INTL 431/531: Cross-Cultural Communication
Spring 2015
176 ED

REVISED April 28, 2015

Monday & Wednesday, 4 – 5:50 pm

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Office: PLC 371
Office Hours: Tue & Thurs, 12 – 1 & by appointment
Office Phone: (541) 346-5051 (graduate students) or 541-346-5052 (undergraduates)
Graduate Teaching Fellow: Lindsay Massara (lmassara@uoregon.edu)

Course Description

The course uses class discussion, guest speakers from around the world, contemporary readings, film, and group and one-on-one projects with international students to explore the nuance of effective cross-cultural communication. Together, we will consider values, beliefs, assumptions, behavior, education, development, politics, and environment as factors in cross-cultural understanding. This is not a lecture class. The course will provide real world context to current issues in cross cultural communication. Our goal is to engender critical thinking, curiosity, and empathy, while advancing cross-cultural understanding.

Course Readings

Course readings will be available online or in PDF format: http://Blackboard.uoregon.edu. As the term progresses, new readings may be assigned or readings changed.

Course Objectives

1. Identify ways that we bring our culture with us when we communicate.

2. Reflect critically and constructively on the experience of entering a cultural sphere that is not our own.

3. Examine the influence of globalization on cultural awareness, connectivity, and interaction.

4. Analyze how international philanthropic organizations communicate about their work and assess the role this plays in cross-cultural understanding.

5. Engage another culture through intercultural dialogue.

6. Identify what advances and hinders cross-cultural communication.
Course Assignments

1. Class Participation (10%)

Students are expected to be active participants in class discussions and activities, which includes being prepared with discussion points for readings, and interacting with guest speakers and classmates.

2. Personal Reflection Papers (30%)

For five guest speakers, submit a one-page reflection in which you: 1) Describe the guest speaker and an aspect of cross-cultural communication emphasized as important to her or his experience; 2) explain how the speaker’s views either confirm or contradict a key concept from one of the week’s readings; and 3) describe the aspect of the presentation that struck you as most interesting, and why. Papers are due Monday at the start of class, following the week of the speaker. Due dates for papers are noted below. Papers should be single-spaced and will be graded: ✔, ✔+, ✔−

3. Mid-term paper – Global Conversations w/American English Institute students (30%)

You will participate in a Global Conversations panel with international students on Wednesdays during weeks 2, 3, 4 and 5. Panel participants will get to know each other, review readings, share views, and report findings to the class. This valuable opportunity for cross-cultural communication, through collaborative work, will provide the framework for your mid-term paper.

In your 3 - 5 page paper you will: 1) give a brief overview of your experience, 2) summarize your panel’s findings, drawing on panel readings, 3) explain how your culture and that of other panelists impacted panel discussions, and 4) identify something significant that you learned about your culture and the culture of students you collaborated with.

Global Conversation panels may provide the opportunity to identify a “cultural informant,” which will help you delve deeper into course objectives and provide the framework for your final paper.

Your mid-term paper is due at the beginning of class on Monday, May 4, and will be given a letter grade. Your paper should be double-spaced and use consistent citations.

See: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1

4. Final Paper (undergraduates) – Cultural Informant Exercise (30%)

Identify a “cultural informant” from a culture that is not your own and from a country you have not visited. How to find a cultural informant will be discussed in class. Write a 4 - 6 page account (20%) and present your findings during the last week of class at a tabling event (10%).
Reflect on your own culture by reviewing the “Thirteen Cultural Categories” (pp. 44 – 50) and “Fundamentals of Culture” (pp. 179 – 181) in Culture Matters: The Peace Corps Cross-Cultural Workbook. Research the cultural values, beliefs, practices, and behaviors associated with your cultural informant. Spend at least 4 - 8 hours together, getting to know each other, and fact check the findings of your research. Select one or two “categories” or “fundamentals.” Articulate your culture’s view and learn about your cultural informant’s view.

In your 4 - 6 page paper you will: 1) give a brief overview of your experience and the culture you explored, 2) describe your interaction and what you learned, 3) draw on class readings and discussions to support or challenge what you learned, and 4) share your personal view on the role of cross cultural communication on campus and what advances and hinders intercultural dialogue. Your paper is due on the last day of class and will be given a letter grade. Your paper should be double-spaced and use consistent citations.

See: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1.

**Graduate Students Only**

**Cross Cultural Communication Workshop (30%)**

Graduate students will conduct cross-cultural training workshops (10%) and present their findings in a 4 - 6 page paper (20%). Details will be discussed with graduate students after class and during Office Hours. Your paper is due on the last day of class and will be given a letter grade. Your paper should be double-spaced and use consistent citations.

