



AUF

The American  
University of Florence

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**J SCHOOL – SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM, COMMUNICATION AND PUBLISHING**

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**DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION**  
**COURSE TITLE: Intercultural Communication**  
**COURSE CODE: CPMCC190**  
**3 semester credits**

**1. DESCRIPTION**

In a pluralistic and multicultural society, it is important to provide individuals with the appropriate tools to develop balanced and integrated personalities that are capable of social interaction with sensitivity and a wide understanding. A skillful communication creates positive relationships and working teams as well as social groups including individuals from different cultures, religious beliefs, sexual preferences, age, and physical characteristics. In order to arrive at this form of intercultural communication, it is necessary to acquire basic competencies and psychological knowledge of the logic-verbal, intuitive, and creative areas. Course topics analyze the subjectivity of perception, the influence of cultural patterns on identity, the interdependence of contemporary life and working contexts, and the capacity to acquire useful skills and experience for effective communication.

**2. OBJECTIVES**

The course aims at providing students with instruments of knowledge, comprehension, application, evaluation and synthesis on the topic by being able to:

- Recognize and analyse key elements of cultural identity and the relationship with diversity
- Identify characteristics, components and variables of culture as a framework for communication
- Define and explain basic components of Intercultural Awareness, Sensitivity and Competence
- Outline basic principles and patterns for effective intercultural communication
- Indicate, analyse and compare key cognitive, behavioural, emotional and ethical aspects of of intercultural-communication
- Reflect on examples of effective interaction in a multi-cultural context
- Translate the theoretical knowledge of the subjects specified in the syllabus into a practical on-site experience
- Organise and present a research paper on a topic by choice
- Demonstrate effective communication and presentation skills
- Enhance participation and constructive critical sense through class discussions
- Improve team performance, and embrace innovation and diversity

**3. REQUIREMENTS**

There are no prerequisites for this course.

**4. METHOD**

This course consists of lectures, class discussions, projects, and site visits within the local community. Mediums for instruction used will include, but are not limited to, interactive and hands-on activities which challenge thought processes, academic texts and studies, videos, slides, guided problem solving,

and experiential and/or field learning activities where applicable.

## **5. TEXTBOOK – FURTHER READINGS – RESOURCES**

TEXTBOOK (Copy available at the university library):

- Ting Tomei, Stella. *Communicating Across Cultures*, Guilford Press, 1999.

The textbook is mandatory for successful completion of the course.

Where applicable, additional materials, handouts and/or notes will be provided by the instructor.

### **FURTHER READINGS**

- Asante M.K, Miike Y. and Yin J., *The global intercultural Reader*, Routledge, 2008
- Bolte Taylor J., *My stroke of insight*, Hodder, 2009
- Conley C., *Emotional equations*, Piatkus, 2013
- Conley C., *Peak: How Great Companies Get Their Mojo from Maslow*, First Edition ed., 2007
- Ekman, P. & Davidson, R., *The nature of emotions, fundamental questions*, NY, Oxford Univ. Press, 1994
- Damasio A., *Descartes' error: emotion, reason and the human brain*, Harcourt, NY, 1999
- Davidson R., Goleman D., *Training the brain: cultivating emotional intelligence*, Morethansound Store, 2008
- Gardner H., Damon W., Csikszentmihalyi M., *Good Work: When Excellence and Ethics Meet*, Perseus Publishing, 2002
- Goleman D., *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Social Relationships*, Bantam Dell Pub., 2006
- Gordon T., *Leaders effectiveness*, Berkeley Publ. Group, 1997
- Howard G., *Five minds for the future*, Harvard Business School Publ., 2009
- Iacoboni M., *Mirroring people. The new science of how we connect with others*, Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, New York, 2008
- Jandt F.E., *An introduction to Intercultural Communication. Identities in a global community*, Sage Publ., Seventh Edition, 2012
- Lakoff G., *The political mind: a cognitive scientist's guide to your brain and its politics*, 2009
- Lewus R.D., *Cross Cultural Communication. A visual approach*, Transcreen Publ., 1999
- Matsumoto D., *Nonverbal Communication: Science and Applications*, Sage Publications, 2012
- Matsumoto D., *Culture and Psychology*, Wadsworth Publishing Co Inc, 5th revised ed 2012
- McDaniel E., Samovar L., Porter R., *Intercultural Communication: A Reader*, Wadsworth Publishing Co Inc, revised ed, 2011
- Medina J., *Brain rules: 12 principles for surviving and thriving at work, home and school*, Pear Press, 2009
- Rogers E. M.& Steinfatt T.M., *Intercultural Communication*, Waveland Press, 1999
- Wallace A., *The attention revolution. Unlocking the power of focused mind*, Wisdom Publ., 2008

