

**Communication 682**  
**Seminar: Intercultural Communication**  
**Fall 2009; 3 credits**  
**Prerequisite: Admission to the graduate program or permission of instructor**

**Robert B. Arundale**  
**MW 3:30 to 5:00 pm**  
**Gruening 410**

### **A DESCRIPTION AND GOALS:**

Intercultural communication is nothing new. Human beings have always struggled with various difficulties of communicating with other human beings who are culturally different. In the broadest sense, understanding how humans communicate in the presence of cultural diversity or difference is the goal of this course.

What seems to have changed through the 20th and into the 21st century is the increased regularity with which persons in many parts of the world are finding themselves engaged in communication with persons who are culturally different from themselves. Numerous studies make apparent that contact with persons who are diverse in culture or ethnicity is increasing and will continue to increase, particularly in the professional worlds of business, organizations, governmental agencies, and educational institutions. Communication professionals involved in teaching, training, consulting, or managing in these contexts must be prepared to use their knowledge of human communication to help themselves and others interact productively with others who are different from them. Providing you with fundamentals for doing so is the more specific goal of this course, in that this course takes the ethical/moral position that communication in the presence of diversity among human beings can be productive and life enhancing for all involved.

To develop your abilities to use your knowledge of human communication in addressing interaction in the presence of cultural diversity, you will be asked to identify an issue of communication in the presence of cultural difference in a professional context that is of interest to you, and over the course of the semester to develop either an extensive case study or a training/development study of this issue. The study will involve careful analysis of the problem, including gathering information about communication in this specific context, locating and employing relevant theory and research, careful analysis of the situation, development of a practical communication solution or training approach for this specific context that considers the rights and concerns of all involved, and evaluating the solution for its legality, applicability, and plausibility. Apart from two exams, and leading a discussion of a particular culture's practices, your grade for the course will derive from this project, as explained below.

### **EXPECTATIONS:**

#### **a) Reading:**

There is a considerable amount of reading for this course. If what you read doesn't "come together," don't sit back and wait for it to magically sink in--get to work trying to understand it using the resources available to you: other related reading, the library, your classmates, your instructor. In short, the reading you do will require you to actively THINK, not passively absorb. The reading assigned in this course is required and is to be accomplished PRIOR to the class

meeting for which it is assigned. You are expected to be prepared to discuss and to use the reading material in your interaction in class.

**b) Interaction:**

In Comm 682 you will encounter new and intellectually challenging concepts and points of view. You will be expected to get involved in and to struggle with these concepts and points of view, some of which are highly general or abstract. If you choose to be passive rather than active in approaching this work, or if you try to struggle with these ideas on your own, the course will be difficult for you, and you'll gain relatively little from it. If, on the other hand, you choose to be active, to exchange and interact with others who are working with the same ideas, the course may actually be easier, and you will gain far more from it. A concept not questioned is a concept not learned, and this applies both to reading and to classroom interaction.

Careful, thorough reading and active exchange and interaction in class are the two essentials to a productive experience in Comm 682. I will do my best to facilitate both, but I expect you to do your full part--I cannot do them for you, and the responsibility for both ultimately rests on you. Regarding class interaction, in particular, you'll obviously have to be there on a regular basis to take part. In addition, we will work to maintain an atmosphere that supports the mutual exploration of ideas. To do so, questions must be used to explore and expand ideas--*there is no such thing as a stupid question*. Similarly, all responses must be seen as tentative steps of approximations toward grasping a body of knowledge--*there is no such thing as a wrong answer in a discussion*. Exchange and interaction carried out in such an atmosphere results in change in views and opinions on each person's part, and requires respect for the questions, answers, views, and opinions of each other person.

**c) Time:**

I expect you to spend a minimum TWO HOURS reading and/or working on this course between Monday and Wednesday, and FOUR HOURS between Wednesday and Monday. Reading assignments are geared to this time expectation and the entire conduct of the course depends on your keeping up with this reading and work. If you cannot meet this expectation, please drop the course now. Because the outside reading work is intended as input for use in class, you won't be learning what you could or should be if you have not done the preparation, and you will be unable to participate in or gain from interaction in class. Failure to keep up with the rest of us will hurt all of us, and result in a painful experience for you.

**d) Communication Department Expectations and Policies:**

It is especially important that you read carefully the final section of this syllabus on "Communication Department Expectations and Policies." These expectations and policies apply to this and to all courses offered by the Department. Questions about these expectations and policies are welcome.

