



# PRAIRIE COLLEGE

Online Education Course Syllabus for  
IS 351 CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION  
Edition 2, Published 2019  
3 credit hours

**Instructor:** Dr. Emma Karin Emgård  
**Email:** emmakarin.emgard@prairie.edu

## **Course Description**

In this course, we will deal with foundational principles for communication between people from different cultures. You will learn to be aware of the influence of thinking processes, worldviews, plus verbal and non-verbal behaviours. We will also cover aspects of anxiety and uncertainty that everyone faces when communicating with someone from a different culture. Most of the assignments will relate to you applying the teaching to your own interaction with different cultures or people from different cultures.

*Prerequisites: IS 140 World Religions, SS 170 Christianity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century World, SS 273 Cultural Anthropology.*

## **Course Rationale**

The assumptions we have about communication have consequences for how we communicate. Regardless of whether we relocate to a different nation and speak to people we meet there or if we speak with a co-worker in our hometown, we have probably crossed some cultural border. Therefore, everyone needs to be aware of the principles involved in cross-cultural communication. You may or may not have experienced culture shock but the class will help your cultural adjustment if you go abroad and also your adjustment to working/relating to people from other cultures even if you stay in your own nation.

## **Course Outcomes**

After completing the course, you should be able to do the following:

1. Define major terms and concepts related to cross-cultural communication.
2. Demonstrate increasing ability to communicate with non-native English speakers, as well as persons who exhibit a different worldview, value system, and communicative style.
3. Identify and explain factors that influence the cross-cultural communication process.
4. Identify personal traits in perception of reality and explain how these traits affect communication.
5. Illustrate the importance of cross-cultural communication, especially with respect to change, transformation, and conversion.
6. Suggest how to apply principles of cross-cultural communication to daily life.
7. Appreciate and effectively use different forms of conflict resolution.

### **Required Texts**

Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*. Toronto, ON: Penguin Books, 2009.

Available online at [http://www.ipadebooks1.com/59/index\\_split\\_000.html](http://www.ipadebooks1.com/59/index_split_000.html)

Elmer, Duane. *Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building Relationships for Effective Ministry*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academics, 2006.

Moreau, Scott. *Effective Intercultural Communication*. Ada, MI: Baker Academic, 2014.

Available as an e-book.

### **Performance Evaluation**

<b>Course Outcome</b>	<b>Requirement/Assessment Strategy</b>	<b>Weight</b>
1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	Active Participation	40%
3, 4, 5, 7	Missiological Critique	15%
2, 3, 4, 6, 7	Racism/Ethnocentrism Paper	15%
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Research Paper	20%
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	Cultural Engagement Paper	10%

### **Course Requirements**

In order to receive a passing grade for the class, you must complete all the assignments. See Appendix A for a quick overview of the schedule.

#### 1. Active Participation (40%)

Active participation means that you will post on the class forum after every topic. Please note that this is the core of the course; always ponder on what you hear, take notes, and then after each topic, share thoughtful comments on the forum. The length of your post is not relevant, rather, you need to make insightful comments in order to receive the most points. You will be graded on a 2-point scale. If you don't post anything you will get 0. If you basically restate what was said in the video or text you will receive 1 point. If it is clear that you have wrestled with the issue you will get 1.5. In order to get higher, your post must be incredibly insightful.

#### 2. Missiological Critique (15%)

Write a 1000-word (3 double-spaced pages) report analyzing *Things Fall Apart* from a missiological communication point of view. Include a cover page (see Appendix B). You need to see what the author is saying to his audience of the 1960s but also what he is saying to you personally today—what are the mistakes you make today? This is a paper of serious missional and self-reflection. Conclude with what you learned for your own ministry with people from different cultures. See Appendix B for a sample of two paragraphs from an A paper.

#### 3. Racism and Ethnocentrism Reflection (15%)

You will write a three-page personal reflection paper about racism. You will interact with the videos in Unit 2.3, your own experience, and the readings. You will end with a conclusion about where you see yourself and what, if anything, needs to change in your own life and attitudes. Please prayerfully view the videos and ask God to show you things in your own life—as well as show you how to deal with these things.

There is no specific format for the paper, but you must include a Title Page (Appendix C) and a Works Cited page.

4. Research Paper (20%)

You will write a five to six-page research paper about one communication issue that you find interesting in relating to people from different cultural backgrounds. Use Elmer’s book as your guide. You must include research that you have done online, interviews with people from a different culture than your own (missionaries you meet are a good source for this paper), as well as insight from Lingenfelter and Mayer’s test in Unit 4. Use Appendix C, D and E.

5. Cultural Engagement Paper (10%)

Your final paper is a reflection and plan of action for how you need to grow in your cross-cultural engagement. From the insight you have gained from the course, you will develop “guidelines” for yourself—things to be aware of when you interact with people from cultures different than your own. Use Appendix B for the Title Page.

