SOCI 105 – INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION:
THE PERSON AND THE PROCESS

Course Description:
Students will develop a personal and theoretical understanding of the cultural origin of
various people’s values, ideologies, habits and idiosyncrasies, and how they effect
communication across cultural, racial, ethnic and gender lines. Through observing,
simulating and experiencing incidents of cross-cultural communication, they will begin to
examine and develop skills that are necessary for effective understanding and for
successful intercultural communication among majority and minority groups.

As we continue to move into the second millennium, we are all challenged to grow in
ways of interconnectedness that were unheard of even 50 years ago. Rapid changes in
information, communication and automation technologies, as well as political and
economic transformations and vast movements in populations, have created a global
imperative to interact with diverse peoples. As our global village continues to shrink, and
we become aware of the challenges and rich possibilities that this diversity brings into
our midst, we can start to visualize the enormous potential for personal and societal
growth. Sociology 105, Intercultural Communication, seeks to develop awareness and
increased understanding among peoples of different cultures, an appreciation of this rich
diversity, and to offer tools for a lifetime of continued growth in intercultural
competence.

Credits: 3

Professors:
Caroline Calogero (732) 224-2896 MAN126E ccalogero@brookdalecc.edu
Rosemarie Bello-Truland (732) 224-2794 MAN 112A rbtruland@brookdalecc.edu
Doug Coil (732) 224-2025 MAN114 dcoil@brookdalecc.edu
WebPage http://www.brookdalecc.edu/fac/sociology/dcoil
Art Marshall (732) 224-2003 MAN115 amarshall@brookdalecc.edu
WebPage http://www.brookdalecc.edu/fac/sociology/amarshall

Learning Assistant:
Leila Wollman (732) 224-2538 MAN127 lwollman@brookdalecc.edu

Text:
• Coil, Doug and Marshall, Art. Intercultural Communication, Thomson Custom
  Publishing,2007
• Angel course management system may be used. See end of the objectives for
  Angel logon procedure.
Intended Course Learning Outcomes/Course Goals (Core Competencies):

Core Competencies: Primary

**Communication**
The student will communicate information and ideas clearly and effectively in the written and spoken form, and will demonstrate effective listening and reading skills.

**Historical/Societal Analysis**
The student will identify and analyze historical and/or societal issues as they impact current and future trends.

**Community and Workplace**
The student will demonstrate cultural sensitivity within the context of the contemporary, diverse, global community. The student will demonstrate ethical conduct and effective teamwork.

**Personal Development**
The student will use the biological, psychological, and social dimensions of health and wellness to improve and maintain physical and emotional well-being. The student will demonstrate personal, time and stress management skills.

Core Competencies: Secondary

**Critical Thinking**
The student will think clearly, critically and creatively to analyze information, identify solutions, make logical decisions and solve problems.

Learning Outcomes/Course Goals

Through this course students will:

1. develop an awareness and greater understanding of people from other cultures.

2. increase their understanding of the ways in which people of various cultures communicate.

3. explore general and culturally specific factors comprising cultures, including: world view, values, attitudes, behaviors, and verbal and nonverbal codes.
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4. recognize ethnocentrism and other barriers to effective heterogeneous communication in themselves and in their daily lives.

5. explore and practice attitudinal and behavioral techniques leading to improved intercultural communication skills.

Unit Topics and/or Unit Outcomes (Objectives)

1. The student will be given the opportunity to develop a personal and theoretical understanding of themselves in terms of cultural origin and individual values, ideologies, habits, and idiosyncrasies.

   - What is culture?
   - What is communication?
   - What is intercultural communication?
   - Describe how noise factors influence and interfere with the communication process.
   - Demonstrate an understanding of what cultures, co-cultures and countercultures are, and how the membership within these groups is determined by the dominant culture being viewed.
   - Develop an awareness of the tendency to view the world through an ethnocentric perspective and how this impacts on cross-cultural communication.
   - Identify the noise factors that cause conflict between individuals and groups. Specific attention is given to the impact of prejudice, stereotyping, assumptions, inferences and privileges.
   - Recognition will exist that communication, whether intentional or unintentional, is an ongoing process which takes a verbal and non-verbal form.

