

WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY  
PLAINVIEW CAMPUS  
SCHOOL OF FINE ARTS

**Wayland Mission Statement:** Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused, and distinctively Christian environment for professional success, and service to God and humankind.

**Course Title and Number:** Intercultural Communication (COMS 3303)

**Term:** Spring 2 2nd8WKS 2022 VC

**Name of Instructor:** Yahui Zhang, Ph.D.

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Virtual Zoom appointment

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**Class Meeting Time and Location:**

Blackboard

**Catalog Description:** Intercultural Communication – theoretical understanding of the dynamic nature of cultural-individual, personal-contextual, differences-similarities, static-dynamic, history/past-present/future, and privilege-disadvantage dialectics. Emphasis on the interplay of culture, communication, context, and power with a consideration of the social science, interpretive, and critical approaches.

**Prerequisites:** COMS 1301 or with consent of instructor

**Required Textbook and Resource Materials:**

Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2022). *Intercultural communication in contexts* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Boston: McGrawHill.

## Optional Materials:

Martin, J. N., Nakayama, T. K., & Flores, L. A. (2002). *Readings in intercultural communication* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Boston: McGrawHill.

Haidt, J. (2006). *The happiness hypothesis*. Basic Books: New York.

## Course Outcome Competencies:

1. Define identity and intercultural communication;
2. Describe the relationship between culture, communication, power, and history;
3. Name several attributes of the dialectical approach to understanding culture and communication;
4. Differentiate in writing the key intercultural communication theories;
5. List the primary steps to progress from an ethnocentric toward an ethno-relative state of understanding and acceptance of cultural differences;
6. view cultural differences objectively and understand that differences are not hierarchical;
7. Identify and evaluate the beliefs, values and norms of their own culture;
8. Demonstrate increasing ability to communicate with persons who exhibit a different worldview, value system, and communicative style.

**Attendance Requirements:** Class attendance is mandatory. Three unexcused absences will result in the loss of a letter grade. Any student who misses 25% or more of the regularly scheduled class meetings will receive a grade of 'F' in the course.

For each day you are late to class or you depart early, one point will be deducted from your total points earned. An excused absence includes illness, family emergency or funeral (call or email the professor to let her know what is happening), attendance at an approved WBU event such as athletic team competition or academic conference (bring the notice from the appropriate sponsor), or unavoidable company travel for full-time employees. No absence will be excused without the professor's approval.

**Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:** Wayland Baptist University observes a zero tolerance policy regarding academic dishonesty. Per university policy as described in the academic catalog, all cases of academic dishonesty will be reported and second offenses will result in suspension from the university.

**Disability Statement:** In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291- 3764. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

## Course Requirements and Grading Criteria:

*Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Executive Vice President/Provost to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.*

### 1. Discussion Board (80):

Each week I will post a few questions on Discussion Board. Your answer to each questions should be at least 80-100 words long and in complete sentences following the convention of good writing (5 point); and demonstrate level-two or level-three thinking (5) – you have to show your competency in applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating. [To post on Discussion Board, follow these steps: <https://wbu.blackboard.com/>, username and password, log in, My Courses, Speech Communication, Discussion Board, Forum (Week 1, 2, 3 etc.), Create Thread, Submit]. For each post, you earn 10 points.

In order to be successful in an online class, you are expected to be a fully engaged member of our learning community by participating in online discussions and activities. All discussions and activities should be completed by 9:00 am Central time the following Monday. For each missed online discussion 10 points will be deducted.

### 2. Application Projects (110 points):

a) Personal Interview and Discussion (60 points) – Interview an international student, an immigrant, a businessperson, or a faculty member regarding his/her experiences at school, in everyday life, or at work in the United States. Please elect someone to interview who is from a different culture from your own. S/he should have arrived in the United States within the past five years and should have been in an organization(s) in the US for more than one years. Focus specifically on expatriate issues such as cultural challenges faced in organization(s) in the U.S. (e.g. cultural and day-to-day challenges), unexpected differences, the experience of culture shock, and methods used to facilitate adjustment to the new culture at school or at work. You should consider doing some research on the interviewee's home country and culture and comparing it to the U.S. when analyzing the results of your interview. For details, please see Appendix A.

b) Film Analysis paper (50 points) – First, select a film that discusses some issues or aspects of intercultural communication. Next, conduct a critical analysis of the film as a cultural context, focusing on several scenes that they think are most important to the plot. For guidelines, please see Appendix B.

