

Course Syllabus, Fall Semester, 2004
SPCH 3372/ANTH 3332, INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION
Instructor: Dr. L. Brooks Hill

COURSE LOGISTICS

Meeting Situation. Time: TR 8:30-9:45AM. Place: RTT 301
Instructor Access: Office: RTT 203/204. Office hours: MWF 9:30-11:30AM & TR 9:55-11:10AM. Also available at other times during each weekday. Drop-ins invited, but appointments encouraged.
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COURSE FIT IN GENERAL EDUCATION

Intercultural Communication is an interdisciplinary course that explores significant social and psychological issues that grow out of interactions among people representing different cultures. It will examine these issues through comparison, integration, and synthesis of several of the social sciences, but primarily from a communication perspective. To underscore further the interdisciplinary nature of this course, also note its inclusion in the programs in Anthropology, Education, and American Intercultural Studies, as well as Speech Communication.

For students under the Courses of Study prior to the 04-05 edition: SPCH 3372/ANTH 3332 is a Common Curriculum choice for Understanding the Human Social Context. This understanding concerns “the interactions between human behavior and social processes and structures.” To meet the requirement for this understanding you need nine semester hours of work, typically three courses distributed as follows: “at least one course will provide an introduction to the ways in which one of the social sciences seeks to understand these [human] interactions, and at least one course will, from a perspective broader than that of any single discipline, either explore one or more significant social issues or examine the evolution, functions, and consequences, both social and individual, of one or more major institutions” (Courses of Study 2003-2004, page 38).

For students under the Courses of Study edition for 04-05: SPCH 3372/ANTH 3332 continues to be a Common Curriculum choice. The newly conceived category is Understanding Human Social Interaction that addresses “the behavior of individuals and groups within social, historical, and institutional contexts, focusing on the ways in which the social sciences and humanities seek to understand human behavior and social cultures, and providing an in-depth investigation of significant social issues and cultural values that help shape individual and social choice” (Courses of Study 2004-2005, page 36). Of the three courses required to satisfy this Understanding, Intercultural Communication is in the subcategory of Social Issues and Values where one course is required.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Examines theory, research, and the application of communication in an intercultural context with an emphasis on verbal and non-verbal language variables; world view; acculturation; diffusion of innovation; and training for foreign assignments.

COURSE CONCERNS AND GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To conceptualize the study of intercultural communication, i.e., identify central concepts and major topic areas.
2. To examine selected topic areas with emphasis on determining what we know and what problems impede further research on the topic.
3. To discuss selected social issues on both the domestic and international scene that may benefit from an intercultural communication perspective.
4. To increase awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses when functioning in an intercultural communication situation.
5. To develop effective communication strategies and tactics for dealing with intercultural encounters.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Examinations (40%). Two examinations will assist my evaluation of your comprehension and synthesis of the readings, lectures, and class discussions. The mid-term examination will count 15% of your grade and will consist of a combination of key-term definitions, short essay questions, and one essay question. The final examination will count 25% of your grade and will consist exclusively of essay questions. To assist your preparation for the final examination, a set of preparatory study questions will be provided.

Book Review (15%). Each student will prepare a 5-7 page, typed review of a fictional, biographical, or other non-textbook of your choice that involves extensive intercultural contact among characters. Your review will briefly summarize the book and then address specifically the intercultural communication concepts and principles that are reflected one way or another in the interaction of the characters or observations of one character.