**e) Cell Phones and Computers:**

Modern electronics has its positives and negatives. The negative of cell phones require that they be turned off when you enter the classroom. Laptops used in the classroom may be a distraction to others, and to users themselves if they become disengaged from the class when operating them. I reserve the right to ask all laptop users in class to shut down and store their

laptops, if in my judgment one or more users have become disengaged from classroom interaction. As noted above, this class is designed for and depends upon engaged interpersonal interaction—it is not designed for lecture and note taking.

**f) Help:**

Finally, and most importantly, be reminded that I am here to facilitate your learning; i.e., I am here to help you. If you experience difficulties with the class and/or with a particular assignment, see me before trauma sets in—the day before the assignment is due is too late.

**TEXTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

On a later page you will find an "outline syllabus" giving the key course topics and key readings for the major parts of Comm 682. This outline syllabus is NOT complete, because it does not list all reading assignments in detail. *We need to retain the flexibility to move faster or slower, and to adapt to changes. For that reason, reading assignments will always be made in class, on a day-to-day basis.* If you want to read ahead, use the outline syllabus as a guide. The tests and major assignments, and their dates, are listed in the outline syllabus. There will be no "surprise" projects or tests, and no extra credit projects.

The text material is:

- 1) *American Cultural Patterns (Revised Edition)*. Stewart, E.C. & Bennett, M.J. Intercultural Press, 1991.
- 2) *With Respect to the Japanese*. Condon, J.C. Intercultural Press, 1984.
- 3) An extensive set of reprints, to be assigned and treated just like a regular text. These reprints are NOT available from [www.uaftext2u.com](http://www.uaftext2u.com). The reprints will be provided to you as needed throughout the semester.
- 4) You will be asked either to purchase or to obtain a paperback volume providing an overview of a select cultural group, as described below under "Culture Discussion."

**OFFICE AND OFFICE HOURS:**

503G Gruening Building; Phone: 474-6799; Email: [rbarundale@alaska.edu](mailto:rbarundale@alaska.edu) (may take 48 hrs!)  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: NOON to 1:00pm. Not available Fridays.

Other times are possible, if we make an appointment in advance, but do not expect to find me in my office at "any old time," or expect that I will be able to meet with you if I am at my office at a time other than those listed above. Best to call ahead.

**NOTES ON GRADING:**

These notes are intended as a sketch of the grading for the course for your reference. A number of details have been omitted, which we will talk about in class as the appropriate time approaches. If you have questions at any point about these notes, please talk it over with me.

The final grade for the course will have eight parts: Two parts will be your grades on the mid term and final exams, at 100 points each. Another part will be a pass/fail grade on leading a "Culture Discussion" as described below, at 50 points. The remaining parts will be your grades on the

various components of the term project, which are sketched below: a) Project proposal and references, 50 points; b) Case study description or Needs assessment, 100 points; c) Case study analysis/solution or Training design/materials, 100 points; d) Evaluation of analysis/solution or design/materials, 50 points; and e) Oral presentation of term project, 100 points. The total possible points is thus 650. The final grade will be based on one's earned percentage of the total possible points, using the University's plus/minus grading scale (90.0 to 100% = A; 87.0 to 89.9% = A-; 83.0 to 86.9% = B+; 80.0 to 82.9% = B; 77.0 to 79.9% = B-; and so on; below 57.0% equaling an F). Approximate dates for the tests and papers are listed on the outline syllabus.

**TESTS:** The two tests during the semester will be essay type tests covering the reading and class discussion, with the second test focused on questions of a more general or integrative nature. I will ask class members to generate questions for the tests, and it is to your advantage to write a good question and submit it to me, since the question might well appear on the test. I will have to edit questions for clarity and appropriateness, and will contribute questions where I think important issues have been overlooked.

**CULTURE DISCUSSION:** Early in the semester I will ask each person in the class to purchase or obtain one of a relatively small set of paperback overviews of selected cultural groups. I have selected these particular overviews because they represent clear, carefully developed summaries of contemporary cultural practices and values, consistent with the overall approach taken in this class. Each person will be focusing on a different group. I will ask you to read the summary you select fairly early in the semester, so that you will be able to draw on what you read in contributing to class discussions. During week 10 I will then ask each person to spend about 45 minutes presenting key information on the culture and leading a discussion of its practices and values. The effort will be graded pass/fail, and is worth 50 points in the final grade. More information will be forthcoming shortly.

