

Intercultural Communication

Spring 2008 2-3:15p.m. @ GRAM 106

Instructor: Dr. Etsuko Kinefuchi

Office: Ferguson105

E-mail: e_kinefu@uncg.edu

Office Hrs: TR 12:30-1:45 (& by appt.)

Phone: 334-4729

COMMUNICATION STUDIES MISSION STATEMENT

*We research, teach, and practice communication
to cultivate the ethical voices of people that speak in critical, constructive, and
transformative ways to identities, relationships, and communities.*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to theories, research and issues important to the understanding of communication between people from different racial, ethnic and other cultural backgrounds in the U.S. and international settings. This course does NOT teach you “10 things you need to know in communicating with ____ culture.” Rather, as we tackle communicative issues that exist in communicating across cultures, we will learn to reflexively and critically examine complex ways in which intercultural phenomena are constructed and negotiated through communication.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course, you should be able to

1. Describe the major topics, theories, and research findings in the study of intercultural communication (ICC).
2. Explain the complexity and power of “culture” and “communication.”
3. Understand the important roles that macro-contexts and power play in ICC.
4. Recognize the influence of your own cultural assumptions and background on your approach to cultural and intercultural interactions and become more willing, self-reflexive, flexible, and open in those interactions.
5. Recognize your roles and responsibility as members of a diverse community and become active agents for enhancing intercultural relationships and communication in the community.

REQUIRED TEXTS & TOOLS

Blackboard. We will use Blackboard for posting announcements, readings, assignments, and grades. Visit your Blackboard daily because announcements will be posted between class periods.

Texts. Readings are available on blackboard. Print out the readings and bring them to class.

E-mail Communication. You must be reachable at your UNCG e-mail address. Please check your e-mail everyday.

ASSIGNMENTS

Note: The following is an overview of the assignments required in this course. Detailed information of each assignment will be provided on blackboard as separate handouts.

Class Participation. We will engage in many in-class activities (e.g., responses to films, experiential exercises) to enhance our understanding of course material. You must be in class and actively participate in these activities to earn points for the activities. Missed activities may not be made up.

Exams. Two exams will be given to assess your learning of the course material. The exam questions may include a combination of multiple choice, true/false, and short answers.

Application and Reflection Papers. You will write three papers in which you apply and reflect on classroom learning: 1) Cultural identity, 2) Popular culture analysis, and 3) Course reflection paper.

GRADING

Class Participation	20%
Application & Reflection Papers	50%
Cultural identity (15%)	
Popular culture analysis (15%)	
Course reflection (20%)	
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%

Grade Scale. A=90-100%; B=80-89%; C=70-79%; D=60-69%; F=below 60% (plus and minus are in thirds of these categories).

Grading System. This course follows the UNCG Grading System (visit www.uncg.edu/reg/Catalog/current/AcaRegs/Grading.html for additional information).

- A: EXCELLENT**—indicates achievement of distinction and excellence in several if not all of the following aspects: 1) completeness and accuracy of knowledge; 2) intelligent use of knowledge; 3) independence of work; 4) originality.
- B: GOOD**—indicates general achievement superior to the acceptable standard defined as C. It involves excellence in some aspects of the work, as indicated in the definition of A.
- C: AVERAGE**—indicates the acceptable standard for graduation from UNCG. It involves such quality and quantity of work as may fairly be expected of a student of normal ability who gives to the course a reasonable amount of time, effort, and attention. Such acceptable standards should include the following factors: 1) familiarity with the content of the course; 2) familiarity with the methods of study of the course; 3) full participation in the work of the class; 4) ability to write about the subject in intelligible English.
- D: BELOW AVERAGE**—indicates work which falls below the acceptable standards defined as C but which is of sufficient quality and quantity to be counted in the hours of graduation if balanced by superior work in other courses.
- F: WELL BELOW AVERAGE**—indicates failure that may not be made up except by repeating the course. The performance is characterized by more than one major flaw and an extraordinary amount of minor flaws.

COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

Academic Honor Policy. Misconduct such as cheating (e.g., using unauthorized information during an exam), fabrication (e.g., inventing and using false data or information), and plagiarism (e.g., presenting someone else's idea as your own or without citation; allowing your work to be used by others without citing you) will result in disciplinary sanctions ranging from a failing grade for the assignment to expulsion from the University depending on the seriousness of the misconduct.

