

Global and Intercultural Communication

COMM 2303.03, Spring 2026

Northeastern University

11:45 am - 1:25 pm, Wednesdays and Fridays

Snell Library 125

Instructor: Dr. Nora Suren

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Office: Holmes Hall 240

Office hours: Wednesday 1:30-2:30pm or by appointment

Course Description:

This course provides an overview of culture and communication. It examines issues such as the social construction of race and identity, and how the interactions of cultural groups in the U.S. has and continues to produce conflict. The course offers a range of strategies for resolving conflict. It also offers an examination of the patterns and implications of globalization in society. It includes a study of how cultural lifestyles and communication patterns intersect with local and international issues of community, language, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity and race. Also covered will be an overview of major issues, approaches and solutions to intercultural miscommunication.

Students will engage critically with theory and apply it to real-world contexts through reflective writing and a collaborative podcast project that translates scholarly insights into creative, public-facing communication.

This course covers many controversial and sensitive topics. Please be aware that we will be looking at many cultures (domestic and international) and this may involve uncomfortable topics.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Define and explain key concepts of intercultural communication, such as culture, difference, identity, and community.
- Describe historical and current perspectives on the study of intercultural communication.
- Examine and compare local constituents, meanings, intersections of multiple cultures.
- Elaborate on the issues surrounding concepts of nation, national culture, and diaspora.
- Apply theory to observations of behavior in daily life.
- Connect diversity and difference to their own experiences.
- Collaboratively design and produce a podcast episode that communicates course concepts to a public audience.

Text and Readings

There is one required digital textbook for this course and it is uploaded as a PDF:

Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2022). *Intercultural Communication in Contexts* (8th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

There will be supplemental readings required throughout the semester and made available as PDF files through Canvas. Please check the Canvas site often for reading material, updates, course information, etc.

Course Structure

Global and Intercultural Communication is designed to use a variety of learning/teaching strategies. Emphasis is placed on both the theory and practice of intercultural communication, thereby helping students to transform their knowledge into action. It is the expectation that each student will complete all of the readings and assigned tasks throughout the semester. Class discussion meetings are designed around this expectation.

Note: The key to success in this class is to stay up on the class. There are assignments to do every week. You cannot disappear and come back later and catch up. If you want to do well in this class, it is important to check into the Canvas site and do the assignments multiple times per week. Do not fall behind.

Please note: As our class discussions involve discussing potentially controversial material, I will not be recording the discussion. I ask that you do the same. I want to create an environment where everyone feels free to explore ideas and arguments.

Assignments

Article or Media Application: Submit one journal article or media piece and analyze it using a key concept from this week's chapter. In class, clearly identify the concept you are applying, explain how the article or media connects to it, and briefly discuss why you selected this example. 8 total applications, assigned throughout the semester.

Field notes: Northeastern University's students come to campus with their own unique cultural backgrounds and the university itself has a distinct culture. During the course of this class, you will be expected to regularly spend time observing intercultural interactions and tracking these observations. Approximately every other week, you will turn in one of these field notes as well as an analysis of how your observation relates to a theory or concept in the course. 5 field notes total.

Unit Quizzes: You will complete three in-class unit quizzes during the semester, each assessing key concepts and terminology from the textbook. Each quiz will cover approximately four chapters and will be administered in person using a closed-book, multiple-choice format. The quizzes are designed to evaluate your understanding of core theories, terms, and frameworks discussed in the textbook and lectures. Make-up quizzes will only be permitted in cases of documented and excused absences.

Student-Led Lectures: Each student will participate in one student-led lecture during the semester. You will work in groups of two to three and will pick either a peer-reviewed journal article or an academic book chapter related to the week's topic. Each group will be responsible for leading class discussion on the assigned reading, presenting key concepts and arguments, and facilitating class engagement through discussion questions or structured activities. Student lectures will be evaluated based on preparation, clarity of presentation, conceptual accuracy, and engagement with peers.

Group Podcast Project: In this collaborative project, your group will create a podcast that applies course concepts to a case study in global and intercultural communication. The project is designed to help you critically engage with theories, conduct research, and communicate your findings in an accessible format.

The project consists of five components:

Topic & Research Questions – Identify a focus area and frame key questions.

Proposal – Submit a brief plan outlining your approach.

Script/Storyboard – Develop a script or outline for your episode.

Group Presentation – Share your process and preliminary insights with the class.

Final Podcast Episode – Record and submit your completed podcast.

Participation: Active engagement with your instructor, peers, and course material is vital to the learning success of everyone in the class and is thus required in this class.

You may miss two classes during the semester using Wellness Days. Any additional days away from class, beyond the two Wellness Days, will be counted as an unexcused absence. If you anticipate being absent for more than two class sessions, please reach out to Professor Suren to discuss how we can work together towards your success in the course.

