Intercultural Communication

COMM 3410 - 002 Fall 2017
MWF 1-1:50 PM CLRE 211

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Email: bingjuan.xiong@colorado.edu
Office hours: Monday/Wednesday 10-11am & by appointment

Course Description

This course invites you to explore intercultural communication within the broader political, economic, and cultural context of globalization. We will survey approaches to intercultural communication that treat globalization, power, and history as equally important in shaping our intercultural experiences in the 21st century. In this class, we will not only examine different cultural ways of thinking, being, and communicating, but also learn about ourselves –how we are shaped by culture, positions of power, and communicative practices of inclusion and exclusion. This course will provide you an understanding of the intellectual and practical aspects of engaging in intercultural encounters, such as processes of language use, processes of cultural transition and adaptation, conflict, power, and identity. I hope that by the end of this course you yourself will be prepared to discover the rules, the potential pitfalls, and the beauty of engaging particular cultural others in this globalized world.

Required Course Materials

Textbook (Available from the CU Bookstore)

Additional Readings (Available on D2L)


### Course Assignments

**Exams – 360 points**

There will be two exams (midterm-180 points and final exam-180 points) throughout the semester. Both exams will be based on course readings and lecture materials. Exam questions include multiple choice questions, matching, T/F, and short essays.

**Rich Point Project – 380 points**

In this course we will cultivate a view of intercultural communication as a practical exercise. In order to get a feel for the practical aspect of intercultural communication, I will ask you to make sense of a “rich point” (i.e., a moment of experiencing deep confusing and rich meaningfulness when confronted with a strange cultural practice). You will select an example of communicative conduct in the United States or elsewhere that tends to confuse you. You will identify the relevant speech community, observe occurrences of the confusing conduct, read relevant research, and write two drafts of a final paper in which you report your findings about the significance of this conduct to those who regularly use it.

This project will consist of five parts:

**Part 1:** Description of rich points (40 points)

**Part 2:** Identifying relevant communicative conduct, speech community (40 points)

**Part 3:** Observation and library research (100 points)

**Part 4:** First draft of final paper (150 points)

**Part 5:** Revised final paper (50 points)

Specific instructions about these assignments will be available on D2L.

**Reading Quizzes – 80 points**

Throughout the semester we will have a total of four reading quizzes. These quizzes can only be taken online (on our D2L course site) within a specific time slot, open book and open note. Each quiz will consist of short essay questions based on prior week’s readings, and will be worth 20 points.

**Group Presentation – 100 points**

This assignment asks you to work together in groups of 5 to present on course-related topics provided by me. First your group will get together and select the topic you’re interested in presenting, then you will be given specific instructions about how to prepare and deliver your presentation. All members are expected
to make the same amount of contribution toward the completion of this assignment, thus all members of
the group will receive the same amount of points. Specific instructions will be available on D2L.

Class Participation – 80 points
Your class participation grade is evaluated based on your class attendance and your contribution to class
discussions throughout the semester. Do not be afraid to ask questions. Questions about the material,
assignments, and why we are doing certain things in class are encouraged. If you speak up frequently and
make thoughtful, relevant contributions, you will be eligible for up to 10 points extra credit. Anyone
who has more than 2 unexcused absences (being late or leaving early = ½ class) will receive an
attendance penalty (3 points per class) deducted from participation points.

* If you have to miss class for an extended period of time, please talk to me.

Course Evaluation

You can earn a total of 1000 points on all of the above assignments.

Scores (expressed here as percentages) translate into letter grades as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92.50-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>89.50-92.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87.50-89.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82.50-87.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>79.50-82.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77.50-79.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>72.50-77.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>69.50-72.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67.50-69.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>62.50-67.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>59.50-62.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59.49 or below</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please note: The grading scheme used here already enables “rounding up.” For example, a B- letter grade
would normally begin at 83.00%, but it begins here at 82.50%. For this reason, this accommodation will
be automatically extended to all cases that qualify. Scores that have not achieved one of these thresholds
will not be considered for rounding up.