Research Project (30%). Each student will conduct a major project in the subject areas of intercultural communication. Minimum length of your report for this project is ten, typed pages, excluding title page, bibliography, and appendices. Choose one of the following options or propose a hybrid of these three general prospects. (1) The theoretical project will entail a literature analysis and synthesis regarding one intercultural communication concept or concern. For this option you are to select one concept (such as acculturation) or another theoretical concern (such as uncertainty reduction or the controversy surrounding the individualism-collectivism characterization of cultures); locate, analyze, and synthesize the relevant literature; and project the future of this topic. (2) The applied project will entail the analysis and possible resolution of a social issue that includes intercultural communication concerns or can significantly benefit from an intercultural communication perspective. For this option you might study ethnic relations in one of the many countries suffering ethnic strife; analyze and synthesize the relevant literature, and then project and defend a communication-based approach for some resolution of the problem. Another possibility might concern the constructive management of cultural diversity in the public school classroom or the business environment. (3) The most practical project is a "contact" paper. This assignment requires that you establish "contact" with someone representative of another culture; learn about their culture; discuss in face-to-face interaction with them the experiences and problems they have had interacting with people in your culture and problems you have interacting with them; and then write your analysis based on your readings, relevant discussions, and interview notes.

Because of its relative importance in the overall grade determination, the research project should be discussed with the instructor throughout the semester. Shortly after mid-term, each student must submit a short proposal for this project including at least a brief introduction of the topic, a rationale for its selection, an explanation of the method, and a tentative overview of the final product. This proposal is not a “graded” assignment, but it must be submitted in a timely manner, be approved, and be acceptable.

Please note that your instructor does not accept electronic transmission of the written projects. Because he also does not want you to miss a class session if your paper is not in final form at class time on the due date, you may place your papers in his mailbox in RTT 203 by 5:00 P.M. of the due date without penalty. Late papers are penalized one letter grade per class session or part thereof.

Class Participation (15%). Each student is expected to participate actively in class; this includes daily participation as well as some specific assignments for class presentation. For examples of the latter, each student will contribute at least once about the research project, once about the book reviewed, and report for a class discussion on at least one topic from the primary texts. Attached is a form regarding “Class participation Criteria” which the instructor will use to monitor and assess these activities. If you are reluctant to participate actively in class discussions, please see the instructor for suggestions and/or alternatives.

Extra Credit. For the very dedicated, grade conscious, or simply worried student, extra credit work is available and encouraged. An attached handout explains “Extra Credit Options.” Please note that a maximum of five points can be added to your final average grade through extra credit work. Also note that this is not a “give-away” bonus, but requires time, energy and a respectable product.

Attendance Policy. You are expected to attend all class sessions. In the case of an excused absence, you are responsible for arranging to complete any work missed during your absence. Because of unforeseen circumstances, such as illness, two unexcused absences (i.e., one week of classes) will be forgiven. You should use these prospects prudently, especially if you know that you will have some excused absences. Exceptional attendance will be rewarded, and the penalty for excessive unexcused absences is severe with a three-point reduction for each on your final average. Only in rare situations will make-up examinations be administered.

Academic Integrity. Pages 103-105 of the Trinity University Student Handbook and Academic Planner, 2003-2004, provide the policies and regulations regarding academic integrity for students at Trinity University who matriculated prior to AY 2004-05. New students who are under the Courses of Study 2004-05 have an Honor Code. Details of the Honor Code are available on the website of the Office of Academic Affairs. Please read the appropriate information and recognize the significance of your complete compliance. If you do not understand any of the terms used or policies stated, please ask your instructor for clarification. The work you submit must be your own, and all borrowed ideas and materials must be appropriately referenced. Whenever in doubt, please ask for guidance.

COURSE TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER SOURCES

Gudykunst, William B., and Young Y. Kim. Communicating with Strangers: An Approach to Intercultural Communication. 4th edition rev. New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 2003.

Martin, Judith N. and Thomas K. Nakayama. Intercultural Communication in Contexts. 3rd edition revised. New York, NY: McGraw Hill, 2003.

Hacker, Diana. A Pocket Style Manual. 3rd edition rev. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2000.

