



Syllabus for PSYC 150: 001
Psychosocial Foundations of African American Worldviews
Department of Psychology
Fall 2025

About the Instructor

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Office Hours: By appointment

Note: The instructor for this course is a counselor with SIUE Counseling and Health Services. If you are a former client who has previously received clinical services from the instructor, your coursework will be graded by another faculty member in the psychology department. If you wish to receive services through Counseling and Health Services, please mention that you are enrolled in Shervonti's course so you can be placed with a different provider. If you have any questions about this process, feel free to ask.

Course Information

Days: Monday/Wednesday from 12:00pm until 1:15pm
Location: Peck Hall, Room 2411

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.

A further look: This course centers the lived experiences, cultural knowledge, and psychological resilience of African American communities. Through an exploration of African American worldviews, students will examine how identity, history, spirituality, family, and community intersect with symptoms of power, privilege, and oppression. This course uses an intersectional, discussion-based, and liberatory approach to psychology—engaging with academic texts, personal storytelling, multimedia content, and creative expression. Students will explore how worldview shapes well-being, education, relationships, and social mobility while also exploring collective strategies for healing, joy, and resistance.

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

Cokley, K. O. (2015). *The myth of black anti-intellectualism: A true psychology of African American students*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Course Assignments and Grades

	Assignment	Point Value
1	Comprehension Quizzes	10x10 = 100
2	Discussion Boards	10x20 = 200
3	Introduction Assignment	50
4	Essay/Presentation	100
5	Final Exam	100
6	Attendance	50
Total Points Available for Course:		600

1. Comprehension Quizzes – 10 Points

- 5 questions, multiple choice, 2 points each
- No trick questions, assessing for comprehension of material

2. Discussion Boards – 20 Points

Ten times this semester, you'll join our online discussion board to build on what we talked about in class. These conversations help you reflect, share ideas, and learn from your peers.

Your initial post responding to the prompt is worth 10 points. You'll also reply to at least two classmates, with each response worth 5 points (for a total of 20 points possible each week).

Aim for 1–2 paragraphs for your initial post and at least 1 paragraph for each response. Keep your comments thoughtful, respectful, and on-topic. I'll be checking in to make sure everyone is participating and that discussions are moving forward.

3. Introduction Assignment: A Reflection – 50 Points

After reading Kevin Cokley's introduction, reflect on your own academic and career journey so far. This is an opportunity for you to share your story and reflect on your choices, your experiences, and your values that led you to this point. We will review assignment details together closer to due date.

4. My Worldview: Culture, History, and Self – 100 Points

The title of this course includes the word "worldview." A worldview is simply how you see and make sense of the world — your mental map of reality. It's the framework of ideas, beliefs, values, and experiences that shape how you understand life, yourself, and others.

In this class, we will be exploring African American worldviews — how history, culture, community, and lived experiences have shaped those views over time. This project will give you a chance to explore your own worldview, connect it to your background, and reflect on how what you have learned in this course deepens your understanding of yourself and your culture. We will review assignment details together closer to due date.

5. Final Exam – 100 Points

- Comprehensive
- 20 Multiple Choices Questions
- 2 Short Answer (one paragraph responses)

6. Attendance – 50 Points

- Attendance will be taken daily
- 2 points taken off for every missed class
- Easy points!

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 a 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.siu.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.siu.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.siu.edu/is/writing>) or utilize one of the many online resources they have identified to help students (<https://www.siu.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.siu.edu/csdi> 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@siu.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.siu.edu or by calling 618-650-2842.

Student Success Coaches

Student success coaches work across campus to serve the SIUE student population with the tools and resources to adjust to and meet the demands of the college experience. Success coaches provide direct services such as time management support and referrals to campus resources. If you find yourself in need of academic or personal support, or in a situation that is preventing you from being successful in the classroom, please utilize Starfish to connect with a coach as soon as possible. The sooner you engage, the sooner you can access the information or tools you need that may help you get back on track.

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.siu.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.siu.edu/policies/3c1.shtml>.

Subject to Change Notice

All material, assignments, and deadlines are subject to change with prior notice. It is your responsibility to stay in touch with your instructor, review the course site regularly, or communicate with other students, to adjust as needed if assignments or due dates change.