

## Objective 3.2: Intercultural Competence

Course: **Social Psychology (PSY 340)**

Students will understand their own and others' cultures and possess skills necessary to engage constructively with all kinds of people.

By graduation students will:	Not Proficient 1 Point	Developing Proficiency 2 Points	Proficient 3 Points	Exceeding Proficiency 4 Points
Produce an exploratory or investigative work based upon a personal interaction such as a conversation, an interview, or a service-learning experience that compares and contrasts the culture of an individual or group outside of the student's own identity community with the student's own culture.	<p>&lt; 28 points earned for the interview transcript portion of the assignment. This equates to:</p> <p>Interview transcript responses either do not include a comparison or only 1 comparison is included between the interviewee and student.</p>	<p>28-31 points earned for the interview transcript portion of the assignment. This equates to:</p> <p>Interview transcript responses describe some (2) similarities and differences between the interviewee and student.</p>	<p>32-35 points earned for the interview transcript portion of the assignment. This equates to:</p> <p>Interview transcript responses describe several (3-4) similarities and differences between the interviewee and student.</p>	<p>36-40 points earned for the interview transcript portion of the assignment. This equates to:</p> <p>Interview transcript responses describe multiple (at least 5) similarities and differences between the interviewee and student.</p>
Produce an exploratory or investigative work that elucidates multiple aspects of a culture outside of the student's own identity community.	<p>&lt;24 points earned for the elucidates multiple aspects of the culture/subculture portion of the assignment. This equates to:</p> <p>Does not reflect that the student has a basic understanding of the interview and class content; little to no detail provided; missing multiple aspects needed to explain the culture/subculture.</p>	<p>24-27 points earned for the elucidates multiple aspects of the culture/subculture portion of the assignment. This equates to:</p> <p>General or basic understanding of the interview and class content; minimal detail provided; describes some aspects needed to explain the culture/subculture.</p>	<p>28-31 points earned for the elucidates multiple aspects of the culture/subculture portion of the assignment. This equates to:</p> <p>Sufficient understanding of the interview and class content; appropriate detail provided; describes multiple aspects needed to explain the culture/subculture.</p>	<p>32-35 points earned for the elucidates multiple aspects of the culture/subculture portion of the assignment. This equates to:</p> <p>Excellent understanding of interview and class content; appropriate detail provided; goes above and beyond to describe multiple aspects needed to explain the culture/subculture.</p>

Assignment meeting Outcome 1: Culture/Subculture Interview Assignment

Assignment meeting Outcome 2: Culture/Subculture Creative Final Project and Reflection Assignment

**PSY 340 - Culture/Subculture Interview Assignment**  
**(Part 1)**  
**CORE Objective 3.2: Outcome #1**

*“Produce an exploratory or investigative work based upon a personal interaction such as a conversation, an interview, or a service-learning experience that compares and contrasts the culture of an individual or group outside of the student’s own identity community with the student’s own culture.”*

For this assignment, you will conduct an interview by asking someone who has a different cultural (or sub-cultural) background than you to be your interviewee. Culture (or sub-culture) can be defined in a variety of ways. You might interview someone who differs from you with respect to place of origin or ethnicity. You also could interview someone with norms that differ from the larger culture to which they belong (e.g., someone with a gender identity different from your own). Before meeting with your interviewee, do some initial research about their culture and cultural identity. Spend time thinking and developing questions you would like to ask them. Imagine you are a first-time visitor. What would be important for you to know?

Example questions are provided below, but these are only suggestions. Taking time to do some research about your interviewee’s culture will allow you to tailor your interview questions and to start your interview feeling more relaxed and confident. You will submit your interview questions and a brief description explaining the person you selected to interview and why this person was selected (e.g., how does this person qualify as someone outside of your own culture?). You *must* have your interview questions and interviewee approved by the instructor prior to your interview.

Spend a minimum of one hour with your interviewee asking questions about their culture. Frame your questions within the context of cultural respect and humility (see tips below).

You will need to audiotape your interview (with the permission of the interviewee) so that you do not have to rely solely on your notes to develop your paper. If the interviewee does not grant permission to audiotape, you will need to take detailed notes during the interview. You must provide a transcription of your interview as part of the assignment. Your transcript should include the following: a brief description of who was interviewed (e.g., the culture/subculture and identity represented) and why you selected this person; a complete list of the questions that were asked; the specifics of the interviewee’s responses; your own responses to the questions to compare/contrast the culture of the interviewee with that of your own.

Example Questions: The questions below are suggestions, but these may serve as a guide as you think of questions that will help you to compare and contrast your culture (or sub-culture) to that of your interviewee.

- What culture/subculture are you from?
- What is the role of the men in your society?
- What is the role of women in your society?
- How is education handled in your culture?

