

**MOTIVATION AND DIVERSITY  
PSYCHOLOGY 7963  
(Seminar on Social Psychological Approaches to Diversity and Culture)  
SPRING SEMESTER 2019**

**Meeting Times:** Wed. 2:00-5:00 p.m. (801 SBS)

<b>Instructors:</b>	Carol Sansone, Ph.D.	Paul H. White, Ph.D.
<b>Office Info:</b>	810 SBS 801-581-3667	809-A SBS 801-585-3998
<b>E-Mail:</b>	Carol.Sansone@psych.utah.edu	Paul.White@psych.utah.edu

**Course Objectives:**

“Motivation” underlies many explanations of social psychological phenomena. In fact, individual differences in many social behaviors are often attributed either to differences in capacity or to differences in motivation. This has been particularly true when discussing differences associated with gender, ethnic background, culture, and age.

However, many researchers never take a closer look at the nature of the “motivational” process that is assumed to underlie behavioral differences for diverse populations. The purpose of the present seminar is to attempt to make these underlying assumptions explicit. We will first explore what it means to say someone is “motivated” by looking at different models of motivation. We will then ask whether this “motivation” is assumed to be the same for everyone, or whether it is assumed to be present more for some groups versus others. If presumed to be present for everyone, we also ask whether the motivation is assumed to motivate the same or different behaviors. After examining these issues more generally, we will then conduct the same analysis within a number of different topic areas in social psychology.

**Course Format:**

We will spend two weeks on each topic area with readings primarily during the first week of a topic. The readings for each topic will be posted on Canvas. For each topic, students should come in prepared to discuss their answers to three questions:

1. What is “motivation” in this area? Specifically, what is motivating, and what is it motivating people to do?
2. Is this motivation presumed to be the same for everyone? If not, what is the explanation for why people differ in their motivation?
3. If it is the same, then how is it presumed to cause different behaviors as a function of gender, ethnic and cultural background, age, sexual orientation, etc.?

To facilitate this discussion, you will submit by **noon on the day of class** your initial, simplified (i.e., one sentence) responses to these questions. We will then use class time to discuss and compare students’ initial ideas, including how helpful the readings are in making these kinds of distinctions, as well as any limitations.

For the following week, students should generate two versions of ostensibly the same research question relevant to the topic that addresses behavioral differences as a function of gender, culture, ethnic background, etc. The two versions should demonstrate how researchers generate different questions as a function of the assumptions they are making about the nature of the underlying

motivational process. So, for example, you could first specify an assumption that the motivational construct is the same for everyone, and then generate a research question that tries to explain behavioral differences in that topic based on that assumption; then, you would flip or reverse that assumption, and specify when or for whom motivation differs, and then generate a research question that follows from that assumption. These should be written (one page limit; yes, that includes both versions of the question; yes, it can be single-spaced), including both versions, one page). These should be submitted on Canvas by **Noon on Tuesdays**. You should be prepared to discuss your assumptions and research questions, and how they are similar or dissimilar from your classmates.

By the end of the semester, students will prepare a 10-page research proposal, the ideas for which will also be presented orally during the last class week of the semester. The research proposal can be based on an elaboration of a research question that the student posed earlier in the semester, or can be based on a new research question. Please meet with us before writing the paper. The paper should be submitted on Canvas by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, **April 26<sup>th</sup>**..