**Academic Policies**

1. Plagiarism

Make sure you know the difference between a paraphrase and a quote. Everyone you paraphrase or quote must be included in the Works Cited. For more information, please go to <https://prairie.edu/current-students/registrars-office/>. Under “Basic Academic Info, Guides & Catalogue,” you will find the “Writer’s Guide.”

2. Grading and Response Time

My timeline for grading and assignment feedback is 7-10 days. I will try to respond to student communications within 2 days, excluding weekends, holidays, and vacation time.

3. Prairie College Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Number Grade	Rating	Point Value
A+	90-100		4.0
A	85-89	Excellent	4.0
A-	80-84		3.7
B+	77-79		3.3
B	73-76	Good	3.0
B-	70-72		2.7
C+	67-69		2.3
C	63-66	Satisfactory	2.0
C-	60-62		1.7
D+	55-59		1.3
D	50-54	Poor	1.0
F	0-49	Failure	0.0

Numerical course grades are not rounded.

**APPENDIX A**  
**Course Schedule**

<b>Unit 1 Introduction to Cross-Cultural Communication</b>			
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Viewing</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
1.1 What is Cross-Cultural Communication?	3 videos	Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapters 1-2	Forum 1 and 2
1.2 Anxiety, Uncertainty and Mindfulness	1 video and a PowerPoint	1 PDF file	Forum 3
1.3 Jesus Style Communication	--	2 PDF files	Forum 4
<b>Unit 2 Worldview, Racism, and Ethnocentrism's Effect on Communication</b>			
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Viewing</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
2.1 Worldview	2 videos and a PowerPoint	Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapter 4	Forum 5
2.2 <i>Things Fall Apart</i>	PowerPoint and 3 videos	<i>Things Fall Apart</i>	Missiological Critique
2.3 Racism/ Ethnocentrism	3 videos	--	Racism and Ethnocentrism Reflection
<b>Unit 3 Verbal and Nonverbal Communication</b>			
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Viewing</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
3.1 Verbal Communication	3 videos, a power point,	Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapters 5, 6, and 7	--
3.2 Nonverbal Communication	5 videos	Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapter 8	--
<b>Unit 4 Cultural Values and the Effect on Intercultural Communication</b>			
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Viewing</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
4.1 Overview	2 videos, a power point	Lingenfelter questionnaire to be filled out	Forum 6
4.2 Hofstede's Individualistic vs. Collectivistic Cultures and Hall's High/Low Context	8 videos	Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapter 9, and 11	Forum 7
4.3 Hofstede's Power Distance	1 video	Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapter 12	Forum 8
4.4 Hofstede's Masculinity and Femininity	1 video	Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapter 13	Forum 9
4.5 Hofstede's 3 Final Dimensions	3 videos	--	Forum 10

4.6 Proxemics, Time (Edward Hall)	4 videos	Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapter 10,	Forum 11
4.7 Honor vs. Justice (shame vs. guilt)	2 videos	PDF and Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapter 14	Forum 12
<b>Unit 5 Cultural Adaptation</b>			
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Viewing</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
5.1 Cultural Conflict and Conflict Resolution	2 videos	Elmer's book and Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapter 23	Research Paper
5.2 Cultural Engagement	1 video	Moreau, Campbell and Greener chapter 15,17-22, 24	Cultural Engagement Paper

**APPENDIX B**  
**First two paragraphs of a Student Paper (A grade)**

Within the story of the Ibo people and their interactions with the white man, it can be easy to critique the European missionaries' work. Although there are many areas of their ministry not beneficial to the Ibo people, there are many things that they did well – for example, their obedience to the Great Commission despite personal risk. The focus of critiquing their ministry, therefore, must be to be more effective in future ministry. Insight can be gained by considering their strengths and weaknesses.

Unlike the post-modernistic tendency rampant in today's Western society to white-wash truth claims and to live rather pluralistically, the missionaries of the Ibo people stood firm upon the truth of the Gospel. They were not afraid to state that the Umuofia's worship of false gods was idolatry. They were not afraid to reach out to the lost, the least, and the little despite protest. In several instances, however, the missionaries swung too far to the other end of the pendulum and did not approach the telling of these truths graciously from a culturally appropriate point. Mr. Smith was overzealous and did not allow for grace when people either intentionally or unintentionally engaged in idol worship. During Mr. Brown's time in Umoufia, the growth of the Church along with the maintained respect between himself and the elders evidenced a more Christ-like balance of mercy and justice of both parties.

**APPENDIX C**  
**Format for cover page**

CATCHY BUT INFORMATIVE  
TITLE

By  
Duktig Elev

Email  
# XX

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
**IS 351 - 1 Cross-cultural Communication**  
Dr. Emma Karin Emgård  
February 21, 2018

## APPENDIX D

### Guidelines for Writing a Research Paper

Reading a well-thought and well-written paper is one of the most enjoyable aspects of being a teacher. However, papers that are poorly done are not only unpleasant for you as the learner, but are also tedious for the instructor.