- How is education funded in your country?
- What are the most popular forms of entertainment in your life/country?
- What is considered the most respectful/disrespectful in your culture?
- What would you say is the most commonly held misconception about people of your culture?
- Have you ever experienced prejudicial behavior directed at you as a member of your culture/subculture?
- What can be done about prejudice, in your opinion?
- Do you feel conscious about being a member of your culture/subculture?
- Do you feel conscious about discrimination?
- What aspect(s) of your culture/subculture make(s) you the proudest?
- In what ways does being a member of your culture/subculture impact your personal life?
- Have you ever experienced a situation where your culture/subculture seemed to contribute to a problem or uncomfortable situation? If so, explain.
- Does being a member of your culture/subculture enter in your process of making important or daily decisions? If so, how?
- Have you ever felt “different” in a group setting because of being a member of your culture/subculture? How did this affect you?
- Do you ever feel like you might be acting unfairly toward somebody because of his or her membership of a culture/subculture?
- What should I know of your culture’s recent history, governance and language?
- What do you understand as the major values and beliefs of your culture?
- What cultural customs might surprise me?
- If I were to fall in love with someone from your culture, what would you advise me in terms of dating, courtship and marriage practices?
- What are some different cultural practices that I might not be aware of? For example, understanding of time, work and leisure?
- Do you have a religious tradition? How was it shaped by your culture and historical tradition? How has this tradition shaped your understanding of the world?
- What do you see as the most important thing we can do to build greater understanding between cultures?

### Interview Tips:

1. Do some research: First of all, do research and learn the important information about the culture/subculture. No matter your own culture/subculture, knowing the essential details about your interviewee’s culture/subculture will certainly help to create a positive impression and a more open interview environment.

2. Interview etiquette: Get familiar with an appropriate interview etiquette and culture/subcultural taboos. The way you behave during the interview can be a crucial factor your interview success.

3. Your role during the interview: You have to be proactive, show your interest in the interviewee, stay engaged and ask questions but be sure to listen more than you speak. You are

there to guide discussion not to debate or contradict the interviewee's experiences or opinions. Have an open mind and listen.

4. Do not try too hard: You want to know basics of the interviewee's culture/subculture not appropriate it. Put your own bias and experiences aside and truly listen to the interviewee.

5. Watch your body language: 95% of all communication is transmitted through the way we move. Your tone of voice, gestures, and posture really matter.

6. Establish basic expectations that will encourage dialogue, mutual respect, and hearing what others say. Recognize that talking about different culture/subcultures can be challenging and perhaps discomfiting. To encourage open, respectful dialogue, consider the following:

- Everyone should understand the purpose of the conversation is to hear and for you to learn from another. Do not to declare others to blame, guilt, ignorance.
- People should be relaxed and comfortable with one another, but not assume that everyone shares their own ideas, beliefs, or experiences. A key for a successful interview is to be interested in and "hear" (openly acknowledge) what another has experienced and what they think.
  - Thus, saying "I've never thought of that before – could you explain why you think that?" is a lot better than "I don't believe it; that's never happened to me."
- Recognize that people of good intent can mis-speak or say things that unintentionally offend others. Letting others know how their words affect you or might be understood by others is healthy and constructive; ascribing malice or stupidity to their words is not.
  - Thus, saying "I feel frustrated (or I feel disrespected) when people say. ....because...." is a lot better than "That pisses me off; that's such a stupid (or racist) thing to say"

**PSY 340 - Culture/Subculture Creative Final Project and Reflection Assignment**  
**(Part 2)**  
**CORE Objective 3.2: Outcome #2**

*“Produce an exploratory or investigative work that elucidates multiple aspects of a culture outside of the student’s own identity community.”*

You will individually complete a creative final project based on the information collected during your interview (assignment part 1) and your personal reflections following the interview.

This assignment provides an opportunity to create an independent, in-depth work to elucidate multiple aspects of the culture (or subculture) you learned about during your interview. You also will have the opportunity to construct a project that is compatible with your specific skills/needs; for example, you may choose to create a video based on the findings and what you learned from your interview; write a play or poem about your interview; create an original work of visual art (e.g., a painting or sculpture) that helps to depict or showcase information from your interview; design a course or workshop about your interview; create a blog or a podcast series to elucidate information from your interview to others.

The final product of your project will be completely up to you, with the only requirement being that the final product *must* be based on your interview and what was learned from your conversation with someone outside of your own identity community. Your work on this project should occur over the course of the semester, and not just at the end. To help guide your progress, you will submit the following:

1. *A Project Proposal*: You are allowed considerable freedom in the construction of your final project; thus, you must propose your final project idea to your instructor (and have this idea approved). This approval process will ensure that you choose a project that is suitable for completion this semester and that challenges you to explore and critically evaluate your interview and lessons learned with sufficient depth.
2. *Project & Reflection Paper*: Given the variety of mediums through which a final project can be completed, you will submit a reflection paper (along with your finished individual project) regarding your completion of the final project. Reflection papers should be ~3-5 pages in length and should describe in detail the following:
  - The norms and standards being used by the culture/subculture and an application of *at least five* social psychological concepts to explore and explain multiple aspects of how this culture/subculture differs from your own.
    - For example, you may use concepts discussed during class and in the eBook to elucidate how the cultural norms and standards drive behavior among those in the group.
  - A reflection of what was learned and gained from your final project as well as your interview and the experience of interacting with someone outside of your culture/subculture. As you reflect, think about the following:

- How does your identity, culture, and group membership compare to the person interviewed?
- What surprised you, challenged you, or will stay with you as an important aspect of your communication across cultures?
- What does this experience mean to you personally? What changed in you as a result of this interview/conversation?
- Were there communication practices (asking open questions, not interrupting, staying silent but present, etc.) that you wished you had used or done better?
- Were there any preconceived notions/beliefs/biases held before the interview that changed as a result of your interview?
- Did this experience help you understand the challenges and complexities inherent within different cultures/subcultures?
- What is your take away from this assignment? What was learned and/or gained?