2. Through readings, discussion, role-play, simulations and group presentations, students will develop an understanding of how they, as individuals, affect communication across cultural, racial and gender lines.

   - Develop an understanding of how “cultural baggage” or cultural values influence communication between cultures and how this limited view of the world is often the source of conflict.
   - Identify examples of U.S. cultural values and the impact of these values on interaction.
   - Identify examples of an individual’s “world view” and how it fosters or limits communication.
   - Develop an awareness of how new situations or exposure to different values often results in culture shock.

3. Having been given the opportunity to develop an introspective understanding of themselves, students will develop skills that are necessary for effective understanding and for successful intercultural communication among majority and minority groups. This includes both a national and international perspective.
A synthesis of knowledge from the first two units leads to the development of many skills. Additionally, assertive training results in specific skills which can lead to more effective, open and honest cross-cultural communication.

Notification for Students With Disabilities:
Brookdale Community College offers reasonable accommodations and/or services to persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who wish to self-identify, must contact the Disabilities Services Office at 732-224-2730 or 732-842-4211 (TTY), provide appropriate documentation of the disability, and request specific accommodations or services. If a student qualifies, reasonable accommodations and/or services, which are appropriate for the college level and are recommended in the documentation, can be approved.

College Policies:
For information regarding:
- Brookdale’s Academic Integrity Code
- Student Conduct Code
- Student Grade Appeal Process

Please refer to the **STUDENT HANDBOOK AND BCC CATALOG**.

Department Policies:
Intercultural Communication is an experiential class. While using the text for support, your participation in course activities is required. This facilitates experiencing and practicing communication skills with practical applications. In addition, due to the experiential nature of the course, it is imperative that the demonstration and modeling of appropriate communication skills and attitudinal behavior must be demonstrated consistently in order to evaluate the core competencies identified in this course.

Expectations of Students:

- Participation: all goals and objectives for the course are expected to be completed by all students
- Submit assignments in a timely fashion and meet deadlines.
- When questions arise regarding clarification of scheduled supplemental assignments or essay evaluations, the student is expected to initiate communication with the instructor at an appropriate time.
- Alternative assignments must be completed in consultation with the instructor.
- Attend all class sessions.

Course Activities:

- Exploration of a co-culture.
- Reading assignments from the text and selectively assigned materials
- Interactive experiences with people from various cultures/co-cultures.
- Intercultural simulations and awareness activities.
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- Use of media and technology.

Grading:
Your progress in Intercultural Communication course is determined by completion and quality of the specifically identified objectives listed in the course syllabus.

The following guidelines will be used in determining the grade for this course:
All essays must be keyboarded or typed using 12 font.

SOCI 105/ Intercultural Communication provides for students to achieve a grade based on the following two part criteria:
1. Specific course requirements which results in the accumulation of points as follows: A, B+, B, C+, C, D, F, and INC

Required essays = 75 possible points
Intercultural Activities = 30 possible points (10 points on each of 3 activities)
Project – selected from a list of options = 25 possible points
Total possible points = 130

Grade of A = 110-130 points
Grade of B+ = 101-109 points
Grade of B = 86-100 points
Grade of C+ = 81-85 points
Grade of C = 70-80 points
Grade of D = 65-69 points
Grade of F = 64 points and below
INC – Student needs to complete 70% of the course requirements to be eligible for an INC (Incomplete) grade. Eligibility is determined by the instructor.