You are encouraged to read a weekly national news magazine (such as Newsweek or Time Magazine) and/or a daily national newspaper (such as The New York Times or the Wall Street Journal) to maintain currency on issues that we will necessarily discuss in this class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC/ACTIVITY	READINGS
Thur 8/26	Course Orientation and Introductions	
Tues 8/31	Historical Overview and Definitions	M&N Ch. 1/G&K Ch. 1
Thur 9/02	Conceptualizing the Area	M&N Ch. 2/G&K Ch. 2
Tues 9/07	Cultural Influences on the Process	M&N Chs. 3 & 4
Thur 9/09	-continued-	G&K Ch. 3
Tues 9/14	Socio-Cultural Influences	G&K Ch. 4
Thur 9/16	-continued-	M&N Ch. 5
Tues 9/21	Psycho-Cultural Influences	G&K Ch. 5
Thur 9/23	-continued-	
Tues 9/28	Environmental Influences	G&K Ch. 6
Thur 9/30	BOOK ANALYSIS REPORTS BOOK ANALYSIS DUE	
Tues 10/05	Cultural Variation In Message Decoding	G&K Ch. 7
Thur 10/07	Cultural Variation In Verbal Behavior	G&K Ch. 8
Tues 10/12	-continued-	M&N Ch. 6
Thur 10/14	Cultural Variation in Non-Verbal Behavior	G&K Ch. 9
Tues 10/19	-continued-	M&N Ch. 7
Thur 10/21	“MID-TERM” EXAMINATION	
Tues 10/26	Intercultural Communication Effectiveness COURSE PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE	G&K Ch. 10

Thur 10/28	Cultural Transitions	M&N Ch. 8
Tues 11/02	Implications of Popular Culture	M&N Ch. 9
Thur 11/04	Developing Relationships with Strangers	M&N Ch. 10
Tues 11/09	-continued-	G&K Ch. 12
Thur 11/11	Managing Conflict and Negotiating Face	G&K Ch. 11/M&N Ch. 11
Tues 11/16	Adapting to New Cultures	G&K Ch. 13
Thur 11/18	Becoming Intercultural	G&K Ch. 14/M&N Ch. 12
Tues 11/23	Building Community	G&K Ch. 15
Thur 11/25	THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY	
Tues 11/30	Film & Discussion: “The Foreigners”	
Thur 12/02	Major Project Reports/FINAL PAPER DUE Preparatory Study Questions Distributed	
Tues 12/07	Major Project Reports Concluded Course Wrap Up	
Wed & Thur 12/08-09	READING DAYS	
Wed 12/15 8:30-11:30 A.M.	FINAL EXAMINATION	

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

EXTRA CREDIT OPTIONS

During the semester many opportunities arise for students to engage in culture learning. As an encouragement to participate, I will make available some extra credit. Option 1 identifies some general activities and what you might do for credit. Option 2 lists some films you might wish to view and assess. You may not receive more than 5 extra credit points throughout the course, but these points are simply added to your final average. Reviews are due no later than one week after the activity involved. The last day for submitting extra credit work is Friday of the fourteenth week of class.

OPTION 1: GENERAL ACTIVITIES

The International Studies Program, including Study Abroad, the Trinity Multi-Cultural Network, and various academic departments on campus regularly host events with intercultural emphases. You are urged to attend and participate for your personal edification. If, however, you wish to earn extra credit, write a 3-5 typed-page review of the intercultural communication implications you observed, drawing together what we have spoken or read about for class and the activities at the event. For each of these events you may earn up to one point toward your final average.

OPTION 2: FILM REVIEWS

The following list identifies some films that accentuate intercultural communication and relations. Others may be added to this list if they deal extensively with intercultural relations. You are encouraged to view them for your own edification. If you wish to receive extra credit for doing so, you can earn up to one point toward your final average for each film you review and write a 3-5 typed-page commentary about the implications for intercultural communication. Incidentally, some of these films are available in VCR or DVD format from IMS or local rental businesses. You might get a group together, watch the movie, and then discuss its intercultural communication implications.

DON' T CRY IT' S ONLY THUNDER
EL NORTE
THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY
KILLING FIELDS
THE YEAR OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY
MOSCOW ON THE HUDSON
SALAAM BOMBAY

TORTILLA SOUP
JOY LUCK CLUB
CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD
EAT, DRINK, MAN, WOMAN
LONE STAR
INDOCHINE
-ETC-