### 3. Term Project/Literature review (60):

This project is designed to encourage you to learn specific information about a specific topic in a specific culture. The outcome of this research project is a literature review that summarizes your research on the cultural topic you have chosen. For details, please see Appendix D.

**4. Self-intro Video (10 points):**

You will help us build an online learning community by uploading a short video clip about yourself on DB 1. Please make yourself memorable by telling us something unique about you, for example, your passion, dreams, failures, values, etc. Your speech should be between 2-3 minutes long.

**5. Quizzes (40 points):**

You will find one or two quizzes in each week's folder. They will be multiple choice questions. As long as you read the chapter, pay attention to the video lecture, and understand the most important concepts and theories, you should ace them. Each quiz is worth 5 points.

**Grading Scale**

300-270 = A 269-240 = B 239-210 = C 209-180 = D 179-Below = F

## Tentative Schedule:

Please note that this is a tentative schedule for topics that will be explored this semester. Slight changes may be made as the semester progresses. Always bring your syllabus with you to class to record any changes.

Weeks	Topics	Assignments
1	Ch. 1 & Ch. 2	DB 1
2	Ch. 3 & Ch. 4	DB 2
3	Ch. 5 & Ch. 6	DB 3
4	Ch. 7	DB 4 & Interview due
5	Ch. 8 & Ch. 9	DB 5
6	Ch. 10	DB 6 & Film analysis due
7	Ch. 11 & Ch. 12	DB 7
8	Reflections	DB 8 & Lit review due

### Part I: Foundations of Intercultural Communication

Chapter 1: Why Study Intercultural Communication?

Chapter 2: The Study of Intercultural Communication

Chapter 3: Culture, Communication, Context, and Power

Chapter 4: History and Intercultural Communication

### Part II: Intercultural Communication Processes

Chapter 5: Identity and Intercultural Communication

Chapter 6: Language and Intercultural Communication

Chapter 7: Nonverbal Codes and Cultural Space

### Part III: Intercultural Communication Applications

Chapter 8: Understanding Intercultural Transitions

Chapter 9: Popular Culture and Intercultural Communication

Chapter 10: Culture, Communication, and Intercultural Relationships

Chapter 11: Culture, Communication, and Conflict

Chapter 12: Striving for Engaged and Effective Intercultural Communication

## Appendix A

### Personal Interview and Discussion (60 points)

For this assignment, each student is required to:

1. Interview an international student, businessperson, or faculty member regarding his/her experiences at school or at work in the United States. You are required to select someone to interview who is from a different culture from your own. S/he should have arrived in the United States within the past five years and should have been in an organization(s) in the US for more than one year. Focus specifically on expatriate issues such as cultural challenges faced in the U.S. (e.g. cultural and day-to-day challenges), unexpected differences, the experience of culture shock, and methods used to facilitate adjustment to the new culture at school or at work. You should consider doing some research on the interviewee's home country and culture and comparing it to the U.S. when analyzing the results of your interview.
2. Write an analysis paper (30 points). This paper should be at least 4 pages long (double-spaced, 12-point font and error free; references and appendix are not included), written in prose format. First, in a short paragraph of 2-4 sentences, briefly give background information on the person you interviewed (e.g. his/her nationality and hometown, age, prior international experience, how long the person has been in the U.S.). Then, for the body of the assignment, delve into his/her cultural experiences in the organization(s) or various contexts in the USA. Be sure to link your analysis and discussion to topics and theories covered in the textbook and you will also need at least two research articles to substantiate your main points. Please provide in-text citations and the list of references at the end of the paper.
3. Deliver a presentation (30 points). The presentation will include a summary of your analysis and identification of two or three issues for class discussion - it will last between 10-15 minutes in total. Please record your presentation, upload it to VidGrid or YouTube, and embed your video on DB 4.