NO CLASS FEB. 6<sup>TH</sup> [SPSP TRAVEL]

### **Evaluation:**

Final grades will be based on the following:

**40% Class discussion** -- graded each week (starting week 2) using the following guide:

- A Posted response by noon on day of class (for first week of topic) or by noon the day before class (for second week of topic); presented these ideas in class and discussed; responded to others presentations, expanded discussion, connected to related topics, etc.
- A- Posted response by due date; presented these ideas in class and discussed
- B+ Posted response by due date, OR presented own ideas in class and discussed
- B or lower Missing critical participation criteria

**30% Bi-weekly 2-version research question (1 page or less)**

#### Grading Criteria:

- A Described two distinct versions of assumptions and related research question, with both version, related to same “difference” trying to understand
- A- Described two versions of assumptions with research question, but assumptions and/or research question not worked all the way through
- B+ Described only one version of assumptions with related research questions OR two versions but they do not address same behavioral difference, or behavioral difference trying to understand not specified
- B (or below) Do not specify behavioral difference, missing specifications of assumptions, research questions not related to assumptions and/or to difference

**30% Final research proposal**

Proposed schedule and topics:

**Week I.** Overview of class & watching “Hidden Figures”

**Week II.** What is “motivation”?

Readings:

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2008). Self-determination theory: A macrotheory of human motivation, development, and health. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne*, 49(3), 182-185.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0012801>

Leary, M. R. & Cox, C. B. (2008). Belongingness motivation: A mainspring of social action. In J. Y. Shah & W. L. Gardner (Eds.), *Handbook of Motivation Science* (pp. 27-40). New York: Guilford Press

Weiner, B. (2018). The legacy of an attribution approach to motivation and emotion: A no-crisis zone. *Motivation Science*, 4(1), 4-14. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/mot0000082>

[Cornwell JF](#), [Franks B](#), [Higgins ET](#). (2014). Truth, control, and value motivations: the "what," "how," and "why" of approach and avoidance. *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience*. 8:194. doi: 10.3389/fnsys.2014.00194.

Oishi, S., & Choi, H. (2017). Culture and motivation: A Socio-Ecological approach. In A. J. Elliot (Ed.), *Advances in Motivation Science* (pp.141–170). Academic Press, ISBN: 9780128121238

**Week III.** Is it the same for everyone? If same, how does it explain differences in behavior? If different, why do people differ in their motivation? For this first topic, the focus is on the topic of “evolutionary” explanations for gender differences in “mate/partner preferences”.

Readings:

Buss, D.M., & Schmitt, D.P. (1993). Sexual strategies theory: An evolutionary perspective on human mating. *Psychological Review*, 100, 204-232.

Eastwick, P. W., & Smith, L. K. (2018). Sex-differentiated effects of physical attractiveness on romantic desire: A highly powered, preregistered study in a photograph evaluation context. *Comprehensive Results in Social Psychology*.

Hawkes, K. (2004). The grandmother effect. *Nature*, 428, 128-129.

Wood, W., & Eagly, A. H. (2002). A cross-cultural analysis of the behavior of women and men: Implications for the origins of sex differences. *Psychological Bulletin*, 128, 699-727.

**Week IV.** How do different assumptions result in asking different questions? Come in with two versions of research question that focus on the topic of “evolutionary” explanations for gender differences in “mate/partner preferences”.

Background Readings (review as needed):

Miller, J. G. (2004). Culturally sensitive research questions and methods in social psychology. In Sansone, Morf, & Panter (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Methods in Social Psychology*, (pp. 93-116). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Sansone, C., Morf, C. C., & Panter, A. T. (2004). The research process: Of big pictures, little details, and the social psychological road in between. In Sansone, Morf, & Panter (eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Methods in Social Psychology*, (pp. 1-11 only). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

**Weeks V-XII** [NO CLASS FEB. 6<sup>TH</sup> OR MARCH 13<sup>TH</sup> (spring break)]: Remaining specific topics  
The remaining specific topics will be the following areas. They are listed in no particular order (we will decide that as a class.) Readings will be selected in collaboration with students and instructors (so if there are articles on these topics you would like to suggest, let us know!)

Academic Achievement

Emotion and Emotion Regulation 1

Intergroup Relations

Age/developmental differences in work motivation

The “Second” week of a topic will address the two versions of a research question on behavioral difference in the topic area as function of "diversity".

**Week XIII.** Student presentations of research proposals. [plan to present for 15 minutes]