### **LIBRARIES IN FLORENCE**

Please consult the posted schedules for official opening times of the university library. Also note that the library is for consultation only and it is not possible to borrow materials. The library is equipped with a scanner and internet access so that you may save or email a digital copy of the pages needed.

Students may also utilize additional libraries and research centers within the local community:

**BIBLIOTECA PALAGIO DI PARTE GUELFA**

Located in Piazzetta di Parte Guelfa between Piazza della Repubblica and Ponte Vecchio. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca\\_palagio\\_di\\_parte\\_guelfa/](http://www.biblioteche.comune.fi.it/biblioteca_palagio_di_parte_guelfa/)

**BIBLIOTECA DELLE OBLATE**

Located in via dell'Oriuolo 26. Please consult the library website for hours of operation:

[www.bibliotecadelleoblade.it](http://www.bibliotecadelleoblade.it)

**THE HAROLD ACTON LIBRARY AT THE BRITISH INSTITUTE OF FLORENCE**

Located in Lungarno Guicciardini 9. Please consult the library website for hours of operation. This library requires a fee-based student membership. For information: [www.britishinstitute.it/en](http://www.britishinstitute.it/en)

## **6. FIELD LEARNING**

Please consult your Official Registration for any mandatory field learning dates. Field Learning Activities cited in Official Registrations are an integral part of the course and also include an assignment that counts towards your final grade, details will be provided on the first day of class.

## **7. COURSE MATERIALS**

No additional course materials are necessary.

## **8. COURSE FEES**

Course fees cover course-related field learning activities, visits, and support the instructor's teaching methodologies. Book costs are not included in the course fee. The exact amount will be communicated by the instructor on the first day of class.

## **9. EVALUATION – GRADING SYSTEM**

10% Attendance

10% Participation

15% Assignments

20% Midterm exam

25% Final Exam

20% Research Paper (including Oral Presentation)

A = 93-100 %, A- = 90-92%, B+= 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B-=80-82%, C+ = 77-79%, C=73-76%, C- =70-72%, D = 60-69%, F= 0-59%, W = Official Withdrawal, W/F = Failure to withdraw by the designated date.

## **10. ATTENDANCE – PARTICIPATION**

Academic integrity and mutual respect between instructor and student are central to the academic policy and reflected in the attendance regulations. Student presence is mandatory and counts toward the final grade.

**Absences** are based on academic hours: 1 absence equals 3 lecture hours.

Two absences: 6 lecture hours, attendance and participation grade will be impacted.

Three absences: 9 lecture hours, the final grade may be lowered by one letter grade.

Four absences: 12 lecture hours, constitutes automatic failure of the course regardless of when absences are incurred.

Please note:

- The above hours refer to lecture hours. Please note that the contact / credit hour policy in

the academic catalog includes additional distribution ratios according to delivery category. Ex: 1 absence equals 6 FL/SL/Lab hours or 9 EL hours.

- Hours may be distributed in different formats according to the academic course schedules.

#### LATE ARRIVAL AND EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late or departing early from class is not acceptable. Two late arrivals or early departures or a combination will result in an unexcused absence. Travel is not an exceptional circumstance.

#### TRAVEL (OR DELAYS DUE TO TRAVEL) IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR ABSENCE FROM CLASS.

It is the student's responsibility to know how many absences are incurred. If in doubt, speak with your instructor!