## Appendix B

### Film Analysis (50 points)

Select a film that discusses some aspects of intercultural relations in contexts. Then conduct a critical analysis of the film as a cultural context, focusing on several scenes that you think are most important to the plot. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

1. Describe the context in which the action takes place. Which elements of the film give us information about the context? How does the context affect communication patterns between the main characters?
2. Describe different identities that emerge in the course of the film. How are these identities constructed (ascription, avowal, interpellation)? How can the communication perspective help us understand the identities of the main characters? How can we use the critical perspective to understand these identities? What is the relationship between identities and context? Identify different social and cultural identities. Does the identity of any of the main characters change in the course of the film? What influenced this process?
3. How does history affect the standpoints of the main characters? What do we learn about history from the film? What is the relationship between history and identities of the main characters?
4. What can you say about communication styles and language use in the film? What did you learn about the characters from the way they use language? Identify social structures that affect how the language is used (discourse).
5. Analyze nonverbal codes and cultural space. How do the main characters use nonverbal communication? How are cultural spaces constructed in the film? Identify different elements that are used to construct these cultural spaces.
6. Identify cultural position(s) the film represents. How are the cultural positions represented in the film related to our present cultural and political contexts? To which cultural positions does the film appeal? Whose social interests (in terms of social positions) are represented in the film? Why are those and not other interests represented? How is power implicated in the social positions of the main characters?

You can choose either to answer some of the questions listed here or choose some concepts we have learned from this class. This presentation should cover at least three questions or concepts with an introduction, 2-3 main points, and a conclusion. You need to show that you have thought carefully about the content of the film by discussing the implications or applications of your observations to communication situations and how they are related to our learned knowledge/concepts/theories.

## Appendix C

Term Project: Research (Literature Review) on a Specific Culture (60 points)

Objective: To encourage students to learn specific information about a culture of personal interest.

Description: The outcome of this research project is a literature review that summarizes the student's research on the culture he/she has chosen.

### Part A: Instructions for Research Project

1. Select a culture that you wish to research.
2. Research this culture using research reports published in academic journals, published ethnographies, interviews, encyclopedias, and other published materials. A minimum of ten credible sources should be used to document information in the literature review. At least six of these sources should be research reports published in academic journals or published ethnographies. Students are encouraged to use members of the culture in their communities for two of the remaining four sources.
3. The paper should have a cover page on the front that includes the title of the paper, the course number and title, and student names.
4. The literature review itself should be 10-15 pages double-spaced, and typed in 12-point font. The literature review should begin with an introduction that identifies the culture you have chosen and why you think it is important to study. This introduction should be no more than 1 page in length. The rest of the literature review should contain a logically organized and detailed report from the available literature that answers at least 1 or 2 questions listed in Part B. In addition, this assignment should include a conclusion that summarize the main points/concepts of the paper.
5. The information included in the literature review should be cited using in-text citations (in APA style).
6. At the end of the literature review, include a "references" section that lists the full references for the citations used in the literature review. Include only those references that are actually cited.
7. Write the paper according to APA style guidelines. This especially applies to the use of in-text citations and the reference section. Note: This paper is a formal research paper and should be written in third person.
8. You are encouraged to meet with the instructor for help in completing this project. Please start your project immediately.

### Part B: Suggested Term Project Questions

1. What are some of the value differences between this culture and your own?
2. What are the predominant religious beliefs espoused by members of this culture, and how do you think these beliefs influence their behaviors in a specific context?



3. What are some nonverbal communication differences found in this culture?
4. What are some communication style differences found in this culture?
5. What are some language or dialectical differences found in this culture?
6. How are social roles/gender roles viewed in this culture?
7. Do the family structure and roles differ in this culture?
8. Are there differences in interpersonal/romantic relationships in this culture?
9. If you were a person traveling to do business in this culture, what information would you need?
10. For someone going to this culture for a study abroad or a brief work assignment, what information would aid his/her cultural adjustment?
11. How does this culture's history influence perception and communication between this culture and your own culture?
12. How does this culture's government influence perception and communication between this culture and your own culture?
13. What are some of the stereotypes people of your culture have about people in the culture you have chosen? Is there any truth to them?
14. What are some of the important trends in the popular culture?
15. How do people in this culture usually deal with conflicts of various nature?

Note: This is not a comprehensive list. Many important questions could be investigated about the culture you have chosen.