**General Education Course Inclusion Proposal**

**PERSPECTIVES ON DIVERSITY**

*This proposal form is intended for departments proposing a course for inclusion in the Northern Michigan University General Education Program. Courses in a component satisfy both the Critical Thinking and the component learning outcomes. Departments should complete this form and submit it electronically through the General Education SHARE site.*

**Course Name and Number: Intercultural Communication, BC 415**

**Home Department: Communication and Performance Studies**

**Department Chair Name and Contact Information** (phone, email): Dr. Jim Cantrill, 227-2061, jcantril@nmu.edu

**Expected frequency of Offering of the course** (e.g. every semester, every fall): Every Winter and Summer

**Official Course Status**: Has this course been approved by CUP and Senate? **YES**

*Courses that have not yet been approved by CUP must be submitted to CUP prior to review by GEC. Note that GEC is able to review courses that are in the process of approval; however, inclusion in the General Education Program is dependent upon Senate and Academic Affairs approval of the course into the overall curriculum.*

**Overview of course** (please attach a current syllabus as well): *Please limit the overview to two pages (not including the syllabus)*

1. Overview of the course content

BC 415 Intercultural Communication is an interdisciplinary, interactive class designed to provide an introduction to intercultural questions stemming from the growing diversity and interconnectedness of the United States and the world. In order to develop a foundational level of cross-cultural competency, this course will challenge students to learn about the ways people from different cultural backgrounds think, communicate, and behave based on the value systems, worldviews, and narratives that ground them.

BC 415 is not only designed to teach student how to behave in certain foreign cultures. Actually, the more important purpose of it is to help students understand the issues and debates in intercultural studies, such as power relations, stereotyping, racism, intercultural conflicts in historical and political contexts, as well as engage them to critical analysis of the culture-related issues theoretically, politically, and empirically. Also they are required to critically evaluate existing theories and concepts in intercultural communication.

The first part of this course is focused on building awareness and a basic understanding of cultural formation, perception, communication, and behavior on the interpersonal level. The second part of the course emphasizes historical and theoretical knowledge, building frameworks from the history of diversity in the USA and established theories in the field for critical analysis and understanding of intercultural engagement. The third phase of the course focuses on building the skills needed to apply knowledge to address issues of dehumanization, cross-cultural conflict, and social integration including issues involving ethnic, racial, gender, and class differences.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

* Recognize/recall and define specified terms of cultural analysis.
* Explain theories related to intercultural communication.
* Interpret behaviors of another culture within that culture’s own framework of meaning.
* Identify and explain the influence of context—especially history, power, and social/spiritual value orientations—in intercultural interactions.
* Apply intercultural communication concepts/theories to personal experiences, social interactions/observations, and media representations of interactions involving members of different cultures.
* Identify cross-cultural ethical principles.
* Apply ethical standards to intercultural communication cases.
* Assess your own competence and character in relating with culturally different others.

1. Explain why this course satisfies the Component specified and significantly addresses both learning outcomes.

The overview of the course shows that the goals of the course align well with all of the four dimensions of the “Perspectives on Diversity” component as well as the three dimensions of the “Critical Thinking” component.

**Social Responsibility in a Diverse World** has four outcomes:

Knowledge of cultural worldviews – In this class, students have opportunities to learn about foundational principles of intercultural communication from the fields of social psychology, cultural anthropology, media and communication theory with selected areas of personal application. Also, they have assignments which give them opportunities to find the history of diversity of the US society and to understand a certain culture (which is not their own) in a comparatively thorough way.

Intercultural awareness – Throughout the course, students will learn how to move out of ethnocentrism to interpret other cultures within that culture’s own framework of meaning and value. Students are also trained to be respectful of cultural differences.

Intercultural engagement – In this class, students are required to learn about a certain culture which is not their own. To complete this assignment, they are supposed to interview people from that culture and people who have been to that culture in person.

Ethnic issue recognition – In this class, students are required to identify cross-cultural ethical principles and apply ethical standards to intercultural communication cases.

**Critical Thinking** has three outcomes:

Evidence – In order to complete their assignments and take part in in-class discussion, students are to read and apply support from the required text chapters and class handouts. Also, they complete a literature review based on library research to acquire quality evidence and credible cultural information.

Integrate – Students are required to understand the core arguments of important cultural and intercultural concepts and theories. Also, they are required to learn how to apply that knowledge to personal experiences, social interactions/observations, and media representations of interactions involving members of different cultures.