You are being asked to write an academic paper which is not the same as an essay or other forms of writing. Hopefully the following information will help you in completing and enjoying this assignment.

- **Research:** Start working on this paper soon. Insight that comes from good research seldom, if ever, comes from last minute preparation. Asking God for a miracle when research has been put off until a few days before the due date qualifies as presumption. Complete most of your research before writing. Try to establish a preliminary outline early in the process as well.
- **Reflection:** Prior to writing your final draft you should be able to answer the following questions:
  - What is my central theme in this paper?
  - What are a few questions I am addressing related to this theme?
  - What line of argument am I taking in answering those questions?
- Surprise endings have no place in writing an academic paper like this. The main “plot” should be evident from the beginning. Therefore consider the following:
  - Your first paragraph should grab the reader’s interest and convince him/her that the following pages merit careful attention and reflection.
  - Next, provide a clear purpose statement in which you describe the overall direction of your paper, the conclusions you have developed and how you intend on getting there. (This is where you present your thesis.)
  - Conclude well. A summary is not a conclusion. A conclusion demonstrates that you have reflected on and interpreted your research material convincingly.
- **Argumentation, not assertion:** The aim of a paper like this is to develop skills in analysis, evaluation and critical thinking. Therefore, a summary of other people’s views and ideas is inadequate. Likewise simply stating a personal conviction in the absence of reasonable arguments suggesting why a certain position is held is to be avoided.
- **Style:** Academic writing does not have to be boring. Be creative and interesting. Avoid the use of well-worn clichés. Each paragraph should address **one** idea or concept and each sentence should be a complete, grammatically correct unit (that is, it should contain a subject and a verb at least.). At this stage in your academic development you should be expanding your vocabulary. However, avoid the use of big words that are awkwardly imposed on a sentence. Words with multiple syllables are impressive only if they clarify or enhance what you are trying to say. Read your paper out loud or have someone else read it. You will be amazed how much sloppy grammar can be purged out of a paper by simply reading it aloud.
- **Plagiarism:** Including another person’s words or ideas in a manner that gives the impression that they were born in your mind is academic theft. Ideas and concepts that others have developed may be included in your paper legitimately, but only if correctly and accurately acknowledged and documented. See the Academic Guide. It is key for you to understand how to paraphrase and reference paraphrased information.

- **Basic Format:** Papers should all be written as follows:
  - Print is to be the equivalent of 11 or 12 point font.
  - A cover page (see example)
  - A Table of Contents page
  - The actual paper
  - A Works Cited page
  - All pages are to be numbered (but not the Title Page).
  - Citation of Sources: You will use Turabian format.
  
- Regarding inclusive language: **You must avoid the masculine terminology in reference to people in the general sense.** For example, the terms “humanity” or “people” or “humankind” must be used rather than terms such as “man” or “mankind” when referring to the human race. **You will actually be marked down for using non-inclusive language.**

**APPENDIX E**  
**Grading Rubric for Research Papers**

I will grade the research paper in three categories listed below. I will assign each category a grade based on a 10 point scale, but the first two categories will be weighted twice as much as the third one. The cumulative grade will be expressed as a percentage.

Thesis and quality of argument:	$/10 \times 2 = /20$
Use of specific cultural data:	$/10 \times 6 = /60$
Quality of expression:	$\underline{/10 \times 2 = /20}$
Cumulative grade:	$/100$

Grading scale as it relates to thesis development and cultural data:

10 – 9 points	Markedly superior, creative insight
8	Excellent command of required material
7.5	Very good but lacks that extra measure of detail or insight
7	Satisfactory, conventional, some generalizations, limited development
6	Fair, some inaccuracies, frequent generalizations, lack of development
5	Marginal, clichés, underdevelopment of ideas, lacking relevant data
0 – 4	Lack of material, increasing inaccuracy, irrelevant material

Grading scale as it relates to quality of expression:

10 – 9 points	Superior; command of grammar, punctuation, spelling (GPS); liveliness; understands the technical vocabulary of the subject
8	Competent; command of GPS; clarity; accurate paragraphing and technical vocabulary
7.5	Good; some notable GPS flaws that reduce clarity; coherent; limited use of and some errors in technical vocabulary
7	Conventional; increasing frequency of GPS errors, clichés; paragraphing issues
6	Fair; GPS errors now noticeable distraction; simple; basic vocabulary
5	Marginal competence; higher frequency of GPS errors, incompleteness; fragmentary and haphazard arrangement of material
0 – 4	Lack of command GPS; incoherence, paragraphing negligible