The Psychology Department in the College of Science presents a colloquium by

Dr. Jiyoung Park
University of Massachusetts, Amherst

Cultural Shaping of Emotional Processing: A Cultural Neuroscience Approach

Negative experiences are often unavoidable. When they happen, they can cause a cascade of emotional responses—ranging from initial, automatic reactions, to slower, more consciously accessible feelings and subsequent behavioral expressions. To understand this sequence of emotional processing and its downstream consequences on health and well-being, I examine the role that culture plays as an important macro-social condition that contributes to meaningful individual differences in emotional processing. In this talk, I present a series of studies that examine how socio-cultural conditions defined by various macro-level variables, including national culture, social status, and race, influence each step of this emotional sequence, including (a) automatic, defensive reaction to self-threat, (b) behavioral expressions of anger, and (c) biological health correlates of anger expression. I address these issues by taking a multi-method approach using behavioral, neural (event-related brain potentials), physiological (cardiovascular responses), and health outcomes (biomarkers of inflammation and cardiovascular risk). Finally, I discuss current research projects and raise future research questions that can refine our knowledge concerning how socio-cultural factors “get under the skin” to influence biological processes underlying emotional processing.

Tuesday, January 10, 2016 at 4pm
Refreshments served at 3:45
335 Shillman Hall