**TERM PROJECT:** Comm 682 is focused on developing abilities to address issues of communication in the presence of cultural diversity, as they occur in actual professional contexts. Developing these abilities requires practice, and term project is oriented to providing an opportunity for such practice. In general terms, you will be asked to carry out either a case study, or a training and development project, in which communication in the presence of cultural diversity is an issue. Case studies or training and development projects involve both researching actual human communication, in this case in a professional context, and developing analyses/solutions applicable to the particular case, or designs/materials useable for actual training. These are two of the types of work graduates of the M.A. Program in Professional Communication may be called upon to perform. Case studies and training and development projects are complex tasks, but are not themselves the focus of this course. The process of conducting a case study is described more fully in the article by Yin I will distribute soon. Comm 675 has provided the skills essential in conducting a training and development project, hence do NOT attempt a T&D project unless you have taken Comm 675. Neither type of project proceeds according to a strict formula, because it must adapt to the specific circumstances of the actual situation being examined, so each person's project will be in some ways a unique undertaking. I will be available, of course, to provide you with advice or direction in accomplishing either type of term project.

Because case studies are different from training and development projects, the key steps in developing/completing the term project are sketched here in relatively broad outline. More information will be provided in class as each step approaches. Feel free to ask me about any step at any point prior to (or after) considering it in class.

Monday, September 21: One page sketch of proposed project and choice of approach (ungraded). Your initial mission is to identify a specific “real world” problematic involving communication in the presence of cultural diversity in a professional context, about which you feel a desire to educate yourself and others. Unless something immediately comes to mind, I suggest you immerse yourself in scholarly as well as in current news sources, political documents, speeches, movies, etc., to assist you in identifying a current communication/diversity problematic that has not yet been addressed, at least to your satisfaction. This will be your concern for the semester, so choose well. I’ll be glad to help, but you need to offer a number of possibilities first. Your sketch will also need to identify whether you will use a case study or training and development approach.

Monday, October 5: Formal proposal due for the case study or the training and development project (50 points). More information will be provided in the near future on this and on subsequent steps in the development of the term project, but this proposal will guide your work for the semester, so it must be carefully thought out. It will be difficult to do an adequate proposal in less than 6-8 pages, not counting the list of references you have located in the communication literature as relevant to your project. Your proposal needs to explain why you are taking a case study or training and development approach, to sketch what you anticipate carrying out that approach will involve. As with all writing in the course, the proposal must be clear, well organized, carefully and thoroughly edited, and fully consistent with American Psychological Association Style Manual standards.

Monday, November 2: Complete Case study description or Needs assessment of communication/diversity problematic due (100 points). This document presents the results of your research into communication as it actually occurs or occurred in the professional context or situation you have chosen to examine, as informed by relevant theory and scholarly literature. In many respects, this part of the term project parallels the “results” section of a traditional research report.

Monday, November 30: Complete Case study analysis/solution or Training design/materials due (100 points). For a case study, this document parallels the “analysis” section of a research report, but also provides your discussion of the “solution” you have developed for addressing the communication/diversity problematic you have studied. For a training/development project, this document presents the complete design of the training program you have developed to address the needs you identified, and/or the training materials you have prepared to do so.

Monday, December 7: Critical evaluation of the case study analysis/solution or training design/materials (50 points). In this document you will step back from the prior document and provide an assessment of strengths and weaknesses, limitations and future needs for research regarding the analysis/solution or design/materials you have provided.

Wednesday: December 9: Oral presentation of your term project to the entire class (100 points). This 15 minute oral presentation needs to be of professional quality, just as it would be on the job. It will be evaluated on the 8 competencies employed in Comm 131 and 141 courses.

*Criteria for evaluating the other elements of the Comm 682 term project will be forthcoming, along with the more complete description of each of the components.*

**GRADING AND WRITING:** Highly superior work deserves a superior grade, i.e., an A. Truly excellent work deserves an excellent grade, i.e., a B. Good, solid, generally acceptable work deserves an acceptable grade, i.e., a C. Anything below that is problematic for a graduate course.

The Department assumption is that if you are a graduate student, you can write well. Thus, be warned that writing proficiency is considered a significant part of any grade earned. Expect to be graded on spelling, punctuation, grammar, and style as well as on the content and organization of your written work. If you do not presently own (i.e., employ, live with, are married to, have given birth to, were birthed by, or are being mentored by) an editor, it is advisable that you immediately locate such a person and that you visit the **Writing Center**, located on eighth floor (801) of Gruening. The Writing Center phone number is 474-5314; fax is 478-5246.

#### **OUTLINE SYLLABUS:**

Note again that this is NOT a comprehensive list of readings, but only a broad guide to the structure of the course. Reading assignments made in class will ALWAYS take precedence.