Evaluate – Students are encouraged to critique and criticize the existing knowledge, concepts, and theories to find out which aspects are or are not applicable to the current society, some of which may have changed significantly from the time when such concepts/theories were first proposed.

1. Describe the target audience (level, student groups, etc.)

The course targets juniors and seniors in all majors, although advanced individuals of lower standing should be able to successfully complete it, too. The course is applicable to all students who would like to be a competent intercultural communicator in our diverse world. Students considering careers that mandate intercultural communication competence in some way would also benefit.

1. Give information on other roles this course may serve (e.g. University Requirement, required for a major(s), etc.)

In addition to currently carrying World Cultures credit, BC 415 is an elective for the following programs: Communication Studies (major & minor), Public Relations (major), Media Production & New Technology (major), and Media Studies (minor). It also is elective for majors in international studies.

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
CRITICAL THINKING**

*Attainment of the CRITICAL THINKING Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Critical Thinking Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this area. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| DIMENSION | DIMENSION  GUIDANCE | PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT |
| Evidence | Assesses quality of information that may be integrated into an argument | Task Type: Multiple Choice & Essay Examinations, papers, in-class presentations, and research projects. (subject to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)  Frequency: At least twice a semester  Overall Grading Weight: 30%  Expected Proficiency rates: As a 400-level course, BC 415 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.  *How the assessment fits the dimension:*  Quality of information may be defined in terms of accuracy, relevance, or credibility in the context of an issue or situation being considered. Instructors can measure this in exams by analyzing whether students choose or provide the most correct information when answering a question. For example, a question may present a case of intercultural conflict and ask students to select the most applied theory/concept for addressing the situation. In papers, presentations, discussions, and projects, instructors will assess whether students use information that is deemed accurate, relevant, and credible according to accepted standards in scholarly communication research. |
| Integrate | Integrates insight and or reasoning with previous understanding to reach informed conclusions and/or understanding | Task Type: Multiple Choice & Essay Examinations, papers, in-class presentations, and research projects. (subject to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)  Frequency: At least twice a semester  Overall Grading Weight: 30%  Expected Proficiency rates: As a 400-level course, BC 415 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.  *How the assessment fits the dimension:*  Instructors may assess students’ integration of insight with existing understanding through exams by asking questions that require students to integrate the course material. For example, a question may ask students to analyze the current issues in global migration through a historical lens. Papers, presentations, discussions, and/or projects require students to integrate concepts from class with reality and/or personal experiences, commonly debated issues, or other concepts from class to explain phenomena, predict outcomes, or find solutions to problems. |
| Evaluate | Evaluates information, ideas, and activities according to established principles and guidelines | Task Type: Multiple Choice & Essay Examinations, papers, in-class presentations, and research projects. (subject to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)  Frequency: At least twice a semester  Overall Grading Weight: 30%  Expected Proficiency rates: As a 400-level course, BC 415 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.  *How the assessment fits the dimension:*  Instructors may assess students’ evaluation abilities through exams by presenting questions that require students to evaluate the existing intercultural theories and concepts. For example, a question may present the major argument of a case of failed intercultural communication and ask students to analyze it through different theoretical and/or conceptual perspectives. Likewise papers, presentations, discussions and projects allow assessment of students’ evaluation abilities through analysis of students’ use of concepts and the conclusions they reach. For example, students will need to evaluate whether a theory/concept proposed in the 1980s still applies to current society. |

**PLAN FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES  
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A DIVERSE WORLD**

