

# Communication Studies 116 -- Intercultural Communication

**Fall 2013**

**Tuesdays/Thursdays**

**Instructor: Ulrich Luenemann (Office: MND 5008)**

Office Hours: Tu/Th 2:45 -4:15 p.m. and/or by appointment

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## **Course Description**

This course provides an introduction to communication between people from different cultures and co-cultures. The course focuses on the practical application of theory and research to intercultural communication situations.

## **Course Objectives**

After completion of this course, students should be able to:

- apply intercultural communication theory in judging the behavior of people from other cultures and co-cultures;
- become aware of and recognize the general and specific ways in which other cultures are both similar to and different from one's own culture;
- explain how cultural variables influence the communication between people of diverse backgrounds;
- analyze the barriers and obstacles to effective intercultural communication; and
- develop the necessary skills to become a better intercultural communicator.

You will accomplish these goals and create your own intercultural knowledge also through communication with your peers, as well as through careful analysis of the online reading assignments and additional information, including lectures and videos, group discussions and exercises, observation projects, and research assignments.

## **Course Materials**

- Samovar, L. A., Porter, R. E., McDaniel, E. R. & Roy, C.S. (2013). *Communication Between Cultures* (8th Edition). Boston, MA: Wadsworth (ISBN-13: 978-1-111-34910-3).
- Online "Resources" on My Sac State (SacCT).
- Various other readings will be assigned in class.

## **Course Policies**

- **Attendance:** Prompt and regular attendance at all class meetings is essential for you (and your class mates) to learn as much as possible from this course. That said, the responsibility for attendance is entirely yours. The only valid excuses for missing class are documented illness (ONLY with a valid doctor's note, to be presented at the next class) or university-sponsored events (with a coach or professor's note of explanation, well in advance). You will be allowed a maximum of one unexcused absence. If you have **two unexcused absences**, **your final grade will be lowered by one-half letter grade. In case of three or more unexcused absences, you will fail the class.** Please note: leaving classes early is equivalent to being tardy; two times being tardy or leaving early will constitute one absence.

- **Attendance on presentation days:** If you miss a class period - *for any reason* - where an assignment is due, you assume responsibility for the zero points that will be recorded. In other words, if you miss your individual or group presentation day, you will get a zero on that assignment.
- **Late work** will NOT be accepted. All assignments are due at the beginning of class time on the date announced or assigned. If, for some reason, you are absent when an assignment is due, you may turn the assignment in early or send it to class with one of your class mates. (Therefore, it behooves you to get to know your classmates and find a “buddy” as early as possible!) Early work may be submitted to Mendocino Hall 5014 (Com-Studies Department). Please ask the receptionist to time stamp your work and put it in my mailbox.  
**Note:** Absolutely no assignments will be accepted via e-mail.
- **All exams** will be taken online on the assigned days. A missed exam will receive zero points since no make-up exams will be allowed or scheduled. No exceptions!
- **Written assignments** need to be typed and cleanly printed using double spacing and an appropriate font (i.e.: Times New Roman/Arial 12). Proper grammar, correct spelling, clarity and articulate style will influence the grading of all assigned work in addition to content and accuracy. Make sure to keep your own copies of all material and work submitted.  
Papers with excessive spelling, grammatical or mechanical errors will be deemed incomplete and will receive zero points. As a side note, proper writing conventions apply to emails as well. Although I will not deduct class points for poorly written email, please realize that your email exchanges take place within an academic setting. The manner in which you communicate with me will communicate something about you. Remember this also for all other classes and always put your best foot forward.
- **Quality class preparation and active participation** in group exercises as well as class discussions can influence borderline grades. Out of fairness to all students, no extra-credit assignments will be given to any student to make up for a failed grade and/or to boost the final score.
- **Grade disputes:** I will not discuss grades for any assignment on the day I hand it back to you, nor will I discuss individual grades in the classroom. All such discussions will take place only in my office at least one day after the grade has been received. If you wish to contest a grade, write out your argument concisely and bring it with you to the meeting.
- **Plagiarism:** The Communication Studies Department's policies on plagiarism will be enforced. Any student proven guilty of plagiarism will receive an “F” in the course and be referred to the Dean of Students for further possible action. Plagiarism is the use of somebody else's material as your own in a speech or paper without giving credit to the author. It includes:
  - Use of someone else's wording without indicating the source and without quotation marks, indentions, italics, etc. to show the material is quoted. *Changing a few words is not sufficient to avoid plagiarism.*
  - Borrowing the whole pattern of organization and points of view of a source without giving the appropriate credit.
  - Borrowing facts, figures, or ideas that came from a particular source unless they are matters of common information that are available in many sources.

- Collaborating with other students to the extent that assignments are identical in patterns of organization, points of view or wording.
- If you need *additional information about plagiarism*, consult the following URL: <http://library.csus.edu/content2.asp?pageID=353>
- **“Incompletes”** will not be given unless the requirements and conditions stipulated by the university are met. The grade of "I" (Incomplete) will be assigned only to students who have medical or other serious reasons, petition the instructor for this consideration, and have completed a substantial portion (over 50%) of the class assignments. You must also present, at the same time, a clear and coherent plan and time line for completion of the course.
- **Dropping** the class will require adherence to university policy. If you want to drop, be sure to do so before the end of the second week. Documentation of extenuating circumstances is required to drop after week two. Make your decision early if you are class-shopping.
- **Learning disabilities:** Please notify me as soon as possible if you have a learning disability that requires assistance, and provide the appropriate paperwork, so your needs can be accommodated in a timely manner.

