students to make connections between the readings for the week, *and* we also hope that students will think carefully about the interdisciplinary connections between the material being discussed and the other discipline (e.g. if you're leading discussion for psychology readings, then work hard to make connections with philosophical topics).

Discussion: This course is a seminar, which means that students lead the course as much as the faculty. Nonetheless, guidance from the faculty is offered to ensure that students learn as much from being discussion guides as participants. This assignment is worth **20%** of the final grade. *Satisfies learning outcomes 1 & 2*

Grading Scale

Numerical Value	Letter/GPA point value	Rough idea of what the grade means
94-100	A/4.0	Outstanding. Student goes above and beyond what is required. Offers an insightful synthesis or analysis.
90-93	A-/3.7	
86-89	B+/3.3	Very good. Student does more high-quality research than is required for the assignment.
82-85	B/3.0	
78-81	B-/2.7	Average. Doing what is assigned
74-77	C+/2.3	
70-73	C/2.0	Below average. Doing less than what is assigned.
65-69	C-/1.7	
60-64	D/1.0	
<60	F/0.0	Failure to show anything learned.

Take note: successfully completing the assignments will get you an 80 (typically). That means you do what is asked of you satisfactorily. Going above that means putting in substantially more effort. But also know that more effort is not a guarantee of a higher grade.

Late Work

Papers are penalized by one letter grade for each class it is late. If students know ahead of time that they will have some difficulty meeting a deadline, please contact me. I'll be more than happy to take other commitments you might have into consideration when assigning due dates.

University Policies

There are a number of important GU policies. Rather than put them all here, below is a table to all the relevant policies.

University and Academic Policy Statements	Associated Links
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Bias Incident Assessment and Support (BIAS) Team
Harassment, Discrimination And Sexual Misconduct Policies	Harassment and Non-Discrimination Policy Title IX
Academic Integrity Policy	Academic Integrity Policy
Students With Disabilities/Medical Conditions and Accessible Documents (EITA)	Disability Access and Resources Office Electronic Information Technology Accessibility (EITA)
Religious Accommodations for Students	Religious Accommodations for Students Policy
FERPA and Privacy	FERPA
Class Attendance Policy	Class Attendance Policy Amended Class Attendance Policy
Notice to Students of COVID-19 Expectations	Student Arrival & Return to Gonzaga Guides

Notice to Students about Class Recordings (audio, video and photos)	<u>Zoom sessions might be recorded</u> <u>Gonzaga University's Student Code of Conduct</u>
Course Evaluations	<u>Course Evaluations</u>

Schedule

Date	Phil or Psych?	Topic	Reading	Assignments
1/11	Both!	Introductions	Syllabus	
1/13	Phil	Confucius	<u>Confucius, from <i>The Analects</i></u>	
1/18	Psych	Mainstream Views and Critical Reaction	<u>R. A. Shweder (Ed.), <i>Thinking Through Cultures: Expeditions in Cultural Psychology</i>. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Chapter 2 pp. 73-110. ("Cultural Psychology: What is it?")</u>	
1/20	Phil	Mainstream Views and Critical Reaction	<u>Jiyuan Yu (1998), "Virtue: Confucius and Aristotle"</u>	
1/25	Psych	Mainstream Views and Critical Reaction	<u>Shweder, R.A. (1986). "Divergent Rationalities." In Fiske, D.W. & Shweder, R.A. (Eds.), <i>Metatheory in Social Science: Pluralisms and Subjectivities</i>. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.*</u>	
1/27	Phil	Mainstream Views and Critical Reaction	<u>Alfred Schutz, from <i>On Phenomenology and Social Relations</i></u>	Journal #1

2/1	Psych	Mainstream Views and Critical Reaction	Cole, M. (1998). <i>Cultural psychology: A once and future discipline</i>. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Chapter on History of Cultural Psychology)	
2/3	Phil	American Cultural Model	Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Self-Reliance”	
2/8	Psych	American Cultural Model	Lipset, S. M. (1996). <i>American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword</i>. (pp.31-76). New York: W. M. Norton & Company. (Chapter on Ideology, Politics, and Deviance).	
2/10	Phil	American Cultural Model	William James, “The Will to Believe”	Check-in #1 for final paper
2/15	Psych	American Cultural Model	Bellah, R. N., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W. M., Swidler, A., & Tipton, S. M. (1985). <i>Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life</i>. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Chapter on Divergent Strands of American Individualism)	
2/17	Phil	American cultural model	Richard Hofstadter, <i>Anti-intellectualism in American Life</i>, ch. 2	
2/22	Psych	Agency/free will/morality	Bauemeister and Brewer, “Believing versus Disbelieving in Free Will: Correlates and Consequences”	Journal #2
2/24	Phil	Agency/free will/morality	Roderick Chisholm, “Human Freedom and the Self”	

3/1	Psych	Agency/free will/morality	Thomas Talhelm & Shigehiro Oishi (2019). " Culture and Ecology ", pp. 119 – 140.	
3/3	Phil	Agency/free will/morality	Marchal and Wenzel, "Chinese Perspectives on Free Will"	
3/8	SPRING BREAK NO CLASSES			
3/10				
3/15	Psych	Agency/free will/morality	<i>Secret of Our Success</i> by Joseph Henrich. " Self-Domestication " And " Our Collective Brains ", pp. 185 – 230.	Journal #3
3/17	Phil	Agency/free will/morality	1. Galen Strawson, "The Impossibility of Ultimate Moral Responsibility" , §§1-3 2. Robert Kane, "Ultimate Responsibility" from <i>A Contemporary Introduction to Free Will</i>	
3/22	Psych	Agency/free will/morality	Morality and Religion by Steven Heine	Check in #2 for final paper
3/24	Phil	Self/personal identity	John Locke, from Essay Concerning Human Understanding , book 2, chapter 27: " Identity and Diversity " (scroll down to find chapter 27)	

3/29	Psych	Self/personal identity	Hazel Markus & Maryam Hamedani (2019). " People are Culturally Shaped Shapers: The Psychological Science of Culture and Culture Change ", pp.11-41.	
3/31	Phil	Self/personal identity	Yuli Liu, "The Self and <i>Li</i> in Confucianism"	
4/5	Psych	Self/personal identity	Kirmayer, L. J. (2007). Psychotherapy and the cultural concept of the person. <i>Transcultural Psychiatry</i>, 44, 232-257.	
4/7	Phil	Self/personal identity	Donald Davidson, "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme"	
4/12	Psych	Motivated cognition/epistemology	Takahiko Masuda et al. (2019); " Cognition and Perception ", pp. 207-219.	
4/14	Phil	Motivated cognition/epistemology	Nelson Goodman, from <i>Fact, Fiction, and Forecast</i>	
4/19	Psych	Motivated cognition/epistemology	Heine, S. J., Lehman, D. R., Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1999). Is there a universal need for positive self-regard? <i>Psychological Review</i>, 106, 766-794	Journal #4
4/21	Phil	Motivated cognition/epistemology	Mercier and Sperber, <i>The Enigma of Reason</i>, ch. 16	

4/26	Psych	Culture and mental health	<u>Chentsova-Dutton & Ryder: "Cultural-Clinical Psychology"</u>	Final papers/ presentations
4/28	Phil		<u>Clark and Chalmers, "The Extended Mind"</u>	