PSYC 150: Psychosocial Foundations of African American Worldviews  
Syllabus – Fall 2022

Instructor: Shervonti Norman, MA  
Email: shnorma@siue.edu | Phone: 618-975-1638 (text preferred over call)  
Office Hours: Thursdays at 4:30 PM or by appointment.

Note: The instructor for this course is a counselor at SIUE Counseling Services. If you are a former client that has had clinical interactions with the instructor, your work will be graded by someone else in the psychology department. If you are interested in receiving services through Counseling Services, when you call to schedule an appointment, pleasure make sure to mention that you are in Shervonti’s course to be sure you are scheduled with a different provider. If you have any questions about this, please do not hesitate to ask.

Course Information  
Days: Monday/Wednesday from 12:00 PM until 1:15 PM  
Location: Alumni Hall, Room 0333

Course Description

This course focuses on centralizing the Black/African American experience through an intersectional, psychological lens. A primary goal of the course will be to explore both qualitative and quantitative findings in order to discuss both unique/individualized experiences and those that are common themes within various African American communities. This course is designed to be an experimental, discussion-based seminar.

Course Objectives

- To define a cultural worldview with emphasis on the role of race and ethnicity in framing lived experiences  
- To explore models of identity development that seek to expand knowledge of self and others  
- To discuss the role of privilege and oppression as life-defining undercurrents in American society  
- To explore the role of American history in family and community dynamics within various intersectional identity groups  
- To identify central issues, tensions, and structural barriers faced by those who identify as African American  
- To explore the development of personality, attitudes, and behavior as informed and framed by cultural worldviews  
- To discuss how these factors effect health, well-being, educational experiences, and career trajectories  
- To identify individual and community strategies to enhance resilience

Required Materials/Textbook

Course Assignments and Grades

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Point Value</th>
<th>Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Comprehension Quizzes</td>
<td>14x5 = 70</td>
<td>Weekly Comprehension Quizzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Discussion Boards</td>
<td>14x10 = 140</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction Assignment</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9/7/2022 by midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10/19/2022 by midnight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Points Available for Course: 375

1. Weekly Comprehension Quizzes – 5 Points

- 5 questions, multiple choice, 1 point each
- No trick questions, assessing for comprehension of material for the week

2. Weekly Discussion Boards – 10 Points

Learning is a developmental process that is generally optimized when course content is paired with opportunities for discussion and opportunities to personally reflect. This assignment will provide the opportunity for discussion and reflection. Combined with our discussions in class on Wednesdays, there will be a discussion board each week to continue the in-class conversation. The discussion boards will be aligned with course content.

Each week you will be asked to respond to a prompt, and you will also be asked to respond to at least two of your peers. Responding to the prompt is 5 points and the two required responses will be 2.5 points for a total of 10 points.

The posts should be as long as you need to get your thoughts across. I understand that some learners need specifics so let’s aim for between 1-2 paragraphs for the initial post and your responses should be at least 1 paragraph. Your responses should be thoughtful, respectful, and on-topic. I will be monitoring the discussion boards to make sure you all are participating and expecting dialogue to be flowing between classmates.

3. Introduction Assignment – 15 Points

After reading Kevin Cokley’s introduction, I felt inspired to think about my academic and career journey. I also want to learn about you all and the start of your journey. We will discuss this assignment more as a group.


The title of this course includes “worldview.” A worldview is a mental model of reality – a comprehensive framework of ideas and attitudes about the world, ourselves, life, a system of beliefs, a system of personally customized theories about the world and how it works.

This assignment helps to unite various elements of that puzzle to help you to 1) understand what a worldview is in general and 2) how this concept applies to you in the context of your lived experiences.
This assignment will require you to 1) critically examine your background, including past experiences in your life and your values, 2) gather information from your elders and other family members, and 3) reflect on how these factors contribute to how you understand yourself in the present.

You will be writing a 3-5 page, double-spaced essay and presenting it to the class for 5-10 minutes. We will discuss further as a group closer to the due date Wednesday, October 19, 2022.