Class time missed due to documented illness or disability, religious holidays, university athletics obligations are excused absences.

Assessment and Grades

Overall course grades will be assessed through accumulated weighted assignments throughout the semester.

Assignment	Details	% of Grade
Article / Media Applications	8 × 3%	24%
Field Notes	5 × 3%	15%
Unit Quizzes	3 quizzes (5% each)	15%
Student Lectures	One group lecture per student	15%
Group Podcast Project	Topic (5%) Proposal (5%) Script/Storyboard (10%) Group Presentation (10%) Final Podcast (15%)	45%
Participation	Attendance & engagement	6%
Total		100%

Letter grades will be assigned using this chart:

A	93.0% and above	C+	77.0% to 79.9%
A-	90.0% to 92.9%	C	73.0% to 76.9%
B+	87.0% to 89.9%	C-	70.0% to 72.9%
B	83.0% to 86.9%	D	60.0% to 69.9%
B-	80.0% to 82.9%	F	59.0% and below

Late Work

Late assignments will receive a 20% deduction. Work will not be accepted more than one week past the deadline without documented emergency circumstances. In such cases, I will try to accommodate you, but make-up time cannot be guaranteed.

WeCare

You may want to consider contacting We Care, if you are encountering any issues (COVID-19 or otherwise) as they can contact all of your instructors, get you in touch with the right resources and provide other help as needed: wecare@northeastern.edu or 617.373.7591

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 protects individuals from sex or gender-based discrimination, including discrimination based on gender-identity, in educational programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance.

Northeastern University and its faculty are committed to creating a safe and open learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced a Prohibited Offense including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, or stalking, please know that help and support are available. Northeastern strongly encourages all members of the community to take action, seek support, and report incidents of Prohibited Offenses to the Title IX Coordinator within The Office for University Equity and Compliance (OUEC) through the Online Discrimination Complaint Form found at <https://www.northeastern.edu/ouec/file-a-complaint/>.

Please be aware that faculty members are Mandatory University Reporters who are required to disclose information about alleged discrimination, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, or stalking to the OUEC. If the OUEC receives a report, a member of their office will reach out to offer information about your rights, support resources and pathways towards a resolution as a member of the campus community. Community members are not required to respond to this outreach. If you, or another community member you know wishes to speak to a confidential resource who does not have this reporting responsibility, please contact University Health and Counseling Services staff (<http://www.northeastern.edu/uahcs/>), the Center for Spiritual Dialogue and Service clergy members (<http://www.northeastern.edu/spirituallife/>) or the Sexual Violence Resource Center (open@northeastern.edu). By law, these confidential resources are not required to report allegations of discrimination to the University without your signed release.

Please visit www.northeastern.edu/ouec for a complete list of reporting options and support resources both on- and off-campus and contact the OUEC (ouec@northeastern.edu) at any time.

Students with Disabilities and Special Challenges

Students who need accommodation in this course should be sure to make appropriate arrangements with the Disability Resource Center. If you would like to request accommodations because of a disability, you must contact the Disability Resource Center at 617-373-2675 or 617- 373-2730.

Academic Misconduct

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you are unsure of how to properly cite a source or encounter any problems with an assignment, see me before you plagiarize. The penalty for academic dishonesty is severe and may result in an F for the course or even expulsion from the University. When in doubt, ask. Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to OSCCR.

Guidelines on Generative AI

AI tools such as ChatGPT are increasingly common. While I encourage you to focus on the productive struggle of learning, we will approach these tools as resources, not substitutes for your own work.

Permitted Use: You may use AI programs to brainstorm or generate ideas. Keep in mind that AI-generated content may be inaccurate, incomplete, or unoriginal, and overuse may hinder your creativity.

Prohibited Use: You may not submit AI-generated material as your own work. Doing so constitutes a violation of academic integrity and will be reported.

Citing AI: If you use AI-generated material, you must cite it like any other source, with appropriate consideration of its quality.

Email: Please allow at least 24 hours for response to emails during the work week and plan accordingly.

TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

Day One	Day Two	Day Two	Day Two	Day Two	Assignment Due
1/7 & 1/9 Week One	1/7 & 1/9 Week One	1/7 & 1/9 Week One	1/7 & 1/9 Week One	1/7 & 1/9 Week One	1/7 & 1/9 Week One
Discuss syllabus, course expectations, and introductions	Discuss syllabus, course expectations, and introductions	Discuss syllabus, course expectations, and introductions	In-class group activities	In-class group activities	Read and understand the Syllabus
1/14 & 1/16 Week Two: Why Study Intercultural Communication? History of Intercultural Communication	1/14 & 1/16 Week Two: Why Study Intercultural Communication? History of Intercultural Communication	1/14 & 1/16 Week Two: Why Study Intercultural Communication? History of Intercultural Communication	1/14 & 1/16 Week Two: Why Study Intercultural Communication? History of Intercultural Communication	1/14 & 1/16 Week Two: Why Study Intercultural Communication? History of Intercultural Communication	1/14 & 1/16 Week Two: Why Study Intercultural Communication? History of Intercultural Communication
Read Chapter 1 Intro to Field Notes	Read Chapter 1 Intro to Field Notes	Read Chapter 2 Student lecture + discussion	Read Chapter 2 Student lecture + discussion	Read Chapter 2 Student lecture + discussion	Due before day 2: Article/Media Application
1/21 & 1/23 Week Three: Frameworks for ICC: Culture, Communication, Context, Power	1/21 & 1/23 Week Three: Frameworks for ICC: Culture, Communication, Context, Power	1/21 & 1/23 Week Three: Frameworks for ICC: Culture, Communication, Context, Power	1/21 & 1/23 Week Three: Frameworks for ICC: Culture, Communication, Context, Power	1/21 & 1/23 Week Three: Frameworks for ICC: Culture, Communication, Context, Power	1/21 & 1/23 Week Three: Frameworks for ICC: Culture, Communication, Context, Power
Read Chapter 3 Field Note #1 due before class	Read Chapter 3 Field Note #1 due before class	Student lecture + discussion Librarian visit Think about what you want to study for podcast project	Student lecture + discussion Librarian visit Think about what you want to study for podcast project	Student lecture + discussion Librarian visit Think about what you want to study for podcast project	
1/28 & 1/30 Week Four: History & Intercultural Communication	1/28 & 1/30 Week Four: History & Intercultural Communication	1/28 & 1/30 Week Four: History & Intercultural Communication	1/28 & 1/30 Week Four: History & Intercultural Communication	1/28 & 1/30 Week Four: History & Intercultural Communication	1/28 & 1/30 Week Four: History & Intercultural Communication
Read Chapter 4 Intro to Group Project	Read Chapter 4 Intro to Group Project	Student lecture + discussion Work day	Student lecture + discussion Work day	Student lecture + discussion Work day	Due before day 2: Article/Media Application By the end of the week: 3-5 group research question ideas due

Day One	Day Two	Day Two	Day Two	Day Two	Assignment Due
2/4 & 2/6 Week Five: Identity and Intercultural Communication	2/4 & 2/6 Week Five: Identity and Intercultural Communication	2/4 & 2/6 Week Five: Identity and Intercultural Communication	2/4 & 2/6 Week Five: Identity and Intercultural Communication	2/4 & 2/6 Week Five: Identity and Intercultural Communication	2/4 & 2/6 Week Five: Identity and Intercultural Communication
Read Chapter 5 Quiz #1 in class	Read Chapter 5 Quiz #1 in class	Student lecture + discussion	Student lecture + discussion	Student lecture + discussion	Due before day 2: Article/Media Application By the end of the week: Finalize research question and begin group project proposal
2/11 & 2/13 Week Six: Language and Intercultural Communication	2/11 & 2/13 Week Six: Language and Intercultural Communication	2/11 & 2/13 Week Six: Language and Intercultural Communication	2/11 & 2/13 Week Six: Language and Intercultural Communication	2/11 & 2/13 Week Six: Language and Intercultural Communication	2/11 & 2/13 Week Six: Language and Intercultural Communication
Read Chapter 6 Field note #2 due before class	Read Chapter 6 Field note #2 due before class	Student lecture + discussion	Student lecture + discussion	Student lecture + discussion	Due before day 2: Article/Media Application
2/18 & 2/20 Week Seven: MID SEMESTER CHECK IN	2/18 & 2/20 Week Seven: MID SEMESTER CHECK IN	2/18 & 2/20 Week Seven: MID SEMESTER CHECK IN	2/18 & 2/20 Week Seven: MID SEMESTER CHECK IN	2/18 & 2/20 Week Seven: MID SEMESTER CHECK IN	2/18 & 2/20 Week Seven: MID SEMESTER CHECK IN
Archives trip to the NEU Library to see the AAMARP collection	Archives trip to the NEU Library to see the AAMARP collection	Archives trip to the NEU Library to see the AAMARP collection	Archives trip to the NEU Library to see the AAMARP collection	No in person meeting today. Online individual consultations	No in person meeting today. Online individual consultations
2/25 & 2/27 Week Eight: Nonverbal codes, Cultural Space and Intercultural Communication	2/25 & 2/27 Week Eight: Nonverbal codes, Cultural Space and Intercultural Communication	2/25 & 2/27 Week Eight: Nonverbal codes, Cultural Space and Intercultural Communication	2/25 & 2/27 Week Eight: Nonverbal codes, Cultural Space and Intercultural Communication	2/25 & 2/27 Week Eight: Nonverbal codes, Cultural Space and Intercultural Communication	2/25 & 2/27 Week Eight: Nonverbal codes, Cultural Space and Intercultural Communication
Read Chapter 7 Discussion Work day	Read Chapter 7 Discussion Work day	Student lecture + discussion	Student lecture + discussion	Student lecture + discussion	Due before day 2: Article/Media Application By the end of the week: Podcast proposal due
3/4 & 3/6 Week Nine: SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS	3/4 & 3/6 Week Nine: SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS	3/4 & 3/6 Week Nine: SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS	3/4 & 3/6 Week Nine: SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS	3/4 & 3/6 Week Nine: SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS	3/4 & 3/6 Week Nine: SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS
3/11 & 3/13 Week Ten: Intercultural Transitions	3/11 & 3/13 Week Ten: Intercultural Transitions	3/11 & 3/13 Week Ten: Intercultural Transitions	3/11 & 3/13 Week Ten: Intercultural Transitions	3/11 & 3/13 Week Ten: Intercultural Transitions	3/11 & 3/13 Week Ten: Intercultural Transitions
Carpenter Center visit Field note #3 due before class	Carpenter Center visit Field note #3 due before class	Read Chapter 8 Student lecture + discussion	Read Chapter 8 Student lecture + discussion	Read Chapter 8 Student lecture + discussion	Due before day 2: Article/Media Application