Course Requirements & Guidelines

1) Consistent attendance will help you to succeed in this class. Unexcused absences will negatively
affect your class participation grade, and probably your overall performance too. Please note that excused
absences will be granted ONLY:
a) If the student is required to attend an officially sanctioned athletic event as a participant and
   notifies me in advance.
b) In cases of a religious observance where I am notified in advance.
c) In cases of documented serious illness.
d) In cases of a documented family emergency.

e) In cases of a documented legal obligation that cannot be adjusted (e.g. court appearances)

Please be aware that airline reservations made for personal travel do not constitute an excused absence.

2) Completing reading and written assignments on time will help you to succeed. Being prepared for class will help you and others to learn. You should bring a personal copy of reading assignment (electronic or print) to class on the day when it will be discussed.

Submit all papers as electronic files (doc. or docx.) to Drop Box on our course D2L site. Paper assignments will be released and discussed well in advance of their due date. I accept late submission of assignments, but I will take 5 points off for each class day your assignment is late.

3) Actively and constructively participating in class discussion will help you to succeed. The more you share (relevantly and constructively) and the more you value your peers, the better this class will be. Let us work together to create an enjoyable and rich learning environment for everybody.

4) Taking responsibility for your learning will help you to succeed. Please be aware that you are responsible for taking notes during class. The PowerPoint slides presented in class only provide an outline of the topics discussed, and do not include all exam materials (i.e. examples from the textbook & readings, in-class discussions, etc.). If you miss a class, you are responsible for acquiring the material from another student.

A note on grading: Grades on particular assignments are not generally negotiable and are unlikely to be changed, with few exceptions. Grading rubrics will be made available to you before assignment due dates, and you are responsible for seeking assistance (e.g., making an appointment during my office hours) if there is anything you do not understand. You will not be given extra opportunities to raise a grade which other students in the class do not get, for example, re-submitting or adding to an assignment in the hopes of getting a higher grade, as this is unfair to the rest of the class.

5) Reducing distractions will help you to succeed. A March 25, 2008 article in the New York Times summarized recent studies of productivity in business settings. Researchers found that after responding to email or text messages, it took people more than 15 minutes to re-focus on the “serious mental tasks” they had been performing before the interruption. Hidden behind all the hype about multi-tasking, then, is this sad truth: it makes you slower and dumber. For this reason alone you should seek to avoid the problem of divided attention when you are in class. Thus, please put away your computer and turn off your cellphone (or set them in a silent mode). If you need to use your laptop for learning purposes (i.e. taking notes), please talk to me in advance.

Department and University Services and Polices

Classroom Behavior
Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Class rosters are provided to me with the student's legal name. I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate name or gender pronoun. Please advise me of this preference early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records. For more information, see the policies on classroom behavior and the Student Code of Conduct.
Accommodation for Disabilities
If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit your accommodation letter from Disability Services to me in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities in the academic environment. Information on requesting accommodations is located on the Disability Services website (www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices/students). Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or dsinfo@colorado.edu for further assistance. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions under the Students tab on the Disability Services website and discuss your needs with me.

Religious Holidays
Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, I will make reasonable accommodations (e.g., regarding the completion of assignments) for all students who have conflicts created by religious observance dates. Please approach me with these requests early in the semester.

See the campus policy regarding religious observances for full details.

Sexual Misconduct, Discrimination, Harassment and/or Related Retaliation
The University of Colorado Boulder (CU Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. CU Boulder will not tolerate acts of sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation against or by any employee or student. CU’s Sexual Misconduct Policy prohibits sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, intimate partner abuse (dating or domestic violence), stalking or related retaliation. CU Boulder’s Discrimination and Harassment Policy prohibits discrimination, harassment or related retaliation based on race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, veteran status, political affiliation or political philosophy. Individuals who believe they have been subject to misconduct under either policy should contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) at 303-492-2127. Information about the OIEC, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding sexual misconduct, discrimination, harassment or related retaliation can be found at the OIEC website.

