**CRS 430: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**

Spring 2024

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| Instructor: **Dr. Sylvia Sierra**  Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-4pm on zoom (link on Blackboard; and by appointment; email me 3-4 dates & times that you are available)  Email: ssierra@syr.edu |

“Cultures do not talk to each other; individuals do.” —Ron and Suzanne Scollon (1995/2000)

**Course Description**

This course explores the nature of intercultural communication from the perspective of interactional sociolinguistics. We take a broad view of “culture”, which includes geographic region, ethnicity, age, socioeconomic class, and gender. We examine the relationship between language and culture by investigating aspects of language use that vary by culture, including turn-taking, speech acts, silence, politeness, and nonverbal cues. In addition to considering language use in everyday conversation, we examine communication in institutional contexts, including education, business, law, and medicine. Class activities include lectures, discussion in whole-class and small-group formats, video presentations, and hands-on data analysis. Requirements include a solid attendance record, active participation in class discussions, a mid-term project presentation and a final project presentation, and discussion leading of a reading.

**Course Objectives**

At the end of class, students will be able to (1) read, understand, and be able to compare and critique intercultural studies, (2) describe cultural differences in communication and identify the factors which contribute to them, (3) conduct and write analyses of new intercultural communication data, and (4) develop ideas for using intercultural methodology in their particular areas of interest.

**Course Requirements**

*Required Materials*

1. Tannen, Deborah. 1986. *That’s Not What I Meant!* (TNWIM)New York: Harper Collins.

2. Additional articles and book chapters, available electronically on Blackboard

3. A recording device for recording and transcribing a conversation (with permission!), e.g., a tape recorder, digital recorder, cell phone with a recording option, or camcorder.

In order to successfully complete the course, students must:

* Read all assigned material
* Attend and participate in classroom discussions and activities
* Successfully complete in-class reading response activities, record and transcribe 3 minutes of recorded conversation, lead discussion of an assigned article, complete 1 mid-term project based on the transcript and 1 final project

*Attendance and participation*

This class relies on lively discussion and group work in class and attendance is required; active note-taking in class and active participation in class discussions based on required readings and analysis of texts is expected. Arrive to class on time; I will take attendance at the beginning of every class and will not stop class to update the attendance or to fill you in on what is happening if you arrive late. **Chronic tardiness or leaving class early WILL negatively affect your attendance grade. You must be present in both mind and body. This means you are physically present, from the start to end of class, and do not leave the classroom for extended lengths of time. This also means you are present mentally, and not engaged in other unrelated activities during class.**  **If you are randomly going to be absent/miss class, DO NOT email me about it with an excuse. In my classes there are no excused or unexcused absences—you are simply absent.** In such cases I will notice you are absent and will mark you as such. **The only exception is if you know or if it becomes apparent that you will be absent for more than 2 days—then you should let me know. Every student is permitted to miss 2 days of class – generally any more days missed WILL negatively affect your attendance grade.** In the case of an unavoidable absence, it is **your responsibility** to keep up with coursework, get notes from classmates, etc. **There is no make-up work for attendance points/reading response activities**. (Note: If you are a student-athlete and must miss class for a university-sanctioned event, let me know in advance. Assignment deadlines are generally the same for student-athletes as for other students, even if the student misses class on a day when work is due.)

*Reading Activities*

In lieu of quizzes or written reading responses, students are required to participate actively during in-class small group reading activities. I will assign small groups, which will rotate 4 times during the semester, about every 3 weeks. Prompts for discussion will be provided. You are required:

1. to read to assigned reading and *annotate* it (e.g., highlight/underline/take notes)
2. to use your annotated reading and/or notes to post to the online Discussion Board about the reading at least one hour before class. Consider the questions: What did the authors do, what did they find, why does it matter? What are some keywords--were there any new words or concepts for you? What questions do you have? If you don’t have any questions, what was most interesting to you? What connections did you make to your own life, or to current events?
3. to attend class and have the annotated reading (whether the textbook or the article/book chapter) and/or your notes and participate actively in your group based on your annotated reading and/or notes.
4. to peer evaluate your group members at the end of each 3 week period (I will provide guidelines when we get there - you will evaluate your group members on the 3 items listed above – *evidence* that they *read comprehensively*, not on how well they can talk about the topic of the reading)

I will assign you a grade based on your reading activities at the end of each 3-week period.

