

## CMST 3330 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Department of Languages, Philosophy, and Communication Studies  
Section: 006  
Room: Main 203

SPRING 2019

MWF: 12:30-1:20 PM

**Instructor:** Dr. Sidi Becar Meyara

**Email:** [sidi.meyara@usu.edu](mailto:sidi.meyara@usu.edu)

**Office:** Lundberg 202

**Office Hours:** MW: 9:30AM –  
10:20AM & 11:30 – 12:20 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

### **Required Texts:**

Hall, B. J., Covarrubias, P. O., & Kirschbaum, K. A. (2018). *Among cultures: The challenge of communication* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

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

### **Course Description/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.

### **Late Work/Missed Assignments:**

- Late work will not be accepted unless a valid reason is provided. When accepted, you may 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.
- 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.

### **Special Needs and Accommodations**

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 and Participation**

You are required to attend class and participate in different activities with your peers. Failure to miss class with greatly affect your participation grade for both the class and group. You have two excused absences that you can use for family emergencies. Any subsequent absences will result in lowering your participation grade 4 points (this will come your class participation). You will receive a ZERO = for anything done in your absence unless your absence is excused (a result of a documented illness or a university sponsored travel).

### **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.

**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.
- 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.

**Course Requirements:** *All assignments are due through canvas by 11:59 PM on their due date.*

1) Major Assignments: There will be **TWO** major assignments due this semester.

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

2) Thought Essays: You are required to complete **FIVE** one-page, single-spaced, and typed thought essays. 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. A description of this assignment is found on canvas.

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. A description of the assignment is found on canvas.

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 that what you write for your discussion leadership assignment does not count as your regular thought essays.

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.

5) *Quizzes and Exams*: You are required to come to class prepared, having read the materials. You will take 9 quizzes over the course of the semester. I will only count your 8 highest scores. You should expect to take a quiz on a Monday or a Wednesday of each week. These are not pop-up quizzes since you know you should expect them every week we have materials to read. You cannot make up a quiz unless you have a valid excuse.

You will take 2 exams this semester. Both exams will cover assigned readings and lectures. Early exams or make-up exams will rarely be given, and only to students who have unavoidable conflicts—that can be documented—with the exam time. The exams will consist of multiple-choice and short-answer questions.

### Grading System

#### *Major Written Assignments:*

Cultural Identity Paper 100 Points

#### *Thought Essays:*

5 Thought Essays @ 20 points each 100 Points

#### *Exams:*

9 quizzes @ 10 points each 80 points

Midterm : 80 Points

Final 80 Points

*Discussion Leadership 2 @ 30 points each* 60 points

*Participation* 40 Points

**Total: 540 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%

## Appendix A: Major Written Assignments

**\*\*I am looking for clear, succinct, and well thought out papers. Follow the standard guidelines for writing a paper. Use APA 6<sup>th</sup> 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).**

**I. Cultural Identity Paper:** 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 themes (Ex: Verbal communication, Conflict Management Strategies, Understanding of Prejudice etc...) and discuss them in relation to your culture. 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 themes 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 themes thoroughly in relation to your culture. For example, if you choose to focus on *narratives* as one of your themes, you will highlight how narratives are used in your culture (focusing on narratives you are familiar with) to teach individuals about who they/their cultural heritage.

Also, you will apply a minimum of 8 *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 regarding the importance of understanding one's own cultural practices/how such a reflection has the potential to help improve your intercultural communication skills.

The paper must have the following sections:

- 1) Introduction of the paper, (10 points).
- 2) Discussing 3 aspects of cultural identity focusing on examples from your life/your culture (60 points).
- 3) Applying four concepts or theories to analyze and make sense of the salient or important cultural identities (20 points).
- 4) A concluding paragraph in which you highlight the importance of reflecting on these cultural identities and how this reflection can help you become a better intercultural communicator (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 the first time you use them (no need to bold each concept more than once). **Make sure you cite the readings appropriately.**