**Participation:** Satisfactory participation will be the result of contributing to class discussions by putting forth insightful and constructive questions, comments and observations. Overall effort, cooperation during group work, proper care of work space and tools, responsible behavior, and completion of assignments will be assessed. All of the above criteria also apply to Field Learning and site visits.

## 11. EXAMS – PAPERS – PROJECTS

Note: be aware that the date and time of the exams cannot be changed for any reason so organise your personal schedule accordingly.

- Students are required to do the assigned readings for each lesson.

- Home Assignments aim at documenting your knowledge and understanding on specific aspects relating to the course topic and count for a 15% of the final grade. They will be checked and discussed in class.

Please be aware that late assignments will not be accepted in any form and the related grade for that assignment will be F corresponding to 0 points. The text of the assignments is in the online course folder and the specific instructions will be given in class in their due time.

There will be a Midterm and a Final Exam on lectures and readings of the course.

Midterm exam counts for 20% of the final course grade.

Final Exam counts for 25% of the final course grade. It's not cumulative.

Format: both exams are divided in two sections:

Part I: Short-answer questions requiring students to answer with concise explanations of main ideas, key words and concepts, based on readings from the course-pack and lesson material.

Part II: Essay questions requiring a depth and width of analysis and not simply the description of factual occurrences.

Each correct and complete answer will be marked with the relevant points, summing up to 100 points in case of all perfect answers.

A complete answer consists in accurate and complete factual explanations, analysis or definitions, clear expression of personal opinions with appropriate language style, correct spelling and punctuation.

- Research Paper counts for a 20% of the final course grade.

The Research Paper is a Group Research (to be realised in small groups of at least 3 students that need to be formed and communicated to the instructor by Lesson 4.

Research is meant to discover information and explore ideas. The group work aims at stimulating creativity, the capacity to work well in teams and employing critical thinking skills.

Furthermore, it aims at assessing multiple viewpoints on potentially challenging juridical, historical or ethical issues. Working with teammates gives you the opportunity to consider and weigh alternative

perspectives and opinions that you might not have considered working on your own. The topic selected has to be communicated after the midterm break and see the addendum for the deadline of its submission and detailed explanations. Research papers will be discussed in class.

## 12. LESSONS

<b>Lesson 1</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Introduction to the course Intercultural Awareness, Competence and Sensitivity in the age of globalization
<b>Objectives</b>	Inform on the level, requirements, and main contents of the course; Define and explain basic concepts of Intercultural Awareness, Competence and Sensitivity
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Ting-Toomey, Ch 1 "Intercultural Communication: An Introduction" and Ch 10 "Attending to Intercultural and Intergroup Conflict Issues"

<b>Lesson 2</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Culture as a context for communication. Recognizing own's culture to know the others': Elements, Function, Characteristics, Components of Culture Intergroup encounters: Cultural Distance - Elements, Levels
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify key elements, characteristics, components and function of culture as a framework for communication Identify components and levels of cultural distance in intergroup encounters
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Co-Cultures: living in a multicultural society Read: Ting-Toomey, Ch 5 "Developing Intercultural and Intergroup Communication Competence: A Mindfulness Lens" and Ch 6 "Cultural Value Dimensions and Intercultural Encounters"

<b>Lesson 3</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Key components and effective Intercultural verbal Communication The Dynamic Model of Intercultural Sensitivity and the Process of Intercultural Communication
<b>Objectives</b>	Outline basic components, principles and patterns for effective intercultural verbal communication Identify stages of the intercultural communication and intercultural sensitivity processes
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Bennett M., A developmental model of intercultural sensitivity Read: Ting-Toomey, Ch 7 "Mindful intercultural verbal communication" Assignment: ASSIGNMENT #1 - FOR NEXT LESSON

<b>Lesson 4</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Effective Intercultural Nonverbal Communication: reflecting identities, expressing emotions, managing conversation; the impact of posture; Culture and individual personality Overcoming cultural gaps
<b>Objectives</b>	Outline basic components, principles and patterns for effective intercultural

	nonverbal communication Identify and explain other advanced skills in communication; analyse the role of attitude on communication; analyse the impact of culture on individual personality
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Ting-Toomey, Ch 7 “Mindful intercultural verbal communication” cont.