Points = 130 points maximum

Required Essays
1 = 10 points maximum
2 = 10 points maximum
3 = 10 points maximum
4 = 10 points maximum
5 = 25 points maximum
6 = 10 points maximum

Intercultural Activities
1 = 10 points maximum
2 = 10 points maximum
3 = 10 points maximum

Project
1 = 25 points maximum
2. For In-Class Students

Point accumulation by itself will not guarantee a grade. Students must also satisfy the following criteria:

**Grade of A:**
Completion of this course at an A level would indicate that a student has been outstanding in their attendance. This means, no more than one unexcused absence. It is expected that active participation is critical to the success of class activities. In addition, a student would be expected to demonstrate the skills appropriate to intercultural communication, and therefore, be able to handle a leadership position.

**Grade of B+ or B:**
Completion of this course at a B+ or B level would indicate that a student has been above average in their attendance. This means, no more than two unexcused absences. It is expected that active participation is critical to the success of class activities. In addition, a student would be expected to demonstrate the skills appropriate to intercultural communication.

**Grade of C+ or C:**
Completion of this course at a C+ or C level would indicate that a student has been average in their attendance. This means, no more than three unexcused absences. It is expected that active participation is critical to the success of class activities. In addition, a student would be expected to demonstrate the skills appropriate to intercultural communication.

**Grade of D:** Only under exceptional situations will a D grade be considered due to the sensitive nature of the course material. Marginal skills could not be equated with effective intercultural communication and could be counterproductive to the goals of the course.

**Grade of F:** Failure to meet stated completion levels for the course.

**Grade of INC** – Student needs to complete 70% of the course requirements to be eligible for an INC (Incomplete) grade. Eligibility is determined by the instructor.

**Due Dates:** Since the course is offered under a variety of time periods, an appropriate syllabus will be provided by the instructor to indicate due dates for course requirements.

**Required Essays, Intercultural Activities, and Project**

Answer all essay evaluations at the appropriate grade level honestly and thoroughly, using the text and other information sources as well as personal experience and contacts with cultures. Honesty in assessing your own feelings, even when not in line with the prevailing opinion of others, is key. Instructors respect honest reactions and maintain
confidentiality. Essay evaluations should be proofread and must be submitted on the due date in the course syllabus for full credit. Where differentiated instruction is required for study abroad students, it will be identified as alternative assignment for study abroad students only. See essay 2, 5 and the alternative project options.

Required Essays

Essay#1
The world is confusing place until we can make some sense of it. Much of how we see the world is learned and transmitted from generation to generation. Keep in mind that one element of intercultural communication is perception, “the process by which an individual selects, evaluates, and/or gauges stimuli from the external world.” Think back to memories of your childhood when you were first aware of the existence of a co-culture (race, ethnicity, ableness, religion) apart from your own (perhaps through the media or through direct contact). Describe the experience. How did you feel about it? (caution, fear, welcoming, superior, inferior, sought distance, sought further possibilities if encountered) What do you remember of your family’s attitude toward this group? What do you feel might have been done to make this first intercultural encounter more positive?
These early perceptions may have changed or been altered many times since; however, they impacted on you then and affect you now directly or indirectly. What can be learned from your early experiences that might impact on the young and impressionable in your life today and in the future. Support your theories or beliefs by direct references to the text. (Chapter 1 and 2)

Essay#2 (Create a Society Activity: Culture & Perception)
Culturally determined beliefs are the main influence on how we behave and relate to our environment and how we relate to different environments. Based on your classroom experience and your participation in developing a society that protects your group’s values, what did you learn from this that might make it easier for you to communicate, travel, and interact with others in your group. What have you learned from this experience that would make you a more successful traveler in the real world? What are your obligations/your options?
In the sharing aspect of this “cultural baggage” activity, it was probably evident that specific dominant US cultural patterns were evident in each of the societies in spite of how different they first appeared. Identify at least five of these patterns which you are aware of from this activity. (Chapters 3, 4 and 5)

Study Abroad Students Alternative Essay 2
View one of the following videos found in Bankier Library prior to departure:
  The Past, What You Are Is Where You Were When Again
  BF773 .M37 2005
  Flashpoint BF575.P9 M37 2003
  Just Get It! HM132 .M3 1996
Use information from this video, the Cultural Postulates Handout, and Chapters 3 & 4 in the text to identify five US cultural values. Discuss how these values influence your life. Also describe how two of these values are considered to be “cultural baggage” when interacting in the host culture. How does our awareness of the “cultural baggage” help us become a more successful traveler in the real world? Where possible, relate to your current experience.