5. **Final Exam – 100 Points**
   - Comprehensive
   - 20 Multiple Choices Questions
   - 2 Short Answer (one paragraph responses)

**Expectations**

- Your attendance is expected as I would love for all of you to experience the course in full; however, please make your health and the health of others a priority.
- Participation is expected. This class is heavily based on discussion and contributing to the conversation is important. While participation is not a grade, I will be taking note of who contributes.
- Bring your book to class! We will reference the book during discussions.
- Final grades are not negotiable.

**Students Needing Accommodations**

Students needing accommodations because of medical diagnosis or major life impairment will need to register with Accessible Campus Community & Equitable Student Support (ACCESS) and complete an intake process before accommodations will be given. Students who believe they have a diagnosis but do not have documentation should contact ACCESS for assistance and/or appropriate referral. The ACCESS office is located in the Student Success Center, Room 1270. You can also reach the office by e-mail at myaccess@siue.edu or by calling 618-650-3726. For more information on policies, procedures, or necessary forms, please visit the ACCESS website at www.siue.edu/access.

If you feel you would need additional help in the event of an emergency situation, please notify your instructor to be shown the evacuation route and discuss specific needs for assistance.

**Psychology Department Policy on Withdrawals and Incomplete Grades**

All withdrawals must be completed by the end of the 13th week of classes during fall and spring, and by a similarly late date (i.e., before 82% of class meetings have occurred) in any summer term. Grades that apply to students who initiate a withdrawal and grades that apply when a student fails to officially withdraw within established deadlines are determined by university policy (see https://www.siue.edu/registrar/class/dropping.shtml).

The granting of a grade of I (Incomplete) is not automatic. It is available only in cases when a student has completed most of the work required for a class but is prevented by a medical or similar emergency from completing a small portion of the coursework before the deadline for grade submission. An I must be approved by the instructor with appropriate documentation provided by the student. If an instructor agrees to give a student an I, the instructor will fill out a Memorandum of Incomplete Grade to be kept with the
student’s records. If the work is not completed by the time specified on the Memorandum, the student’s grade will be changed from I to F.

**Psychology Department Policy on Plagiarism**

Plagiarism includes either presenting someone else’s words without quotation marks (even if you cite the source) or presenting someone else’s ideas without citing that source. If you plagiarize, your instructor cannot evaluate your understanding of the topic. When paraphrasing from another source, at the very least the student should change the wording, sentence syntax, and order of ideas presented in the paper. Ideally, the student will integrate ideas from multiple sources while providing critical commentary on the topic in a way that clearly identifies whether words and ideas are those of the student or are from another source. Plagiarism is one type of academic misconduct described in SIUE’s Student Academic Code ([http://www.siue.edu/policies/3c2.shtml](http://www.siue.edu/policies/3c2.shtml)). University policy states that “Normally a student who plagiarizes shall receive a grade of F in the course in which the act occurs. The offense shall also be reported to the Provost.” ([http://www.siue.edu/policies/1i6.shtml](http://www.siue.edu/policies/1i6.shtml)). The University policy discusses additional academic sanctions including suspension and expulsion from the University.

**Psychology Department Policy on Writing**

As a student in this course, you will be expected to display university-level writing, which includes completing course assignments that meet the following basic writing criteria. Specifically, all written assignments completed for this course should include:

- clear transitions from sentence to sentence and idea to idea (e.g., paper is organized/flows well);
- verb tense consistency;
- clear and unambiguous sentences and ideas;
- writing that is free of typos, spelling errors, and major grammatical errors;
- properly formatted citations and references (if relevant).

This is by no means an exhaustive list of basic writing skills but will give you an idea of what we are looking for in our papers. If you feel you need help with your writing, you are encouraged to seek assistance from the writing center on campus ([http://www.siue.edu/is/writing](http://www.siue.edu/is/writing)) or utilize one of the many online resources they have identified to help students ([https://www.siue.edu/lss/writing/resources.shtml](https://www.siue.edu/lss/writing/resources.shtml)). If your graded written assignments fail to meet the basic writing requirements listed above (and any others found to be appropriate by your instructor), the instructor will stop the grading process and return the paper to you (see below for the specific policy for this class).

**Diversity and Inclusion**

SIUE is committed to respecting everyone’s dignity at all times. In order to learn, exchange ideas, and support one another, our virtual and physical classrooms must be places where students and teachers feel safe and supported. Systems of oppression permeate our institutions and our classrooms. All students and faculty have the responsibility to co-create a classroom that affirms inclusion, equity, and social justice, where racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, xenophobia, and other social pathologies are not tolerated. Violations of this policy will be enforced in line with the SIUE Student Conduct Code.