<b>Lesson 5</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Emotions as social skills and the role of empathy; Mirror Neurons: biology of interdependence and the role of intentional positive attitude. How we think - The Subjectivity of perception
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify key the role of emotions as social skills and the scientific explanations for empathy; Analyse the biology of perception of reality
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Medina John, Brain rules Read: Kabat-Zinn Jon, “Meditation - Odysseus and the blind seer” in Coming to our senses

<b>Lesson 6</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	The role of Attention and the practical training to enhance it; Training attention in schools and corporate world Review for the Midterm Exam
<b>Objectives</b>	Analyse the role and potentiality of focused attention Identify and experience the basic practice to enhance awareness and attention; clarify questions on the content of the exam
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Kabat-Zinn Jon, “Presence,” “The power of attention and the dis-ease of the world,” “A.D.D. Nation,” “24/7 Connectivity,” “Continual partial attention” in Coming to our senses Read: Wallace Alan, “Introduction” in The attention revolution: unlocking the power of a focused mind Assignment: ASSIGNMENT #2 - FOR NEXT LESSON

<b>Lesson 7</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	MIDTERM EXAM

<b>Lesson 8</b>	
<b>NA</b>	ACADEMIC BREAK

<b>Lesson 9</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Individual identity and Cultural membership: understanding issues of “belonging” Identity Negotiation Theory
<b>Objectives</b>	Recognize and analyse key elements of cultural identity and the conflictual relationship between individuality and communality
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Identity: Issues of Belonging Read: Ferrucci Piero, “Sense of belonging,” “Respect,” “Flexibility” in The power of kindness, 2006 Read: Ting-Toomey, Ch 2 “Intercultural–Intergroup Engagement: An Integrative Identify Negotiation Theory Framework” and Ch 11 “Attuning to Intercultural–

	Intimate Relationship Development Processes” Assignment: ASSIGNMENT #3 - FOR NEXT LESSON
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<b>Lesson 10</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Approaching differences in a constructive way: Mindful and Effective cultural conflict management Bridging cultures: human values beyond differences
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify the conflictual relationship with diversity and reflect on examples of effective interaction in problematic multi-cultural contexts
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Ting-Toomey, Ch 11 “Attending to Intercultural and Intergroup Conflict Issues” Assignment: ASSIGNMENT #4 - FOR NEXT LESSON

<b>Lesson 11</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Team-building as a life skills for working in diverse groups Emotional literacy Emotions - Function, characteristics, elements Constructive emotional behaviour
<b>Objectives</b>	Study and reflect on key elements for working effectively in diverse groups Identify the role, the components and the characteristics of emotions and their constructive management
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Ekman Paul, “Emotions revealed,” selected pages Read: Hain, “Understanding Emotional Intelligence”

<b>Lesson 12</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Emotions: Domains, Themes and Scripts Effective communication to an audience - Principles and Techniques to skilfully design and delivery a presentation
<b>Objectives</b>	Identify emotional domains and themes and individual scripts Identify key components for skilfully communicating to an audience
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Ekman Paul, “Emotions revealed,” selected pages

<b>Lesson 13</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	From intercultural to transcultural ethics: perspectives for the future Role models in building bridges
<b>Objectives</b>	Analyse latest reflections on social ethics; Illustrate and discuss effective examples of intercultural effectiveness Demonstrate effective communication and presentation skills
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Communicating Interculturally: becoming competent Read: Ting-Toomey, Ch 12 “Becoming Ethical Intercultural Practitioners and Improving Communication Practices” Cultural context: the influence of the setting Read: Gardner Howard, “Five minds for the future,” 2008

<b>Lesson 14</b>	
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<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	Exploring our potential and developing a global “We” Review for the Final Exam
<b>Objectives</b>	Analyze the debate on global interdependence Demonstrate effective communication and presentation skills; clarify questions on the content of the exam
<b>Readings/ Assignments</b>	Read: Jeremy Rifkin, “The Age of Empathy,” 2010

<b>Lesson 15</b>	
<b>Meet</b>	In class
<b>Lecture</b>	FINAL EXAM