*Conversational Transcript*

Students will record a casual conversation in which you take part with friends or family (with their permission) and will create a written transcript of a 3 minute segment of the conversation. I will provide you with further instructions on how to transcribe conversational data and the requirements for this transcript early on in the class.

*Projects*

Students will present two projects in which they synthesize the course readings and discussions and analyze aspects of conversations that they have recorded and transcribed. Students may opt to work with partners or in small groups but it is not required and should be undertaken at your own risk. The first project should be a discourse analysis based on your conversational transcript. You will have the option of turning in a one page preliminary analysis before presenting your findings from the first project, to make sure you are on the right track. The second project may be a presentation of an analysis, or a website, a portfolio, a workshop, a media project (e.g. a film). Note on film option: your film cannot simply be interviews of your friends/family without any substantive analysis/commentary on what they say. I encourage you to draw from your personal skills and interests and to be creative!

*Discussion leading*

Each student will lead class discussion on an assigned article either individually or in a pair. These will be on the dates listed in the syllabus. Students will be able to sign up for an article. You are expected to pose a series of 3 thoughtful, stimulating, and complex questions for your classmates to discuss. Avoid ‘pointed’ or ‘leading’ questions. You can also deepen our consideration by drawing a connection to something outside of the text (this might be your transcript, a contemporary event, a recent news story, something from your own research for your project, a comparison/contrast with something else we have read, etc). The primary goals of this assignment are to encourage you to think about the themes that emerge from each of our readings (and that cut across multiple readings) and to make sense of the readings in a more robust context relevant to your own lives. I urge you to read ahead and begin preparing well in advance for your discussion leading session; you are also always welcome to meet with me or email me about your ideas.

*Evaluation*

The final grade will be calculated based on the following distribution of graded class assignments:

In-class Reading Response activities: 20% (graded every 3 weeks 4x; 5 pts per 3 weeks)

Conversational Transcript: 15%

Analysis Presentation 1: 21% (1% is peer presentation response)

Analysis Presentation 2: 21% (1% is peer presentation response)

Attendance/Participation: 13%

Discussion leading: 10%

Grade Scale for the Class, g is the student’s final grade:

A 92.5000 ≤ g

A- 89.5000 ≤ g ≤ 92.4999

B+ 87.5000 ≤ g ≤ 89.4999

B 82.5000 ≤ g ≤ 87.4999

B- 79.5000 ≤ g ≤ 82.4999

C+ 77.5000 ≤ g ≤ 79.4999

C 69.5000 ≤ g ≤ 77.4999

D 59.5000 ≤ g ≤ 69.4999

F g < 59.5

**Grades are EARNED – they are not subject to negotiation, and I do not provide “extra credit.” It is YOUR responsibility to keep up with assignments and to monitor your progress as well as grades on Blackboard.**

**I do not accept late work. If you are planning to be absent, you need to make arrangements to have your work in before class time.**

Grading criteria will be made explicit for all assignments. Assignment rubrics will generally be handed out at least one week before the assignment is due and I will post prior student examples of each assignment on Blackboard.

Other Course Policies:

Classroom conduct: Arrive on time and prepared to engage with the material and other people in a respectful manner. Do not engage in disruptive behavior such as chatting during a lecture. **Cell phones, laptops, and other electronic devices are prohibited (except in cases of special permission from the instructor) in an effort to facilitate classroom interaction**. Violators of these policies will be marked absent for the class period; repeat offenders will lose additional participation and/or activity points.

Grades: Grades are not up for negotiation. However, if you feel a grading error has been made, or if you do not understand a written comment on your work, set up an appointment to discuss your concerns. **The policy of this class is not to discuss grades until 24 hours have elapsed since assignments are returned**; this gives students the opportunity to re-consider the assignment sheet, re-read their work, and consider the instructor’s written remarks prior to discussion.

