

The University of Montana-Missoula

COMX 415.50 Online Fall 2019 Intercultural Communication

Instructor: Dr. Phyllis Ngai

- **Office:** LA 415
- **Office Hours:** 1:30 – 2:00 PM (Mon); 1:00 – 2:00 PM (Wed); by appointment
- **E-mail:** phyllis.ngai@umontana.edu

Course Description

This course aims to guide students through a journey of understanding the multiple dimensions of intercultural communication. The primary focus is intercultural interactions with and among US Americans. Diversity within the United States offers a rich learning ground. Examples set in other countries are also used in exploring communication across cultures. The unit of analysis in this course involves interpersonal, face-to-face conversations and interactions among people from different ethnic, racial, linguistic, and/or cultural backgrounds. The overarching questions that guide this expedition are: (1) What do we need to know about communication and culture in order to fulfill the goals set forth for specific intercultural contexts? (2) How can we develop intercultural and transnational competence? The required text by Stella Ting-Toomey and Leeva Chung includes thorough discussions regarding key communication concepts, useful cultural taxonomies, suggested communication strategies, and important research findings about intercultural communication. The second recommended text by Donal Carbaugh takes us one step further into the heart of intercultural communication—that is cultures in conversation. In addition, students will be introduced to a wide array of multidisciplinary materials that capture different perspectives, including those of immigrants, training consultants, political scientists, linguists, international educators, and lawyers. To connect theory to practice, students will have the opportunity to apply what they have learned from course materials in their daily lives over the semester through an intercultural partnership.

Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will have achieved the following:

- Understanding the concepts culture, communication, cultural identity, intercultural and transnational competence, and related concepts;
- Awareness of the rich diversity of communication styles within and beyond the United States;
- Understanding of cultural influences in one's life and one's own cultural identity;
- Sensitivity to different dimensions of intercultural communication;
- Understanding of the distinctive roles of verbal and nonverbal communication in intercultural contexts;
- Abilities to apply cultural taxonomies in the analysis of intercultural interactions;
- Understanding of the effects of code usage in intercultural communication;
- Skills for avoiding and removing barriers (e.g., cultural biases) that hinder intercultural communication;
- Competence in applying effective intercultural communication strategies in selected contexts;
- Abilities to learn *in situ* as an ethnographer;
- Knowledge for continuing to develop intercultural and transnational competence.

Texts

- ***Understanding Intercultural Communication*** by Stella Ting-Toomey and Leeva C. Chung, 2nd edition, 2012. Oxford University Press. [REQUIRED]

- *Cultures in Conversation* by Donal Carbaugh, 2005. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. [Recommended]
- *Transnational Competence: Empowering Curricula for Horizon-Rising Challenges* by Peter H. Koehn and James N. Rosenau, 2010. Paradigm. [Optional]
- *The Sage Handbook of Intercultural Competence* edited by Darla K. Deardoff. 2009. Sage. [Optional]
- *Readings for Diversity and Social Justice* (3rd ed.) edited by Maurianne Adams, et al., 2013. Routledge. [Optional]
- *Intercultural Communication: A Discourse Approach* (3rd ed.) by Ron Scollon, Suzanne Wong Scollon, and Rodney Jones, 2012. Wiley-Blackwell. [Optional]
- *Dancing with a Ghost: Exploring Indian Reality* by Rupert Ross, 1992. Reed Books Canada. [Optional]

Tentative schedule

Aug 26 – 30	Course Introduction
Sep 3 – 6	Imperatives for Intercultural Competence
Sep 9 – 13	Intercultural Communication Process
Sep 16 – 20	Intercultural Communicators as Ethnographers
Sep 23 – 27	Cultural Patterns and Communication
Sep 30 – Oct 4	Verbal Intercultural Communication
Oct 7 – 11	Nonverbal Intercultural Communication
Oct 14 – 18	Mid-term Assessment
Oct 21 – 25	Crossing Cultural and Communication Boundaries
Oct 28 – Nov 1	Cultural Biases and Intercultural Contact
Nov 4 – 8	Intercultural Conflict Issues
Nov 12 – 15	Cultural and Ethnic Identities
Nov 18 – 22	Intercultural Communication and Ethics
Nov 25 – 29	Thanksgiving Break
Dec 2 – 6	Applying Intercultural Competence

Assignments and Assessments

Debate Participation	40 points x 4 = 160
Group Discussion Participation	40 points x 4 = 160 points
Discussion Facilitation	40 points
Four Quizzes	50 points x 4 = 200 points
Mid-term Report	160 points
Final Paper	250 points
Presentation and review	30 points
Total:	1,000 points

Course Policies

- You are responsible for submitting your assignments by the due date. Late work receives a 5-percent deduction each day (up to 40 percent) from the total points earned unless you provide a note from your healthcare provider indicating that you were unable to complete the assignment because of sickness.
- Missed quizzes cannot be made up unless you provide a note from your healthcare provider indicating that you were not able to complete the assignment because of sickness.
- **Deadlines:** When managing your time to complete assignments, please be prepared that you may experience unpredictable technical difficulties. For example, your computer may freeze up or your Internet provider might not work properly at times. Technical problems are not acceptable excuses for late submission of assignments. You need to plan extra time to complete and submit assignments online in case of technical difficulties. In addition, you need to have a back-up plan for taking quizzes and submitting homework online. Is there another computer you can use? Is there another place you can get online?
- Students with disabilities may request reasonable modifications by contacting me. The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). “Reasonable” means the University permits no fundamental alterations of academic standards or retroactive modifications. You can find detailed information on this website <http://www.umt.edu/disability>.
- You should be aware that as a student at the University of Montana, you must practice academic honesty and are bound by the following Code of Academic Conduct:
<http://www.umt.edu/studentaffairs/sccAcademicConduct.htm>
As the code explains, academic misconduct includes plagiarism, cheating, and deliberate interference with the work of others. It is the intellectual equivalent of fraud—a crime against the codes of the academy. *As an academic crime, plagiarism merits academic punishment, ranging from an F on the assignment or for the course, to suspension or expulsion from the University.*
- The deadlines for adding/dropping and changing your grading option are posted on the Registrar’s Office website: <http://www.umt.edu/registrar/students/dropadd.php>. The instructor will deny late-drop petitions (after the 31st day of instruction) except for medical reasons.

Graduate Credits

If you register for this course as a graduate student, you need to complete an extra paper to earn graduate credits for this course. Contact the instructor for the guidelines. This paper is due during finals week. You should consult with the instructor regarding a focus before writing the paper.