***And I almost forget to mention...***

- **Cell Phones** will be turned off at the beginning of class and put away (***not vibrate, not silent, but off***) for the duration of the class period. The same goes for **Laptops, PDA's** and **MP3** players.  
There will be no laptops allowed in class for the purpose of taking notes or any other reason. This class is very participatory. There will only be little lecturing during class but mostly group activities and discussions, which require full attention and direct participation. Laptops will only be allowed for presentations at the discretion of your instructor.
- **Students being caught using their cellphones or any other electronic devices during class sessions will lose points for class participation.**
- **Online:** Some supporting course material as well as exams will be delivered through the course web site on SacCT. You are required to check the course web site frequently for updates and some interactive assignments. It is vital that you become familiar with the online course website right from the start to receive a good grade in this course.

**Explanation of Assignments**

1. **Two (2) Exams** (*Mid-Term & Final*) will measure the students' understanding of the main concepts and principles addressed and covered in class.
2. Students will write - and also formally present - **one (1) *Research Paper*** exploring the values, beliefs and norms of a culture other than their own by applying the main theories and cultural patterns discussed throughout the course. The research paper (approx. 8 -10 pages) must include the description of an intercultural event the student participated in and must address the impact of the explored and observed cultural variables on intercultural communication. A handout with specific instructions for this project will be given in class.
3. **One (1) minor Group Assignment** (with formal presentation) on a major cultural ingredient.

4. **One (1) major Group Project and formal Team-Presentation** towards the end of the course will measure the students' abilities to apply the learned theories to real business situations.
5. **Two (2) Small Essays** (roughly 3-4 pages each): **a) cultural self-analysis (with formal presentation)**; and **b) video-analysis**.

**Evaluation and Point Distribution:**

- My evaluations are not "on a curve" and students in my classes do not compete with each other for grades; quality work for all assignments is the only objective and standard.
- Over 20 years of teaching, I have probably given fewer "F" grades than the CSUS average.
- Based on the idea of equality and fairness for all, no individual student will be allowed to do extra assignments to receive a better grade.
- The final grades will be given according to the following accumulated points received:

<b>Cultural Self-Analysis (50/25)</b>	<b>75 Points</b>
<b>Video-Analysis</b>	<b>75 Points</b>
<b>Minor Group Assignment (75/25)</b>	<b>100 Points</b>
<b>Major Group Project (125/50)</b>	<b>175 Points</b>
<b>Research Paper (200/25)</b>	<b>225 Points</b>
<b>Mid-Term (100) &amp; Final Exam (150)</b>	<b>250 Points</b>
<b>Participation</b>	<b>100 Points</b>
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<b><u>Total Points Possible:</u></b>	<b><u>1000 Points</u></b>

**Translation of Accumulated Points into Final Grades**

<b>A = 940+</b>	<b>A- = 900-939</b>	<b>B+ = 880-899</b>
<b>B = 840-879</b>	<b>B- = 800-839</b>	<b>C+ = 780-799</b>
<b>C = 740-779</b>	<b>C- = 700-739</b>	<b>D+ = 680-699</b>
<b>D = 640-679</b>	<b>D- = 600-639</b>	<b>F = below 600</b>

## Grading Criteria for Assignments

*Below is a general outline of how written and oral work will be assessed.*

"F" is given for an assignment that fails to meet the mechanical or conceptual requirements of university work. Mechanical requirements would be matters such as turn-in times, length of assignment, grammatical concerns, focus of assignment, etc. Conceptual matters would revolve around the comprehension of ideas and relationships between ideas.

"D" is given for work which meets the requirements established (deadlines, mechanics etc.) but demonstrates serious flaws either in conceptual formation or mechanical limits.

"C" work is marked by timely completion of the assignment, demonstrating a solid grasp of the material. "C" work shows me that you understand the material under consideration. "C" is the standard grade, and all assignments are constructed and selected with this in mind.

"B" work is marked by a timely completion of the assignment, demonstrating not only a grasp of the material under consideration, but the ability to synthesize the material rather than simply repeat what you have learned. "B" work goes beyond minimum requirements outlined in the assignment, and represents work which is above average.

"A" work constitutes superior handling of the mechanical and conceptual material covered in class. Not only will "A" work synthesize materials covered, but will also show some originality of thought, a very high degree of clarity in expression, and an ability to contextualize ideas, explore implications, and/or raise meaningful questions. "A" serves as a reward for **superior presentation** of extremely **diligent consideration** given to **conceptually complex** work.

**In short, "C" is good, "B" is better, and "A" is exceptional. Grades will be awarded according to this scale.** Again, more specific details and requirements will be given for each assignment.

**Finally**, if you have any questions or concerns regarding your coursework or your performance in the class, please take advantage of the office hours. I am here to support your academic efforts in any way I can.