Contacting your instructor by email: In the university context, email should be considered as a form of professional communication. **The message subject line should include our course number, section, and your reason for emailing (e.g., CRS 430 section 1: Transcript question).** If you do not follow these requirements, you might not receive a response. Keep in mind that I do not check or reply to emails in the evenings or on weekends.

**Schedule of Readings and Assignments (subject to change)**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Topic** | **Readings Due** | **Assignments/Notes** |
| T 1/16 | Introduction | Syllabus |  |
| TR 1/18 | Intercultural Communication and the Discourse Approach | Listen to NPR interview with **Deborah Tannen** on **John** **Gumperz** (link on Bb), AND read **Ron Scollon, Suzanne Scollon & Rodney Jones** 2012: “What is a discourse approach?” (Bb) | *Descriptivism lecture*  *Assign reading groups* |
| T 1/23  (note: add deadline) | Conversational Style | **Deborah Tannen** -That’s Not What I Meant: Preface-Chapter 3 | *Sign up sheet for Discussion leading*  *Paper Bags*  *Student info sheets* |
| TR 1/25 | Conversational Style | **Deborah Tannen** – New York Jewish Conversational Style  AND **Tannen** Conversational Style excerpt on Blackboard, pgs 42-52 | **Bring your paper bags/items and student info sheets!**  *Recording and Transcribing guidelines* |
| T 1/30 | Turn-taking | **Molly Wieland** – Turn-taking structure in French-American cross-cultural conversation AND:  **Yael-Janette Zupnik** – Interruption in Israeli-Palestinian dialogue | Discussion Leading  (pick one of these readings) |
| TR 2/1 | Speech Acts | **Christine Béal** – Keeping the peace: A cross-cultural comparison of questions and requests in Australian English and French | Discussion Leading  **1st Peer Review of Reading Activities** |
| T 2/6 | Data Fest! |  | **Transcript due (upload 3 minute clip and transcript on Bb; bring copies of transcript for the class)** |
| TR 2/8 | Conversational Strategies: Directness/indirectness and power/solidarity | Deborah Tannen -That’s Not What I Meant: Chapters 4 & 6 | Discussion Leading  *Project Instructions* |
| T 2/13 | Conversational Strategies: Framing | Deborah Tannen -That’s Not What I Meant: Chapter 5Suwako Watanabe – Cultural differences in framing | Discussion Leading (Watanabe) |
| TR 2/15 | Narrative | **Sarah Michaels** - “Sharing time”: Children’s narrative styles and differential access to literacy | Discussion leading |
| T 2/20 | Agonism | **Deborah Tannen** – Agonism in the academy  **Christina Kakava** – Opposition in Greek discourse | Discussion Leading  Discussion Leading |
| TR 2/22 | Agonism | **Barbara Johnstone** – Arguments with Khomeini | Discussion Leading |
| T 2/27 | Gender & Sexuality | **Deborah Tannen** –  chs. 7 & 8 of TNWIM (ch. 9 is optional, on criticism in intimate relationships)  **Cheryl Nicholas** (2004) Gaydar: Eye-gaze as identity recognition among gay men and lesbians | Discussion Leading (Nicholas)  **2nd Peer Review of Reading Activities** |
| TR 2/29 | Silence & nonverbal cues | **Alton L. Becker** 1995– Silence across languages  **Cynthia Ntuli** (2012)- Intercultural Misunderstanding in South Africa: An Analysis of Nonverbal Communication Behavior in Context | Discussion Leading (Ntuli) |
| T 3/5 | Silence & Noise | **Jaakko Lehtonen & Kari Sajavaara** 1985 – The Silent Finn  **George R. Saunders** 1985– Silence and Noise in Italian | Discussion Leading  Discussion Leading |
| TR 3/7 | Deaf Culture | None! Work on your midterm project! |  |
| 3/12 &  3/14 | No classes: Spring Break! |  |  |
| T 3/19 |  | None! Work on your midterm project! | **Midterm presentations** |
| TR 3/21 |  | None! Work on your midterm project! | **Midterm presentations** |
| T 3/26 | Social Media Communication | **McCulloch, Gretchen** (2019) – “Internet People” (Bb)  **Deborah Tannen** (2017) The (sometimes unintentional) subtext of digital conversations (Bb) | *Final Project Instructions*  Discussion Leading |
| TR 3/28 | Bilingual and bicultural identities | **Benjamin Bailey** 2000- Multiple identities among Dominican Americans  **Anna Wierzbicka** 2004– Bilingual lives, bilingual experience | Discussion Leading  Discussion Leading |
| T 4/2 | Institutions  (Medicine) | **Brad Davidson** 2000- The Interpreter as institutional gatekeeper | Discussion Leading  **3rd Peer Review of Reading Activities** |
| TR 4/4 | Institutions  (Business) | **Rogerson-Revell** 2007 – Humor in business: A double-edged sword | Discussion Leading |
| T 4/9 | Institutions  (Business) | **Benjamin Bailey** 2000 - Communicative behavior & conflict between African-American customers &  Korean immigrant retailers in LA | Discussion Leading |
| TR 4/11 | Institutions  (Business) | **Helen Spencer-Oatey & Jianu Xing** 2008- Issues of face in a Chinese business visit to Britain | Discussion Leading |
| T 4/16 | Institutions  (Law) | **Diana Eades** 2005– Beyond difference and domination? Intercultural Communication in Legal Contexts AND: Racism, linguistics and the law: <https://www.oxfordstudent.com/2020/07/09/racism-linguistics-and-the-law/> | Discussion Leading (Eades) |
| TR 4/18 | Institutions  (Education) | **Susan Phillips** – Indian & Anglo communicative behavior in classroom interaction  **Christine Mallinson & Charity Hudley** - Linguistic Insight to Address Educational Inequality | Discussion Leading  Discussion Leading    *Institution Comparison handout* |
| T 4/23 | Wrapping it up | That’s Not What I Meant book: Chapter 10 | **Bring laptops for course evaluations! 4th Peer Review of Reading Activities** |
| TR 4/25 | **Final Project presentations** | None; be working on your final project | **Final Projects due** |
| T 4/30 | **Final Project presentations** | None; be working on your final project | **Final Projects due** |