#### **DATE: TOPIC & KEY READINGS TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE CLASS**

- 9/9 Introductions to course, to one another, and to term project
- 9/14 Perception/Person perception: Schneider, et al., Toch & Maclean reprints , Yin reprint
- 9/16 Models of Comm., Constituting meaning/action: Cartier, Akmajian, et al. reprints; Arundale reprint, Sections 1-4
- 9/21 Conjoint Co-constituting model of Communication: Arundale reprint, Sections 5-6;  
**ONE PAGE SKETCH OF TERM PROJECT DUE IN CLASS**
- 9/23 Conjoint Co-constituting, social construction & culture: Arundale reprint, Sections 7-8; With Respect to the Japanese (WRJ), pp. 1-19.
- 9/28 Communication framework for studying intercultural communication: Barnlund reprint; Arundale reprint on framework, WRJ pp. 19-33.
- 9/30 Case study of cultural diversity as a factor in communication: Scollon & Scollon reprint
- 10/5 Describing cultural patterns in others' and ones's own cultures/values; Condon & Yousef, Samovar & Porter reprints; Stewart & Bennett, pp. 1-19.  
**TERM PROJECT PROPOSAL AND REFERENCES DUE IN CLASS**

- 10/7 Activity value orientations: Stewart & Bennett pp. 61-87 on activity; Complete WRJ as assigned.
- 10/12 “World” value orientations: Stewart & Bennett pp. 113-128 on world
- 10/14 Relationship value orientations: Stewart & Bennett pp. 89-112 on relationships
- 10/19 Self value orientations: Stewart & Bennett pp. 129-147 on self
- 10/21 Values, conjoint co-constituting, & violation: an integration: Arundale handout on face constituting theory.
- 10/26 **MIDTERM EXAM**
- 10/28 Face and facework across cultures: Arundale on face constituting theory.
- 11/2 Face and facework across cultures  
**CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION or NEEDS ASSESSMENT DUE IN CLASS**
- 11/4 Differences in nonverbal behavior across cultures: Schneider, Hastorf & Ellsworth, Ch. 6
- 11/9 and 11/11 No class (National Communication Association conference)
- 11/16 through 11/23 Class discussions on specific cultures: Readings as assigned
- 11/25 through 12/2 Managing cultural diversity; The value of cultural diversity:  
Readings to be announced.
- 11/30 **CASE STUDY ANALYSIS/SOLUTION or TRAINING DESIGN/MATERIALS DUE IN CLASS**
- 12/7 An overview of intercultural theories; Guidelines for intercultural communication and issues of values.  
**EVALUATION OF ANALYSIS/SOLUTION or DESIGN/MATERIALS DUE IN CLASS**
- 12/9 **ORAL PRESENTATIONS (15 MINUTES)**
- 12/14 Overview of Intercultural Communication: Arundale reprints on framework and on conjoint co-constituting model; be ready to articulate intercultural issues for self and others
- 12/18 **(FRIDAY): 3:15 PM; FINAL TEST (FINAL EXAM TIME)**

## Communication Department Expectations and Policies

The University/student relationship is not one of producer and consumer. When students, parents, scholarships, and/or other funders pay fees in order for a student to attend classes, this obligates the student to a set of educational responsibilities and expectations. Education is a *process* in which critical thinking skills and analysis are concentrated upon throughout one's academic career. Following are the expectations and policies of the UAF Communication Department. These expectations and policies are endorsed by all faculty members and will be implemented in all Communication classes.

1. **Assignment deadlines:** Late assignments will result in the loss of one letter grade per working day that the assignment is late. The **only** exception to this policy is a carefully **documented** emergency or University sanctioned activity (e.g., scholastic conferences, athletics). In cases of life contingencies, arrangements must be made to submit work **before** the deadline date.

2. **Make-up exams:** Make-up exams are only given in Departmentally approved circumstances, as noted above regarding assignment deadlines. Arrangements for any make-up exams must be made **prior** to student's absence.

Note that in all instances, scheduled final exam times will be adhered to; thus it is incumbent upon the student to plan travel times accordingly.

3. **Attendance:** For those classes which require attendance, note that absence means "not present," regardless of "why" you are not present.

4. **Tardiness:** Tardiness equals absence in so far as the attendance record is concerned. Anyone not present when attendance is taken will be listed as absent.

5. **Disruptions:** Don't **ever** enter a classroom while a student presentation is being given. This is rude and unfair to those students who are on time. Such disruption can cause severe speaking apprehension for students who are already less than comfortable in front of a classroom.