You may study with other students, but each of you must write your own paper/answer based on your own insights and understanding of the issue at hand. Two or more papers/answers that share much resemblance will be considered as a case of plagiarism, and the authors will receive zero for the assignment.

Please familiarize yourself with the Academic Honor Policy described in the current Student Handbook. Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Pledge on all major work submitted. For the details of the types of violations, sanctions, and the hearing process, please visit <http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity>.

Attendance and Participation. Your regular attendance and active participation are imperative to your learning in this course. Here are the definitions of attendance-related concepts I use for this class:

- a. **Complete attendance:** Come to class on time and pay thoughtful attention to class until the class session is over. No activities unrelated to our class (e.g., text-messaging, surfing on the net, homework). I will ask you to leave the classroom if you engage in irrelevant activities.
- b. **Partial attendance (= ½ attendance):** Late arrival (arrive after the roll is taken) or early departure (leave before the session is over). It is your responsibility to let me know of your presence if you arrive after the roll is taken.
- c. **Excused absence:** The absence is due to a university-sanctioned event, a sudden illness, a traffic accident, death in your family, or a jury duty. The absence will be excused after providing legitimate documentation (e.g., doctor's note) and completing any activities that you missed during the class session in question.
- d. **Unexcused absence:** All other absences not included in the "Excused absence."

You may be excused for two absences without penalty. Use this privilege wisely for doctor's appt. or any other reasons other than the excused absences defined above. After the first two absences (or 4 partial attendances), you will lose 2% from the final grade for every unexcused absence.

Whether your absence is excused or unexcused, you are responsible for catching up with any information and assignments you missed.

As a member of the class, you are expected to demonstrate the following:

- a. Evidence of careful reading of the assigned readings. Bring a well thought-out question or two from the assigned reading(s) to class as part of your participation.
- b. Frequent, thoughtful, respectful and reflexive contributions to class activities.
- c. Listen to all opinions carefully and respond to them as co-equals, not antagonists.

Communication with the Instructor. Maintaining timely and consistent communication with me is absolutely CRITICAL to your successful participation in the course. Bring my contact information everywhere you go. Please make an appointment with me if you cannot make it to my office hours. I will be happy to make an arrangement to meet with you at a different time.

Discrimination and Harassment. The University policies regarding affirmative action and sexual misconduct are enforced in this class. If you feel discriminated against or harassed by students, faculty, or staff on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, age, marital status, or disability, please contact the office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (334-5099). You can find the details of the policies and procedures at <http://saf/dept.uncg.edu/conduct/>.

Incomplete Grade. An incomplete grade is given only when a student has completed most of the assignments successfully and has attended class regularly but was unable to finish the final project or the final exam due to an extreme circumstance such as being hospitalized for an illness or an accident.

Keeping Track of Your Grades and Progress. Your grades will be posted on Blackboard so you can keep track of your progress and grades. Come to talk to me within a week after a grade is posted when you have questions about the grade or you need my assistance in improving your future grades. I want everyone to succeed in my course, but I will not know what concerns you have until you initiate a conversation with me.

Learning Difficulties. If you have a documented disability or medial condition that may affect your participation in this class, please contact Disability Services, 208 Elliot University Center, 334-5440 (voice & TTY) as soon as possible. During the first week, please bring me a copy of the documentation from the Access Center describing the accommodations that you need in the course.

Saving Assignments. Save your assignments in your computer or through other secure means and keep all written assignments that are graded and handed back to you until the final grade is posted. I will keep exams and papers for one semester after you completed my course. You are welcome to come to my office to collect your papers/exams. After a semester, I will discard all remaining exams/papers from the previous semester.

Submission of Assignments. All written assignments must use the APA style and must be typed, double-spaced with 1" margins all around. Use 12 font size Times New Roman. Proof-read all papers. A paper that fails to meet these guidelines will automatically receive a one letter grade deduction.

HARD COPIES are required for all paper assignments. No electronic submission is accepted unless otherwise specifically instructed. An assignment that is due outside class should be turned in to the Department office (Ferguson #103) between 8a.m. and 5p.m. or hand it to me BEFORE the due date. DO NOT slide your paper under my office door. A late paper maybe accepted for a week after the deadline with a penalty: -5% after the deadline (the beginning of the class) but on the due date before 5p.m. and -10 % per calendar day including weekends.

COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is tentative and subject to revision by the instructor. Changes are announced in class and on blackboard prior to the dates that are affected by the changes. 📖 = a reading assignment due on the given day. Have the readings done before class.

Week 1

- Jan. 15 Course Introduction
- Jan. 17 Why study intercultural communication (ICC)

=== Key Components of Intercultural Communication ===

Week 2

- Jan. 22 Defining "culture" and "communication"
📖 Moon (Thinking about "culture" in intercultural communication)
- Jan. 24 Macro context and power
📖 Nakayama (Dis/orienting identities)

Week 3

- Jan. 29 Macro context and power
📖 Allen (chapters 1-2)

- Jan. 31 Cultural identity: Centrality of identity in ICC and identity theories
📖 Orbe & Harris (chapter 4: Racial and ethnic identity negotiation)
📖 Yep (My three cultures)

Week 4

- Feb. 5 Cultural identity: Racial identity development
📖 Tatum (Family life and school experience)

=== **“Channels” of Intercultural Communication** ===

- Feb. 7 Verbal communication: The nature and power of language
📖 Orbe & Harris (ch. 3: The power of language, labels, and naming)

Week 5

- Feb. 12 Verbal communication: Language variations and patterns
📖 Watts (Confessions of a thirty-something hip-hop (old) head)
- Feb. 14 Verbal communication: Intercultural (non)accommodation
📖 Giles & Noels (Communication accommodation in intercultural encounters)

Week 6

- Feb. 19 Nonverbal communication within and across cultures
📖 Martin & Nakayama (ch. 7: Nonverbal codes and cultural space)
Cultural identity paper due

- Feb. 21 Nonverbal communication within and across cultures

Week 7

- Feb. 26 Exam #1

=== **Negotiating Identity and Communication in Two Worlds** ===

- Feb. 28 Co-cultures: Living in two (multiple) cultures
📖 Urban & Orbe (the syndrome of the boiled frog)

Week 8

- Mar. 4 Co-cultures: Living in two (multiple) cultures
📖 Braithwaite & Braithwaite (“Which is my good leg?”)
- Mar. 6 Co-cultures: Living in two (multiple) cultures
📖 Hegde (Swinging the trapeze)

Week 9

Spring break

Week 10

- Mar. 18 Contact hypothesis and obstacles to ICC

- Mar. 20 *Harriett Elliott Lecture Series –EUC Auditorium*
Dr. Barnett Pearce: “Transforming Communication about Values, Identity, and Race”

=== **Media and Cultural Adaptation** ===

Week 11

- Mar. 25 Cultural representations in media: Trends and theories
 📖 Orbe & Harris (Race/ethnicity, interracial communication, & the mass media)
- Mar. 27 Cultural representations in media: Popular culture
 📖 Dubrofsky (*The Bachelor*)

Week 12

- Apr. 1 IC transitions and cultural adaptation
 📖 Kim (Cross-cultural adaptation)
- Apr. 3 IC transitions and cultural adaptation
 📖 Keshishian (Acculturation, communication, and the U.S. mass media)

Week 13

- Apr. 8 IC transitions and cultural adaptation
 Class activity
Popular culture analysis paper due
- Apr. 10 IC transitions and cultural adaptation
 Class activity (cont.)

=== Where Do We Go From Here? ===Week 14

- Apr. 15 How do we live together in multiple, contested cultural realities
 📖 Roy & Oludaja (The role of dialogue in managing intergroup conflict)
- Apr. 17 How do we live together in multiple, contested cultural realities
 📖 Dace & McPhail (Crossing the color line)
 📖 Tatum (Embracing a cross-racial dialogue)

Week 15

- Apr. 22 How do we live together in multiple, contested cultural realities
 📖 Bateson (Joint performance across cultures)
- Apr. 24 How do we engage in ICC?: Putting pieces together
 Group activity

Week 16

- Apr. 29 How do we engage in ICC?: Putting pieces together
 Group activity
- May 1 Exam 2

Course reflection paper due to Ferguson #102 by 5p.m., May 9, 2008