CMS 321 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIONS SPRING TERM 2013
Instructor: Raponzil Drake
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Course description:
Communication between and among cultures in the interpersonal and organizational context will be studied. Differences in communication behaviors due to nationality, ethnicity, gender and social status are explored. Students will 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 that influence communicative (verbal, nonverbal, body language and listening) behaviors. **This course fulfills the Cultural Perspectives requirement of the Doane Plan.**


SYLLABUS
There will be an emphasis on both domestic and Global Cultures as well as the enormous variety of ethnic and cultural groups residing in the United States. – Part of the course work will involve reading newspapers from various countries throughout the world. Please visit the website [www.understandingrace.org](http://www.understandingrace.org). We will explore a variety of assessments used on this site to facilitate discussions around race and culture. Another website that will help you find many relevant articles from various countries is: [http://www.world-newspapers.com](http://www.world-newspapers.com).

Please browse this site and bring an article of interest to our first class meeting.

You will also be responsible for assigned reading in our text: **Understanding Human Differences** (see above for ISBN), as well as for readings assigned during the course. We will spend time exploring the various cultural and sub-cultural groups in the U.S. Particular attention will be placed on studying how immigrants to this country are treated and have been treated throughout the past one hundred years. Some time will also be given to the study of those cultures that have been oppressed by our government during the Indian Wars.

Cause and effect of economic status, language, education, gender, ethics and religion will be explored not only through statistical information but also through such lens as pre-existing bias, racism, and historical considerations. The class will be driven by weekly assignments based on assigned readings in the textbook as well as relevant internet research. Overarching questions will be posed weekly and thoughtful, clear and convincing responses to the instructor will be expected in a timely manner. Sharing of student comments, without revealing authorship, will become part of the class mechanism. This is based on the premise that the exchange of ideas, insights, and opinions is a vital part of any learning environment.
By the second week of the term, each student is to have chosen a single culture/subculture within the U.S. to explore throughout the quarter. I suggest you make a list of at least three such groups that are of particular interest to you. This will help us avoid duplication of research projects. Sub-cultures can be as diverse as country-specific current immigrants, age related groups such as senior citizens, occupational groups such as artists, gender-specific groups such as women in politics and GLTB individuals and groups, specific racial groups, and others to be discussed as you present your choices.

**COURSE GOAL:**
Students will develop a broader and deeper understanding of U.S. sub-cultures and selected world cultures and how communication between and among various cultures can be facilitated.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**
1. Students will develop a greater understanding of various sub-cultures as they have evolved and developed in the U.S.
2. Students will learn how nationalism, religion, values, cultural bias, stereotypes, and personal bias inform our behaviors and the behaviors of others.
3. Students (collectively and individually) will be able to identify the blockages, both personal and societal, that affect and/or negate successful cross-cultural communications.
4. Students (collectively and individually) will be able to develop a series of strategies that will help bridge those blockages that impede successful cross-cultural communications.

**GRADING**
There are four (4) components to your grade:
1) Attendance and Participation (20%)
2) Reflective Response Assignments (35%)
3) Research Progress Updates (20%)
4) Formal Research Paper (25%)

**Attendance & Participation:** Keeping to a firm schedule of assigned readings and responses are integral to the successful completion of any course. Consequently, staying on the requested reading and research schedule will count for 20% of your grade.

**Assignments:**
These assignments are your reflective responses to questions based upon the readings for each class meeting. Your reflective responses are to be received no later than 8 pm on the day preceding each class meeting. These responses will count for 35% of your grade.
grade. Late assignments forfeit 2 points per day or fraction of a day following 8 pm on the due date of each assignment.

Research progress updates:
Research of your selected topic of a U.S. culture/sub-culture is expected be an ongoing process throughout the course. Consequently, weekly oral updates on your research findings and/or questions for the Instructor will count for **20% of your grade**. These oral updates will be given during each class meeting. (An extensive, comprehensive response to each week’s readings and assignments, as well as your personal reflections on assigned readings are to be emailed to the Instructor weekly, as described in “Assignments” section above.)

**Formal research paper** is to be sent via email at raponzildrake@gmail.com no later than July 22. Guidelines for this report, which is to be submitted via email, will be discussed during the second class meeting. This portion of your full research project will count for **25% of your grade**. **Formal research papers submitted after 8 pm on July 22** are penalized 2 points per day or fraction thereof, late after 8 pm on July 22.

**Please explore the website noted below before the first class meeting.**
http://www.world-newspapers.com

**PREPATORY READING ASSIGNMENT:** to be presented during our first class meeting.

Once you have clicked onto this website proceed as follows:
- click on world-newspapers.com
- click on news and politics in left column
- locate list of publications center column
a. Select one foreign publication site from the following: Asia, Europe, Australia and Oceania, Middle East, North and Central America, or South America.
b. Select and read an article of particular interest to you
c. Prepare to share your findings with class at the first class meeting.

