

# COMM3042 Intercultural Communication

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## Course Text and Materials

- Communication Between Cultures (latest version). Samovar, L., Porter, R. E., McDaniel, E. R. & Roy, C. S. Wadsworth, Boston.
- Readings in course packet.

## Course overview

In many ways, American culture shares many similarities with Italian culture. But many things are different, sometimes in easy to discern ways... other times it's much more subtle. During your time in Italy, however, you will certainly recognize many differences between our national cultures and as you travel you will notice regional differences.

The primary purpose of this class is to help you understand what you're experiencing and to equip you to do a better job of living and interacting with people from a different culture. Even after you return to the U.S., of course, you'll still interact with members of multiple cultures almost daily, so the lessons of this class, I hope, will also have the lasting effect of improving your everyday communication.

Because communication is a broad area, we will explore intercultural communication over a broad range of communication areas, including interpersonal communication, organizational communication and even journalism, advertising, and public relations.

I'll do my best to make this class applicable to your life in Italy right now. What will make the class even better is if you help me in this regard—keep track of unusual or uncomfortable things you encounter. Ask questions. Chime in with your own stories or embarrassing situations. Share some of the interesting experiences you've had while in Europe. Bring in pictures of surprising signs. Reflect on intercultural communication experiences you've had before this summer. I want this class to be both useful and fun, and your participation will contribute to both of those goals.

## Course objectives: At the end of the course...

- You will be able to name and explain at least two key theories of intercultural communication.
- You will be able to identify key cultural differences between the U.S. and Italy.
- You will be able to interact more effectively with people from other cultures, both talking and listening.
- You will recognize cultural commitments and assumptions that are part of entertainment, news, art, and public relations.
- You will have a more critical perspective on American culture, recognizing the presence of ethnocentrism.

## **Tentative Schedule (this schedule may change as the course progresses)**

- Introduction to Course
  - What is Intercultural Communication? Why study it?
  - Chapters 1 & 2; Reading 1
- Intercultural Communication
  - Flexibility; The “ugly American” American Cultural Norms; Culture Shock
  - Chapter 3; Chapter 6 pg. 173-184; Chapter 5
- Cultural Value Patterns
  - Individualism & Collectivism; Power Distance; Uncertainty; Sex roles; Value orientations
  - Chapter 6 pg. 184-204; Reading 2
- Verbal Communication and Culture
  - Chapter 8 + Reading 3
- Nonverbal Communication and Culture
  - Chapter 9 + Reading 4
- Culture and Identity; Facework; Bias
  - Chapter 7 & Chapter 6 pg. 208
- The Multicultural Business Context
  - Chapter 10; Reading 5
- Intercultural Conflict
  - Reading 6
- Intercultural Interpersonal Relationships
  - Reading 7
- Training Presentations

*Note: In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. You may access information about changes in this course due to emergencies via e-mail or the course management system.*

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### ***Attendance/Participation***

Attendance at all classes and CIMBA sanctioned activities is MANDATORY. All unexcused absences will have the following consequences:

- a. 1st absence will result in a loss of a 1/3 of a letter grade in that class
- b. 2nd (cumulative) absence will result in a loss of an entire letter grade in that class
- c. 3rd (cumulative) absence will result in a dismissal from the program

Absences due to illness require a note from the CIMBA Undergraduate Office Staff and/or the Istituto Filippin medical staff. If a student is sick and cannot attend class, he/she must inform the CIMBA Staff immediately. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence. If you miss a class for excused reasons, follow CIMBA guidelines, keep to the course schedule, and understand that you will be responsible for that day's material.

### ***Saturday Classes***

Due to the extensive amount of travel time incorporated into the CIMBA Undergraduate program, we will have to have a few Saturday classes to ensure that we have the appropriate amount of class sessions (per UI regulations). These Saturdays have NOT been confirmed yet, however they will be by the end of the first week of classes. Note that these Saturday classes will NOT be during any of the CIMBA scheduled travel breaks.

***Participation and Readings: Come to class on time, ready to engage the material through the class discussions and activities***

You are expected to come to class having completed the assigned readings. If it becomes obvious that the class is not reading the assignments and participating in discussion, I reserve the right to administer unannounced quizzes.