*Attainment of the SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN A DIVERSE WORLD Learning Outcome is required for courses in this component. There are several dimensions to this learning outcome. Please complete the following Plan for Assessment with information regarding course assignments (type, frequency, importance) that will be used by the department to assess the attainment of students in each of the dimensions of the learning outcome. Type refers to the types of assignments used for assessment such as written work, presentations, etc. Frequency refers to the number of assignments included such as a single paper or multiple papers. Importance refers to the relative emphasis or weight of the assignment to the entire course. For each dimension, please specify the expected success rate for students completing the course that meet the proficiency level and explain your reasoning. Please refer to the Critical Thinking Rubric for more information on student performance/proficiency in this area. Note that courses are expected to meaningfully address all dimensions of the learning outcome.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| DIMENSION | DIMENSION GUIDANCE | PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT |
| Knowledge of cultural  worldview frameworks | Knowledge of  elements  important to members of  another culture | Task Type: Multiple Choice & Essay Examinations, papers, in-class presentations, and research projects. (subject to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)  Frequency: At least twice a semester  Overall Grading Weight: 30%  Expected Proficiency rates: As a 400-level course, BC 415 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.  *How the assessment fits the dimension:* Exam questions, papers, presentations, discussions, and/or projects are designed for students to understand and analyze certain cultural practices against the background of the corresponding culture. For example, the question may present the gifting customs in Israel and ask student what values/worldview is embedded in these customs. |
| Intercultural Awareness | Awareness of multiple  cultural perspectives | Task Type: Multiple Choice & Essay Examinations, papers, in-class presentations, and research projects. (subject to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)  Frequency: At least twice a semester  Overall Grading Weight: 30%  Expected Proficiency rates: As a 400-level course, BC 415 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.  *How the assessment fits the dimension:*  The assessment for knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks may also apply to this dimension. That is, exam questions, papers, presentations, discussions, and/or projects are designed for students to understand and analyze certain cultural practices against the background of the corresponding culture. |
| Intercultural Engagement | Being willing to engage with  cultures  other than one’s  own | Task Type: Multiple Choice & Essay Examinations, papers, in-class presentations, and research projects. (subject to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)  Frequency: At least twice a semester  Overall Grading Weight: 30%  Expected Proficiency rates: As a 400-level course, BC 415 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.  *How the assessment fits the dimension:*  For example, the complete the final research project, students are required to interview people from other cultures. Their interview transcripts are supposed to be handed in along with their final paper, for the instructors to evaluate. |
| Ethic Issues Recognition | Awareness of ethical issues  as they relate to cultures | Task Type: Multiple Choice & Essay Examinations, papers, in-class presentations, and research projects. (subject to rubric analysis independent of grading scale)  Frequency: At least twice a semester  Overall Grading Weight: 30%  Expected Proficiency rates: As a 400-level course, BC 415 presents students with advanced-level readings and theories. Students are required to understand and evaluate complex concepts and use those concepts in forming their own thoughts and arguments. They are required to meet professional standards of scholarship. This may be difficult for students who are not prepared or motivated to meet this level of rigor. Thus, the criterion level is 75%.  *How the assessment fits the dimension:*  Exam questions, papers, presentations, discussions, and/or projects are designed for students to find out the ethical issues behind certain situations of intercultural communication. For example, the question may present a joke relevant with intercultural communication or media’s representation of a certain culture and ask students to point out the hidden ethical issues. |

The Syllabus

BC 415 Intercultural Communication

Winter 2014

Tuesdays and Thursdays 4:00-5:40pm

TFA 312

Dr. Shuang Xie

211 Thomas Fine Arts Building

[sxie@nmu.edu](mailto:sxie@nmu.edu)

227-1644

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00am – 2:00pm

**Course Description and Objectives**

1. Course Description

Intercultural Communication is an interdisciplinary, interactive class designed to provide an introduction to intercultural questions stemming from the growing diversity and interconnectedness of the United States and the world. In order to develop a foundational level of cross-cultural competency, this course will challenge students to learn about the ways people from different cultural backgrounds think, communicate, and behave based on the value systems, worldviews, and narratives that ground them.

The first part of this course is focused on building awareness and a basic understanding of cultural formation, perception, communication, and behavior on the interpersonal level. The second part of the course will emphasize historical and theoretical knowledge, building frameworks from the history of diversity in the USA and established theories in the field for critical analysis and understanding of intercultural engagement. The third phase of the course will focus on building the skills needed to apply their knowledge to address issues of dehumanization, cross-cultural conflict, and social integration including issues involving ethnic, racial, gender, and class differences.

1. Objectives

By the end of the course, you will be able to:

* Recognize/recall and define specified terms of cultural analysis
* Explain theories related to intercultural communication
* Interpret behaviors of another culture within that culture’s own framework of meaning
* Identify and explain the influence of context—especially history, power, and social/spiritual value orientations—in intercultural interactions
* Apply intercultural communication concepts/theories to personal experiences, social interactions/observations, and media representations of interactions involving members of different cultures
* Identify cross-cultural ethical principles
* Apply ethical standards to intercultural communication cases
* Assess your own competence and character in relating with culturally different others

**Required Textbook**

Martin, J. & Nakayama, T. (2009) Intercultural communication in contexts (5th

Ed.). Boston: McGraw Hill.