See: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/1

**Electronic Devices**

Please turn off cell phones during class. Use of laptops for note taking, only, is OK.
# Course Schedule

## Week 1: Introduction


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon 3/30</th>
<th>Course introduction</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 4/1</td>
<td>Guest speaker Sriram Khé (personal reflection due 4/6)</td>
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Sriram Khé hails from Tamil Nadu, India. He is Associate Professor of Geography at Western Oregon University and received a Ph.D. from the University of Southern California. He writes about cultural issues and calls his research “autoethnographic.” Find his essay, “An Honored Ambassador for all India,” in Blackboard and visit his blog at: [http://sriramkhe.blogspot.com](http://sriramkhe.blogspot.com)

## Week 2: Rules of Conversation


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon 4/6</th>
<th>Lindsay Pepper – Cross Cultural Communication basics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wed 4/8</td>
<td>Global Conversations – #1</td>
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**Lindsay Pepper** is the Coordinator of the UO International Cultural Service Program. She is pursuing an MA in International Studies.
**Week 3: Multicultural America**


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon 4/13</th>
<th>Guest speaker <strong>Patricia Toledo</strong> (personal reflection due 4/20)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 4/15</td>
<td>Global Conversations – #2</td>
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**Patricia Toledo** worked for 13 years in the U.S. Commercial Service at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico then immigrated to the U.S. to join her husband in Eugene. She serves on the Anti-Racial Profiling Committee of League of United Latin American Citizens and the Institutional Review Board of the Oregon Research Institute. She is a UO graduate.

**Week 4: International Diplomacy & Development**


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<tr>
<th>Mon 4/20</th>
<th>Guest speaker <strong>Eric Benjaminson</strong> (personal reflection due 4/27)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 4/22</td>
<td>Global Conversations – #3</td>
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**Eric Benjaminson** is former U.S. Ambassador to Gabon and to São Tomé and Príncipe. He recently retired from a 32-year career with the U.S. Foreign Service, having served in Europe, China, Canada, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Namibia. He is a UO alum, Executive Director the Gabon-Oregon Center, and speaks French, Chinese and Swedish.
**Week 5: Global Conversations**

Readings to be selected by panel participants in Week Four.

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 4/27 &amp; Wed 4/29</td>
<td>Global Conversations panel presentations</td>
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**Week 6: Complexities of Identity**


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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 5/4</td>
<td>Mid term paper due</td>
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<td>Guest speakers <a href="#">Sharon Alitema</a> and <a href="#">Tajo Ouermi</a> (personal reflection due 5/11)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 5/6</td>
<td>Visit by Laurette Garner, UO Peace Corps Representative (served in Madagascar)</td>
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[Sharon Alitema](#) is from Kampala, Uganda. She is a UO student pursuing a Bachelor of Architecture. [Timbwaoga “Tajo” Ouermi](#) hails from Burkina Faso. He is a UO senior majoring in physics. Sharon and Tajo participate in the UO International Cultural Service Program.

**Week 7: Globalization & the Sinosphere in Eugene**


Chinese Business Etiquette, Culture & Manners

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<tr>
<td>Mon 5/11</td>
<td>Guest speakers: <a href="#">Meiling Zhang</a>, <a href="Helen">He Han</a>, <a href="Kevin">Zhan Li</a>, and <a href="Henry">Zhou Ziyuan</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 5/13</td>
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[Meiling Zhang](#) is a UO Law student pursuing an LL.M. in Environmental and Natural Resources Law. [He Han](Helen) is pursing an LL.M. in American Law. [Zhan Li](Kevin) is pursuing an LL.M. in Business Law. He is also a master calligrapher. [Zhou Ziyuan](Henry) is a UO junior majoring in economics.
Week 8: Islam in the Modern Era


| Mon 5/18 | Guest speakers Tahira Anwar, Hueda Kapri, Najla Sabri, and Fahmo Mohammed (personal reflection due 5/27) |
| Wed 5/20 | |

Tahira Anwar is a UO Fulbright Fellow from Karachi, Pakistan, studying linguistics. Hueda Kapri is from Albania. Hueda and Tahira participate in the UO International Cultural Service Program. Najla Sabri is on leave from her job at the World Bank in Kabul, Afghanistan. She is pursuing a master’s in International Studies. Fahmo Mohammed founded the UO Women’s Muslim Student Association.

Week 9 - 10:
Graduate Cross-Cultural Training Workshops & Undergraduate Tabling Presentations

| Wed 5/27 | Cross-Cultural Training Workshops |
| Mon 6/1 | Cross-Cultural Training Workshops |
| Wed 6/3 | *Final papers due*  
Undergraduate Tabling Presentations |