The Hub [https://www.siue.edu/cnsdi](https://www.siue.edu/cnsdi) is an excellent resource for students for support and community. Any person who believes they have experienced or witnessed discrimination or harassment can contact Ms.
Jamie Ball, Director in the Office of Equal Opportunity, Access and Title IX Coordination at (618) 650-2333 or jball@siue.edu. There is also an online form for reporting bias incidents at https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?SIUEdwardsville&layout_id=10.

Academic and Other Student Services

As an enrolled SIUE student, you have a variety of support available to you, including:

- Lovejoy Library Resources
- Academic Success Sessions
- Tutoring Resource Center
- The Writing Center
- Academic Advising
- Financial Aid
- Campus Events
- Counseling Services

If you find that you need additional support, please reach out to me and let me know.

Cougar Care

Dealing with the fast-paced life of a college student can be challenging, and I always support a student’s decisions to prioritize mental health. Students have access to counseling services on campus (Student Success Center, 0222). Make an appointment by visiting cougarcare.siue.edu or by calling 618-650-2842.

UNIVERSITY COVID-19 POLICIES

Health and Safety

The measures outlined below are required and any student who does not comply may be in violation of the COVID-19 People-Focused Health and Safety Policy, as well as the University’s Student Code of Conduct.

The full text of the COVID-19 People-Focused Health and Safety Policy can be found here: https://www.siue.edu/policies/Covid.shtml

Classrooms, Labs, Studios, and Other Academic Spaces


Individual faculty of record may determine that masking will be required in their classrooms and are asked to communicate accordingly with students. Face masks may be required in other campus sites following guidance from governing regulatory agencies.

- Students who forget to wear a face covering when masking is required will be reminded of their obligation to comply with SIUE’s COVID-19 People-Focused Health and Safety Policy and temporarily asked to leave the class until they are able to conform to the policy. Students who forget or lose their face coverings when masking is required may be able to obtain replacements
from a friend, a faculty member, or a nearby departmental office. Face coverings are also available for purchase in the Cougar Store (MUC).

- Students who refuse to wear a face covering when masking is required will be asked to leave the classroom and referred to the Dean of Students for non-compliance with community health and safety protocols. Repeated non-compliance may result in disciplinary actions, including the student being administratively dropped from an on-ground/face-to-face course or courses without refund if no alternative course format is available.

- If a student has a documented health condition which makes wearing a face covering medically intolerable, that student should contact ACCESS to explore options with the understanding that ACCESS will not grant accommodations which excuse the need for a face covering while on campus or in the classroom. ACCESS will work with qualifying individuals to find reasonable alternatives, whenever such solutions are available. Please call or contact the ACCESS Office via email to schedule an online appointment to discuss potential alternatives. ACCESS office (Student Success Center, Room 1203, 618-650-3726, and myaccess@siue.edu).

General Health Measures

Students and employees are expected to review the siue.edu/coronavirus website (https://www.siue.edu/about/announcements/coronavirus/) to better understand prevention strategies and safety expectations.

- Students and employees are expected to maintain healthy hygiene practices.
- Students and employees are expected to follow COVID-related guidelines and directions.
- Students and employees are expected to conduct a daily health self-assessment and isolate themselves if COVID-related symptoms are present. COVID-related symptoms include:
  - Fever (100.4 degrees or above) or chills
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue
  - Muscle or body aches
  - Headache
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Congestion or runny nose
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Diarrhea

Academic Integrity

Students are reminded that the expectations and academic standards outlined in the Student Academic Code (3C2) apply to all courses, field experiences and educational experiences at the University, regardless of modality or location. The full text of the policy can be found here: https://www.siue.edu/policies/3c2.shtml.

Recordings of Class Content

Faculty recordings of lectures and/or other course materials are meant to facilitate student learning and to help facilitate a student catching up who has missed class due to illness or quarantine. As such, students are reminded that the recording, as well as replicating or sharing of any course content and/or course
materials without the express permission of the instructor of record, is not permitted, and may be considered a violation of the University’s Student Conduct Code (3C1), linked here: https://www.siue.edu/policies/3c1.shtml.