The instructor may provide other materials and additional readings in the form of handouts.

NOTE: I deliberately set the course objectives to make sure they are not only motivating students to learn, but also practical and reachable. I also carefully choose and design the class assignments to make sure they not only help students learning but also help myself to measure the course outcomes. After the final grades have been submitted, I will closely review students’ performance on each assignment use the following rubric to subjectively assess the outcomes of the class.

Course Appraisal

Student A Obj. 1 Obj. 2 Obj. 3 Obj. 4 Obj. 5 Obj. 6 Average

Student B Obj. 1 Obj. 2 Obj. 3 Obj. 4 Obj. 5 Obj. 6 Average

Student C Obj. 1 Obj. 2 Obj. 3 Obj. 4 Obj. 5 Obj. 6 Average

Student D Obj. 1 Obj. 2 Obj. 3 Obj. 4 Obj. 5 Obj. 6 Average

AVERAG Obj. 1 Obj. 2 Obj. 3 Obj. 4 Obj. 5 Obj. 6 Average

OVERALL AVERAGE

5 = Very Well: Demonstrates an exceptional performance in the category being assessed. Information is provided in a thorough manner and indicates a high level of cognitive understanding. This rating would be equivalent to an ‘A’ in a course.

4 = Well: Demonstrates a good performance in the category being assessed that is clearly above average, but still has areas where there could be notable improvement. Information is provided in a comprehensible manner and indicates a reasonably good level of cognitive understanding. This rating would be equivalent to a “B” in a course.

3 = Adequately: Demonstrates a minimally acceptable performance in the category being assessed, and has areas that would benefit from significant improvement. Information is provided in a manner that is sufficient and indicates a relatively basic level of cognitive understanding. This rating would be equivalent to a “C” in a course.

2 = Inadequately: Demonstrates a performance that would not be minimally acceptable in the category being assessed. Information is provided in a manner that is not sufficient and indicates a lack of cognitive understanding. This rating would be equivalent to a “D” in a course.

**Course Requirements**

This is a 400-levle course; as such, it requires you to critically reflect on readings, apply theoretical concepts to contemporary social issues and your own experience, and analyze, compare, and evaluate different ways of viewing intercultural communication. You are expected both to master fundamental content and explore chosen issues deeply so as to apply them to intercultural experiences. The course will provide you with opportunities for cultural exposure through lectures, group discussions, oral presentations, and intercultural performance.

The graded activities and assignments include two in-class activities and a term paper. I describe them briefly right here and I will provide more specific information in separate handouts.

*Presentation of Ethnic America*

This presentation will be 20 minutes.

I will grade your presentation on your ability to:

* Develop, research, and organize your ideas.
* Deliver an effective, comprehensive, and successful presentation of these ideas within the allotted time.
* Demonstrate an understanding of basic principles of effective communication in the intercultural context.

Note: I strongly recommend you to use visual aids such as PowerPoint to help with your presentation.

*Theory/Concept Paper:*

This is an opportunity for you to clarify your perceptions and understandings on the concept of culture, cultural differences, cultural theories and other related aspects of intercultural communication.

You are required to select a theory or a concept in intercultural communication and write a summary and critique about its core argument. This paper should be typed, double-spaced, 12 point font, and 6-8 pages.

*Understanding a Certain Culture (Dyadic Group work)*

This is an opportunity to understand a certain culture in a comparative thorough way. You and your partner need to select a certain cultural group and try to learn as much about it as possible. The means include but not limited to interviewing the people from that group, interviewing the people who have been there, watching movies, and reading books/articles relevant with the culture. You are supposed to hand in your interview transcripts and notes in other forms, and a paper of 8-10 pages. Also you and your partner will present your findings in class. The presentation is supposed to be 15 minutes.

Note: I will hand out additional detailed prompts for each assignment at appropriate time.

*Mid-term and Final Exams*

There are two exams: one mid-term and a final. Both of them aim at testing your knowledge and understanding of important vocabulary and concepts presented and discussed in class and that appear in the readings. The format of the exams will be multiple choices, true/false, and short essay type.

*Participation*

Do your reading before we cover the topic in class and come with some questions and comments that you want to talk about. Use class time to get clarification for answers before exams – it’s better that way! Being prepared and participating makes the class more interesting for you and others, and it’ll help you learn more.