**University Policies**

**Academic Integrity**

Syracuse University’s [Academic Integrity Policy](https://class.syr.edu/academic-integrity/policy/) reflects the high value that we, as a university community, place on honesty in academic work. The policy holds students accountable for the integrity of all work they submit and for upholding course-specific, as well as university-wide, academic integrity expectations. The policy governs citation and use of sources, the integrity of work submitted in exams and assignments, and truthfulness in all academic matters, including course attendance and participation. The policy states that any work a student submits for a course must be solely their own unless the instructor explicitly allows collaboration or editing. The policy also requires students to acknowledge their use of other peoples’ language, images or other original creative or scholarly work through appropriate citation. These expectations extend to the new, fast-growing realm of artificial intelligence (AI) as well as to the use of websites that charge fees or require uploading of course materials to obtain exam solutions or assignments. Students are required to ask their instructor whether use of these tools is permitted – and if so, to what extent – before using them to complete any assignment or exam. Students are also required to seek advance permission from instructors if they wish to submit the same work in more than one course. Failure to receive this permission in advance may violate the Academic Integrity Policy. Under the policy, instructors who seek to penalize a student for a suspected violation must first report the violation to the Center for Learning and Student Success (CLASS). Students may not drop or withdraw from courses in which they face a suspected violation. Instructors must wait to assign a final course grade until a suspected violation is reviewed and upheld or overturned. Upholding Academic Integrity includes abiding by instructors’ individual course expectations, which may include the protection of their intellectual property. Students should not upload, distribute, or otherwise share instructors’ course materials without permission. Students found in violation of the policy are subject to grade sanctions determined by the course instructor and non-grade sanctions determined by the School or College where the course is offered, as outlined in the Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric. Students are required to read an online summary of the University’s academic integrity expectations and provide an electronic signature agreeing to abide by them twice a year during pre-term check-in on MySlice.