Honor Code
All students enrolled in a University of Colorado Boulder course are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy. Violations of the policy may include: plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, lying, bribery, threat, unauthorized access to academic materials, clicker fraud, resubmission, and aiding academic dishonesty. All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found responsible for violating the academic integrity policy will be subject to nonacademic sanctions from the Honor Code Council as well as academic sanctions from the faculty member. Additional information regarding the academic integrity policy can be found at the Honor Code Office website.

A note on plagiarism: Plagiarism does not always take such blatant forms, however, of equal concern are the subtler forms of plagiarism. For example, you probably know that all words taken directly from a source need to be quoted and cited, and that there are specific conventions for doing this properly. However, you may not know that merely changing a few words in a passage—say, by using the thesaurus function on your word-processing program—does not protect you from the charge of plagiarism. Passages that are similar to their sources in syntax, organization, or wording but are not cited are considered to be
plagiarized. In fact, even if you cite the source but do not make it clear to your readers that the phrasing of a passage is not your own, the source is still considered to be plagiarized.

Any time you use another’s work—ideas, theories, statistics, graphs, photos, or facts that are not common knowledge—you must acknowledge the author.

**Tentative Schedule**

This schedule will be adapted to meet the needs of the class. You are responsible for keeping track of date changes announced in class. Revised syllabus will be posted on D2L.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignment &amp; Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>Course introduction The history of intercultural communication</td>
<td>Jackson, Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2</td>
<td>9/4-9/8 9/4: NO CLASS (Happy Labor Day!) Definitions of culture Case study: Young teenagers’ idea about culture</td>
<td>Sorrells, Chapter 1 Thurlow (2001)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 3</td>
<td>9/11-9/15 Studying culture through speech communities</td>
<td>Morgan, Chapter 3 Reading quiz 1 due on 9/15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 5</td>
<td>9/25-9/29 How to analyze intercultural communication? Case study: The hiphop speech community</td>
<td>Morgan, Chapter 5 Final project part #1 Due on 9/25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 7</td>
<td>10/9-10/13 Intercultural praxis Understanding the context of globalization</td>
<td>Sorrells, Chapter 2 Final project part #2 Due on 10/9 Group presentation 1 on 10/13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 8</td>
<td>10/16-10/20 <strong>Midterm Review on 10/16 Midterm Exam on 10/18</strong> Communicating difference &amp; globalizing body politics</td>
<td>Sorrells, Chapter 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week 9</td>
<td>10/23-10/27 (Dis) Placing culture &amp; cultural space Case study: Listening to the space</td>
<td>Sorrells: Chapter 4 Carbaugh (1999)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Week 10 | 10/30-11/3 | Migration and intercultural adaptation | Sorrells: Chapter 6
*Final project part #3 Due on 11/1*
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| Week 11 | 11/6-11/10 | Case study: International students in the US “Respeto in Disrespect” within the context of Mexican immigration | Urban & Orbe (2007)
Covarrubias (2017)
*Reading quiz 3 due on 11/10*
|
| Week 12 | 11/13-11/17 | Media, popular culture & intercultural communication | Sorrells: Chapter 7
*Group 4 presentation on 11/15
Final project part #4 Due on 11/17*
|
| Week 13 | Fall Break!!! |
| Week 14 | 11/27-12/1 | Intercultural conflict Case study: Facework strategies | Sorrells: Chapter 9
Oetzel et al. (2001)
*Reading quiz 4 due on 12/1*
|
| Week 15 | 12/4-12/8 | Intercultural communication at workplace | Sorrells, Chapter 8
*Group 5 presentation on 12/6
Final project part #5 Due on 12/8*
|
| Week 16 | 12/11-12/13 | Pulling it altogether |
| **Final Exam on December 18, Monday, 1:30-4:00 PM, CLRE 211 (to be confirmed)** |