

CM 655: Intercultural Communication
Spring 2021
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Required Materials:

Case Studies, Journal Articles and Other Readings as noted on the syllabus and posted to CANVAS

Course Description: This graduate course explores the complex and dynamic relationship between communication and culture. The Readings will provide a theoretical and practical application approach to examining significant similarities and distinctions between and among cultures from both macro and micro cultural perspectives, giving particular attention to how verbal and nonverbal communication moderates our cultural practices and interactions.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Define intercultural communication and identify, describe, and explain the cultural context and its impact on intercultural communication
2. Compare and contrast verbal and nonverbal communication styles and patterns of various cultures
3. Identify and describe the factors that affect the development of relationships across cultures
4. Apply cultural theory and research through written and oral assessments
5. Develop a higher level of intercultural competency

National Communication Association Learning Outcomes in Communication (LOCs):

LOC #8: Utilize Communication to Embrace Difference

- Articulate the connection between communication and culture
- Recognize individual and cultural similarities and differences
- Appreciate individual and cultural similarities and differences
- Respect diverse perspectives and the ways they influence communication
- Articulate one's own cultural standpoint and how it affects communication and world view
- Demonstrate the ability to be culturally self-aware
- Adapt one's communication in diverse cultural contexts

Course Requirements: Below is a brief description of each assignment. More detail will be provided about each assignment closer to the due dates. Each assignment is worth the specified number of points, for a total of 800 points.

Case Study Facilitation. To acquire a practical application perspective of how communication and culture impact our lived experiences, we will read and dissect a mix of case studies. You will select a specific case study from the list provided to you to facilitate on its assigned date. You should not only provide a brief overview of the case study to the class, but address how it is applicable to the topic at hand, which is underlined on the Course Schedule, and explain its

legitimacy to our understanding of intercultural communication. You will be required to engage the class on the case study's content, along with providing at least five additional outside sources specific to the case study's content. (100 points)

Intercultural Policy Reaction Paper. Many policies, court cases, amendments, etc., have occurred in an effort to achieve cultural equality for underrepresented groups. You will choose one of these cases and write a reaction paper that spells out the backstory, results, and cultural implications of the policy. This assignment will culminate with a brief overview of your paper to our class (100 points).

Visual/Multi-Media Presentation of Microculture. Microcultures are identifiable groups within a dominant cultural milieu. You will choose a microculture to explore in depth through research. Based on your research, you will create a photo collage, website, video, or other visual/multi-media piece about the microculture. While you are not expected to be technological experts, you should use some form of audio/visual sensory stimulation that will inform a lay audience of your chosen microculture. You will also present an oral presentation of your creative work. (100 points)

Research Project: You will choose a topic related to the intersections of culture and communication. You will turn in a series of separately graded assignments throughout the semester: 1) 1-2 page proposal; 2) annotated bibliography; 3) literature review; 4) draft; and 5) final paper. Your final paper should reflect intense theory, sound methodology, clear research findings, and the pertinent parts of a complete journal article. (450 points)

Class Participation/Discussions: Students should engage in meaningful class discussions after reading the assigned readings. This also includes attendance, homework, and the breadth and depth of insightful discussion provided (50 points).

Course Schedule

| Week # | Topic | Readings/Assignments |
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| Week 1 | <u>Course Introduction</u> Syllabus Overview of Culture and Communication | READ: "Six Fundamental Patterns of Cultural Differences" |
| Week 2 | <u>Microcultural Groups</u> <i>Discuss Facilitation Assignment</i> <i>Discuss Research Project Proposal</i> | READ: "The Microcultural Context" READ: "Microcultural Differences and Perceived Ethical Problems" |
| Week 3 | <u>Navigating Cultural Differences: Individualism/Collectivism, Power & Context</u> <i>Discuss Intercultural Policy Reaction Paper Assignment</i> | READ: "Individualism-Collectivism" READ: "Sister Wives" READ: "The Bosnian Driver" Research Proposals Due with In-class Discussion |

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| Week 4 | <u>Culture, Communication, and the Workplace</u> <i>Discuss Annotated Bibliography</i> | READ: "When Work & Culture Conflict" READ: "Organizational Culture Affects Employees' Vulnerability" READ: "Security Issues" READ: "Contempt for Educators" |
| Week 5 | <u>Intercultural Policy Making</u> <i>Discuss Literature Reviews</i> | Intercultural Policy Reaction Papers Due with Oral Presentations |
| Week 6 | <u>Verbal and Nonverbal Communication of Intercultural Dynamics</u> | Annotated Bibliographies Due READ: "The Navajo Code" READ: "Cultural Difference in Body Language" READ: "The Dialectical Tension of Dressing too Manly or Provocative at Work" READ: "Personal Pronouns and Why they Matter" |
| Week 7 | <u>Intersectionality</u> Guest Speaker to Address Intersectionality, Otherness, and Negotiating Multiple Identity Markers | READ: "Intersectional Othering" READ: "Interlocking Systems of Oppression and Privilege" READ: "'You Intimidate Me' as a Microaggressive Controlling Image to Discipline Womyn of Color" |
| Week 8 | <u>Race, Racism, and Colorism</u> | READ: "Exploring Parental Approval and Disapproval for Black and White Interracial Couples" READ: "Mildred and Richard" READ: "For all the (dark skinned black) girls who think they're too nice" READ: "Skepticism in Black, Latino Communities about COVID-19 Vaccines" |
| Week 9 | <u>Gender, Sex, Sexism</u> <i>Discuss Visual/Multi-Media Presentation of Microculture</i> | Literature Review Due READ: "Rigged System" READ: "Perceptions of Attractiveness" READ: "A Woman of Color as Vice President" READ: "Should Women Change their Last Names?" |
| Week 10 | <u>Privilege and Oppression</u> | READ: "The College Admission Scandal" READ: "Privilege, Oppression and the Binary Politics of Positionality" READ: "Explorations in Privilege, Oppression and Diversity" View and Discuss Privilege Video |

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| Week 11 | <u>Visual/Multi-Media Presentations of Microcultures</u> | Microculture Visual/Multi-Media Assignment with Presentation Due |
| Week 12 | <u>Family and Culture</u> Discuss Writing Completed Research Paper Draft | READ: : “You Don’t Know What You Don’t Know’: Mitigating Uncertainty in Transracial Adoption” READ: “Is Transracial Adoption Harmful to Kids” READ: “A Case of Mixed Religion Marriage” READ: “When my Korean Mother-in-Law Moved in” |
| Week 13 | <u>Independent Work on Research Paper Draft</u> | N/A |
| Week 14 | <u>Identity, Acculturation, Culture Shock, and Intercultural Competence</u> | Research Paper Draft Due READ: “Acculturation, Culture Shock, and Intercultural Competence” READ: “17 Stories of Culture Shock from Travelers” READ: Identity Crisis/Flight and Return” READ: “Challenges of Reverse Culture Shock” |
| Week 15 | <u>Independent Work on Research Paper and Oral Preparation</u> | Revise Research Papers |
| Week 16 | <u>Intercultural Communication Research</u> | Final Research Papers Due with Oral Presentations |