

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS  
University of Virginia, Academic Sponsor

**Voyage: Spring 2016**  
**Discipline: Communication**  
**SEMS 2500-501/502: Intercultural Communication**  
**Division: Lower**  
**Faculty Name: Dr. Robert Huesca**  
**Credit Hours: 3; Contact Hours: 38**

**Pre-requisites:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will provide a survey of intercultural communication theory and practice, and cultivate communicative competence with people from different cultural backgrounds both in domestic and international settings, as well as across a variety of contexts. The course focuses on the development of self-reflexivity and cultural awareness by balancing attention to concepts and principles with experientially-based study designed to apply theoretical understandings in concrete, international locations.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Students completing this course should be able to:

1. Identify fundamental theories and concepts of intercultural communication;
2. Understand and explain the relationship between communication and culture;
3. Explain the impacts and relationships between cultural processes and non-verbal and verbal behavior; and
4. Demonstrate intercultural communication awareness and competence by evaluating, articulating, and demonstrating cognitive and behavioral adjustments to various settings.

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS**

**AUTHOR:** Judith N. Martin and Thomas K. Nakayama  
**TITLE:** Intercultural communication in contexts  
**PUBLISHER:** McGraw Hill  
**ISBN #:** 9780078036774  
**DATE/EDITION:** 2013/6th

**RESERVE BOOKS FOR THE LIBRARY**

**AUTHOR:** J. Daniel Hess  
**TITLE:** Studying abroad/Learning abroad (An abridged edition of the whole world guide to culture learning)  
**PUBLISHER:** Intercultural Press, Inc.  
**ISBN #:** 1877864501  
**DATE/EDITION:** 1997

AUTHOR: Larry A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter, Edwin R McDaniel  
TITLE: Intercultural Communication: A Reader  
PUBLISHER: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning  
ISBN #: 0495898317  
DATE/EDITION: 2012, 13<sup>th</sup> ed.

AUTHOR: William M. Tsutsui  
TITLE: Japanese Popular Culture and Globalization  
PUBLISHER: Association for Asian Studies, Inc.  
ISBN #: 9780924304620  
DATE/EDITION: 2010

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Depart Ensenada- January 5:

DATE	GENERAL TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
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<b>A1- Jan 7</b>	Course introduction	
<b>A2- Jan 9</b>	Culture learning and intercultural communication	Hess ch. 2, M&N ch. 1
<b>A3- Jan 11</b>	Method and analysis of culture learning; Hofstede dimensions	Hess ch. 3, SPM pp. 19-33 Self-reflection essay due

Honolulu: January 12, Field Lab 1, Jan. 12

<b>A4- Jan 14</b>	Culture, context, power	M&N chs. 2
<b>A5- Jan 17</b>	Histories and identity	M&N chs. 3 & 4

Study Day: January 19

<b>A6- Jan 20</b>	Exam 1	Exam 1
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<b>A7- Jan 22</b>		M&N ch. 5, Tsutsui chs. 1, 2
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Yokohama: January 24-25, Field Lab 2 Jan. 25

In-Transit: January 26

Kobe: January 27-28

<b>A8- Jan 29:</b>	Blog presentations and discussion Japan Field Lab reports due	SPM pp. 445-456
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Shanghai: January 31-February 1

In-Transit: February 2-3

Hong Kong: 4-5

<b>A9- Feb 6:</b>	Blog presentations and discussion	SPM pp. 435-445
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Ho Chi Minh: February 8-12

**A10- Feb 13:** Blog presentations and discussion

Study Day: February 15

<b>A11- Feb 16</b>	Language	M&N ch. 6, Hess Guide 4
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Yangon: February 18-22

**A12- Feb 23:** Blog presentations and discussion

**A13- Feb 25** Nonverbal Codes

M&N ch. 7, SPM pp. 170-178, Hess Guide 2

Cochin: February 27-March 3

**A14-Mar 4:** Blog presentations and discussion

Study Day: March 6

**A15- Mar 7** Intercultural transitions

M&N ch. 8

Port Louis: March 9

**A16- Mar 10** Influence of popular culture

M&N ch. 9

Study Day: March 12

**A17- Mar 13** Culture and developing relationships

M&N ch. 10, SPM pp.179-189

Cape Town: March 15-20

**A18- Mar 21** Blog presentations and discussion

**A19- Mar 23** Culture and conflict

M&N ch. 11

**A20- Mar 25** Intercultural communication competence

M&N ch. 12

Takoradi: March 27-28

Tema: March 29-31

**A21- Apr 1:** Blog presentations and discussion

**A22-Apr 3: Exam 2**

**A23: Apr 5:** Relocation Training Workshop—Japan, Burma, Vietnam

Casablanca: April 7-11

Study Day: April 12

**A24: Apr 13:** Relocation Training Workshop—India, China/Hong Kong, South Africa

April 16: Disembarkation Day, Southampton

## **FIELD WORK**

Experiential course work on Semester at Sea is comprised of the required field lab led by your instructor and additional field assignments that span multiple ports.

- This course adopts an anthropological approach to intercultural communication necessitating careful observation, informal interviewing, and selected participation. You are encouraged to “go native” during the various ports. All experiences should be documented in field notes, still images, and video. The field notes should contain detailed description as well as tentative analysis regarding key theoretical constructs. Videos and still photographs should accompany blog entries and the final training workshop.

