Introduction to Multicultural Counselling

Class Code
APSY-UE 9682

Instructor Details
Dr Suraj Samtani
ss9224@nyu.edu
Consultations by appointment (Monday 12-12:30pm, 3:30pm-4pm). Please allow at least 24 hours for your instructor to respond to your emails.

Class Details
Fall 2017

Introduction of Multicultural Counselling

Monday 12:30pm – 3:30pm
4 September to 11 December
Room 302
NYU Sydney Academic Centre

Class Description
An examination of the ways in which culture and context shape counsellor and client identities and their cross-cultural encounters. Topics include individual identities and systems of societal privilege and oppression associated with gender and sexuality, race/ethnicity, disabilities, class, religion, and other forms of cultural influences. The course also focuses on effective strategies for navigating cross-cultural relationships in helping professions.

Purpose: This course is designed to provide undergraduate students with an introduction to mental health and counselling in multicultural contexts, drawing from multidisciplinary sources of scholarship as well as cultural products such as literature and media. We examine how individual lives and communities are shaped by culture and context, with attention paid to the intersections of culture, power, and inequality. We also discuss how factors such as race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic class, nation, and religion constitute our individual cultural identities in complex ways. This course will use not only traditional forms of learning (lectures, readings, writing, and discussion) but also experiential learning surrounding cultural identities and behaviour, such as structured in-class exercises and out-of-class group projects, to prepare students to engage effectively in intercultural encounters in the United States or abroad.

Expectations: You are expected to complete weekly readings, to participate in class discussions, to engage in exercises and self-reflections that are designed to further cultural awareness and responsiveness, and to complete all assignments on time. Full engagement in
the course material will require that you enlist not only your intellectual resources but also your emotional resources, as you will be asked to reflect on (and discuss the process of learning about) how your own cultural identities affect your assumptions about human behaviour and counselling processes.

We will, on occasion, discuss issues that are controversial or emotionally charged. Some of the sources (such as media) we discuss may include profanity and other mature content. You will also be asked, on occasion, to step outside of your comfort zone. In engaging in these activities or in reactions to materials and discussions, you may experience various levels of discomfort. Such reactions are normal and—to some extent—necessary for learning about identities and differences. The collective goal for the class is to create a safe space that is conducive to growth and learning, and each student is expected to make an effort to treat each other with respect, dignity, and support even when they disagree with the viewpoints expressed by the instructor or classmates or readings during the course of the semester.

Finally, an important aspect of this course is the learning that takes place through structured cooperative learning group activities and experiential activities. Students are expected to contribute actively, constructively, and respectfully to individual and group activities.

### Desired Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will have:
- Become knowledgeable about the ways in which individual identities, worldviews, values, and biases are shaped by multiple cultural influences.
- Become adept at identifying and understanding the intersectionalities of one’s own and others’ cultural identities.
- Acquired knowledge of current theories and research related to the impact of culture in our daily ecologies in local and global contexts.
- Acquired experiential knowledge and tools for intercultural contact.

### Assessment Components

- **Class participation (10%)**
- **Cultural Autobiography (20%)** Due by 12:30pm, Week 10
- **Cultural Immersion Group Project (40%)** Due by 12:30pm, Week 15
- **Quizzes (30%)** Due Weeks 5, 10, 14

**Cultural Immersion Group Project**

Together with several classmates in a group formed early in the semester, you will select an activity involving direct contact with a culturally different group. A 30 minute group presentation will be made in the final week of the course. Each member of the group will write an individual reflection about the experience.

Each component is worth a maximum of the following, and all group members will get the same number of points on all elements of the project except for the individual reflection.

- Project proposal 5 points (Due by 12:30pm, Week 6)
Introduction to Multicultural Counselling

Handout 5 points
Group write-up 5 points
Presentation 15 points (5 points for the Powerpoint slides, 10 points for delivery)
Individual reflection 10 points

**Cultural Autobiography**
You are asked to write a cultural autobiography (6-8 pages, typed, double-spaced) in which you analyse your own identities according to a set of guidelines provided. The autobiography should address multiple domains of cultural influences that contribute to your current identity (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic class, and so on), and also reflect on the intersections and integration (or in some cases, lack thereof) of various cultural influences. You must also address how issues of power and privilege in various aspects of your identity influence how you interact with the world and the people around you.

