

CMST 3330 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies	Fall 2017
Section: 001/002	
Room: Lib 302	MWF: 11:30-12:20 pm

Instructor: Dr. Sidi Becar Meyara

Email: sidi.meyara@usu.edu

Office: Old Main 075

Office Hours: MWF 12:30 pm – 1:20 pm

Also available by appointment.

Most people are other people.

Oscar Wilde, British Novelist and Playwright

...we should learn about other people in other places, take an interest in their civilizations, their arguments, their errors, their achievements, not because that will bring us to agreement, but because it will help us get used to one another.

Kwame Anthony Appiah, Ghanaian philosopher

Course Information

Required Texts:

Hall, B. J. (2005). *Among Cultures: The Challenge of Communication* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

**Other required weekly readings will be available on the CANVAS site. Check the syllabus.

Course Objectives

In a world that has increasingly become interconnected, we are prone to come in contact with individuals/groups from different cultural backgrounds. While this provides the possibility for developing intercultural relationships, it has the potential for creating possibilities for misunderstanding and conflict. Throughout this course, we will learn about the role that culture plays in influencing our communication practices. Understanding the role culture plays will provide some insight into why we do the things we do as well as provide some new perspective into why others are the way they are. The goal of this class is to expose you to different theoretical issues of importance to intercultural communication. My hope is that this course will help you improve as intercultural communicators who appreciate cultural differences and are able to bridge them.

Course policies

Written Assignment Format. All written assignments will be in typed in 12 point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins on all sides of the document. No extra spacing should be added between paragraphs or before or after lines. Although this many seem stringent, it ensures that all students are playing on equal grounds.

Assignment due dates: Written Assignments must be completed, printed, and turned in by the end of class the day they are due.

Late papers will receive a 5-point deduction per 24 hours for up to 5 days after the due date (including weekends). No papers will be accepted beyond 5 days and will result in a zero on that assignment.

Missed Assignments. If you miss **any assignment** due date because of a documented illness or emergency situation, you **MUST** provide me with an official note (doctor, police, etc.) justifying why you were not able to make the due date. All notes must be accompanied by a contact number, as this number will be called to verify your illness or emergency.

Policy on Academic Honesty. I expect you to be honest. Any acts of plagiarism will be penalized according to the Student Code of Conduct (Article VI) in place by Utah State University. Please check the university's information online regarding their policies on academic honesty:

http://catalog.usu.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=96#Academic_Honesty

<http://www.usu.edu/student-services/studentcode/article6.cfm>

Disabilities

Disability Resource Center at Utah State University will work with students needing additional accommodations to academically succeed in this class. Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Room 101 of the University Inn, (435)797-2444 voice, (435)797-0740 TTY, (435)797-2444 VP, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact the DRC as early in the semester as possible.

24/7 Rule Regarding Assignment and Grade Discussions

You are encouraged to discuss assignments and course grades with me frequently to assess your progress throughout the semester and so we can discuss ways to achieve your goals in this course. In general, grades will not be discussed via email or phone. If you should have a question or complaint regarding a grade, please wait 24 hours before bringing it to my attention. After 24 hours, call or email me with a brief description of your concern. As a general approach, please review any assignment feedback in detail and prepare specific questions and concerns you have before our meeting. In essence, develop your argument before you set up the meeting. You must, however, address the issue within one week of receiving the grade/feedback. After one week, the issue is no longer open for discussion (this time will obviously be truncated for the end of semester assignments). This policy ensures that you think through the points you wish to make, review feedback against assignment criteria, and make improvements for future assignments.

Attendance

Regular attendance and participation is required. Especially due to the nature of this course, where group work is a central component, it is vital that you attend regularly. I understand that life happens, and so my policy is that each person can be allowed to miss two days without giving me excuses or reasons. Missing more than 2 days without a valid excuse will result in your grade being lowered one full letter grade for each additional absence. I excuse absences **ONLY** if they are for documented university sponsored travel or direct personal emergencies. It is your responsibility to provide documentation. Meetings for other classes, appointments with advisors, work excuses, catching rides home and many other personal reasons for missing class

are not considered “excused” absences. Any student missing more than 1/3 of the class periods for any reason will not be awarded a passing grade. I will assess attendance at the beginning of class, so please be on time. I will talk to you if you are repeatedly late to class.