## **FIELD LAB**

Field lab attendance is mandatory for all students enrolled in this course. Do not book individual travel plans or a Semester at Sea sponsored trip on the day of your field lab.

Each section has its own field lab. It is not possible to switch between sections.

Field Lab 9:30 a.m. Section: Honolulu: A Native Awakening

Field Lab 11 a.m. Section: The Three Japans: Ancient, Business, and Popular Communication Contexts

Field Lab Report: **DUE** in the class following the field lab experience. Students should submit a 4-6 page summary and analysis drawn from field notes, videos, and photographs recorded during the lab. The papers should provide an overview summary of the field lab experience and then develop more in-depth descriptions and analyses of two aspects of the field lab: one that applies the Hofstede dimensions introduced in class, and one key theoretical construct covered in the class up to the time of the field lab.

### **Field Lab 9:30 a.m. Section: Honolulu: A Native Awakening**

Students in this lab will explore first hand the distinct, rich, and nuanced history and culture of native Hawaiians. This experience will include engaging dialogues, active participation in various rituals, and exploration of specific artifacts and material culture.

Academic Objectives:

- To understand the political experiences of native Hawaiians and their impacts on the native culture
- To learn the significance of specific cultural practices by actively participating in certain rituals
- To apply key concepts from intercultural communication research in order to analyze cultural differences within the context of the United States

### **Field Lab 11 a.m. Section: Japan: A Study in Contrast**

Students in this lab will explore multiple communication facets of Japan by visiting several

settings reflecting the contexts of Japanese ancient, modern, and popular culture. Students will experience and observe individual and group communication practices in these contrasting settings.

Academic Objectives:

- To observe concrete communication practices of involving space, time, nonverbal, and verbal communication in contrasting settings
- To develop at least three, distinct communication guidelines that emerge from observations and demonstrate intercultural communication competence
- To explore how contrasting communication contexts contribute to the formation Japanese cultural identity
- To apply key concepts from intercultural communication research in order to analyze the nature of Japanese culture

## **FIELD ASSIGNMENTS, BLOG POSTS, AND TRAINING WORKSHOP**

Time spent off the ship is what makes Semester At Sea a unique and powerful learning experience. At each port, students should continue the practice of keeping good field notes of observations and experiences, capturing still images, and recording videos. Students will draw on these materials to complete regular assignments including:

- Intercultural Blog Entries. Following each country/region stop, students must submit a blog post that describes and analyzes their experiences. One blog entry must be accompanied by a class presentation, as well.
- Groups will be assigned the first week of class for a final “Intercultural Communication Training Workshop.” This workshop is expected to include original photographs, videos, and other artifacts collected in the assigned country, in addition to research conducted in preparation for the training workshop.

## **METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC**

1. Self-reflection essay (5%)
2. Midterm (15%) and Final Exam (20%)
3. Field Assignments: 6 Blog entries (15%) and 1 Presentation (5%)
4. Field Lab Report (20%)
5. Relocation Training Workshop (20%)

1. Self-reflection essay. Draw on material from Hess regarding the character traits that lead to cultural learning. Summarize and explain the key traits associated with cultural learning, then assess yourself in terms of personal strengths and weaknesses that you possess. Provide explanations and examples to support your major assertions. Briefly map out a strategy for attending to your personal weaknesses and exploiting your strengths in the coming weeks of travel. 600 words max.
2. Midterm and Final exam. In-class tests comprising short answer, multiple choice, and true/false questions.
3. Field Assignments. Students must produce blog entries of 300-600 words for each port where extended stays are involved. Each entry should describe and analyze an on-shore,

“critical incident,” using procedures reviewed in Hess. The Field Lab Report takes the place of one blog entry depending on the date of the assigned Field Lab.

4. Field Lab Report. A 4-6 page summary and analysis drawn from field notes, videos, and photographs recorded during the lab. The papers should provide an overview summary of the field lab experience and then develop more in-depth descriptions and analyses of two aspects of the field lab: one that applies the Hofstede dimensions introduced in class, and one key theoretical construct covered in the class up to the time of the field lab (in-text citations required).
5. Relocation Training Workshops. Each class member will be assigned to a group representing a voyage country, which will create a training session geared for Americans preparing to relocate to the assigned country. Your group will have 30 minutes to present to the class on the day you are assigned. The group presentation assignment is designed to: 1) encourage diverse students to work collaboratively toward accomplishing a common goal, 2) provide exposure to the wealth of research being conducted in the area of intercultural communication, and 3) to augment the material in the textbook and to enhance your understanding of intercultural communication theory. Your goal is to prepare your audience for relocation to your assigned country, highlighting connections to the material/theories. Incorporate research, real examples from your trip and material from the text. Presentations should be engaging and educational. Thus, creativity is strongly encouraged. As a communication class, presentations should be polished and professional. Like good speeches, good presentations will be organized, with a discernable introduction (attention-getter!!!!), body, and conclusion. Segues, signposts, and transitions are to be used in moving from topic-to-topic, from one segment to another. Workshops must include a creative activity to reinforce a key concept, rather than merely being a lecture and discussion format.

## **HONOR CODE**

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University’s honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager’s Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: “On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment.” The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed “[signed].”