**PLEASE BRING YOUR ARTICLE TO OUR FIRST CLASS MEETING.**

**OVERVIEW OF READING SCHEDULE FOR CMS 321, SUMMER TERM 2013**

The following weekly assignments are to be completed only after you have read the entire assigned text for the week.
All assignment are due to be sent, via internet, to raponzildrake@gmail.com.
June 3rd, Week one: Please read the three chapters of Unit I and send me your thoughts on each chapter. Consider the following:
• What surprised me? Why?
• What is the most important statement in each chapter?
• With what do I disagree or question? Why?
This assignment is due 8 pm June 2nd.

June 10th, Week two: Please read Chapters 4 & 5. Assignment: please write a thoughtful essay on your own experiences with xenophobia (as discussed in Chapter 4.) Include personal consideration of attitudes toward linguistic diversity that you hold. Choose a race studied in Chapter 5 and write a thoughtful essay on your experiences with people (multiple) of one of the races covered. If you have not such experience please write about how you will change this lack of cross-cultural/racial encounters. Consider also, how our language creates a sense of ‘other’ concerning members of races other than your own.
This assignment is due to me on June 9th.

June 17th, Week three: Please read Chapters 6 & 7. Assignment: please read Exercise #2 on page 160 and select 4 of the discussion questions and give a thoughtful and ‘informed’ response to each of the 4 you have selected. I suggest that you do a bit of Internet research prior to your choice of response questions. After you’ve read Chapter 7, please research the Indian boarding schools in both Pennsylvania and Nebraska. Much can be found on the internet to augment the textbook writings. Please write your reactions to the government mandate that created these schools (in both Carlisle, PA and Genoa, NE) and how this mandate affected both Indian children & their parents & grandparents.
This assignment is due to me on June 16th.

June 24th, Week four: Please read Chapters 8 & 9 with great care. Assignment: Please answer the following questions from a personal perspective and with great honesty.
• How have you benefitted from Institutional Racism?
• How have you been mis-served from Institutional Racism?
• What changes should we implement to decrease Institutional Racism in our own town, county and state?
Additional questions will be added to these two chapters as our term progresses.
This assignment is due to me on June 24th.

July 1st, Week five: Please read Chapters 10 & 11. Assignment: There are six boxes that identify Myths & Realities of homosexuality. Select one of the myths and undertake further Internet research of the particular myth you have selected. You may choose either a pro or con stance in supporting either the myth or the reality of your chosen subject. Write a defense of your stance. For Chapter 11 you may choose any area for discussion. Do the requisite Internet search and present a theory or premise on which
you base your discussion and define, defend and suggest needed reforms for your area of discussion. **This assignment is due to me on June 30**th.

**July 8th, Week six:** Please read Chapter 12. Assignment: Please write your own definition of a person or group that has been labeled disabled. This should be a relatively short and cogent definition that covers the many facets of the disability under study. Then either interview a person living with that disability or interview a social worker who works with such disabled people. Analyze your interview questions and answers carefully and write your findings. Please describe your process in your assignment as well as your findings. Include all questions that you asked. **This assignment is due to me on July 7**th.

**July 15th, Week seven:** Please read Chapter 13 & 14. Assignment: Since each of you has already experienced both elementary and secondary education I want you to consider your school experiences in light of the information you have gained by reading Chapter 13. Then discuss how education has changed and what additional changes might have to occur as our cultural demographics change during the next 20 years. Then please consider Doane College and suggest a variety of suggested practices or changes that could be implemented to improve our climate of holistic diversity at Doane-Lincoln College. **Finally, after having read the final Chapter, please formulate and send to me a single discussion question to be posed when we meet during the final week of class. This question can be taken from any concept discussed through the entire 14 Chapters of our text. This assignment is due to me on July 14**th.

**July 22nd, Week eight:** Our final class meeting will consist of two parts. The class will begin with a general class discussion of the questions that you submitted to me the preceding Sunday (July 14th). The remainder of the class time will be given over to your oral presentations of your research subject. The oral presentation will cover the highlights of your findings and must include an excerpt from You Tube that will illustrate or augment some facet of your oral presentation. **Your final journal is to be an in-depth commentary on what you have learned from the student presentations and discussions during the final class meeting. This final journal is due to me on July 22nd.**

**SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS**
Occasional additional readings will be assigned in response to classroom discussions and questions. These will be Internet assignments, email attachments, or handouts for which you will complete during class or for which will be given one week to complete.

**RESEARCH PROJECT:**
Your research subject must be submitted for approval no later than June 30th. **Your completed research paper is due no later than July 22nd.** This paper is to be submitted via Internet to me at raponzildrake@gmail.com.