Also read the handout on Value Orientations (World View) and view the following DVD in the Library prior to departure:
- **Global Contrasts** HD62.4 .G56 1996
- **Bridging the Culture Gap** HD2755.5 .B85 1983
- **Managing the Overseas Assignment** HD2755.5 .M26 1983

These media resources will provide an orientation of how differences in world view and other communication factors affect communication between members of other cultures/co-cultures.

**Essay#3**

Verbal communication, meaning language, includes words and meanings, as well as nonverbal communication. Messages of action, space, time and silence have strong links to culture. Language is used to keep in touch with others and allows us to talk about the past, present and future. Language in turn influences the manner in which people perceive and conceptualize the world and the peoples of the world. Nonverbal communication has value in human interaction because much of our nonverbal actions is not easily controlled consciously. It also has a strong link to culture. The past, present and future are major areas for discussion as developed in Chapters 6 and 7. Explain how we use language to deal with the past, present and future and how a culture’s orientation toward the past, present and future offer insight into how that culture communicates. As you develop your response to the above statement, include in part 1 of your essay one topic from A,B or C, and one topic from D,E or F. Discuss specific applications to your communication with others, and/or share personal experiences related to A,B or C and D,E or F.

**Answer A, B OR C**

A. Identify the four divisions of language, and describe the function of each in conversation.
B. Discuss some of the reasons we use language. Why do we communicate with each other, and what are we trying to accomplish?
C. How does the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis link language and culture?

**And answer D, E OR F**

D. Why is nonverbal communication important in our lives? What does it offer us as communicators and as students of intercultural communication?
E. How can the study of nonverbal behavior reduce our sense of ethnocentrism and make us more culturally tolerant human beings?
F. Nonverbal actions and gestures are perceived differently, and different messages are received more or less enthusiastically depending on cultural orientation. Select three of the following messages of action and compare each to the perception held by the different U.S. cultures. (You may use more than one culture in your comparison.)

- Perception of and use of space
- Time consciousness
- Silence
- Touch
- Humility
- Friendship
- Dress and bodily adornment
- Greetings and saying goodbye

In part 2 of your essay, address the verbal and nonverbal statements below.

- **Verbal:**
  Think of the many expressions you use that are not standard English. Describe as many as possible, and define their meanings. With whom do you use these expressions? List some expressions from past generations that are no longer used. Cite at least three examples of how expressions of non-standard English contribute to the noise factor in the communication process. In addition, cite at least one positive outcome of this aspect of communication.

- **Nonverbal:**
  Select a foreign movie, TV show conducted by people from a non-dominant culture, or event you attend where people of another culture are predominantly represented. Observe and describe the following: general appearance, dress, body movements, posture, use of facial expressions, gestures, touch, eye contact, paralanguage, use of personal space, furnishing of home personal artifacts, use of time, silence. Analyze your findings in light of information on nonverbal communication found in your text. (Chapters 6 and 7)

- Note when asked a direct question or asked to do something, cultures respond differently.
- When setting an appointment or accepting an invitation the reaction to the scheduled time is often different.
- The use and distribution of personal space often differs from culture to culture.

