Facilitator / Professor: Sondra E. Solomon, Ph.D.
Office and Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00 – 2:00; Thursday 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. or by appointment
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Required Texts and Readings


4. Additional readings, articles, books, films and experiential assignments as noted on the syllabus.
Introduction

Welcome to the table! The need to study and understand race, ethnicity and class represents a major challenge to mainstream psychology. ALANA (African American, Latino/a American, Asian American, and Native American) and international populations have been largely ignored in mainstream psychological literature therefore; it is not surprising that you may not have been exposed to the concepts and material that will be covered this semester. Mainstream psychology has frequently dismissed the contributions of those who address the concerns, experiences, and interventions designed to assist ALANA and international populations as “non-scientific” or not meeting the standards of “empirically validated intervention”. This creates a dilemma.

While some of you may be taking this course because it is a requirement for licensure (i.e., You Have To Be Here), a requirement for the clinical program (i.e. You Have To Be Here) or a desire to enhance your cultural competence, (i.e., You Are Curious), I trust that there may be some other reasons that you are joining the dialogue. I also have a notion that there may be some anxiety about what opportunities for learning will be offered, how learning will occur and how learning will be experienced by each of you.

The cultural issues we will be discussing concern “skin color”, sociopolitical forces, racism, sexism, heterosexism, stigma, ableism, economic prejudice, gender discrimination, appearance, ageism, and privilege. These potent factors and forces shape individual development, and the “here and now” expression of psychopathology within a cultural context. Awareness of these issues is essential for ethical practice. Research, assessment and empathic interventions with our clients will be enhanced by an understanding of our clients’, patients’, and research participants presenting problems and cultural heritage. An exploration of your own experience and cultural heritage and the way it intersects with your approach to assessment, intervention and research will be a pivotal part of your learning this semester.

THIS COURSE MAY DIFFER FROM OTHER COURSES YOU HAVE TAKEN AT THIS UNIVERSITY AND AT OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS YOU HAVE ATTENDED.

Expectations

Yup … there are a lot of readings on the syllabus and I may even add a few more along the way! I do not expect everybody to read everything but I do expect that everything will be read. That means that seminar participants will share in the responsibility of getting the reading list covered each week. This may involve making decisions amongst you to form groups to cover the material. There will be ample opportunity for everyone to discuss the journal articles, book chapters and case studies each week.

Assigned readings are due on the day of the seminar. Your ability to understand and enjoy the course material will be enhanced if you have done the reading before hand. While it is not necessary, nor do I expect you to have committed the readings to memory, reading the material before class will prove beneficial in the long run. Take notes when you read and generate lots of discussion questions. Participation and interactive education are the cornerstones of this seminar. We learn a great deal from each other, and our collective experience is valuable. We all have a wealth of stories and experiences to communicate. Active participation and consistent attendance is crucial to the success of this class. Your experience will contribute to your own learning and to the learning experience of others.

It is extremely important that an atmosphere of safety, dignity and respect be maintained during the course of this seminar. Be extremely mindful of confidentiality. We will be discussing confidential case material. Also, there are no stupid questions. No one is culturally competent (least of all me). We are all on the learning curve together. This is just a beginning! Your presence and participation in class are greatly appreciated.
Term Paper
As you read journal articles, book chapters, case studies and research for this course you might be interested in gaining additional knowledge about one of these topics. You may have strong reactions to some of the readings and class discussions and/or you may want to relate them to yourself personally or professionally. You may examine a topic from the course syllabus or a topic that has not been addressed during this seminar. The term project may take a number of forms (e.g., discussion paper, critical review of the literature, research proposal, etc.) The subject of the term project should be reviewed with me before you begin work. The topic of the paper should be designed with an eye towards publication or a proposal that you may want to submit for funding. The paper is due on Wednesday, May 4th.

Your Input!
If you are aware of a resource please bring it to our attention. Students with clinical experience may present cases during the semester. I will ask students to accept responsibility for bringing an article or book chapter to the table for discussion.

You will also notice that I have not scheduled topics for April 13th, 20th, 27th, and May 4th. During these last 4 classes we will view contemporary and historical films, present case studies and research proposals through a culturally competent lens.

Let’s Eat!
Let’s schedule a cultural dinner. This will occur on May 4th (our last class). Bring a dish to share that reflects your cultural heritage (e.g., something mom, dad, uncle, grandpa or grandma cooked). If you have started your own cultural tradition regarding food – bring that! Every dish has a story and every story has a dish.


American Psychological Association (2002). The APA guidelines on multicultural education, training, research and practice, APA; Washington, DC.
February 2: Race, Ethnicity, Genetics and Stigma


February 16: Race and Intelligence

PLEASE DO NOT PANIC!!! I KNOW THERE IS A LOT OF MATERIAL TO COVER BUT WE WILL DEVISE A PLAN SO THAT WE DO NOT GET OVERWHELMED!

Race and Genetics


The Bell Curve

Read the Neisser et al. article and the comments by Rushton, Yee, Mahlberg, Spitz, Velden, Lynn, Ernhart and Hebben, Melnick, Naglieri, Frumkin, Reld, and Neisser.


Comments on Neisser et al. The commentaries are very brief – approximately 2 – 5 paragraphs each.


Reed, T.E. (1997). "The genetic hypothesis": It was not tested but it could have been. American psychologist, 52, 69-81.


The Bell Curve and the Bell Curve Commentaries

The Source


The Commentaries

Here are several responses to original text. Select a few to read and to discuss in class.


Jones, J. Back to the future with the bell curve: Jim crow, slavery, and g. In Bell curve wars: Race, intelligence and the future of America. (Steven Fraser Ed.). Harper Collins: New York.

February 23: The American Psychological Association’s Ethical Issues and Mental Heal Services Model

This is an experiential learning seminar. No preparation is necessary. Materials will be distributed when we meet.
March 2: Can Anyone Treat Everyone? Intervention and Ethnicity.

Barriers to the Therapeutic Alliance


Sue & Sue: Chapter 3 - Sociopolitical Considerations of Trust and Mistrust
Sue and Sue Chapter 4 – Barriers to Effective Multicultural Counseling / Therapy

Intervention and Ethnicity

March 9: Understanding and Treating Male Clients


March 16: Understanding and Treating Female Clients


March 23: Spring Break


April 6: Bisexual, Gay, Lesbian and Transgendered Populations


April 13: Film Forum, Media Watch and Case Presentations I
April 20: Film Forum, Media Watch and Case Presentation II
April 27: Film Forum III, Media Watch and Case Presentation III
May 4: Film Forum IV, Media Watch and Case Presentation IV
Final Project Due