

COMM. 324: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

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[A] *Course OVERVIEW*

In this course, we will study the processes of intercultural communication, which includes communication of individuals, groups, and organizations across cultural and other boundaries. What culture *is*, where the boundaries are drawn, and how cultural identity is developed and invoked in interpersonal and intergroup communication, will be central to our semester's investigations. We will also study how intercultural communication occurs within business, law, health care, media, sports, and personal relationships. We will look at current events to understand how intercultural communication can successfully mediate disputes, as well as the consequences of miscommunication in global and personal conflicts.

[B] *Course LEARNING OBJECTIVES*

1. To be able to understand and articulate how culture works, how it changes, and the interplay between culture and communication among people(s).
2. A coherent understanding of the major theories in intercultural communication, and how these theoretical perspectives relate to "real world" intercultural communication events.
3. To understand how and why our own social learning, histories, expectations, attitudes, and identities affect who we communicate with, and how we communicate with them.
4. To better understand why improving intercultural communication, and cultural competence, affects the major social debates of the current time—locally and globally.
5. Develop or enhance interviewing skills, including planning the meeting, distilling interview notes, and applying theoretical constructs to understanding the interviewee's experiences.
6. Develop ability to integrate and apply key concepts and readings to analysis of particular social events.

[C] *Course FORMAT*

This is an upper division course, and therefore, I expect that you will come to class on time, having done the reading, and prepared to participate actively with questions, insights from the readings, and equally importantly, stories from your own life experiences. The class will be run as a seminar, meaning a mix of lecture and discussion that will require your active participation in each and every class meeting.

Subject matter from the readings may be referenced and built upon, but will not be repeated—lectures will cover other material, which makes your attendance essential to successful learning.

[D] *Course READINGS*

1. Required Texts:

(Available at the USC bookstore)

- COMM324 Course Reader.
 - *Note:* There is also a copy in the Annenberg Resource Center on reserve for the semester
- Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard.

2. One of the following:

(Available at any major bookstore)

- Fadiman, A. (1997). *The spirit catches you and you fall down: A Hmong child, her American doctors, and the collision of two cultures*. New York: Farrar, Strous & Giroux.
- Lahiri, J. (2003). *The namesake*. New York: Houghten-Mifflin.
- Jen, G. (1991). *Typical American*. New York: Plume Publishing.
- Santiago, E. (1993). *When I was Puerto Rican*. New York: Vintage Books.

[E] *Student REQUIREMENTS and GRADING*

Participation:

Since learning is an active process, this class will require real engagement with texts and ideas. Therefore, class will be taught interactively. Students must come to class prepared to talk about the readings, and with questions or comments to promote class discussion. Everyone, from the most talkative to the most shy, will be expected and encouraged to contribute frequently.

Participation goes beyond the classroom. Students are encouraged to attend office hours, both for continued group discussion or for individual conference times. I am available to meet by appointment should my office hours not be at times that work for your schedule.

Attendance:

Students *must* make every effort to attend all lectures and class meetings. Since lectures will not repeat material from the required readings, they cannot be an adequate substitute for attending class. Should you have to miss class, it you're your responsibility to arrange with a classmate to borrow their notes. The instructor will not provide her lecture notes to you.

Two unexcused absences will be allowed (in such a small class, an email with an explanation is always appreciated). If there is an unavoidable reason for missing multiple classes, please inform me as soon as possible. Three or more absences from class without a documented excuse will result in the lowering of the student's final grade by half a point (i.e. from A to A-).

Completion of Readings:

The readings for this course come primarily from the course reader and from sources posted on Blackboard. An additional book, from the list above, must be selected and read by the date of the final exam.

Completion of Assignments:

Details of the two major assignments will be discussed during class time in advance of their due dates. Please note that it is necessary to complete ALL assignments, and both exams, to pass the course.

Exams:

Both the midterm and final exams will be given in class. Neither is designed to promote anxiety or to “catch” you—rather, if you’ve attended lectures, completed the reading, and given some thought to how our discussions apply to current events and everyday processes, you will be well prepared.

