

**CMS 321W Intercultural Communication Lincoln Campus  
3 Credits 8-Week Syllabus**

**Instructor: Dr. Don Dickerson 402-770-1149; DrD1@neb.rr.com**

**This class meets for eight (8) sessions. We begin this class Monday, 17 March 2008, and we end Monday, 05 May 2008. Classes begin at 6:00 PM sharp and end at 10:30 PM. We meet every Monday, at 6:00 PM sharp and end not later than 10:30 PM,**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Communication among cultures in the interpersonal and organizational context. Differences in communication behaviors due to nationality, ethnicity, and social status are explored. Students study their own cultures, as well as the cultures of others, to develop greater awareness of patterns of thinking, beliefs, assumptions, values, and cultural norms, which influence communication (verbal, nonverbal, and listening) behaviors. Various guest speakers will present. This course fulfills the Cultural Perspectives requirement of the Doane Plan.

**CMS 321 Intercultural Communication**

**The What? Want an exciting and challenging adventure to discover better communication skills that affect you, the people you know and work with, and the rest of the world? Come join us for a life-changing experience! For personal and professional growth, this class makes a significant difference. Our goal: it's about opening and expanding our minds to explore cultures, groups, nations, and how we can communicate better. It's recognizing our connectedness and our common humanity.**

**The Why? So we can collaborate to build a better and happier community not only around us, but also globally.**

**The How? In every class guest speakers present a topic to open our minds, invite discussion, and help us remove our scotomas, leading us to improved intercultural communication. Some past topics include: people with disabilities; Spanish-speaking cultures; GLBTI people (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex people); religion/government relations; Asian cultures; Muslims; HIV infected people; gender communication; critical listening skills, and others. The richness of shared experiences and stories of class members, along with our knowledge and talents, will enhance our ability to communicate with people more effectively, whoever they are.**

**This class is so good we will let it fulfill a major requirement for Organizational Communication majors and either the International/Multicultural requirement or a Liberal Learning requirement for the Doane Plan.**

**The Who? It's about us and the various relationships we have with people everywhere. They come from all walks of life, with many experiences, from many backgrounds and cultures, and many talents to share, as do we. How we connect with others lies at the heart of intercultural communication. We and all others are "The Who."**

### **READINGS (Required)**

- A class notebook (referred to as "CN") on related topics pertinent to the course description will be distributed at the beginning of the class. Professor may assign other reading during the course from written handouts and/or Internet Web sites. Handouts given by speakers.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To develop a greater awareness and understanding of various types of people in cultures and sub cultures, in order to communicate and connect more effectively with them.
2. To foster an attitude of open-mindedness and a willingness to invest time in understanding the benefits of valuing diversity and the commitment to honor it;
3. To learn and practice listening skills to communicate more effectively;
4. To examine fears, prejudices, stereotypes, and myths regarding classes of people, cultures, sub cultures, different professions, or other ways that create scotomas;
5. To know how xenophobia, ethnocentrism, and scotomas block effective communication and disconnect us from others, and to determine practical ways to break down these barriers and confidently replace them with what can work.

**“It ain’t what you don’t know that gets you into trouble. It’s what you know for sure that ain’t so.” (Mark Twain)**

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. Attendance and active participation in class discussion and activities.
2. Read and study handouts and articles in CN (class notebook) and additional handouts given in class by speakers and/or professor. **Keep up with emails from professor.**  
**Note:** You must have an e-mail address to use for this class and Internet access. The more e-mail addresses you provide, such as home, work, and other, the better and faster we can communicate in terms of assignments and their assessment, or any other important information or question you or I may have. If you cannot access your work e-mail at home when I send you an e-mail, and it is a weekend or holiday, you will not likely get it until you return to work after the weekend or holiday. Or if you give my only your home e-mail address, then you may have to wait until you get home to retrieve the e-mail. On occasion, the e-mail in question may be important to you.
3. **Computer generate all assignments online, using Microsoft Word and following format given you by professor. You will attach assignments to your e-mail as a Microsoft Word document.**
4. See assignments section below, for explanation of other course requirements.

**COURSE POLICIES**

**Attendance.** Attendance is an expectation, not an option. It should be clear from the course description, course objectives, and course requirements that class participation is critical to learning. Each class you fully attend merits 45 points.

You must negotiate with professor for any missed class within three (3) days of the missed class. If you do not contact the professor within three (3) days of your absence, you forfeit 50 points. Except for extraordinary circumstances, missing more than two classes results in a failure. You can merit an A if you miss only one class and you do quality makeup work for 25 points. Thus, 25 of 50 points (which a fully attended class merits) can be gained for that missed class. [This applies only for a maximum of two missed classes.]

If you know you will miss more than two classes during this term, do not enroll in this class at this time.

**For personal and professional growth, this class makes a significant difference.**

**Assignments**

<p><b>1. Class attendance.</b> Class attendance includes “active participation.” That means being actively involved in class discussions and activities. This is a communication class. Consequently, communication is critical. Therefore you need to show participation by your questions, comments, shared experience, in addition to any valuable information you may have to offer. We will have several guest speakers. Your questions/comments will be expected when speakers make their presentations. Consequently, your presence and active contribution are important for yourself and others.</p>	<p>3 6 0 4 0</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each class fully attended (4 ½ hours) is worth 45 points, for 360 points total.</li> <li>• Active participation demonstrated through active involvement in class → discussions (as described in #1) and class activities is worth 40 points. →</li> </ul>	<p>4 0 0</p>
<p><b>Total</b></p>	
<p><b>2. Personal growth in class.</b> The professor will assess your open-mindedness and how well you dealt with your ethnocentrism, xenophobia, and scotomas; that is, whether or not you dealt with these in your class participation and in written reflections. These concepts and their application we will learn more about at the very beginning.</p>	<p>5 0</p>
<p><b>3. Written reflections.</b> Each student will computer generate five one-page written reflections (worth 30 points each) online. Each one-page reflection will reflect on three key things learned from the speaker (or assignment). <b>You will computer generate all assignments as Microsoft Word documents, online, and email each assignment as an attached document.</b> Professor will discuss how to do this in first class. Students will receive a hard copy sample, showing how to do this.</p>	<p>1 5 0</p>
<p><b>4. Self-assessment of learning.</b> For your final assignment, you will demonstrate your own personal growth of the learning objectives stated on page one of this syllabus. This will be explained in the sixth class. Professor will provide written directions on a</p>	<p>1 0 0</p>

separate handout. This is an online reflection assignment with specific questions for you to respond to.	
5. <b>Grading.</b> To calculate final grade for an 8-week term, divide the number of points gained by the number of possible points. Determine letter grade by using scale below.	<b>Total</b> <b>700</b>

**Letter grade and numerical values**

<b>A+ = 98-100</b>	<b>B+ = 89-91</b>	<b>C+ = 80-82</b>	<b>D+ = 71-73</b>	<b>F = 64 and below</b>
<b>A = 95-97</b>	<b>B = 86-88</b>	<b>C = 77-79</b>	<b>D = 68-70</b>	
<b>A- = 92-94</b>	<b>B- = 83-85</b>	<b>C- = 74-76</b>	<b>D- = 65-67</b>	

**Join us in an exciting adventure as we learn to communicate more effectively with people who come from a variety of groups, cultures, and sub cultures.**

**“Diversity should be celebrated like a garden in which a thousand flowers can blossom.” (Valentine Gana Afuh)**