Professionalism

Professionalism includes respecting others’ opinions, being respectful to those who are speaking during lectures and discussions. It also includes working together in a spirit of cooperation. This is an extremely interactive class, and it is important that we all respect one another, participate to the best of our abilities, and learn to feel comfortable with one another. I will not allow you to be disrespectful toward others.

A Note About Technology: Cellular phones and other electronics are not to be utilized during class time as they distract both the user and the rest of the class. Laptops are permitted for note taking and collaboration, so you should not have your laptop open unless it is time to take notes.

Class conduct

No student is permitted to create a threatening, intimidating, or harassing environment in this course. Classroom civility is a part of the Student Code, and infractions will be pursued through the Student Conduct Coordinator. This course will be conducted in a safe and tolerant environment, and any person who detracts from that environment will be first given a verbal warning about the behavior. If said behavior persists, the student will be asked to leave the class and will not be able to return until the case is settled to the satisfaction of the professor.

Course Requirements

1) Written Assignments. There will be two major writing assignments due this semester. Major assignments are due in class on their due date. Print and bring to class. No emailed papers are accepted unless discussed with me prior to submission.

Descriptions of the major writing assignments are provided in the Appendix at the bottom of this document and will be discussed in class.

2) Reflection Papers. You are required to complete five one-page, single-spaced, and typed reflection papers. In these papers, you will synthesize the readings for that week by discussing how they relate to one another and to concepts and theories discussed in this class. You are required to use concepts and theories from the class to help explain your evaluations and analyses. You may relate the readings and class concepts back to events and happenings you are exposed to in the real world, to personal experiences, or to information you have learned in other classes. Generally, and not always, reflections are due on Friday when we have discussion leadership assignments. However, you should always check the syllabus to make you are turning things on time.

Please note that reflection papers need to be printed and turned in person at the end of class on the scheduled days. Emailed reflections will not be accepted. You have to be in class to receive credit for the reflections. Also, note that you are not allowed to write a reflection on a day on which you are the discussion leader.

You are required to write 5 different reflections (again do not write a reflection on a day you are leading a discussion). Try to spread them out (write a week and skip a week) but make sure you

complete all 5 reflections by the end the of the semester. Again, please take into account that you have two discussion leadership days.
Everyone is required to write the first reflection.

3) Discussion Leadership: You will be required to serve as the discussion leader for two different occasions throughout this semester. You will lead your discussion on the readings for that week. These discussions should be lively and last between 30 – 35 minutes. You will lead the discussion in a group of 3 – 5 students. As a discussion leader, you will write a 1-2 paragraphs synthesizing the readings and highlighting the main arguments. On the same document, you will come up with a list of open-ended questions (5-6 questions to ask of your group) in order to help you lead a discussion.

On a different page, you will also need to create a discussion activity to do with your group and provide a full description of that activity. The activity should help student discuss the issues from the readings.

It is your job to keep the discussion going and your group members involved in the discussion. You will be graded based on your ability to concisely synthesize the materials, ask open-ended questions, and keep the discussion lively.

Please note what you write for your discussion leadership assignment does not count as your regular reflection papers. Also, note that a discussant does not dominate the conversation, but rather help students consider new perspectives and distinct ways of thinking about the subject matter.

4) Class participation. Because this is a 3000-level class, a high level of individual participation is expected of each student. As you cannot participate if you are not in class, regular attendance is therefore vital to your overall success in this course. Please arrive *on time* having already completed the assigned reading, ready to engage in our discussion of the materials.

