

Culture and Psychology: Italy from a Psychological Perspective

PSYC 494/470

Summer 2015 Study Abroad Program

May 21st to June 8th, 2015

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Psychology is the study of mental processes and human behavior in a variety of contexts. Culture from a historical, societal, and interpersonal perspective is heavily influenced by psychology. This course is designed to provide a comparative study of the beliefs, ideas, and applications of psychology in the United States and Italy. During this course we will seek to understand human behavior and mental processes through exploration of psychological theories, application, and a cultural focus. Specifically, this course will highlight the differences and similarities that exist between various cultures and how these differences influence the application and progression of psychological concepts. Main areas of focus will include (a) cross-cultural dimensions, (b) group dynamics, (c) interpersonal communication, (d) psychological disorders and issues, and (e) workplace concepts.

This course will combine traditional teaching methods such as lectures and presentations with immersion in Italian culture. Therefore, participation in this course will require students to travel to Italy (Florence, Rome, and Vatican City) for 2.5 weeks during the summer of 2015. During this time, students will be exposed to guest speakers, cultural exhibitions, and field experiences. Specifically, students will visit places of business, historical sites, and cultural centers as well as speak with Italian citizens. Through this course students will be exposed to new cultural experiences that influence how individuals, groups, and organizations coexist in a global society.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to complete the following tasks:

- Explain basic concepts related to culture and psychology
- Apply a global context to the core components of human behavior and psychology
- Express the impact of culture on individuals, groups, and organizations.
- Apply knowledge gained and skills acquired to various contexts
- Present thoughts and ideas in a professional manner

COURSE FORMAT:

This course is comprised of traditional lectures, in-class discussions and exercises, interactions with local residents, guest speakers, and cultural excursions. Some meetings and discussions will take place prior to departure (in Spring 2015), and some assignments will be due subsequent to our return (Summer 2015). Students should be prepared to keep all deadlines that will be in the syllabus once the program dates are finalized.

ATTENDANCE:

Because the course depends on an exchange of ideas and experiential learning, attendance is critical. Students are expected to attend all class sessions/meetings. If you must miss a class, you remain responsible for completing that meeting's readings and also submitting any written work due on that day. Missing class does not allow you to submit work late; you should submit your work before your absence. Excused absences will only be given with medical, other third-party documentation, or instructor approval.

INTEGRITY POLICY:

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Be prepared to do your own work on writing assignments and examinations. When citing from sources, you must clearly distinguish between your own words and ideas and that borrowed from someone else. Improperly citing sources does constitute plagiarism and will be dealt with in accordance with the cheating policy. If a student violates the academic integrity policy as outlined by the University, he or she will receive a failing grade (F) on the appropriate assignment. A second infraction will result in a failing grade (F) for the course. No exceptions will be made. If you have a question about what constitutes academic dishonesty, see the Student Academic Integrity Policy (Appendix F) of the University Catalogue.

ASSESSMENT:

Student grades will be assessed using a combination of quizzes (pre-departure), activities, class participation, written assignments, and a presentation. Each component will be weighted to determine the overall course grade. Because of the nature of the course some elements of the course must be completed prior to traveling to Argentina in spring 2015. These elements include the completion of selected readings and 2 quiz opportunities. In addition, the reflective paper must be completed and turned in after returning to the United States by July 1st, 2015. Late assignments will not be accepted.

Quizzes:

Quizzes will take the form of a series of multiple-choice, short answer, and/or essay questions designed to determine your mastery of topics covered in recent chapters. Each quiz will be taken at the individual and team level and must be completed within the allotted time. There will be 2 quizzes taken prior to our departure for Italy. Quizzes will represent 10% of the final grade.

Activities:

Activities may take the form of group work, speaker interactions, individual tasks, instructional training, field exercises, and interviews with members of the host culture. Activities will be based on readings and information presented in lectures/presentations and designed to provide opportunities for additional knowledge and skill acquisition. However, the emphasis of these activities will be to develop additional knowledge, skills, and critical thinking abilities. Students will earn points through mastery of knowledge and "participation" in activities. Requirements for activities will be discussed when each activity is presented to the class. Several activities will require students to interact with local residents and employees and investigate Italian culture as a first hand observer. Students should bring a notebook in which to complete all activity assignments that will be turned in before returning to the United States. Activities will represent 40% of the final grade.

