Course ID Number: ADC6010

Course Title: Cross-cultural Communication

No. of Credits: 1

Graduate School of International Relations
International University of Japan

Term: Spring 2010

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Course Introduction

Cross-cultural (or intercultural) sensitivity has become a very important need for us in today’s global village. Effective intercultural communication skills are important in a multicultural society, particularly for those individuals who would be in positions that require effective management of cultural conflicts. The unique features of multicultural education and society at IUJ provide very good opportunities to IUJ students to develop an appreciation for cultural differences and effective intercultural communication skills. We will find this course immediately helpful in developing a better understanding of our cross-cultural experiences at IUJ.
Important Note: If you are interested in taking this course, please pre-register. Since there is a class size limit, pre-registration information will be helpful to the instructor. You may make a final decision later about course registration.

Cross-Cultural Communication\(^1\) (Tentative Syllabus)

Spring 2010

Instructor: Mohammed Ahmed
Tel: x498; e-mail: mkahmed
Classes on Wednesdays, 10:30 AM-12:00

Introduction
Cross-cultural (or intercultural) sensitivity has become a very important need for us in today’s global village. Effective intercultural communication skills are important in a multicultural society, particularly for those individuals who would be in positions that require effective management of cultural conflicts. The unique features of multicultural education and society at IUJ provide very good opportunities to IUJ students to develop an appreciation for cultural differences and effective intercultural communication skills. We will find this course immediately helpful in developing a better understanding of our cross-cultural experiences at IUJ.

Goals and design
This course focuses on individual and conceptual dimensions of intercultural communication. It aims at developing an individual’s intellectual appreciation for cultural differences and sensitivity regarding intercultural interactions.

We will:
1. Discuss basic concepts, conceptual frameworks, and some broader contexts of intercultural communication;
2. Analyze and discuss examples of cross-cultural conflicts in a variety of situations;
3. Develop an understanding of barriers to effective intercultural communication;
4. Develop intercultural sensitivity in terms of beliefs, values, and norms; and
5. Develop an understanding of intercultural competence.
The early part of the course will focus on the problematic topic of identity in this globalized world. The course will also cover issues of essentialism, otherization, and representation in multi-cultural contexts.

Course organization
The course will be offered in ten 90-minute sessions. Classes will be mostly interactive.

Based on reading materials, the instructor will cover specific topics by mostly conducting class discussions and lecturing when essential. Classroom sessions will focus on reviewing and discussing main points in assigned readings. Students will be asked a series of questions about assigned readings. Students will be expected to have read the assigned materials in advance and come prepared to participate actively in the discussions.

In addition, practical examples involving problematic cross-cultural interactions will be introduced. These examples, selected from published materials, will be introduced in the form of cross-cultural dialogs, critical incidents, and critical experiences. They will be given as homework assignments, and students will be expected to come prepared to discuss these short assignments. Finally, students will also be encouraged to draw on their own cross-cultural experiences, including those at IUJ.

Classroom activities are designed to generate discussions and exchanges of ideas and opinions among the students. The classes should be personally interesting to all the participants.

Course requirements and assessment scheme
1. A mid-term paper (3-4 pages) due in week 5: 25%. This assignment will ask students to discuss their cultural self-identity.
2. An end-of-term paper (5-6 pages) due in week 10, based on a topic selected by the student and agreed upon by the instructor: 35%. This assignment will ask students to apply some basic concepts and/or conceptual framework that they will have learned in the course and discuss topics they are interested in. They will be encouraged to conduct short and easily manageable empirical investigations. Specific guidelines for this assignment will be given in the class.
3. Two in-class quizzes (weeks 5 and week 10), assessing comprehension of the assigned reading materials: 20%
4. Attendance and participation: 20%

**Weekly Sessions: Topics, readings, and assignments**

See the appendix at the end of this syllabus.

**Reading materials**

**Main text** (Students should have a copy of this text.)


The topics of weekly sessions, as listed in the attached appendix (pages 5-7), follow the sequence of chapters in the main text. Students are expected to read the designated chapters from the main text before the scheduled classes.

**Additional texts**

Students are not expected to buy any of the additional texts listed below. They will be available as reserved materials in the library. The instructor will use materials from these texts to cover some of topics in the classes; he may refer to some of these materials for further readings. Students will also find them useful for writing their papers during the course.


The following online journal is useful: *Journal of Intercultural Communication*. [http://www.immi.se/intercultural/](http://www.immi.se/intercultural/)

**Course policies/etiquette**

- Please read the assigned materials and come prepared to the classes. Be prepared to answer the instructor’s questions and participate actively in class discussions.
- The classes will consist of both lectures and discussions.
➢ Come to the class on time. A pattern of late arrival will adversely affect the attendance/participation score.
➢ Switch off your cell phone before the class begins.
➢ Do not be absent from the classes. (If your absence becomes unavoidable, inform the instructor immediately, preferably by e-mail.)

