Culture, Context, and Development
EDHD 750

What is culture, and how does culture influence social development? Social theorists and psychologists are fond of dichotomies, but too often dichotomized portrayals of cultures do not capture the complexities of social life. Cultures entail expectations related to social hierarchies, social status, and group norms which bear directly on outcomes for children’s healthy development. In this course, we will read theoretical articles and current empirical findings on group identity, morality, and autonomy for understanding culture, context, and development.

This course is open to graduate students in education, psychology, family science, and related disciplines. Prior coursework in development science is preferred but not required.

Course Requirements and Grading. Students will be required to give oral presentations, turn in one typed discussion question weekly, and write two papers. The first paper is a critique of a research report and the second paper is a theoretical paper. Grading will be as follows: 30% for oral presentations and weekly questions, and 70% for the two papers.

Course Structure and Readings. This is a graduate seminar with a mixture of lecture and discussion. Students will take turns leading the class discussion. Readings will be made available in class and distributed via the internet on the first day of classes by the instructor.

Course Evaluations at the University of Maryland. As a member of our academic community, you as a student have a number of important responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to submit your course evaluations each term through CourseEvalUM in order to help faculty and administrators improve teaching and learning at Maryland. Please make a note now of the link at which you can access the submission system (www.courseevalum.umd.edu). If you submitted all of your evaluations in the fall or are a new student, you can also access all posted results from Fall 2007 forward via Testudo under CourseEvalUM Reporting. To retain this access, you must submit all of your evaluations each semester.

More information is at: https://www.irpa.umd.edu/Assessment/CourseEval/stdt_faq.shtml.
Course Objectives. To help students:

- Gain knowledge about theory and research in social development with a focus on culture, context, and development.
- Understand the scientific method and acquire the ability to formulate research questions.
- Develop critical reading, writing, and presentational skills through reading assignments, writing assignments, group discussions of theoretical material, and class presentations of current research findings.
- Make connections between theory, research, and practice, and to consider the implications of research for interventions, education, and policy regarding children and adolescents.

Class Attendance. Students should attend each class session, except in the case of illness and/or extenuating circumstances. Please inform the instructor of missed absences with an explanation.

Academic Dishonesty. It is assumed that all students understand the consequences of academic dishonesty at the University of Maryland. If you do not, please consult the graduate catalog or course registration booklet to become familiar with how cheating, fabrication, facilitation of academic dishonesty, and plagiarism are defined by the University.

Students with Disabilities. If you are a student with a documented physical or learning disability, please contact me by the first week of class so that we can make arrangements for the necessary accommodations.

Jan 26 Introduction
Culture, context, and development: Theories and history

Feb 2 Context – Specific Characterizations of Culture and Development


Presenters: _____________________________________

Feb 9  
**Context - General Characterizations of Culture and Development**


Presenters: _____________________________________

Feb 16  
**Culture and Ethnicity: Status and Bias**


Presenters: _____________________________________

Feb 23  
**Culture and Social Exclusion**


Presenters: _____________________________________

Mar 2  
**Culture, Personhood, and Group Identity**


Presenters: ________________________________

Mar 9  Culture, Prosocial Behavior, and Development


Presenters: ________________________________

Prof. Jessica Sommerville, University of Washington, Seattle, CogSci lecture, 3:30 to 5:00pm

Mar 16  Culture, Victimization, and Outcomes


Presenters: ________________________________

**SPRING BREAK**

Mar 30  **Culture and Gender**


Presenters: ________________________________

Apr 7  **Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD) Biennial Meeting – No class**

April 13 **Culture, Authority, and Knowledge Acquisition**


Presenters: ________________________________

Apr 20  **Culture, Immigrant Status, and Nationality**


Presenters: _____________________________________

**Prof. Paul Harris, Harvard University, CogSci lecture, 3:30 – 5:00 pm**

April 27 Washington University for lecture on Diversity Science

May 4 **Multicultural Contexts in Development**


Presenters: _____________________________________

May 11 **Term Project Paper presentations**

Presenters: _____________________________________

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