The Violation and Sanction Classification Rubric establishes recommended guidelines for the determination of grade penalties by faculty and instructors, while also giving them discretion to select the grade penalty they believe most suitable, including course failure, regardless of violation level. Any established violation in this course may result in course failure regardless of violation level.

Using websites that charge fees or require uploading of course material (e.g., Chegg, Course Hero) to obtain exam solutions or assignments completed by others and present the work as your own violates academic integrity expectations in this course and may be classified as a Level 3 violation, resulting in suspension or expulsion from Syracuse University.

For more information about the policy, see <https://class.syr.edu/academic-integrity/>. If you have any questions about academic integrity, proper citation of sources, inappropriate collaboration, and so on, please communicate with me about it.

**BLACKBOARD LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

This class will use the Blackboard Learning Management to house the syllabus, course content, links to external course materials, assignments, quizzes, exams, feedback, and grades. Note when submitting materials that the University’s Blackboard Learning Management System is on Eastern Time.

If students are unable to submit an assignment due to Blackboard issues, **they must submit a screenshot of the error message and/or a ticket for a request for ITS support as documentation.**

Information about Blackboard is available on[Answers Blackboard](https://answers.syr.edu/display/blackboard01/Blackboard#space-menu-link-content); alternatively, you can contact Information Technology Services by sending an email to[help@syr.edu,](mailto:help@syr.edu) calling 315.443.2677, or in-person at the ITS Service Center, located at 1-227 CST in the Life Sciences Complex. Out of an abundance of caution, the ITS Service Center may be open on an appointment-only basis.

**ACADEMIC ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Syracuse University values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation.  There may be aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion and full participation in this course.  I invite any student to contact me to discuss strategies and/or accommodations (academic adjustments) that may be essential to your success and to collaborate with the Center for Disability Resources (CDR) in this process. If you would like to discuss disability-accommodations or register with CDR, please visit [Center for Disability Resources](https://disabilityservices.syr.edu/). Please call (315) 443-4498 or email [disabilityresources@syr.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@syr.edu) for more detailed information. The CDR is responsible for coordinating disability-related academic accommodations and will work with the student to develop an access plan. Since academic accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact CDR as soon as possible to begin this process.

**DISCRIMINATION OR HARASSMENT**

The University prohibits harassment or discrimination related to any protected category including creed, ethnicity, citizenship, sexual orientation, national origin, sex, gender, pregnancy, disability, marital status, age, race, color, veteran status, military status, religion, sexual orientation, domestic violence status, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression or perceived gender. Any complaint of discrimination or harassment related to any of these protected bases should be reported to Sheila Johnson-Willis, the University’s Chief Equal Opportunity & Title IX Officer. She is responsible for coordinating compliance efforts under various laws including Titles VI, VII, IX and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. She can be contacted at Equal Opportunity, Inclusion, and Resolution Services, 005 Steele Hall, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13244-1120; by email: titleix@syr.edu; or by telephone: 315-443-0211. Federal and state law, and University policy prohibit discrimination and harassment based on sex or gender (including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, stalking, sexual exploitation, and retaliation). If a student has been harassed or assaulted, they can obtain confidential counseling support, 24-hours a day, 7 days a week, from the Sexual and Relationship Violence Response Team at the Counseling Center (315-443-8000, Barnes Center at The Arch, 150 Sims Drive, Syracuse, New York 13244). Incidents of sexual violence or harassment can be reported non-confidentially to the University’s Title IX Officer (Sheila Johnson Willis, 315-443-0211, titleix@syr.edu, 005 Steele Hall). Reports to law enforcement can be made to the University’s Department of Public Safety (315-443-2224, 005 Sims Hall), the Syracuse Police Department (511 South State Street, Syracuse, New York, 911 in case of emergency or 315-435-3016 to speak with the Abused Persons Unit), or the State Police (844-845-7269). I will seek to keep information you share with me private to the greatest extent possible, but as a professor I have mandatory reporting responsibilities to share information regarding sexual misconduct, harassment, and crimes I learn about with the University’s Title IX Officer to help make our campus a safer place for all.