**Quizzes**
Three in-class quizzes, each worth 10-points, will test your mastery of basic concepts from lectures and readings. The format for the quizzes will include definitions and short answers. They are NOT cumulative.

*Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component will result in failure of the class.*

*For this course your total numerical score, calculated from the components listed above, is converted to a letter grade without rounding.*

*Extra Credit: Site policy does not allow grading of work outside of the assignments included in the syllabus. The final grade will only be calculated from the assessment components listed here and no other work, whether additional or substituted, is permitted.*

**Assessment Expectations**

**Grade A:** Excellent performance showing a thorough knowledge and understanding of the topics of the course; all work includes clear, logical explanations, insight, and original thought and reasoning.

**Grade B:** Good performance with general knowledge and understanding of the topics; all work includes general analysis and coherent explanations showing some independent reasoning, reading and research.

**Grade C:** Satisfactory performance with some broad explanation and reasoning; the work will typically demonstrate an understanding of the course on a basic level.

**Grade D:** Passable performance showing a general and superficial understanding of the course’s topics; work lacks satisfactory insight, analysis or reasoned explanations.
Grade F: Unsatisfactory performance in all assessed criteria. Work is weak, unfinished or unsubmitted.

The complete range of grade conversions is as follows:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94 to 100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 to &lt; 94</td>
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<td>B+</td>
<td>87 to &lt; 90</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84 to &lt; 87</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80 to &lt; 84</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74 to &lt; 77</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 to &lt; 74</td>
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<td>D+</td>
<td>67 to &lt; 70</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65 to &lt; 67</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0 to &lt; 65</td>
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Assignments (excluding in-class presentations and exams) must be submitted electronically via NYU Classes. It is the student’s responsibility to confirm that the work has been successfully been uploaded. In the unlikely event that a submission to Classes fails, students must immediately submit the work to the Academic Programs Coordinator via email before the original submission deadline accompanied by an explanation of the issue. All in-class presentations and exams must be completed during the scheduled class time. An assessment component is considered completed when the student has met all the terms for that assessment component as outlined by the instructor.

An assessment component completed after the deadline without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 2 points on the 100-point scale (for the assignment) for each day the work is late. Work completed beyond five weekdays after the due date without an agreed extension receives a mark of zero, and the student is not entitled to feedback for that piece of work. Because failure to submit or fulfil any required assessment component will result in failure of the course, it is crucial for students to complete every assignment even when it will receive a mark of zero.

The academic standards of New York University apply to all coursework at NYU Sydney. NYU Sydney policies are in accordance with New York University’s plagiarism policy. The presentation of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

It is a serious academic offense to use the work of others (written, printed or in any other form) without acknowledgement. Cases of plagiarism are not dealt with by your instructor.
They are referred to the Director, who will determine the appropriate penalty (up to and including failure in the course as a whole) taking into account the codes of conduct and academic standards for NYU’s various schools and colleges.

**Attendance Policy**

Study abroad at Global Academic Centres is an academically intensive and immersive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. And since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the centres is mandatory, and unexcused absences will affect students' semester grades. The class roster will be marked in the first five minutes of class and anyone who arrives after this time will be considered absent. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

For courses that meet once a week, one unexcused absence will be penalised by a two percent deduction from the student’s final course grade. For courses that meet two or more times a week, the same penalty will apply to two unexcused absences. Repeated absences in a course may result in failure.

Faculty cannot excuse an absence. Requests for absences to be excused must be directed to the Academic Programs Coordinator. Students must provide appropriate documentation for their absence. In the case of illness, students must contact the Academic Programs Coordinator on the day of absence. They must provide medical documentation to Academic Programs Coordinator within three days of the absence in order to be medically excused. The note must include a medical judgement indicating that the student was unfit to attend class/work on the specific day or dates of the absence. Faculty will be informed of excused absences by the Academic Programs staff.

**Classroom Expectations**

This is a seminar subject and requires the active participation of all students. It also requires engaged discussion, including listening to and respecting other points of view. Your behaviour in class should respect your classmates’ desire to learn. It is important for you to focus your full attention on the class, for the entire class period.

