

COMMUNICATION 123—INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

SPRING, 2014

Tuesday & Thursday, 10:30 –11:50pm, Kerr 293

Professor:	Dr. Bo Feng
Office:	Kerr Hall 361
Email:	bfeng@ucdavis.edu
Office Hours:	Wednesday, 10:00am – 11:00am and by appointment

OVERVIEW

Welcome to CMN 123! The purpose of this course is to expand your understanding of the role of culture in shaping the ways in which we communicate with and relate to others. Culture can be broadly defined as a system of taken-for-granted assumptions about the world that influences how we think, feel, and act. This course will introduce you to major theories and concepts of intercultural communication from a variety of perspectives, and we will look at many of the different processes that make up cultural differences, and examine how these theories and concepts can guide us to communicate competently in intercultural communication settings. In addition, we will engage in critical discussions about the role of culture and communication in (re)constructing the collective human reality. Issues of identity, power, and control, as well as ways of transcending cultural and ethnic differences will be discussed.

TEXT

Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2012). *Intercultural communication in contexts* (6th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill. (Referred to as M&N on the course schedule)

Some additional readings will be posted on the course website on Smart Site.

EVALUATION

Exams (2 @ 100 points each)

There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. You will be tested on material that is discussed in the text, online readings, as well as material from lectures and class discussions. Exams will include mostly multiple-choice and true/false questions but may also include fill-in-the-blank or short answer questions. The final exam will be **non-cumulative**. A study guide will be available to you online before each exam. The exams will be given on the dates listed in the schedule unless otherwise announced in class.

Group project (100 points):

You will work in a group of 5 on a project that focuses on a specific *non-U.S.* culture of your choice. The project should (a) describe, (b) explain, and (c) prescribe. For the descriptive element, you should choose ONE observable aspect of the verbal and/or nonverbal communication practices in the culture to show *how* members of the culture communicate differently than most Americans, and what misunderstanding or biases may arise from such differences. For the explanatory element, you should identify some theoretical explanations, based on cultural worldviews, values, cognitive styles, etc., that are less visible but nevertheless shed light on the processes leading to the differences. Finally, for the prescriptive element, you

should provide a “toolkit” to your classmates for *how to* communicate effectively with members from the culture. Audio-visual aids or creative ways of demonstrating the differences to engage your audience will be highly encouraged. More detailed instructions on the project will be posted on SmartSite. This is a term project, requiring you and your group members to choose a topic and start working on it as soon as possible. Each group will give a **10-minute** presentation of the project in class. To complete this project, your group will write a **10-12 page** paper on the project, covering all the three elements identified above. The group paper is due on May 29 (both emailed and hard copies are acceptable).

Course Requirements Summary

Mid Term Exam	100 points
Final Exam	100 points
Group project	100 points
Final paper	60 points
Presentation	25 points
Electronic presentation	10 points
Oral presentation	15 points
Group member evaluation	15 points

Total	300 points

Your final course grade will be calculated using the following scale:

Calculating Final Course Grade

A	94-100%	282-300 pts
A-	90-93.99%	270-281 pts
B+	87-89.99%	261-269 pts
B	84-86.99%	252-260 pts
B-	80-83.99%	240-251 pts
C+	77-79.99%	231-239 pts
C	74-76.99%	222-230 pts
C-	70-73.99%	210-221 pts
D	60-69.99%	180-209 pts
F	below 60%	below 180 pts

CLASS POLICIES

Attendance. Attendance and participation are vital if you are to do well in this course. Lecture material is often independent of what can be gleaned from texts and will make up an important part of the exams. It is your responsibility to obtain information about what was discussed during missed classes. This includes any changes to the schedule that were announced orally, lecture notes, handouts, etc.

Missing Exams. Missing a scheduled exam will result in zero point for that exam. Makeup exams will be given only for valid emergency situations (e.g., medical emergency) or for participation in University-sanctioned activities (e.g., varsity sports). Proof of valid emergencies (e.g., a written excuse from a Medical Doctor) must be presented in a timely manner. Should a valid emergency occur, immediately consult with me to determine what constitutes acceptable proof of your emergency. Unless it is a real emergency (e.g., same day sickness or car accident), requests for excused absences on exam days should be made in writing at least three days in advance of the scheduled exam. If an excused absence is granted, make-up exams will take place at the convenience of the instructor and within one week after the scheduled exam.

Equal treatment. A principle of equal treatment of all students will be a fundamental guide I use in responding to requests for special consideration. No student will be given an opportunity to improve a grade that is not made available to all members of the class. Examples of *unacceptable* opportunities for an individual include “extra credit” work such as retaking an exam or an extension of time on an assignment. However, this policy is not intended to exclude reasonable accommodation of verified student disability. If you have a documented disability or educational need that you believe will affect your performance in this course, please let me know and I will try to provide appropriate accommodation.

Plagiarism. You’re expected to know and follow the University’s policies on academic integrity (<http://sja.ucdavis.edu>). Any suspected cases of academic misconduct will be handled according to University regulations.

Professionalism. Students are expected to be professional in terms of the quality of submitted assignments, the quality of the communicative interaction with classmates and the instructor, and general conduct. Based on my past experiences, I think setting the following ground rules is necessary:

- Arrive to class on time, and stay until class is dismissed.
- Avoid disruptive behavior during the class such as chatting, snoring, using the pencil sharpener, etc.
- Turn off or set in silent mode beepers or cell phones.
- If you must leave early, leave quietly by a back door if possible.

Tentative Course Schedule

Key:

M&N: Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2012). *Intercultural communication in contexts* (6th ed.)

OR: Online Reading (available on Smart Site)

Week	Topic	Readings	Assignments due
Week 1			
Tuesday, 4/1	Course Introduction	M&N, Ch. 1	
Thursday, 4/3	History & Study of Intercultural Communication	M&N, Ch. 2	
Week 2			
Tuesday, 4/8	Culture, Communication, Context	M&N, Ch. 3	
Thursday, 4/10	Culture, Communication, Context, cont.	OR1	Group name list due
Week 3			
Tuesday, 4/15	Identity & Intercultural Communication	M&N, Ch. 5	
Thursday, 4/17	Identity & Intercultural Communication, cont.		
Week 4			
Tuesday, 4/22	Language & Intercultural Communication	M&N, Ch.6	
Thursday, 4/24	Language & Intercultural Communication, cont.	OR2	Proposal for group research paper due
Week 5			
Tuesday, 4/29	Mid-Term Exam		
Thursday, 5/1	Nonverbal Codes & Cultural Space	M&N, Ch.7 OR3	
Week 6			
Tuesday, 5/6	Intercultural Transitions	M&N, Ch. 8	
Thursday, 5/8	Intercultural Transitions, cont.	OR4	
Week 7			
Tuesday, 5/13	Intercultural Relationship	M&N, Ch. 10	
Tuesday, 5/15	Intercultural Conflict	M&N, Ch. 11& OR5	
Week 8			
Tuesday, 5/20	Media, Technology, and Culture	OR6	
Thursday, 5/22	Intercultural Communication Competence	M&N, Ch. 12	Sign-up for group presentation dates
Week 9			
Tuesday, 5/27	Research Day		
Thursday, 5/29	Group Presentations		Final project paper due
Week 10			
Tuesday, 6/3	Group Presentations		
Thursday, 6/5	Final Exam		