Class Participation:

Students should have read all assigned readings prior to the class meeting and be prepared to actively participate in class discussion of those readings. Class participation will represent 20% of the final grade.

Reflective Paper:

Students will complete a reflective paper in which they reflect on their experiences in Italy that influenced their personal and professional growth. This paper will be due by July 1st, 2015. Specific details and dates will be provided upon the acceptance of the program. The presentation will represent 20% of the final grade.

Presentation:

Students will be required to complete a short presentation illustrating the experiences and knowledge gained while in the host country upon returning to the United States. Specific details and dates of the presentations will be discussed during the pre-departure class meetings and host country visit. Grades will be given based on content, application, professionalism, and critical thinking showcased. Assignments will be given a letter grade: A, B, C, D, or F; + and - grades may be added to the A, B or C grades. The numerical equivalent of each letter grade is as follows: A+ = 98; A = 95, A- = 92, B+ = 88, B = 85, B- = 82, C+ = 78, C = 75, C- = 72, D = 65, F = 0. The presentation will represent 10% of the final grade.

GRADING SCHEME:

Final grades will be determined using the percentage system detailed in the assessment section.

A = Outstanding. "A" students demonstrate commitment to class in attendance, participation, and preparation; this means virtually perfect attendance, reading assignments fully, and showing interest during class time. They ask questions, are able to connect past learning with the present, show initiative, and are not afraid to be creative. Written work demonstrates comprehensive and solid understanding of the material, and presents thoughtful interpretations, well-focused and original insights, and well-reasoned commentary and analysis. Students' written work should also demonstrate skillful use of source materials, illuminating examples and illustrations, fluent expression, and no grammatical errors. [A = 93-100 points; A- = 92-90]

B = Good. "B" students may miss class from time to time, but are generally well-prepared and participate positively. Their commitment to class may vary: at times they may seem bored or distracted, at other times engaged and involved. They have interest in the subject and have the ability to master novel material. Some students may under-utilize their skills early, but such students tend to improve over the duration. Written work demonstrates a complete and accurate understanding of the material, presents a reasonable degree of insight. Work reflects competence and a general level of understanding. Source materials, examples, illustrations, are used appropriately and articulation/writing is clear. Papers have been carefully proofread. [B+ = 89-87; B = 86-83; B- = 82-80]

C = Fair. "C" students miss class frequently and show little interest in course readings and class discussion. They are not visibly committed to class and often express boredom. Written work is only fairly correct, superficial, incomplete, or expresses some significant errors or weaknesses. Source materials may be used inadequately or inappropriately, and arguments lack concrete, specific examples and illustrations. Writing/articulation is vague, hard to follow, or cluttered with technical errors. [C+ = 79-75; C = 74-70]

D = A student in difficulty. "D" students miss classes frequently, participate rarely, show lack of interest, and have generally misunderstood much of the material. Written work demonstrates serious errors in understanding, fails to express the most basic aspects of the material, and may contain little logical development in its arguments. Sources may be used inappropriately or not at all, and writing/articulation appears deficient. [D+ = 69-65; D = 64-60]

F = Fail. Work is unacceptable, not submitted, or not attempted. This is also the grade for plagiarized work or work that breaches university policy on academic honesty. [F = below 60]

REQUIRED READINGS:

Required readings include lecture slides with associated notes and articles. Students should be familiar with all materials prior to entering Italy. However, students will not be quizzed on readings until scheduled quiz dates.

Article Readings:

Bartolucci, C., & Mobardo, G. P. (2012). The origins of psychology in Italy: themes and authors that emerge through a content analysis of the *Rivista Di Filosofia Scientifica* [Journal of Scientific Philosophy]. *History of Psychology*, 15(3), 247-262.

Munizza, C., Argentero, P., Coppo, A., Tibaldi, G., Di Giannantonio, M., Picci, R. L., & Rucci, P. (2103). Public beliefs and attitudes towards depression in Italy: A national survey. *PLoS ONE*, 8(5), 1-8.