***Late Work***

Late work is penalized **20% per day, starting at 5pm on the day it is due. After 5 days, late work is NOT ACCEPTED** and you receive a 0 for the assignment. If you encounter a genuine emergency, please notify me immediately so that other arrangements can be made for you to complete the assignment.

***Respect***

A course about culture can require discussions of a sensitive nature, and we often probe into our assumptions and understandings about the world. You need to bring an open mind and an accepting attitude to our discussions. The opinions and words others share within our class will be treated with respect, and remain within the walls our classroom. Let's make our class a safe place for sharing, and therefore a more interesting learning experience!

***Electronic Devices***

The use of laptops is allowed for note-taking purposes only. All phones must be on silent and stowed away unless you are expecting an urgent communication. Please step out of class to handle such emergencies. Absolutely no texting in class.

***Academic Honesty***

All CLAS students have, in essence, agreed to the College's Code of Academic Honesty: "I pledge to do my own academic work and to excel to the best of my abilities, upholding the IOWA Challenge. I promise not to lie about my academic work, to cheat, or to steal the words or ideas of others; nor will I help fellow students to violate the Code of Academic Honesty." Any student committing academic misconduct is reported to the College and placed on disciplinary probation or may be suspended or expelled (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).

- As is the case for any other course taught at this university, no form of cheating or academic dishonesty will be tolerated by your instructor.
- All assignments in the course require your own work. See the following website for more information: (CLAS Academic Policies Handbook).
- Plagiarism on any assignment will result in a minimum penalty of a failing grade in the course, and may result in a permanent letter in your file with the Dean of Students. Reminder: plagiarism includes the following:
  - Copying someone else's work and claiming it as your own.
  - Paraphrasing someone else's work and claiming it as your own.
  - Collaborating with another person and claiming the work solely as your own.
  - Submitting your own work which has previously been submitted in another class. This is self-plagiarism.

***Electronic Communication/Changes in Course Information***

Please use your Iowa issued e-mail for correspondence in this course. I usually answer e-mails in a 24 hour period. If we are on travel breaks, I will not be answering e-mail. You will be able to call my Italian cell if you need me before 9:30 p.m. Any significant changes in this course will be communicated in class, through e-mail and the course management system.

***Accommodations for Disabilities***

Students with disabilities who need accommodation (seating placement, arrangements for examinations, etc.) should inform the instructor at the beginning of the course so that the appropriate arrangements can be made. I am happy to help you work through any issues. Contact me at the beginning of the semester so that you do not experience any difficulties that may affect your grade.

### **Additional Help**

If you are experiencing difficulty in this course, do not hesitate to contact me. I am happy to help you with any academic difficulty that you may experience. If my office hours do not work for you, let me know and we can set up a different time to meet.

### **Evaluation**

Exam 1	200
Exam 2	200
Intercultural Event Presentation	100
Intercultural Artifact Presentation	100
Cultural Training Group Presentation	200
Participation: attendance, discussion questions, worksheets, possible quizzes, and other small assignments	200

### **GRADING SCALE**

A = 1000 – 900
B = 899 - 800
C = 799 - 700
D = 699 - 600
F = 600 and below

### **Assignments**

- **Exams** will test understanding of concepts and application. There will be two exams and they will be held during regular class meeting times.
- **New cultural experience presentation:** this assignment requires each student to intentionally participate in a new cultural experience. Possibilities include enjoying an, soccer game, high tea, or eating at an ethnic restaurant of a type never before experienced. The presentation will describe the cultural experience, discuss the student's expectations compared with the reality of the experience, and engage at least three different concepts from the study of intercultural communication. The main point of the presentation should be a cultural insight the student gained from the experience. This presentation can be on any culture you experience this semester. More details for this assignment will be provided during the first week of the class.
- **Sign photograph assignment** (for one of the participation grades): at some point during the semester, each student must bring a picture to class (as a print or as a slide) of a sign that illustrates non-American English usage. The photo will be accompanied by a short (less than 1 minute) presentation explaining where the sign was photographed, what it meant, and how the student figured it out.
- **Cultural artifact paper:** each student must consume some "text/experience" directly related to Italian culture. It might be a tour of a museum, church or castle, a production of an opera, etc. After experiencing this text, the student will then write a 1000-1500 word cultural critique of the text. What does the text reveal about Italian culture? What theories or concepts do you see?