



Department of Literacy Education
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Higher Education
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CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES IN THE ADULT ESL CLASSROOM
LTIC553/CAHA 553X
Summer 2009
Northern Illinois University

Instructor

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I read and respond to e-mail messages during normal workdays. However, to be safe you should allow at least 24 hours for a response. Likewise, I attempt to return phone calls as soon as possible. If I am absent from campus for an extended period (not counting weekends and university holidays), I will leave an extended absence greeting on my voice mail.

Office Hours

During the summer I will be available both before and after class each day for appointments, if requested. Let me know a day in advance if you need to meet with me.

Class Schedule

Monday through Thursday, 1:30 to 5:00pm
July 13-30, 2009
Gabel 108
Northern Illinois University

Conceptual Framework

This course ascribes to a conceptual framework for all courses offered by the College of Education and other programs at NIU that prepare professional educators. During the semester, you should be aware of what we do in this course that may reflect components of the following statement:

The NIU community of learners builds on knowledge, practice, and reflection to produce exemplary educators. The community encompasses scholars, education professionals, and pre-service teachers in an interaction that develops the strengths that embody excellence in education. These strengths include creative and critical thinking, scholarship, and caring. Application of these strengths emerges through the collaborative efforts of a diverse community which supports lifelong learning.

Academic Integrity and Professionalism

Academic integrity is expected of all students. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper or assignment written, in whole or part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy from books, magazines, Internet, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. If academic misconduct is suspected, the faculty member will follow the "Faculty Guide to Academic Misconduct" issued by the University Judicial Office. Graduate students should consult the guidelines entitled Research Integrity at Northern Illinois University, available online at <http://www.niu.edu/provost/policies/appm/12.shtml>.

All students are to demonstrate the professionalism associated with and expected of NIU teacher educators. Such dispositions may be defined as the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities and affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator's own professional growth. Dispositions are guided by beliefs and attitudes related to values such as caring fairness, honesty, responsibility, and social justice.

BUILDING THE LEARNING COMMUNITY

It is my belief that learning can occur most effectively in an environment that promotes mutual respect and collaboration. The metaphor of the learning community is useful here. In fact, this metaphor is an important aspect of the College of Education's conceptual framework for all teacher education programs. Discussion, demonstration, and reflection, rather than lecture, will be primary activities in class meetings. Participants will be encouraged to think critically and to voice opinions. At the same time, participants will be expected to focus on course content, to be respectful of others' opinions, and to be willing to collaborate with others when appropriate.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An examination of current practices in the teaching of English as a second language in adult education settings. This course will focus on recognizing the value of cultural differences among learners and how differences in cultural background influence the acquisition of English language skills as well as the acquisition of more general perceptions of our social environment.

COURSE ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

The activities of this course are selected and designed with the goal of increasing self-awareness of the classroom teacher, trainer, counselor, volunteer, curriculum designer, and administrator, and of increasing that person's awareness of cultural differences which exist among individuals in a multicultural setting. As such, it is primarily an affective approach to an examination of culture and its effects on our behaviors and interactions with members of different cultures. Toward that end, experiential activities will provide participants with opportunities to reflect on personal cultural values that influence their behavior as well as the behaviors of other participants.

Activities and assignments have been chosen to allow for individualized experiences to meet the diverse needs of the learners while achieving the overall instructional objectives established for the course. Class meetings will be devoted to discussions of assigned readings, discussions of topics related to culture and adult learning, experiential exercises designed to increase the learner's self-awareness, and discussions of videos designed to illustrate and clarify differences in communication patterns rooted in culture.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE
LTIC 553/CAHA 553X
Summer 2009

Date	Major Topics and Activities
July 13	Introductions; course overview; <i>Cross-cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI), Part 1</i>
July 14	<i>Barnga</i> (a simulation of a cross-cultural experience). <i>CCAI, Part 2</i> <i>Crossing Cultures, Chapter 1</i>
July 15	<i>CCAI</i> (continued), <i>Part 3</i> <i>Crossing Cultures, Chapter 2</i>
July 16	Culture Shock <i>Crossing Cultures, Chapter 3</i> <i>View Cold Water.</i>
July 20	Nonverbal Communication <i>Crossing Cultures, Chapter 4</i> <i>View Nonverbal Communication and Culture</i> How does culture influence our language? How does culture affect how we perceive our world? <i>View The Japanese Version</i> (video) How do we discern differences in cultural styles?
July 21	Cross-Cultural Analysis <i>View A Great Wall</i> Develop your critical incidents from the movie.
July 22	Societal Roles <i>Crossing Cultures, Chapter 5</i> <i>View Bend It Like Beckham</i>
July 23	Pragmatics and Communication <i>Crossing Cultures, Chapter 6</i> The Refugee Experience <i>View Blue Collar and Buddha</i> <i>View God Grew Tired of Us</i>
July 27	Student reports of field trips.
July 28	Student reports of field trips.
July 29	Finish student reports of field trips. Begin student reports on final reflections.
July 30	Finish student reports on final reflection. Final assignment to be posted to LiveText no later than August 4. How has your culture contributed to you as an adult learner? How will a greater understanding of culture make you more effective in your personal and professional roles?

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To increase sensitivity to and respect for ethnic, racial, linguistic, and gender differences.
- To increase awareness of one's own cultural biases, values, and beliefs and to understand their impact on racial, linguistic, and ethnic group members in relationship to learning.
- To examine culturally responsive teaching methods.
- To increase knowledge of resources which will facilitate instruction of culturally and linguistically diverse groups.