Prandini, C., & McCarthy, S. (2006). Teaching psychology as a science in Italy. *International Journal of Psychology*, 41(1), 42-50.

Laghi, F., Liga, F., Baumgartner, E., & Baiocco, R. (2012). Identity and conformism among Italian adolescents who binge eat and drink. *Health, Risk & society*, 14(4), 361-376.

More to come...

Towson University Guidelines

PLAGIARISM & CHEATING:

Plagiarism or cheating may result in your case being referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs that addresses academic misconduct. This decision is up to the discretion of the instructor. Students are expected at all times to behave in accordance with the Towson University expectations of academic integrity and student conduct. Students should be familiar with the academic regulations outlined by the Office of Student Conduct and Civility Education.

DIVERSITY:

Diversity means the fair representation of all groups of individuals, the inclusion of minority perspectives and voices, and the appreciation of different cultural and socioeconomic group practices. We aspire to foster and maintain an atmosphere that is free from discrimination, harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Academic courses will aim at providing opportunities for students to discuss issues of diversity including, but not limited to, ethnicity, gender, disability and sexual orientation as they can be related to course content. Towson University has adopted policies prohibiting discrimination based upon race, sex, disability, or sexual orientation. In addition, the American Psychological Association has explicit policies regarding the issues of and writing about race, gender, class, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, and religion. You may find information on these standards in the APA Publication Manual or on the APA webpage: <http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/>.

UNIVERSITY DISABILITIES POLICY:

Towson University (TU) is in full compliance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities should register with the office for Students with Disabilities (Dowell Hall, Second Level, 410-830-2638) after admission to ensure the timely provision of required support services. Students must provide documentation of a disability from the TU Office for Students with Disabilities. If you need accommodation due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me, and bring a statement from Disability Support Services (4-2638) authorizing your accommodation. Further details are available at www.towson.edu/dss.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION:

Course announcements as well as consultation with the instructor may occur via e-mail messages. Each student must maintain an e-mail account and is responsible for checking for course messages on a regular basis. Students are also responsible for notifying the instructor if their e-mail address changes during the term. Towson University offers free e-mail services to students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND STUDENT CONDUCT:

Expectations for academic integrity and student conduct are described in detail on the website of the Office of Student Conduct and Civility Education (<http://www.towson.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/>). I will expect students to be aware of these guidelines and to conduct themselves accordingly.

EMERGENCY STATEMENT:

In the event of a University-wide emergency course requirements deadlines and grading schemes are subject to changes that may include alternative delivery methods, alternative methods of interaction with the instructor, class materials, and/or classmates, a revised attendance policy, and revised semester calendar and/or grading scheme. In the case of a University-wide emergency, please refer to the following about changes in this course.

- Course web page
- Instructor's email
- For general information about any emergency situation, please refer to the following:
 - 1. Web Site: towson.edu
 - 2. Telephone Number(s)
 - 3. TU Text alert System

Towson University
A Comparison of the US and Argentina: A Psychological Perspective
Summer 2014

(subject to change)

Friday, May 23	Depart U.S.
Saturday, May 24	Arrive in Buenos Aires Transfer to residency Welcome Dinner
Sunday, May 25	Orientation Buenos Aires City Tour
Monday, May 26	Guest Lecture: History of Argentina Visit ESMA
Tuesday, May 27	Visit to ANUVA Wines Visit to Museo Evita
Wednesday, May 28	Visit to Hotel Bauen Evening Tango Show at Tortoni
Thursday, May 29	Guest Lecture: Gender/Family Relations Visit to MALBA
Friday, May 30	Guest Lecture: Intercultural Communication Visit the Mercado de Liniers
Saturday, May 31	Excursion to Dia de Campo and Lujan
Sunday, June 1	Excursion to El Tigre
Monday, June 2	Guest Speaker: American Expatriate Working in Argentina Visit American based company
Tuesday, June 3	Guest Speaker: Industrial or Office Work Setting Visit the Recoleta district and cemetery Farewell Dinner

Wednesday, June 4

Depart for U.S.