It is my hope that you will come away from this class with a better understanding of other cultures and how intercultural communication applies to your life. More importantly, I hope you will build valuable knowledge that will enable you to better understand the multicultural and diverse world around us and adjust your behavior accordingly.

## ComS 116 - Tentative Class Schedule

<b>Week/ Dates</b>	<b>Topics / Activities for Class</b>	<b>Readings, Tasks &amp; Due Dates</b>
<b><u>Week 1</u></b> Sep 03 & Sep 05	Course overview/requirements; Intercultural Challenges: <i>Going International 1</i> ; Culture & Related Terms; <b><u>Assignments:</u></b> <b>1. Cultural Identity: Who am I? (Due: <u>Sep 12</u>)</b> <b>2. Research Paper/Project (Culture selection due by <u>09/26</u>)</b>	Ch 1 & SacCT <b>Research Paper</b> <b>Due: <u>Nov 26</u></b>
<b><u>Week 2</u></b> Sep 10 & Sep 12	Different Worldviews: <i>The Primal Mind</i> (Video); <b><u>Assignment: Video Analysis: Primal Mind (Due: 9/19)</u></b>  <b>Self-Presentations: Who am I?</b>	Ch 2 & 5 (p.120-125) & SacCT <b>Identity Paper</b> <b>Due: <u>Sep 12</u></b>
<b><u>Week3</u></b> <u>Sep 17</u> & Sep 19	Cultural Self-Awareness (U.S. & German Cultural Values) <b><u>with German Students.</u></b> Elements of Culture: Family & History.	Ch 3 & 4 <b>Video Analysis</b> <b>Due: <u>Sep 19</u></b>
<b><u>Week 4</u></b> Sep 24 & Sep 26	Culture and Religion. <b><u>Minor Group Assignmt: "Morals &amp; Religions" (Due: 10/08)</u></b> <b><u>Out-of-Class: Group Work/Practice: "Morals &amp; Religions"</u></b>	Ch 5 & SacCT
<b><u>Week 5</u></b> <u>Oct 01</u> & Oct 03	Video: <i>Going International 2</i> ( <b><u>with German Students</u></b> ) Intercultural Communication Barriers: Identity, Ethnocentrism, Stereotyping & Culture Shock;	Ch 7 & SacCT
<b><u>Week 6</u></b> <u>Oct 08</u> & Oct 10	<b>Group Presentations: Morals &amp; Religions.</b>  Language and Culture	<b><u>Due: 10/08</u></b>  Ch 8 & SacCt
<b><u>Week 7</u></b> Oct 15 & Oct 17	Nonverbal Intercultural Communication  Different Cultural Patterns: Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck's Values; Hall's High/Low Context.	Ch 9 & SacCT  Ch 6 & SacCT
<b><u>Week 8</u></b> Oct 22 & Oct 24	Hofstede's Value Dimensions  <b>Mid-Term online Exam (Chapters 1 through 7 &amp; SacCT)</b>	Ch 6 & SacCT  <b><u>Ch 1-7 (Test)</u></b>

<b>ComS 116</b>		
<b>Tentative Class Schedule continued:</b>		
<b>Week/ Dates</b>	<b>Topics / Activities for Class</b>	<b>Readings, Tasks &amp; Due Dates</b>
<b><u>Week 9</u></b> Oct 29 & Oct 31	The GLOBE Research; Hall & Hofstede's Theories applied to Global Marketing & Advertising. Intercultural Business Negotiations. <b><u>Assignment: Major Group-Project (Due: Nov 12/14).</u></b>	Parts of Ch 10 & SacCT
<b><u>Week 10</u></b> Nov 05 & Nov 07	Different Intercultural Context: Education (In-Class Group Exercise with informal presentations) <b><u>Out-of-Class:</u></b> Group-Work on Major Group-Project (Nov .	Ch 10 & SacCT
<b><u>Week 11</u></b> Nov 12 & Nov 14	<b>Major Group-Project Presentations!</b>	<b>Major Group Project Pres. <u>Due: Nov 12 &amp; 14</u></b>
<b><u>Week 12</u></b> Nov 19 & Nov 21	Different Intercultural Contexts: Health Care  Asian Philosophies and the Concept of "Face"	Parts of Ch 6 & 10 & SacCT
<b><u>Week 13</u></b> Nov 26 ===== Nov 28	Valuing Diversity & Intercultural Conflict Resolution ===== <b>Thanksgiving Holiday!</b>	<b>Research Paper <u>Due: Nov 26</u></b> ===== <b>Celebrate &amp; Relax</b>
<b><u>Week 14</u></b> Dec 03 & Dec 05	<b>Individual Presentations of Research Papers</b>	<b>Presentation of Research Papers <u>Due: Dec 03 &amp; 05</u></b>
<b><u>Week 15</u></b> Dec 10 & Dec 12	Achieving Intercultural Competence and Ethical Considerations & Course Review	Ch 1-10 & SacCT
<b><u>Week 16</u></b> Dec 17 or 19	<b>Final online-Exam (All Class Material &amp; SacCT )</b>	