ASSIGNMENTS

- **Participation.** Students will read texts as assigned and participate in class discussions and activities. Most class discussion will focus on readings from the required text. Some discussion will focus on other assigned readings which will be posted on LiveText. All students will be expected to have a current LiveText account. We will go over these instructions during the first class meeting. (25 points)
- **Cultural field trip.** Students will participate in a cultural field trip. Students will write a summary of their experience of approximately 750-1000 words to be posted to LiveText. A PowerPoint presentation will be developed to accompany the oral presentation in class. Instructions are provided in greater detail on page 5 of this syllabus. (50 points)
- **Final assignment.** Students will write an essay reflecting on the topic of culture in the classroom. Instructions are provided in greater detail on page 6 of this syllabus. (25 points)

EVALUATION

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| • Participation | 25 points |
| • Cultural field trip | 50 points |
| • Final paper | 25 points |
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- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 92 + points | A (excellent; exceeds expectations) |
| 83-91 points | B (satisfactory; consistently meets expectations) |
| 70-82 points | C (marginal; does not meet expectations for graduate level work) |

REQUIRED READING

- De Capua, A, & Wintergerst, A.C. (2004). *Crossing Cultures in the Language Classroom*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. This text can be purchased from the University Bookstore or Village Commons Bookstore in DeKalb. Call UB at 800.999.6488. Call VCB at 800.700.4868.

The subject of culture and language is vast and constantly expanding. The phrase *global village* is so frequently used as to become a cliché when describing a world of faster telecommunication in schools, the workplace, and our communities. Yet, we are so often ignorant of the impact of culture on how we speak and how we learn, whether in the classroom, at work, at home, or in the larger context of community. World events in recent years have certainly emphasized the need for all responsible citizens to become more aware of how culture affects our perceptions of and interactions with others. Participants in this course are encouraged to develop a plan for systematic learning, a plan for continuing personal as well as professional development. Daily newspapers and weekly newsmagazines, as well as the Internet, provide easily accessible sources for stories about personal encounters with issues of culture in the world. You will find on the LiveText course a list of recommended books and periodicals which will provide further direction for the educator who is seeking to better understand issues of culture and language and how they impact the classroom.

THE CULTURAL FIELD TRIP*
A Field Experience in Cross-Cultural Learning

OBJECTIVE

To understand the behaviors, values, and ways of life of persons of another culture through learning about the cultural significance of items used by those persons.

PARTICIPANTS

Facilitator. All participants in teams of two or three.

MATERIALS

None required.

SETTING

- a designated community that represents a culture which is unfamiliar to the team members;
- a meeting place for debriefing and discussion of results.

TIME

A half-day for the field trip. Another several hours for the debriefing, depending on the number of teams and different communities visited.

PROCEDURE

- The facilitator will lead participants in a brainstorming session in which lists are developed which contain different items to be found within the unfamiliar community. These items might be certain kinds of medicine, items related to religion, recreation, food, household supplies and decoration, literature, cosmetics, music, commerce—each of which defines, in a small way, the people’s behaviors, values, and ways of life.
- Participants should carry out their hunt in teams of two or three. They should learn as much as they can about how the item is used, so that they can demonstrate its use to others when they return to the next meeting.
- During the group debriefing, participants share the items and explain to each other what they have learned about their cultural importance. They also compare various experiences involved in carrying out the hunt—amusing incidents, cultural differences, hostile reactions, unexpected discoveries.
- If there are members of the learning group who came from the “target community,” they can assist in explaining to the others about the culture of that community.

OUTCOMES

- Each team will make an oral presentation to the entire class reporting on the field experience, including the item(s) brought back from the field. The time allotted for the oral presentation will be determined in class.
- Each group member will write a report of about 750-1000 words, reporting on the activity, the transactions that took place, insights gained, and connections to any of the readings and discussions. It is to be expected that the team will have discussions of common experience and insights about what was learned from the experience, but each member will have personal insights that are important to consider as well.

*(Adapted from “The Cultural Treasure Hunt” in *A Manual of Teaching Techniques for Intercultural Education*, edited by Henry Holmes and Stephen Guild, UNESCO, October 1971.)

THE FINAL ASSIGNMENT

The final assignment for this class will be a written essay in which you reflect on your learning for this course. Although length of this final reflection will vary, a minimum expectation is about 1500 words, not including references. Students are discouraged from going beyond 3000 words, including references. A template for this assignment will be provided in LiveText and students will be required to follow this template in submitting individual essays. The source material for this reflection will be class discussions, readings, and activities, as well as personal experience. Students should take notes beginning with the first day as to insights gained from these assignments and activities.

Students will be expected to support insights gained by referencing at least ten sources in addition to the required text. These include print-based sources, such as books and journals, and Web-based sources, such as reports published by organizations on the Internet. Use of APA style guidelines is required. A summary of these guidelines are available online at the University Writing Center.
<http://uwc.niu.edu/apaDocumentation.doc>.

The purpose of this assignment is for each class member to reflect on how knowledge gained from the readings, discussions, and activities in this class, combined with personal life experience, have provided new insights into the role of culture in personal and professional interactions with others, as well as the role of culture in promoting or inhibiting learning and teaching in the classroom. Everyone will have an opportunity to share some of these new insights with other class members on the last day of class.

Final essays will be submitted in electronic form on LiveText. Due date will be provided in class. Final assessment of this assignment will be based on clarity, organization, mechanics, and sources.