Day One	Day Two	Day Two	Day Two	Day Two	Assignment Due
3/18 & 3/20 Week Eleven: Popular Culture and Intercultural Communication	3/18 & 3/20 Week Eleven: Popular Culture and Intercultural Communication	3/18 & 3/20 Week Eleven: Popular Culture and Intercultural Communication	3/18 & 3/20 Week Eleven: Popular Culture and Intercultural Communication	3/18 & 3/20 Week Eleven: Popular Culture and Intercultural Communication	3/18 & 3/20 Week Eleven: Popular Culture and Intercultural Communication
Read Chapter 9 Quiz #2 in class	Read Chapter 9 Quiz #2 in class	Student lecture + discussion	Student lecture + discussion	Student lecture + discussion	Due before day 2: Article/Media Application
3/25 & 3/27 Week Twelve: Culture, Communication & Intercultural Relationships	3/25 & 3/27 Week Twelve: Culture, Communication & Intercultural Relationships	3/25 & 3/27 Week Twelve: Culture, Communication & Intercultural Relationships	3/25 & 3/27 Week Twelve: Culture, Communication & Intercultural Relationships	3/25 & 3/27 Week Twelve: Culture, Communication & Intercultural Relationships	3/25 & 3/27 Week Twelve: Culture, Communication & Intercultural Relationships
Read Chapter 10	Read Chapter 10	Student lecture + discussion	Student lecture + discussion	Student lecture + discussion	Due before day 2: Article/Media Application Script/Storyboard due
4/1 & 4/3 Week Thirteen: Intercultural Communication and Conflict	4/1 & 4/3 Week Thirteen: Intercultural Communication and Conflict	4/1 & 4/3 Week Thirteen: Intercultural Communication and Conflict	4/1 & 4/3 Week Thirteen: Intercultural Communication and Conflict	4/1 & 4/3 Week Thirteen: Intercultural Communication and Conflict	4/1 & 4/3 Week Thirteen: Intercultural Communication and Conflict
Read Chapter 11 Field note #4 due before class	Read Chapter 11 Field note #4 due before class	ICA visit	ICA visit	ICA visit	
4/8 & 4/10 Week Fourteen: Week of Independence	4/8 & 4/10 Week Fourteen: Week of Independence	4/8 & 4/10 Week Fourteen: Week of Independence	4/8 & 4/10 Week Fourteen: Week of Independence	4/8 & 4/10 Week Fourteen: Week of Independence	4/8 & 4/10 Week Fourteen: Week of Independence
Read Chapter 12 Quiz #3 in class	Read Chapter 12 Quiz #3 in class	Read Chapter 12 Quiz #3 in class	No Class Today. Conference travel.	No Class Today. Conference travel.	Student presentations of podcast projects due
4/15 & 4/17 Week Fifteen: Final Project & Review	4/15 & 4/17 Week Fifteen: Final Project & Review	4/15 & 4/17 Week Fifteen: Final Project & Review	4/15 & 4/17 Week Fifteen: Final Project & Review	4/15 & 4/17 Week Fifteen: Final Project & Review	4/15 & 4/17 Week Fifteen: Final Project & Review
Last Day of Class Field note #5 due before class Group presentations for final project	Last Day of Class Field note #5 due before class Group presentations for final project	No Class on 4/17	No Class on 4/17	No Class on 4/17	Final podcast projects due: 4/19 End of Term Evaluation