COURSE SYLLABUS
PSYCH 297A 3 credits
Special Topics
Inter-cultural Assessments of Undergraduate Student Trait Self-Control and Behaviors
Joint PSU-UU Psychology Spring Semester 2015 Programme

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General Introduction
297 is a “Special Topics” course, so named by the Psychology Department, because it is infrequently offered to explore, in depth, a comparatively narrow subject which may be topical or of special interest. This course, 297A, introduces students to short assessment tools and techniques that address dimensions of trait self-control in relation to lifestyle. Results from assessments in classes at Penn State Lehigh Valley (PSU) and Utrecht University (UU) will be summarized, interpreted, and compared cross-culturally for undergraduate students at both locations. Although assessments will occur independently at each location, student teams at each site will be in regular communication on the progress of the project. Team results will be presented in a poster session at Utrecht during the first full week of March 2015 (Penn State Spring Break).

Prerequisites
Students should have at least a 2.50 GPA and 6 credits of Psychology including PSYCH 100 and either PSYCH 200 or another 200-level course (preferably PSYCH 238 or 243).

Course Objectives
As a result of the experience, students will demonstrate skills to:
• Conduct team research on a short psychological assessment
• Administer a psychological assessment
• Summarize and interpret results of an assessment
• Make cross-cultural comparisons of beliefs and attitudes
• Construct a professional-style poster and learn presentation skills
Required Readings

Recommended Readings

PSYCH 297A ANGEL
This course is supported by an ANGEL site that includes this syllabus; forms and materials in connection with University-sponsored travel to Utrecht under “Lessons”; readings for the major assignment in the course under “Library Reserves”; a “Gradebook” tab; material to write in APA style from the Penn State Library; and a “Communications” tab for all communications and correspondence among PSU students and UU guest participants.

PSYCH 297A Course Calendar
Tue 13 Jan  Introductions of faculty and students; share class lists and email addresses; review project objectives; review ANGEL material; review important information about the itinerary and documents for the UU portion of the course.

Thu 15 Jan  Review student journal requirements and grading; introduce trait assessment literature (see “Required Readings”); review short assessment of lifestyle and behaviors (Funder, 2010, chs. 2, 3, 5)
Tue 20 Jan  Form teams of 2-3 students; review trait assessment instruments for the PSU and UU teams; review reliability and validity issues in assessment (see “Required Readings” and Funder, 2010, chs. 2, 3, 5)

Thu 22 Jan  Review lifestyle assessment instrument (Funder, 2010, chs. 2, 3, 5); continue to review literature on trait assessment; review administration procedures for classroom assessment (Ray, 2009, ch. 14 and “Required Readings”)

Tue 27 Jan  Review trait assessments (from the list) and lifestyle assessments and the protocol for classroom administration (Ray, 2009, ch.14)

Wed 28 Jan – Wed 04 Feb  PSU data collection by teams. NOTE: no formal class sessions are held during this time, but the classroom is open for discussion, communication, and assistance with the assessments and trip preparations

Thu 05 Feb  Forming hypotheses on assessment results (Ray, 2009, ch. 3; Funder, 2010, ch. 3, 5)

Tue 10 Feb  Visual and numerical summaries of assessment results (Ray, 2009, ch. 5)

Thu 12 Feb  Summarizing and analyzing assessment results (Ray, 2009, ch. 5)

Tue 17 Feb  Review APA style for sharing research results (Ray, 2009, ch. 15)

Thu 19 Feb  Review APA style for posters (Ray, ch. 15)

Tue 24 Feb  Review APA style for posters (Ray, ch. 15)

Thu 26 Feb  Construct APA-style posters for UU trip (Ray, ch. 15)

Tue 03 Mar  Construct APA-style posters for UU trip (Ray, ch. 15)

Thu 05 Mar  Make preparations for UU trip; deal with concerns and expectations

Utrecht University Activities 09 March - 13 March Outline of Activities
- PSU and UU teams meet to compare assessment results and interpretations
- PSU and UU teams present posters to the UU community
- PSU students visit UU classes
- Students tour professional facilities (e.g., Ambulatorium; Altrecht Mental Hospital; Trimbose Institute)
• Students tour cultural sites (e.g., Mechanical Clock Museum; UU Museum; Utrecht Dom and Tower; National Railway Museum; The Hague)

**Post-trip Activities**

- **Tue 17 Mar**  Review results of assessments with special attention to cross-cultural comparisons of results

- **Thu 19 Mar**  Compare results from PSU and UU
Tue 24 Mar  Conduct cross-cultural analyses of results (Funder, 2010, ch. 14)
Thu 26 Mar  Conduct cross-cultural analyses of results (Funder, 2010, ch. 14)
Tue 31 Mar   No class (work on team papers)
Thu 02 Apr   No class (work on team papers)
Tue 07 Apr   Prepare team presentations for campus
Thu 09 Apr   Prepare team presentations for campus
Tue 16 Apr   Present team posters on campus
Thu 18 Apr – Thu 30 Apr  Teams work on final papers

Mon 04 May  **Team papers and student journals due**

**Course Evaluation: Student Journals 20%**
Each student will keep a personal journal with the following types of entries:
- description and evaluation of the team assessment instrument, including relevant research to support the instrument
- description of team activities
- personal reflection on each of the Course Objectives (see above)
- personal reflection on the international experience
- the contribution of the course to your Psychology major and career plans

**Course Evaluation: Team Poster (60%)**
There will be a team grade given as a result of the collaboration and contribution of each team member to the poster session in Utrecht. Completeness of the poster and adherence to APA style will be used to evaluate each poster.
Course Evaluation: Team Written Report 20%
A final report (7-10 pages) from each team on the project written as a research paper in APA style.

PSYCH 297A Course Grade
The standard Penn State grade-point system applies to this course:

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Statement of Academic Integrity
Based on Section 49-20 of the Faculty Senate Legislation of 29 February 2000. Definition and Expectations: Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University’s Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students’ dignity, rights, and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts. Academic integrity includes a commitment not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and
compromise the worth of work completed by others. The Penn State Lehigh Valley Campus faculty and administrators expect all students to abide by these statements.

**Statement of Disability Awareness**
The Pennsylvania State University is committed to providing access to a quality education for all students, including those with documented disabilities. If a student has a disability and wants to request an accommodation for a course, it is the responsibility of the student to first obtain a University accommodation letter confirming the disability and suggesting appropriate remedies. This letter can be obtained from Learning Support Services on campus. It is encouraged that students request accommodation needs early in the semester.

Approval Pending from Penn State Office of Global Programs

24 November 2014