Grading System

Major Assignments:

Assignment 1: Cultural Immersion	100 Points
Assignment 2: Reflecting on Cultural Identity	100 Points

Reflection Papers:

5 Reflection Papers @ 20 points each	100 Points
--------------------------------------	------------

Exams:

Midterm Exam:	50 Points
Final Exam:	50 Points

Other Evaluations:

Discussion Leadership 2 @ 30 points each	60 points
Participation	40 Points
Total:	500 points

The following grading scale will be used in the course:

A = 93%-100%	A- = 90%-92%	
B+ = 87%-89%	B = 83%-86%	B- = 80%-82%
C+ = 77%-79%	C = 73%-76%	C- = 70%-72%

D+ = 67%-69%

D = 63%-66%


D- = 60%-62%

Tentative Course Schedule

This schedule provides an outline for our time together this semester. The schedule is displayed by week and day below. **Please note that this schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion based on the flow and content of our interactions. **

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Due * On CANVAS	Assignments Due
1	Aug 28	Introduction to the Course		
	Aug 30 th	Difference Matters	*Allen- Difference Matters	
	Sept 1 st	Continued		
2	Sept 4 th	NO SCHOOL – LABOR DAY		
	Sept 6 th	Intercultural Communication	Textbook Ch.1	
	Sept 8 th			* Reflection Paper (Required of all)
3	Sept 11 th	Communication and Culture	Textbook Ch. 2 *American World View	
	Sept 13 th	Continued ... <i>Assign Paper # 1</i>		
	Sept 15 th			* Discussion Leadership * Reflection Paper
4	Sept 18 th	Learning and Adaptation	Textbook Ch. 3 *Wolf-Heart of Whiteness	
	Sept 20 th	Continued ...		
	Sept 22 nd			* Discussion Leadership * Reflection Paper
5	Sept 25 th	Culture and Identity	Textbook Ch. 4 * Trouble with third culture kids	
	Sept 27 th	Continued ...		
	Sept 29 th			* Discussion Leadership * Reflection Paper
6	Oct 2 nd	Verbal Communication	Textbook Ch. 5 *Ellis&Moaz-Cultural Codes	

	Oct 4 th	Continued ...		
	Oct 6 th			* Discussion Leadership * Reflection Paper
7	Oct 9 th	<i>Paper # 1 Full Draft Workshop</i>		
	Oct 11 th	Exam Review		<i>Paper # 2 Due</i>
	Oct 13 th	<u>MIDTERM EXAM</u>		
8	Oct 16 th	Nonverbal Communication	Textbook Ch. 6 *Bond-Emotions in China	
	Oct 18 th			* Discussion Leadership * Reflection Paper
	Oct 20 th	NO CLASS – FALL BREAK		
9	Oct 23 rd	PRESENTATIONS		
	Oct 25 th	PRESENTATIONS		
	Oct 27 th	PRESENTATIONS		
10	Oct 30 th	Intercultural Communication and Prejudice	Textbook Ch. 7 *Mheiri-Muslims	
	Nov 1 st	Continued ...		
	Nov 3 rd			* Discussion Leadership * Reflection Paper
11	Nov 6 th	Managing Conflict	Textbook Ch. 8 *Tutu-Truth and Reconciliation	
	Nov 8 th	Continued ... <i>Assign Paper # 2</i>		
	Nov 10 th			* Discussion Leadership * Reflection Paper
12	Nov 13 th	Travel and Adaptation	Textbook Ch. 9 *Christofi&Thompson-Reacculturation	
	Nov 15 th	Continued		
	Nov 17 th			* Discussion Leadership * Reflection Paper
13	Nov 20 th	Intercultural Communication and Diversity	Textbook Ch. 10 *Chen-Media, Globalization, and	

			communication	
	Nov 22 nd	Continued ...		
	Nov 24 th			* Discussion Leadership * Reflection Paper
14	Nov 27 th	Communication and Intercultural Competency	Textbook Ch. 11	
	Nov 29 th	Continued ...		
	Dec 1 st			* Discussion Leadership * Reflection Paper
15	Dec 4 th	<i>Paper # 2 Full Draft Workshop</i>		
	Dec 6 th	Putting Things in Context – the case of Mauritania		
	Dec 8 th	Final Exam Review		Paper # 2 Due
Final Exam	Dec 11 th	<u>Exam @ 11:30 am</u> 		

Final Exam: Monday, December 11th 11:30 am –1:20 p.m. Students are required to take the exam at the time and place allotted for the final exam. We do not allow anyone to take the final before or after the final exam period unless they have a conflicting final exam and it is determined that final for this class should move per the school policies.