**FAITH TRADITION OBSERVANCES**

Syracuse University recognizes the diversity of faiths represented in the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holy days according to their traditions. Under the policy, students should have an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to a religious observance provided they notify their instructors no later than the end of the second week of classes for regular session classes and by the submission deadline for flexibility formatted classes. Student deadlines are posted in MySlice under Student Services/Enrollment/My Religious Observances/Add a Notification.

**MENTAL HEALTH & WELLNESS CONSIDERATIONS**

Mental health and overall well-being are significant predictors of academic success. As such it is essential that during your college experience you develop the skills and resources to effectively navigate stress, anxiety, depression and other mental health concerns. Please familiarize yourself with the range of resources the Barnes Center provides ([https://ese.syr.edu/bewell/](https://maestro.syr.edu/trk/click?ref=zvu694kig_1-5908x39e88x01654&)) and seek out support for mental health concerns as needed. Counseling services are available 24/7, 365 days, at 315-443-8000. I encourage you to explore the resources available through the Wellness Leadership Institute, [https://ese.syr.edu/bewell/wellness-leadership-institute/](https://maestro.syr.edu/trk/click?ref=zvu694kig_1-5908x3f53dx01654&).”

**HUNGER AND FOOD SCARCITY AT SU:**

Hunger and food scarcity. There are food pantries at both Hendricks Chapel and on South Campus, stocked with edibles and personal care items. To find out more, go to the [Hendricks Food Pantry Site](https://chapel.syracuse.edu/student-support/food-pantry/), or contact Syeisha Bird at [smbyrd@syr.edu](mailto:smbyrd@syr.edu), or at 315-706-4526.

**THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) sets forth requirements regarding the privacy of student records. FERPA governs both the access to and release of those records, known as education records, and the information they contain. Under FERPA, faculty have a legal responsibility to protect the confidentiality of student records. For additional information about FERPA and Syracuse University’s FERPA policy, see [Compliance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act](https://policies.syr.edu/policies/university-governance-ethics-integrity-and-legal-compliance/compliance-with-the-family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act-ferpa/) or contact the Office of the Registrar (315.443.3535).

In recent years it has become increasingly common for parents and other family members to contact faculty directly with questions about a student’s academic performance. If this happens, you are encouraged to consult your department chair or senior associate dean for guidance. Even seemingly innocuous statements about matters such as class attendance or participation can constitute FERPA violations. Students may file FERPA waiver forms, which allow university personnel to discuss their academic records and performance with specified individuals.

**ORANGE ALERT**

ORANGE ALERT, Syracuse University’s crisis notification system, uses text messages, phone, and email alerts to provide rapid notification and instructions to members of the University community in the event of a crisis in progress.

**In the event of an emergency, please use one of the following numbers to reach us:**

From any phone: 315.443.2222  
From your cell phone: #78 (#SU)  
Campus landline: 711  
For more information on ORANGE ALERT, including how to update your contact information, visit the [DPS website](https://dps.syr.edu/public-information/orange-alert/)

**EMAIL POLICY**

Syracuse University has established email as a primary vehicle for official communication with students, faculty, and staff. Emergency notifications, educational dialog, research, and general business correspondence are all consistently enhanced in institutions of higher learning where email policies exist and are supported by procedures, practice, and culture.

An official email address is established and assigned by Information Technology Services (ITS) for each registered student, as well as for all active faculty and staff members. All University communications sent via email will be sent to this address. Faculty and staff members must use the officially established University email address to communicate with students registered in their classes. Keep in mind that student records sent to a non-syr.edu email address may create a FERPA violation (See the complete policy at [Syracuse University Email Policy](https://policies.syr.edu/policies/information-technology/e-mail-policy/)).

**TRIGGER WARNING**

Because of the nature of the topics covered in this class, the course readings or class discussions may generate intellectual and emotional discomfort. These responses are natural parts of intellectual growth. If, however, your emotional response becomes acute psychological distress (triggering), please communicate with me. I invite you to contact me if you have concerns in this regard.