

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number 1620S
Date of Senate Approval 03/05/20

Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

APC Document 16 (PSYC): **Addition of new course, PSYC 206, Cultural Psychology**

Effective date: Fall 2020

1. Add: On page 274, new course, PSYC 206:

206 Cultural Psychology (4)

Cultural psychology is the study of social-psychological processes in an evolving cultural context. Topics include cross-cultural communications, social influence, discrimination, prejudice, and group dynamics. Emphasis will be placed on the application of knowledge to real-world problems in communication, health, and wellness. Learning will be assessed via quizzes, group projects, thought papers, and classroom activities. Students will also be asked to reflect upon the role of culture in their own lives to prepare for future cultural interactions. Prerequisite: PSYC 100. Fall.

Impact Statement: With the retirement of Dr. Tracy Brown in May of 2020, the department will temporarily lose one course (PSYC 290) in our 200-level menu of five courses, which only he has taught in recent years. Almost half of PSYC majors transfer here with credit for 1-3, 200-level courses, yet we continuously need to offer 16-18 sections of 200-level courses every year, which are filled to capacity. This requires 4-6 faculty often teaching double sections of a lower-level course every semester. Consequently, we need to retain a menu of at least 5 optional courses to meet demand.

With the arrival of Assistant Professor Bernal in Fall 2018, the department is finally able to offer a course in Cultural Psychology, one of his areas of expertise. Dr. Bernal taught this as a 300-level Special Topics course his first year, with the expectation that it would become a permanent part of his course load, with course level to be determined.

This new course will be an elective in our menu of 200-level courses in PSYC, 3 of which are required for the major. It will become a Diversity Intensive course by F20, and all instructors will teach the course as DI. At least two faculty can teach this course, and we expect to offer 2-4 sections per year. This course will be taught in a lecture format, and scheduled class time corresponds to a standard 4ch course. No specialized space or materials will be needed, and we expect the class to enroll 25-30 students every time it is offered.

Cultural Psychology encompasses the following learning objectives:

- Appraise how culture and context affect our concept of mental illness and well-being
- Explain how cultural and societal context affect our beliefs, perceptions, and behavior
- Recognize the benefits and limitations of cultural psychology research
- Differentiate among different applications of cultural psych theory
- Discuss moral and ethical concerns stemming from cultural differences
- Apply cultural psychology knowledge to your worldview

The addition of Cultural Psychology at the 200-level will offset the loss of PSYC 290, and it will require no additional teaching resources or staffing. The major impact of this change will be to redistribute the course teaching patterns of PSYC faculty across levels in our curriculum.

Rationale: Our 200-level course menu was re-designed between 2011-13 as part of the Psychology Department's last extensive curriculum review. The goal of the 200-level core was to provide foundational knowledge for advanced courses in PSYC, mandating that 200-level courses meet the following criteria: a) the content can be adapted to require only PSYC 100 as a prerequisite, b) the content is of substantial value to non-PSYC majors, who only take PSYC 100, c) the content can be taught effectively without a lab component, and d) at least two faculty members can teach the course. Cultural Psychology meets all of the criteria for inclusion in our 200-level core.

A review of the curricular literature showed that Cultural Psychology is taught by almost 70% of Psychology Departments which offer a BA in psychology (Norcross et al, 2016). It is one of only 5 subfields in psychology for which course offerings have increased since 2005. It will allow our department to address a current gap in departmental learning objectives, namely, the study of diversity and ethics. It will also provide our homogeneous student population with greater opportunities to ponder issues of diversity in the context of human behavior, which will benefit the university as a whole.