### 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. \*\*

Week	Date	Topic	Reading Due * On CANVAS	Assignments Due
1	Jan 7 <sup>th</sup>	Introduction to the Course		
	Jan 9 <sup>th</sup>	Difference Matters	*Allen- Difference Matters	
	Jan 11 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Continued ...</i> Assign Thought Essays		
2	Jan 14 <sup>th</sup>	Intercultural Communication	Textbook Ch.1	
	Jan 16 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Continued ...</i>		
	Jan 18 <sup>th</sup>	Assign Cultural Identity Paper/Schedule Discussions		<i>*Thought Essay #1</i>
3	Jan 21 <sup>st</sup>		<b>NO CLASS – MLK DAY</b>	
	Jan 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Communication and Culture	Textbook Ch. 2 *American Worldviews	
	Jan 25 <sup>th</sup>			*Discussion Leadership
4	Jan 28 <sup>th</sup>	Learning and Adaptation	Textbook Ch. 3 *Wolf-Heart of Whiteness	
	Jan 30 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Continued ...</i>		
	Feb 1 <sup>st</sup>			*Discussion Leadership <i>*Thought Essay #2</i>
5	Feb 4 <sup>th</sup>	Culture and Identity	Textbook Ch. 4 *Third Culture Kids	
	Feb 6 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Continued ...</i>		
	Feb 8 <sup>th</sup>			*Discussion Leadership

6	Feb 11 <sup>th</sup>	Verbal Communication	Textbook Ch. 5 *Ellis&Moaz – Cultural Codes	
	Feb 13 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Continued ...</i>		
	Feb 15 <sup>th</sup>			*Discussion Leadership
7	Feb 18 <sup>th</sup>		<b>NO CLASS - PRESIDENT DAY</b>	
	Feb 20 <sup>th</sup>	MIDTERM REVIEW		
	Feb 22 <sup>nd</sup>		<b><i>NO CLASS – WESTERN STATES CONFERENCE</i></b>	
8	Feb 25 <sup>th</sup>		<b><i>NO CLASS – WESTERN STATES CONFERENCE</i></b>	
	Feb 27 <sup>th</sup>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b>		
	Mar 1 <sup>st</sup>	Nonverbal Communication	Textbook Ch. 6 *Bond-Emotions in China	
9	Mar 4 <sup>th</sup>	Stereotypes, Ethnocentrism and Prejudice	Textbook Ch. 7 *Mheiri-Muslims & Stereotypes	
	Mar 6 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Continued ...</i>		*Discussion Leadership
	Mar 8 <sup>th</sup>			CI Paper Outline *Thought Essay #3
10	Mar 11 <sup>th</sup>		<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
	Mar 13 <sup>th</sup>		<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
	Mar 15 <sup>th</sup>		<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
11	Mar 18 <sup>th</sup>	Managing Conflict	Textbook Ch. 8 *Tutu – Truth/Reconciliation	
	Mar 20 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Continued ...</i>		
	Mar 22 <sup>nd</sup>			*Discussion Leadership

12	Mar 25 <sup>th</sup>	Travel and Adaptation	Textbook Ch. 9 *Christofi & Thompson – Re-acculturation	
	Mar 27 <sup>th</sup>	<i>Continued ...</i>		
	Mar 29 <sup>th</sup>			*Discussion Leadership *Thought Essay #4
13	Apr 1 <sup>st</sup>	Culture and Applied Context	Textbook Ch. 10	
	Apr 3 <sup>rd</sup>		<b>NO CLASS – CENTRAL STATES CONFERENCE</b>	
	Apr 5 <sup>th</sup>		<b>NO CLASS – CENTRAL STATES CONFERENCE</b>	
14	Apr 8 <sup>th</sup>	Intercultural Communication and Diversity	Textbook Ch. 11 *Chen-Media, Globalization, and communication	
	Apr 10 <sup>th</sup>		<i>Continued ...</i>	*Thought Essay #5
	Apr 12 <sup>th</sup>		<i>Continued ...</i> Work on CI Paper	
15	Apr 15 <sup>th</sup>	Cultural Identity Paper Workshop		<i>Cultural Identity Paper</i>
	Apr 17 <sup>th</sup>	Communication and Intercultural Competency	Textbook Ch. 12	
	Apr 19 <sup>th</sup>			*Discussion Leadership
16	Apr 22 <sup>nd</sup>	FINAL REVIEW		
	Apr 24 <sup>th</sup>	FINAL REMARKS	A DAY ON MAURITANIA	

*Final Exam: Wednesday, May 1st at 12:30 PM*