Students with Disabilities:

Students requesting academic accommodations based on a disability are required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from the DSP when adequate documentation is filed. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DPS is open Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00. The office is in Student Union 301 and their phone number is (213) 740-0776.

Academic Integrity: The Annenberg School for Communication is committed to upholding the University's Academic Integrity code as detailed in the SCampus Guide. It is the policy of the School of Communication to report all violations of the code. Any serious violation or pattern of violations of the Academic Integrity Code will result in the student's expulsion from the Communication major or minor.

Policy on Grades of Incomplete (IN): A grade of incomplete can be assigned only if there is work not completed because of a documented illness or some other emergency occurring after the 12th week of the semester. Students must NOT assume that the instructor will agree to the grade of IN. Removal of the grade of IN must be instituted by the student and agreed to by the instructor and reported on the official “Incomplete Correction Form.”

Grade Breakdown:

Participation:	5 %
Midterm Exam:	25 %
Assignment 1:	15 %
Assignment 2:	25 %
Final Exam:	30 %

[E] Semester PLAN and READINGS

NOTE: Readings and topics covered are subject to change at the instructor's discretion

WEEK 1:

Tuesday, January 13

Introduction to the Course

Thursday, January 15

Defining Culture

WEEK 2:

Tuesday, January 20:

**Culture, Communication, & Power
History & Intercultural Communication
Collective History**

Thursday, January 22:

Social Identities and Intercultural Communication

WEEK 3:

Tuesday, January 27:

**Social Identities and Intercultural Communication (continued)
Social Identity Theory**

Thursday, January 29:

Sports as Social Identity

WEEK 4:

Tuesday, February 3:

Intercultural Communication & Immigration

Thursday, February 5:

**Intercultural Communication & Immigration, Continued
Communication Accommodation Theory**

WEEK 5:

Tuesday, February 10:

Nonverbal Communication

Thursday, February 12:

Movie & Assignment

WEEK 6:

Tuesday, February 17:

**Intercultural Interaction in Context: Health Care
Doctor-Patient Communication & Cultural Competence,
Cultural Values surrounding medicine and health
Translation & Ethics: Guest Speaker**

Thursday, February 19:

**Intercultural Interaction in Context: Health Care
Entertainment-Education: At Home and Abroad
Serving Hard-to-Reach Communities in this Country**

WEEK 7:

Tuesday, February 24

Cultural Transmission in Context: Religious Practice

Thursday, February 26

Cultural Transmission in Context: Socialization in the Home and Community

WEEK 8:

Tuesday, March 3:

**Intercultural Interaction in Context: Education & Schooling
Funds of knowledge
Language attitudes and acquisition**

Thursday, March 5:

**Intercultural Interaction in Context: Education & Schooling (cont)
Language and Intercultural Communication**

WEEK 9:

Tuesday, March 10:

**Cultural Transmission in Context: Language Attitudes & Accents
Review for Midterm Exam**

Thursday, March 12:

MIDTERM EXAM (short class day)

SPRING BREAK: MARCH 16-22

WEEK 10:

Tuesday, March 24:

Inter-Cultural Relationships: Negotiating Boundaries in Friendship and Love

Thursday, March 26:

Bicultural Families

WEEK 11:

Tuesday, March 31:

Intercultural Communication and Media Connections

Thursday, April 2:

Intercultural Communication and Media Connections: Ethnic Media

WEEK 12:

Tuesday, April 7:

Gender and Culture

Thursday, April 9:

Overlapping Cultures: Gender, Race, and Sexual Orientation

Guest Speaker

WEEK 13:

Tuesday, April 14:

Intercultural Communication in Business

Thursday, April 16:

Intercultural Communication in Business, Continued

WEEK 14:

Tuesday, April 21:

Intercultural Communication in Law: Guest Speaker

Thursday, April 23:

Intercultural Communication in (International) Conflicts

Case Study: Israel/Palestine & Middle Eastern Conflict

WEEK 15:

Tuesday, April 28:

Intercultural Communication, Conflict and Resolution

Thursday, April 30:

Where to from here?

Review for Final Exam

FINAL EXAM

Tuesday, May 12, 11am - 1pm