Appendix A: Major Writing Assignments

****I am looking for clear, succinct, and well thought out papers. Follow the standard guidelines for writing a paper. Use APA 6th to cite references. All papers must be typed in Times Roman 12, be double-spaced, have a title page, and a separate reference page (when needed). You are allowed 5 proof errors in any given paper, after which a deduction of one point per error will apply****

I. Cultural Immersion: For this paper, I want you to find someone from a different cultural background. Over the course of three weeks, I want you to meet up with this person at least 3 times and conduct 30 – 45 min interviews to find out about their culture. During these interviews, you should ask them about cultural differences between their home country/ United States, their identity (how do they identify/see themselves? Why?), and their adaptation (how they have adapted to this new culture or not?), and the differences in verbal communication between here and their home countries. Feel free to ask them anything you would like, but your questions should be guided by the readings.

Interviews (20 points):

1. Meet the person and discuss their schedule to agree on meeting times. You should have a separate set of notes for every visit. You will attach the notes from your interviews to the final document that you turn in. Make sure you do not lose or misplace your notes from these interviews. This will negatively affect your grade.
2. This will be a formal paper with an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. Papers that are under five pages in length will be graded down.

Written Assignment (50 points):

3. You will begin descriptively by writing about the person you chose, the times you met, and your initial impressions. Tell us why you chose this person in particular and what you felt as you began your interviews with them. In this section, you will have a **thesis statement**, which will state the type of questions and the areas you focused on in your attempt to find out about this individual culture.
4. You will then move to the body of the paper in which you will detail the type of questions you asked and what you found about about this individual culture. **In this section, you explore in detail the differences and the similarities that exist between this individual's culture and your own as well as provide a clear and well-written account of how they see themselves, how they have adapted to this culture or not etc...**

Analysis and Closure (20 points):

5. In your concluding section, you will write out your ideas about this particular culture. This is the “meta-level” of your paper where you will explain and analyze the implications of your interviews. For example, you might want to tell us why this culture is the way it is? What are the implications of their cultural practices? How do they influence individual members of this culture? Others? Why is it useful to know about how this culture is different/similar? Why do you think these differences exist?

Presentation: (10 points)

In class, you will give a 5-minute presentation on the culture you explored. During this presentation, you will provide a brief overview of what you did and what you have learned about this culture highlighting some of the similarities/differences you discovered. This is supposed to be short but interesting presentation so that others interested in this culture or your work could follow-up with you.

II. Situating Your Cultural Identity/s: The purpose of this assignment is for you to reflect on your cultural identity in relation to materials learned throughout this course. For this paper, you are asked to choose and reflect on 3 different aspects of your own culture (Ex: Verbal communication, Conflict Management Strategies, Understanding of Prejudice etc....) and discuss them thoroughly in relation to materials learned in this course and other cultural practices you encountered in our readings. In doing so, you are trying to highlight how this course has helped you reflect on these aspects of your cultural identity.

In your introduction, you will lay out the different aspects you wish to reflect on and highlight the different concepts you intend to incorporate in your discussions of them.

In the body of your paper, you will discuss the 3 different aspects thoroughly in relations to materials from the readings highlighting how the course has helped you understand them better. Also, you will apply a minimum of *four concepts* (bold these within your paper for clarity) learned in this class to your own experiences. You must provide ample evidence that you understand these concepts and that they are a good fit with the context you described.

The conclusion should sum up the paper and highlight your views about the importance of understanding one's own cultural practices.

The paper must have the following sections:

- 1) Introduction of the paper, (10 points)
- 2) Discussing 3 aspects of cultural identity in relation to course materials and other cultures encountered throughout the course? (60 points)
- 3) Applying four concepts or theories to analyze and make sense of the salient or important cultural identities, and (20 points)
- 4) Conclusion. (10 points)

The paper must be five double-spaced pages in length with smooth transitions between the introduction, the foci of your paper, the concepts, and the conclusion. The concepts can be discussed “**anywhere you see fit**” in the paper but make sure that I can find them—you may consider using **bold** to highlight the concepts from the readings the first time you use them (no need to bold each concept more than once).