**Attendance and participation**

This includes attending the classes regularly, coming to classes on time, coming prepared and participating actively in classroom discussions, and contributing positively to classroom environment.

**Timely submission of papers**

This is extremely important. If any assignment is not submitted according to the deadline, it may affect the total score and grade.

**Charges for Copied materials**

The instructor may bring photocopied materials packets and handouts for distribution in the class. Students will be charged a nominal fee for these materials at the end of the course.

**NOTES:**

1 Although some important distinctions may be made between the terms “cross-cultural” and “intercultural,” both are used in this course description. They may be seen as interchangeable terms, overlapping in their contents in the study of cross-cultural or intercultural communication.

2 There may be a limit in how many students can register in this course. Please pre-register.
If there are any questions, or if you need some more details, please contact Mohammed Ahmed.

Appendix A: Schedule of sessions

The following schedule may be slightly modified when the course begins. A final version of the course description will be distributed to the students in the introductory session. In addition, during the course itself, some minor modifications in covering the topics may become necessary depending on the actual classroom pacing and dynamics.)

SESSION 1
Course introduction:

◇ Course design, contents, components; course requirements; class organization
◇ Beginning key concepts (“communication,” “culture,” “inter-/cross-cultural communication”)
◇ “Cross-Cultural Dialogs,” “Critical Incidents,” and “Critical Experiences” as important elements of the course
◇ Discussion: Cross-Cultural Dialog 1
◇ Student profile

(Note: Since this is a course introduction session, students are not expected to come to the class prepared for class discussion based on assigned readings. This session is designed to introduce the course design, materials, and activities. It will also and get started with some introductory concepts.)
SESSIONS 2-3

Topics:
- Cultural Patterns
- Perception
- Cross-Cultural Dialogs 2-3 and Critical Incident I

Main readings:
- Main text (Cooper at al.). Read Chapter 2 (“Cultural Patterns”) and Chapter 3 (“Perception”)

Additional readings:
- An Introduction to Intercultural Communication: Identities in a Global Community, by Fred E. Jandt. Read Chapter 4 (“Barriers to Intercultural Communication”) and Chapter Five (“Stereotypes and Prejudice as Barriers”)
- In Klopf & McCroskey. Read Chapter Five (“Perceiving and Motivating”)

For in-class discussion:
- Cross-Cultural Dialogs 2-3 and Critical Incident I

Mid-Term Paper Assignment: Written instructions for the mid-term paper given.

SESSIONS 4-5

Topics:
- Cultural Identity
- The notion of “Essentialism”

For in-class discussion
- Cross-cultural Dialog 4 and Critical Incident 2

Main readings:
- Main text (Cooper at al.). Read Chapter 4 (“Cultural Identity”)
Quiz 1 (in-class, week 5)
Mid-term Paper: Due at the end of week 5

SESSIONS 6-7
Topics:
◊ Verbal communication
◊ Cross-cultural pragmatics and different cultural values in language
◊ Nonverbal communication

For in-class discussion
Cross-cultural Dialogs 5-6 and Critical Incident 3

Main readings:
Main text (Cooper at al.). Read Chapter 5 (“Verbal Intercultural Communication,” pages 103-119) and Chapter 6 (“Nonverbal Intercultural Communication,” pages 132-141).

Additional readings
 o Cross-cultural Pragmatics: The Semantics of Human Interaction, by Anna Wierzbicka. Read Chapter 3 (“Cross-cultural pragmatics and different cultural values,” pages 67-103.)
 o In Klopf & McCroskey. Read Chapter 12 (“Communicating Nonverbally Interculturally”)
 o In Jandt. Read Chapter 6 (“Nonverbal communication”).
 o In Condon & Yousef. Read Chapter 6 (“See what I mean? Observations on nonverbal communication across cultures”).

SESSIONS 8-9
Topics:
◊ Nonverbal Communication (contd. briefly)
◊ Family and friends
◊ The concept of “Otherization”

For in-class discussion
  Cross-cultural Dialogs 7-8 and Critical Incident 4

Main readings:
  Main text (Cooper at al.). Read Chapter 7 (“Family and Friends,” pages 163-170).

SESSION 10
Topics:
  ◊ Education
  ◊ Course wrap-up

Main readings:
  o Main text (Cooper at al.). Read Chapter 9 (“Education,” pages 193-201) and
    Chapter 12 (“Media and Technology”).

Quiz 2 (in-class, week 10)
Final Paper: Due at the end of week 10
MA/2.1