**Essay#4 (Assertive Training)**

Strategies for negotiation differ from culture to culture. Since cultures differ in their value orientation, these differences sometimes cause conflict in personal relationships and in workplace situations. Based on the general acceptance and value of assertion, describe a situation that happened in the recent past in which you behaved in a less than effective manner; either chose to withdraw from communicating your real thoughts and feelings, or you acted too aggressively. Why? **Outline in specific detail which rights are being violated and irrational beliefs that existed and the alternative solutions now available.** Where possible, choose an incident that took place in an intercultural
context and you would be able to follow through to completion. If you could redo this situation, what would it be like this time? How might the presence of someone from another culture change your style of reacting or the other person’s perception of your actions? It would be expected that you support your examples and/or theories by referring specifically to the assertion handouts and the text. (Chapters 8 & 11)

For in-class students, absences during the assertiveness training will require the critiquing of a text or series of articles as assigned and/or available resources.

Essay#5 (Co-cultural Group)

We live in a diverse society where we are regularly confronted with situations requiring us to be sensitive to cultural similarities and differences. Often our lack of knowledge about a culture or a co-cultural group, as well as existing stereotypes and prejudice may negatively affect our communication with group members. In order to challenge misconceptions and to increase our cultural awareness, you will provide training for the class about a cultural group. For Study abroad students, this must be the group that you are visiting. This focus of this project is to explore a co-cultural group based on race, age, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic class, gender, sexual orientation or physical ability. This project will require you to do the following:

- Submit an outline for the presentation
- Develop a list of four resources per person that identifies or supports each group member’s contribution to the group presentation.
- Develop a one page handout that identifies important values and attitudes concerning the group, reflects common stereotypes and/or prejudices, and identifies important contributions to our society or culture this group has made.
- Identify three skills you needed to be strengthened to communicate more effectively with this group.
- Each group needs to identify a leader who will confirm participation and contributions appropriate to the assignment. Those students not identified as active participants will be required to complete a writing assignment with a research component, the topic to be assigned by the instructor. The submission of a portfolio demonstrating each participant’s contributions is required.
- A group presentation is expected to be made based on what has been considered valuable in the one page handout. This handout is to be provided to each class member. Presentations are to be 20 minutes in length, but not to exceed 30 minutes.

Study Abroad Alternative Essay 5: Replace the six bulleted items with the following two bullets:

- Submit a paper, six to eight pages in length, on a co-cultural group.
- Develop a one page summary identifying important values and attitudes concerning the group, reflects common stereotypes and/or prejudices, and identifies important contributions to our society or culture this group has made.

Essay#6

Here is your opportunity to exert your new skill in assertion. Evaluate your experience in this course in terms of what worked or did not work for you. Focus on your progress in
the area of cross-cultural communication skills. Establish short-term (6-12 months) and long-term (over 1 year) goals to keep these processes going and to keep from taking steps backwards. Identify how you might meet these goals.

**Essay#7 Study Abroad Students only**
A journal must be maintained to include weekly entries that reflect your experiences while living in a new cultural environment. This is not a diary listing schedules of activities, but is to reflect your growth as a cross-cultural communicator. **It is to be noted that this journal represents contact hours that other students have in the classroom.**

**Intercultural Activities**

Check with the instructor ahead of time to make sure that the event you have chosen is acceptable. Your report should be at least three keyboarded pages and include the following:

- Description of the event, its purpose(s), the culture group originating the event, and how you learned of the event
- Comparison to similar events in your culture
- What you saw and experienced that made you feel confident you understood completely
- What you experienced that was puzzling to you
- What might be the major difficulties in intercultural communication between people from the sponsoring cultural group and your cultural group
- How you felt being an outsider in a less predictable situation
- In one sentence, describe an important conclusion about intercultural communication due to your participation in this event.

**Sample Intercultural Activity**
Experience the cuisine of another culture. Describe how the type of food, its method of preparation and presentation represent the culture being assesses. A student could talk to a member of the culture, a server, the owner of a restaurant, as well as research dietary practices and taboos in this intercultural essay.