- Arrive to class on time.
- Once you are in class, you are expected to stay until class ends. Leaving to make or take phone calls, to meet with classmates, or to go to an interview, is not acceptable behaviour.
- Phones, digital music players, and any other communications or sound devices are not to be used during class. That means no phone calls, no texting, no social media, no email, and no internet browsing at any time during class.
- Laptop computers and tablets are not to be used during class except in rare instances for specific class-related activity expressly approved by your instructor.
- The only material you should be reading in class is material assigned for that class. Reading anything else, such as newspapers or magazines, or doing work from another
class, is not acceptable.
• Class may not be recorded in any fashion – audio, video, or otherwise – without permission in writing from the instructor.

Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

NYU is committed to building a culture that respects and embraces diversity, inclusion, and equity, believing that these values – in all their facets – are, as President Andrew Hamilton has said, “…not only important to cherish for their own sake, but because they are also vital for advancing knowledge, sparking innovation, and creating sustainable communities.” At NYU Sydney we are committed to creating a learning environment that:
• fosters intellectual inquiry, research, and artistic practices that respectfully and rigorously take account of a wide range of opinions, perspectives, and experiences; and
• promotes an inclusive community in which diversity is valued and every member feels they have a rightful place, is welcome and respected, and is supported in their endeavours.

Religious Observance

Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. Students must notify their professor and the Academic Programs Coordinator in writing via email one week in advance before being absent for this purpose.

Provisions to Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Centre for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see Study Away and Disability.

Required Texts

It is a course expectation that you have done the required reading and have prepared sufficiently to discuss them in class.

• Additional articles posted on NYU Classes

Week 1 Introduction and Course Overview / General Principles of Counselling
Monday 4 September

Required Reading:

**Week 2**  
**What is Culturally Competent Counselling? / Counsellor Identity & Self Awareness**  
**Monday 11 September**

**Required Reading:**
- DSM-V Cultural Formulation interview and chapter

**Week 3**  
**Counsellor Identity and Self Awareness/Race & Racial Identity**  
**Monday 18 September**

**Guest lecture** (to be confirmed): Amanda Mason, Psychologist with Transcultural Mental Health Centre (Working with Thai clients and adapting treatment for them)

**Required Reading:**

**Week 4**  
**Race and Racism**  
**Monday 25 September**

**Required Reading:**

**Week 5**  
**Quiz 1 / Gender and Sexism**  
**Friday 6 October (Make-up day for Monday Public Holiday)**

**Required Reading:**

**Week 6  Heterosexism / Classism**

**Monday 9 October**

**Guest Lecture** (to be confirmed): Brendan Crozier (working with LGBT clients)

**Required Reading:**

**Assignment: Cultural Immersion Project Proposal (5%)**

**FALL BREAK: 16 - 20 October (Week 7)**

**Week 8  Field Trip**

**Monday 23 October**

Field trip (site to be confirmed)

**Week 9  Field Trip discussion and Classism / Abelism**

**Monday 30 October**

**Required Reading:**

**Week 10  Quiz 2 / Bias due to Religion / Deconstructing Biases**

**Monday 6 November**

**Required Reading:**
### Assignment: Cultural Autobiography (30%)

#### Week 11  Cultural Identity

**Monday 13 November**

**Required Reading:**

#### Week 12  Culturally Informed Assessment and Counselling

**Monday 20 November**

**Guest lecture** (to be confirmed): Counselling indigenous clients

**Required Reading:**

#### Week 13  Culturally Informed Counselling / Micro-skills and Role Plays

**Monday 27 November**

**Required Reading:**

#### Week 14  Quiz 3/ Micro-skills and Role Plays

**Monday 4 December**

**Required Reading:**

#### Week 15  Group Presentations

**Monday 11 December**

**Assignment: Cultural Immersion Group Project (40%)**
Dr Suraj Samtani (PhD, University of New South Wales) is a Clinical Psychologist. He has completed a Masters and PhD in Clinical Psychology at the University of New South Wales (UNSW). His primary research interests are rumination and worry, and developing better assessments and treatments for these cognitive processes across disorders.

He has taught various subjects at UNSW including neuropsychological assessment and psychopathology, social and developmental psychology, and introduction to psychology. He has worked as a clinician with acute psychosis, traumatic brain injury and personality disorder populations, conducting neuropsychological assessments and delivering treatment. His clinical experience also includes working with children and adolescents with learning difficulties, anxiety, depression, and autism spectrum disorder.