**Please notice (very important and strict):**

**The consequence of not being able to complete the above assignments /exams on the due dates may be 50% percent off what you earn.**

**Grading**

Each Assignment described under the heading of Class Activities and Assignments earns up to the following total number of points:

Examinations (2X40) 80

Presentation of an ethnic group 20

Theory/concept paper 40

Understanding a certain culture (paper and interview transcript) 50

Presentation of your selected certain culture group 20

Participation and Attendance 40 (20 for class attendance and in-participation and 20 for EduCat participation)

Total 250

Letter Grades Ranges

90% or above of the total A 225

87.5—89.5% of the total A- 218

85%--87% of the total B+ 212

80% -- 84.5% of the total B 200

77.5%--79.5% of the total B- 193

75%--77% of the total C+ 187

70% -- 74.5% of the total C 175

65% -- 69.5% of the total C-

60%--64.5% of the total D

59% and below F

**The Instructor’s Expectations**

1. Attendance and Participation

Provided that this is a participation-intensive course, your attendance is crucial. In each class, I will have an attendance sign-in sheet passed around. Signing-in for an absent friend will not be tolerated, and anyone one caught doing so will be significantly penalized.

You should attend all classes, and arrive promptly at the start of each class. Students who are absent on more than two occasions during the semester, or who are persistently late to class, will lose marks progressively unless they can show very strong cause. 6 or more unexplained or insufficiently justified absences will likely lead to a Fail grade. Talking in class other than in the context of task-related discussions and activities that I have initiated will be similarly penalized. Cell phones must be turned off. Laptops are not permitted unless I request.

1. Other Expectations

Academic Misconduct Cheating in any form compromises your grade and lowers the quality of your diploma. As a college student, it is your responsibility to know what constitutes cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating academic dishonesty (See the NMU Student Handbook http://dso.nmu.edu/handbook). To clarify, using someone’s work without giving that person proper credit (e.g., properly citing them) or passing other people’s work off as your own is considered plagiarism regardless of whether you got the material from a book, the Web, a video or your best friend. Academic dishonesty may result in anything from a zero on an assignment to expulsion from the university. If you are ever in doubt as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, talk to me!

*Laptops and cell phone*

Laptops are not allowed in class unless I request.

Cell phone MUST be turned off.

*Email*

Email is the best way to communicate with me outside of the classroom. I try to reply to students as soon as possible provided I am not stuck by a major task. But I usually do not reply emails which inform me reasons or excuses of absence. Also, I usually do not check emails on weekends. So, please do not expect a reply if you just email me to ask for a leave, and please do not expect an immediate reply if you email me on weekends.

When you are emailing me, please write “ BC 415” in the subject line and sign the email with your full name.

*Disability Services*

If you have a need for disability-related accommodations or services, please inform the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Disability Services Office at 2001 C. B. Hedgcock (227-1700). Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state, and University guidelines.

**Schedule**

Note: You are supposed to read the relevant book chapter before we discuss it in class.

Week 1

8/26 To know each other and to go through the syllabus

8/28 Chapter 1 Why Study Intercultural Communication?

Week 2

9/2 Chapter 2 The History of the Study of Intercultural Communication

9/4 Chapter 4 History of Intercultural Communication

Week 3

9/9 Chapter 3 Culture, Communication, Context, and Power

9/11 Chapter 11 Culture, communication and Conflict

Week 4

9/16 & 9/18 Movie---- Outsourced

Week 5

9/23 Chapter 6 Language and Intercultural Communication

9/25 Chapter 7 Nonverbal Codes and Cultural Space

Week 6

9/30 Chapter 8 Understanding Intercultural Transitions

10/2 Chapter 9 Intercultural communication and Pop Culture

Week 7

10/7 & 10/9 Movie--- Come see the Paradise

10/9 Mid-term exam (weeks 1-6)

Week 8

10/14 Chapter 5 Identity and Intercultural Communication

10/16 Movie – Somewhere between

Week 9

10/21 & 10/23 Striving for Engaged and Effective Intercultural Communication

10/23 concept paper due

Week 10

10/28 &10/30 Media and Intercultural Communication

Week 11

11/4 & 11/6 Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Racism

Week 12

11/11& 11/13 immigration, use of social media and global identity

Week 13

11/18 discussion of final project topics

11/20 library research and group work for the final project

Week 14

Turkey – day week (the whole week!)

Week 15

12/2 final paper due

12/2 & 12/4 presentations

Final Exam Week

Final Exam (Weeks7-15)

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class or sent to NMU email accounts.