The following is a sample of suggested intercultural activities:

- Go to the movies or theater, eat food, listen to music, have fun…preferably with a person from that culture or co-culture, so that you can have a better time and gain more insight into the experience.
- Listen to other points of view: minority-owned radio (WBAI 99.5FM); culture-specific shows on WBJB 90.5 FM; or WNYE 91.5 FM, or others; or TV programs featuring a co-cultural issue.
- Read newspapers or magazines written by members of co-cultures.
- Attend different religious services.
- Visit Lunchbreak, BCC Learning Centers…, and speak with participants.
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- Attend a performance at Crossroads Theater, New Brunswick or other productions conducted by members of a co-culture.
- Visit a Holocaust Center and select/review video or print material.
- Attend a cultural/ethnic event sponsored on campus or in the community, i.e., International Peace Fair, events sponsored by Student Activities and Community Development.
- Visit a museum specializing in a co-culture: Shoenberg (African-American); Museum of the American Indian…
- Attend a crafts demonstration or lecture on campus, at a town meeting, at the public library…
- Visit a business that deals in international markets and find out their needs, problems, skills they are looking for.
- Be creative: What other activities can you think of? Search newspapers, BCC’s Happenings, library bulletin boards.

Project Options:
Complete one of the following:

- Research paper of between 7-10 pages using an acceptable research format.
- A service learning project for a minimum of 20 hours. A reflective journal must be maintained following each period of service. For example, if visits are scheduled daily or weekly, journal entries are to follow. This project must be coordinated with Linda Mass, Director of Experiential Learning.
- Alternative projects may be suggested and approved at the discretion of the instructor.

For study abroad students only – Project Options

- Research paper of between 7-10 pages using an acceptable research format.
- A service learning project for a minimum of 30 hours within the predominant culture in which visited. This will be documented by an appropriate official. A reflective journal must be maintained following each period of service. For example, if visits are scheduled daily or weekly, journal entries are to follow.
- Complete a project, which needs to be determined with the professor prior to departure.

Sample Study Abroad Project:
You will be interacting with members of British culture in a work and leisure/personal environment. You are to prepare 7-10 page informative paper describing how aspects of the co-culture of ______ theater/music impact on communications. Describe how values, attitudes, perceptions, stereotyping, prejudice, customs…might influence communication. This project should focus on ways of improving communication between people. What aspects of this co-culture do you feel comfortable or uncomfortable with?

Evaluate this project to consider that if I was interacting with members of this co-culture on a long-term basis, how would I be affected? What would be a source of culture shock (see handout) and what are ways I would adapt to this cultural environment?

Reading Assignments: Essays require the following chapters to be read:
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Chapters 1-8 and 11

Videos/DVDs relevant for course

- A World of Gestures: Culture and Nonverbal Communication  BF637 .W64 1991
- Bridging The Culture Gap HD2755.5 .B85 1983
- Ethnic Notions E185.61 .E84 1987
- Flashpoint: When values Collide  BF575 .P9 M37 2003
- Gender and Communication HM258 .G46 1994
- Global Contrasts HD62.4 .G56 1996
- Just Get It! HM132 .M3 1996
- Managing The Overseas Assignment HD2755.5 .M26 1983
- Personal Space: Exploring Human Proxemics  BF469 .P46 1999
- Responsible Assertion RC489 .A77 1978 – examines assertive, nonassertive & aggressive behavior
- The Eye of the Beholder BF311 .E93 1953
- The Eye of the Storm BF575 .P9 E95 1998
- Valuing Diversity: Managing Differences HF5549.5 .V28 1983

REMINDER: All essays MUST demonstrate effective use of the text through specific examples and/or references, as well as personal reflections.
Videos for possible class use would be required as part of a makeup assignment as appropriate. Other videos may be selected by individual instructors.

Angel Logon Instructions

- The Angel logon and password are the same as the Brookdale email logon and password.
- Contact the Teaching and Learning Center at 732-224-2089 if there are questions.
- If you experience technical difficulties, contact the Angel toll-free Collegis Angel Help line at 877-725-4357.
- Angel may be accessed by clicking online courses on Brookdale’s web page, http://www.brookdalecc.edu
- After clicking online courses, check on the Angel icon and then enter your logon and password.