

PSY498 Seminar in Psychology
Section Course Descriptions

Section 01

Title: Development in Cultural Context

Instructor: Tabitha Holmes, Ph.D.

Course Description

This course will consider the ways in which culture influences human development (and how culture is in turn influenced by developing members of a particular culture). To do this, we will use ecological theories and theories of cultural psychology to understand social, cognitive, emotional, and physical development within particular cultural contexts. Given that the emergence of cultural psychology is relatively recent and is a result of the intersection of scholarly work from a variety of sciences and social sciences, this course will draw from scholarship in psychology, anthropology, sociology, education, and related fields. We will consider such topics as how culture influences:

- attachment and childrearing
- learning and education
- mental health
- expression of emotion
- perceptions of self

Section 02

Title: Sport and Exercise Psychology

Instructor: Kimberlee Bonura, M.S.

Course Description

This course overviews the field of sport and exercise psychology. It will cover a broad range of topics including personality, attention, anxiety and arousal, arousal adjustment strategies, cognitive-behavioral intervention, causal attribution, motivation, self-confidence, psychology, and social issues of sport. Understanding how personality, self-concept, self-esteem, self-efficacy, and other psychological characteristics relate to participation and performance in sport and physical activities. Analyzing and understanding motivational bases for sport and exercise participation as well as barriers to participation and special motivational issues in competitive sport. Appreciating the relevance of cognitive styles, attention and concentration in sport and exercise, and practical strategies for assisting people with issues related to these topics. Examining costs and benefits of exercise participation and participation requirements for attaining different outcomes. Exploring core issues and related intervention strategies in working with athletes and recreational exercisers to enhance performance and participation.

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Section 03

Title: Cognitive Neuroscience

Instructor: Giordana Grossi, Ph.D.

Course Description

This course focuses on the relationship between mind (cognition and behavior) and brain. We will learn how to explore this relationship from a systematic and scientific point of view by reviewing some of the main concepts, methods, and issues in the field of cognitive neuroscience. After an introduction to the brain (how it is organized and how it works) and an overview of the main methods of investigation employed in cognitive neuroscience, we will review research in the field focusing on the issues of modularity, localization of functions and specialization, neural plasticity, learning, relationship between structure and function, affective neuroscience, and ethics (cognitive neuroscience in popular science literature). The objectives of the course are twofold. First, at the end of the course, you should have knowledge of the main findings in the field. Second, and most important, you should have an appreciation of the complexity of the relationship between brain and mind, and an appreciation of the issues inherent to the study of such relationship. These issues are both theoretical and methodological, and will be pointed out throughout the course.