

**Name of Activity or Assignment: Cultural Identity Forum**  
**Name of Course: Intercultural Communication**  
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**I.LOC:**

**LOC #2: Employ communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts**

1. Explain communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts
2. Apply communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts

**LOC #4: Create messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context.**

1. Select creative and appropriate modalities and technologies to accomplish communicative goals
2. Critically reflect on one's own messages after the communication event

**LOC #9: Utilize communication to embrace difference**

1. Articulate a connection between communication and culture
2. Appreciate individual and cultural similarities and differences
3. Articulate one's own cultural standpoint and how it affects communication and worldview
4. Demonstrate the ability to be culturally self-aware

**II. Length of Assignment:** This assignment takes three-four weeks to complete. I typically assign the assignment in the fourth week of the semester; the creative project is due in week six and the reflection paper is due the beginning of week seven.

**III. Materials Needed:** Students will need computer access to complete the reflective paper. The materials needed for the creative project will vary based upon the students' level of creativity and technological skills.

**IV. Instructions:**

The cultural identity forum project includes two parts: Creative Project (10% of grade) and a Reflection Paper (10% of grade)

**Creative Project:** You will produce a photo collage, video, or other visual/multi-media piece in which you explore your own cultural identity. This project is reflexive and should draw your personal experience as well as your cultural understanding of your identity. Additionally,

your approach to the project should reflect a particular approach to understanding identity & culture (e.g., social science; interpretative; or critical approach).

Projects will be displayed to your classmates in a discussion forum. Once projects are posted you will be asked to view others' projects and complete a reflection prompt.

**Reflection Paper:** You will need to provide a 3-4 page (typed double spaced) paper detailing how your project demonstrates your identity, factors that influence your identity, communication practices you engage in that reflect/build your identity; and a broad theoretical approach that frames your project. Some questions to help you consider each of these concepts:

- How do you define your identity? What role do race, gender, ethnicity, orientation, geographic region, groups you belong to etc. play in this definition?
- What factors influenced your identity development? Consider the influence of parents, grandparents, other family, communities, education experiences, religion, race, ethnicity, gender, ancestors, etc.
- What are some of the communication practices that reflect your cultural identity? How do you express your cultural identity in your nonverbal and verbal communication behaviors?
- Which theoretical approach did you select and how does your project demonstrate that approach? Be sure to explain the approach and provide specific examples from your project that demonstrates characteristics of the approach.

One of the most challenging aspects of this assignment is selecting a theoretical approach please keep in mind the following:

- Social Science: Identity created by self (by relating to groups. Emphasizes individualized, familial, and spiritual self.
- Interpretative: Identity formed through communication with others. Emphasizes avowal and ascribed dimensions.
- Critical: Identity shaped through social, historical forces. Emphasizes contexts and resisting ascribed identity.

#### **V. Rubric or Scoring Guide:**

**Creative Project:** Due to the variation in the projects developed the evaluation criteria is applied holistically in three areas:

Cultural artifacts included represent and explore cultural identities (40 points)

Creativity of the project in the development of the visual/multi-media piece (40 points)

Reflection of a particular approach to understanding identity & cultural (e.g., social science, interpretative, or critical approach (20 points)

The creative project primarily fulfills LOC #4. The bulk of the grading is on the selection of cultural artifacts that explore their cultural identities and selecting a creative approach to the development of the visual/multi-media piece.

Reflection Paper: Each area of the rubric includes a number range for a total of 100 points.

	Mastery (17-20)	Proficient (14-16)	Developing (11-13)
Define Identity and Factors that Influence Identity (LOC #9-3)	Clearly identified specific aspects of cultural identity and elaborated upon their importance; discussed multiple influences on identity development	Specific aspects of cultural identity were discussed, but were not discussed in depth; Only discussed a few influences on identity development or did not develop discussion of influences provided.	Personal identity characteristics rather than cultural identity characteristics were identified; Did not clearly identify influences beyond immediate family. Did not acknowledge the broader social influences on cultural identity
Communication Practices (LOC #9- 1 & 3)	Identified specific nonverbal and verbal communication practices that relate to the cultural identities explored in the project	Only discussed a few nonverbal and verbal communication practices. Description was vague or did not specific relate to cultural identities	Did not clearly identify communication practices. Unclear understanding between communication practices and cultural identity.
Theoretical Approach (LOC #2- 1 & 2)	Identified a clear theoretical approach, explained the approach correctly, and materials provided in the project reflect the theoretical approach appropriately.	Identified a clear theoretical approach, but may not have explained the approach currently or the materials provided in the project did not clearly reflect the theoretical approach.	Theoretical approach was muddled and unclear. Approach was not explained clearly and the materials provided did not clearly reflect the theoretical approach.
Reflexivity/ Cultural Awareness (LOC #9- 4)	Articulates a level of self-awareness of own cultural positionality and bias beyond the provided writing prompts	Identifies own cultural positionality and bias, but lacks depth and expansion beyond writing prompts provided	Shows minimal level of self-awareness beyond the writing prompts provided
Writing (LOC #4-2)	Mastery of standard application of rules of English, limited writing rule violations,	Average application of rules of English, some rule violations at times distracting but does	Application of rules of English, multiple rule violations, distracting and detracts from the

	however these do not detract from the overall paper	not hurt the overall readability of the paper	overall readability and clarity of the paper
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**VI. Notes:**

The importance of the project comes during the reflection paper. Students have the opportunity to explore others projects before they have to write their paper for this assignment. Exploring those other projects allows them to think more clearly how to articulate to others what they were trying to accomplish in the project. To help them explore other projects I ask them to complete a reflection prompt (I use journals in the course and this prompt is just incorporated into those points).

Please explore your fellow students’ projects. Please answer the questions prompted below in your journal.

1. Select a project that you found to be the most creative or intriguing. Whose project? How does this project reflect cultural identity? What about the project did you find to be creative or intriguing?

2. Select a project that represents a cultural identity that is different than yours. Whose project? How does the project reflect cultural identity? What did you learn from this project about a cultural identity that is different from your own?

Finally, this project is specific designed for a course that explores three theoretical approaches to understanding intercultural communication as articulated by Martin and Nakayama (2013). Anderson-Lain (2017) explores this connection in depth and may be useful for adopting this assignment. If the theoretical approach is removed from the design of the assignment please note that LOC #2 would no longer apply.

**VII. References:**

Anderson-Lain, K. (2017). Cultural identity forum: Enacting the self-awareness imperative in intercultural communication, *Communication Teacher*, 31, 131-136.

doi:10.1080/17404622.2017.1314529

Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2013). *Intercultural communication in contexts* (6th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.