

# Communication Studies 3330--Intercultural Communication

## General Information:

Instructor: Dr. John S. Seiter

Office: Main 308

Office Hours: Wednesday 9:30-11:30 and by appointment

Office Phone: 797-0138

Department Office is in Main 204 (to drop off mail): 797-1209

email: john.seiter@usu.edu

Class Meets: 9-10:15 T/H Main 201

Course Text: Hall, B. J. (2005). *Among Cultures: The Challenge of Communication* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

## Course Objectives:

The major objective of this course is to provide you with an overview of the study of communication and culture. Specific course objectives include increasing your:

- 1) understanding of how culture influences communication and, in turn, how communication shapes culture;
- 2) ability to explain cultural differences in communication;
- 3) understanding of cultural issues that affect communication effectiveness;
- 4) ability to determine when cultural issues are influencing the development of interpersonal relationships;
- 5) knowledge of ethical issues in communicating with someone from another culture;
- 6) understanding of the role of communication in intercultural adaptation; and
- 7) knowledge of how to transcend cultural and ethnic differences to build "community."

## Initial Expectations:

I hope you will take responsibility for what you learn from the course and attempt to make the course as relevant as possible to you personally. This course is geared to create an awareness of cultural influences, differences and communication patterns. It is only the first step in becoming an interculturally competent person. I hope you will attempt to integrate what you learn from lectures, discussions, and readings with your "real life" experiences.

## Graded Assignments:

1. Two midterm exams that will consist of true/false, multiple choice, and essay questions. These exams will be worth 50 points each. Please bring a blue book.

2. One final exam that will be cumulative. This exam will be worth 75 points. Please bring a blue book
3. Interaction or culture report (15 points).  
Options:
  - a. Interaction report: This necessitates several hours of interaction with a person from a culture distinctly different from your own. Your interaction time will be built around three activities. First, you both will participate in a ritual of the other person's culture (e.g., a wedding, funeral, festive occasion, etc.). Second, you will participate in a culturally relevant skill (e.g., learning an art, craft, how to cook, etc.). Third, you will interview your partner to gain insight into his/her culture. Finally, you will turn in a 3-5 page paper (typed and double-spaced, APA format) that describes this interaction.
  - b. Culture report: This project requires you to research a culture distinct from the one you examine in your group report. Read up on the culture and describe its communication pattern in a 3-5 page paper (typed and double-spaced, APA format).
4. Term paper (3-5 double-spaced, APA format) dealing with a communication concept relevant to the class. To complete the paper, you will read at least 4 references while adding your own insights. You should talk about implications of the research and what types of research might be done in the future (25 points).
5. Seminars/Group projects--groups will specialize in the communication of a specific cultural group. The culture you pick must be distinct from your own culture. Each group will review literature on the culture, investigate artifacts, rituals, values etc. of the culture and present their findings to the class in a lively, entertaining seminar. Handouts are encouraged. (25 points [I will evaluate you {20 points} and your colleagues will evaluate you {5 points} on your performance]).
6. Participation-- Participation. Participation, I suspect, is often confused with talking a lot in class. While I do hope you will be prepared to ask and answer questions, provide thoughtful commentary, and engage in meaningful discussions, I hope you'll also realize that participation sometimes means monitoring your own "talking time" in a way that allows and helps others become involved as well. You may miss up to 2 class meetings, for any reason, without penalty. Additional absences will hurt your grade.

## **Grading Policy**

Total points possible=250

Grades will be assigned according to the following distribution of total course points: 0-59%=F; 60-62%=D-; 63-66%=D; 67-69%=D+; 70-72%=C-; 73-76%=C; 77-79%=C+; 80-82%=B-; 83-86%=B; 87-89%=B+; 90-92%=A-; 93-100%=A.

## **General Policies**

1. **Deadlines:** All assignments will be announced sufficiently in advance to allow for thorough preparation and timely completion. All assignments must be turned in ON or BEFORE the due dates. Late assignments will be accepted for full credit only where serious, compelling and verifiable cause can be shown--such determination to be made by the instructor. Late assignments will be penalized severely.

2. **Make-up exams** are usually not an option. A make up exam must be arranged before the test date. Be prepared to document your excuse.

3. **Attendance:** A student may miss up to two class meeting without penalty. Additional absences may result in a reduction of your grade. Absences do not excuse you from assignments due on the date of your absences.

4. **Writing style:** All written assignments should be typed, double-spaced and proof-read for errors. You should pay proper homage to syntax and grammar. A complete reference must be provided whenever you refer to the words, ideas, statistics or other information provided by an author. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism.

5. **Academic Integrity policy:** The department is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and academic excellence. Any student found guilty of plagiarism, fabrication, cheating on exams or purchasing of papers or other assignments will receive a failing grade in the course.

6. Electronic copies of assignments will not be accepted.

7. 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. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice.

## **TENTATIVE SCHEDULE**

1/12: Introduction to the course.

1/14, 1/19, 1/21, 1/26: Nature and definitions of communication and culture. Ch 1 (pp 1-11 and pp. 16-23).

1/28; 2/2, 2/4: Values and Other Cultural Differences/Similarities (religion). Ch2, Ch 3 pp 85-94).

2/9: Identity. Ch 4.

2/11: Midterm prep.

2/16: Attend Monday Classes

2/18: **Midterm**

2/23, 2/25, 3/1, 3/3: Perception. Ch 1 (pp. 11-16), 7

3/8, 3/10: Spring Break.

3/15, 3/17: Verbal comm. Ch 5. **Interaction/culture report due.**(on 28<sup>th</sup>)

3/22, 3/24: Nonverbal communication. Ch 6

3/29, 3/31: Midterm prep

4/5: **Midterm**

4/7: Transitional experiences Ch 9.

4/12, 14: **Seminars**

4/19, 4/21, 4/26: Transitional experiences continued Ch 9. ICC relationships and effectiveness Ch 8, 11. Wrap up. **Papers due.**

4/28: Exam prep

5/5: **Final exam** 9:30-11:20