Japanese Culture and Society: Social and Cultural psychology

Tutor: Akinobu NAMEDA, Ph.D.

Course description:

This course explores Japanese society and culture by looking at theories and experiencing research in social and cultural psychology. This course is divided into two parts. The first part of this course focuses on culture. We will discuss theories and research findings on culture in psychology as well as cultural phenomena in Japan. For the second part of this course, we will consider and discuss social issues in Japanese context: work-life balance, family work, career development, and so on. In addition to participation in classroom lectures and discussions, students in this course will conduct some research projects on culture and social issues in Japan that will help to have views to understand Japanese culture and society.

Course objectives:

➢ Students can obtain their understanding of culture and social issues in Japan.
➢ Students can make discussions on Japanese culture and society, based on knowledge and research in social and cultural psychology, and/or other academic fields in social sciences.
➢ Students can reflect on their own culture and society in looking at culture and social issues in Japanese context.

Schedule:

12:50 – 16:00 on Tuesdays, during 10 Jan – 18 Apr in 2016

	Date	Title	Contents
1	Jan 10	Introduction	Brief summary and descriptions of the course
2	Jan 17	Cultural differences of mind	Cross-cultural psychology, Culture and self, Culture as an institution
3	Jan 24	Culture in minds	Character, Pocket money, Culture as semiotic mediation
4	Jan 31	Is this a cultural phenomenon?	Stereotype in Japanese society
5	Feb 7	Research project on culture 1	Photo-voice project

6	Feb 14	Research project on culture 2	Project: Understanding "Kawaii (a Japanese word expression)" in Japan: Introduction
7	Feb 21	Research project on culture 2	Project: Understanding "Kawaii" in Japan: KJ qualitative method for organizing information
8	Feb 28	Research project on culture 2	Project: Understanding "Kawaii" in Japan: Work and discussions for presentation
9	Mar 7	Research project on culture 2	Project: Understanding "Kawaii" in Japan: Students' presentations
10	Mar 14	Career development in Japan	How do Japanese people make career development?
11	Mar 21	Work life balance issues in Japan	Population decline, Having children in Japan, Parent's participation in child rearing
12	Mar 28	Field-trip (to be arranged)	Field-trip
13	Apr 4	Family work and family relationships in Japanese context	The share of paid work and household work in family, Communication styles in couples
14	Apr 11	Quality of life in career development	Successive job support for people with disability
15	Apr 18	Research project on social issues 1	Project: Understanding issues on career development

Notes:
    The order and contents of the classes may vary according to the progress of projects and the schedule for field-trip.

Key Words:

    Japanese society; Culture; Social psychology; Cultural psychology.

Reading List:

・Markus, H. R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological review*, *98*, 224.
・Valsiner, J. (2007). *Culture in minds and societies: Foundations of cultural psychology*. SAGE Publications.

Evaluating Method:

1. Communication paper in each class and participation in activities in classes (30 %)
2. Papers based on projects and class activities (50 %)
3. Presentations (20 %)

Contact Information:

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