6. **Reading:** Getting an education requires **careful, concentrated reading**. It is expected by this Department that students spend at least two hours in reading and/or working on a course **before every class meeting**. This Department views work outside the classroom as a minimal expectation and strongly suggests that you **should not take this class until you are ready to meet this expectation**.

7. **APA:** All assignments **must** be submitted in correct, current American Psychological Association (APA) style. If you are unfamiliar with APA style, manuals are available for study, but not check out, on Reserve Reading in the Library, in the Writing Center, and in the Communication Department Resource Area (Grueing 503). Good writing and proper written form are essential skills of any student of Communication.

8. **Grade Inflation:** The following qualitative guidelines suggest the expectations of this Department regarding grading. This grading policy is adopted from the University's general grading guidelines found in the UAF Catalog (Section on Academic Regulations).

A -- An *honor* grade, indicates originality and independent work, a thorough mastery of the subject and the satisfactory completion of more work than is regularly required.

B -- Indicates outstanding ability above the average level of performance.

C -- Indicates a satisfactory or average level of performance.

D -- The lowest passing grade, indicates work of below-average quality and performance.

F -- Indicates failure. All "F" grades, including those earned in pass/fail courses, are included in the GPA calculations.

9. **Incomplete grades:** The letter grade "I" (Incomplete) is a temporary grade used to indicate that the student has satisfactorily completed (C or better) the **majority** of work in a course but for reasons **beyond the student's control** (such as medical emergencies), has not been able to complete the course during the regular semester. An Incomplete will only be assigned in emergencies and **only when the student is current in the class until at least the last three weeks of the semester**. Negligence or indifference are not acceptable reasons for an "I" grade.

10. **Student Code of Conduct:** All work on assignments and exams, and all participation in classes must conform to the UAF Student Code of Conduct, published in the UAF Catalog. Specifically, the Code **prohibits plagiarism**, which is presenting of the work of others as one's own, whether in writing or in oral presentations. More specifically, plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another person without a complete citation of the source of the words or ideas. Paraphrasing another person's work by rearranging their words or summarizing their ideas **also** constitutes plagiarism, unless one provides a complete citation of the source. For courses in Communication, using more than three words in sequence from another source, without citation, constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is a very serious form of academic dishonesty, and will result in a zero grade for the assignment in which it occurs, potentially a failing grade for the course, and the possibility of disciplinary action by the University, as noted in the Student Code of Conduct.

11. **Accommodations:** Any student who has a physical or medically documented learning challenge is invited to contact your instructor early in the semester so that ways to accommodate any difficulties can be anticipated. I will work with the Office of Disability Services (203 Whiting, 474-7043) to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities.

## Departmental Policies on Complaints Regarding Instruction

**1. Student complaints.** Any student who might wish to complain about instructional matters regarding a course, a professor, and/or an instructor must follow this formal procedure:

a. All student complaints must be discussed **first and only** with the faculty or TA with whom the student has a complaint or problem, **before** such complaints will be addressed by **any other member** of the faculty, including the Department Chair.

b. If a student wishes to pursue the issue as a formal complaint, that complaint must be submitted **in writing** to the faculty or TA to whom the complaint is directed **within one week** following any such aggrieved incident and/or occurrence (e.g., grade complaint, procedure complaint, teaching incident, etc.).

c. When the instructor receives a student's **written complaint**, s/he will **respond in writing within a reasonable time period** and is required to **schedule a meeting with the student** to discuss the stated complaint. This results in a possible resolution occurring at the level closest to its origination.

d. If, after meeting with the instructor to discuss the written statement, the student does not believe that the complaint has been sufficiently addressed, s/he may then request that the instructor schedule a meeting with the **student, instructor, and TA Mentor/Department Chair** (depending on whether the instructor is a TA or faculty member). The hierarchy dictates that the TA Mentor be consulted at this point if the instructor is a TA, whereas the Department Chair be consulted if the instructor is a faculty member.

e. Prior to this meeting, the instructor furnishes a **copy of the written complaint and instructor response** to the TA Mentor/Department Chair and schedules a meeting for the three parties. If, after this meeting, the student still does not find that the matter has been sufficiently addressed, then the Department Chair schedules a private meeting with the student. A written report of this meeting will be recorded by the Department Chair/Mentor.

f. **Only** after this policy has been followed does the matter proceed beyond the Department.

g. These Departmental policies do not contravene UAF formal policy, e.g., student grievance and appeals policies.