Potential for Changes in Course Schedule or Modality

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, there remains a possibility that planned classroom activities will need to be adjusted. Depending on circumstances and following state-issued recommendations, potential changes include alterations to distancing requirements, course modality (e.g., transition from face-to-face to online, hybrid, or hy-flex, mask wearing, in-course activities, etc.). These changes would be implemented to ensure the successful completion of the course while preserving health and safety. In these cases, students may be provided with an addendum to the class syllabus that will supersede the original version. If the course schedule or modifications significantly alter expectations, a new syllabus will be issued.

*Appreciation to Dr. Courtney Boddie and those in the psychology department for help creating this syllabus.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Readings/Due Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: 8/22, 8/24</td>
<td>M 8/22: Syllabus</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W 8/24: Syllabus quiz, talk about discussion board, continue introductions, discuss first assignment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2: 8/29, 8/31</td>
<td>M 8/29: What is a worldview? What are disparities? How are race, ethnicity, and nationality similar yet difference from each other?</td>
<td>- Introduction: Personal Reflections of an African American Psychology (pages xv-xxiii) - Victimhood, Separatism, and Anti-Intellectualism: In Defense of Black Culture (pages 55-70) - DISCUSSION BOARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W 8/21: Quiz 2 (over lecture material), Details for introduction assignment, <strong>Guest Speaker</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3: 9/5, 9/7</td>
<td>M 9/5: NO CLASS</td>
<td>- DISCUSSION BOARD - Introduction assignment due 9/7 by midnight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W 9/7: Quiz 3 (over readings), Discussion based on topics from Week 2.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4: 9/12, 9/14</td>
<td>M 9/12: How does race inform worldview? What does history place in this process? What is oppression? What is privilege? How are systemic and interpersonal racism similar to yet different from each other?</td>
<td>- DISCUSSION BOARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W 9/14: Quiz 4 (over lecture material), Discussion based on Monday’s lecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W 9/21: Quiz 5 (over lecture material), Discussion based on Monday’s lecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6: 9/26, 9/28</td>
<td>M 9/26: How can these processes, experiences, etc. be internalized? Internalized Racism (Pyke, 2010), Racial Scripting (Wright, 2007), Racial Archetypes (Bogle, 2001)</td>
<td>- DISCUSSION BOARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W 9/28: Quiz 6 (over lecture material), Details for worldview essay, Discussion based on Monday’s lecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>W 10/5: Quiz 7 (over lecture material and assigned reading), Discussion based on Monday’s lecture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Week 8: 10/10, 10/12 | M 10/10: What are identity intersections? What is the distinction between intersecting identities and intersectionality?  
W 10/12: Quiz 8 (over lecture material), Discussion based on Monday’s lecture |  
| Week 9: 10/17, 10/19 | M 10/17: What is “The Achievement Gap?” Cool Pose (Majors and Billson, 1992), Academic Self-Concept (Woodland, 2008)  
W 10/19: Quiz 9 (over lecture material), Discussed based on Monday’s lecture |  
| Week 10: 10/24, 10/26 | M 10/24: PRESENTATIONS  
W 10/26: Quiz 10, PRESENTATIONS |  
| Week 11: 10/31, 11/2 | M 10/31: PRESENTATIONS  
W 11/2: Quiz 11 (over assigned reading), Discussion based on Assigned Reading |  
| Week 12: 11/7, 11/9 | M 11/7: Self-View: Conversation of Understanding  
W 11/9: Quiz 12 (over lecture material and assigned reading), Discussion based on Monday’s lecture |  
| Week 13: 11/14, 11/16 | M 11/14: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity & Expression Among African Americans  
W 11/16: Quiz 13 (over lecture material), Discussion based on Monday’s lecture |  
| Week 14: 11/21, 11/23 | NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK |  
| Week 15: 11/28, 11/30 | M 11/28: What is the impact of minority stress on mental health among Black folx?  
W 11/30: Quiz 14 (over lecture material), Discussion based on Monday’s lecture |  
| Week 16: 12/5, 12/7 | M 12/5: Self-Care and Resilience, Review for Final Exam  
W 12/7: Final Exam |  

Note: Course agenda may change depending on how quickly (or not so quickly) we get through lecture material. I will update everyone with changes as they come. *