

## COM 365: Intercultural Communication

**M, 3:00 pm – 5:45 pm in C 202**  
Department of Communication & Theatre  
Point Loma Nazarene University

**Professor:** Dr. Lisa Raser  
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**Office:** Cabrillo, Rm. 205  
**Office Hours:** M/W/F: 10:30-11:30 am; M: 1:00-2:30 pm and by appointment.

### PLNU MISSION

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To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

### REQUIRED MATERIALS & RESOURCES

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Lustig, M.W., Koester, J., & Halualani, R. (2018). *Intercultural Competence: Interpersonal Communication Across Cultures*. New York: Pearson.

\*Please read and save this syllabus. If you remain in the course after the first day of class, then you are stipulating that you will abide by the university and course policies described within this syllabus.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OUTCOMES

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In this course, we will be studying the complex and interdependent relationship between communication and culture. Through observation, discussion, and application, we will learn how communication is influenced by culture and how culture is created and sustained through communication. In this class, you will build a foundation of intercultural communication competence so that you will be better prepared to interact with others in diverse contexts.

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

- explain how people's culture(s) affect beliefs, values, perceptions, assumptions and communication styles.
- identify and demonstrate communication skills that improve competence in intercultural communication.
- discuss how individuals express, produce, and negotiate culture through communication.
- explain the role of cultural patterns and verbal/nonverbal codes in the development of intercultural interpersonal relationships.
- apply your understanding of intercultural communication concepts/theory to cultural events in San Diego.

### COURSE FORMAT AND POLICIES

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**Support:** I am committed to helping every student attain their best possible education.

I AM HERE TO HELP! Please do not hesitate to ask questions, or ask for help, in or out of class. I will also be available if you would like me to review your work and give you feedback before it is turned in or presented. If you have any special needs that it would be helpful for me to be aware of, please do let me know.

**Attendance:** As members of a learning community, your presence is appreciated, and your absence is noticed. The class sessions are set up to help people learn from each other (through discussions, activities, etc.) and you are expected to attend each class session. Everyone has useful and insightful information to offer to the class. Participation is the core of this work, and to help keep track of that, I take attendance.

You are allowed one (1) excused or unexcused absence in the course of the semester without penalty. The only absences excused after that will be university approved absences (see section below). Please note that this 1 absence DOES include instances of illness and family obligations. Each absence over one will result in a 12-point deduction to your overall grade.

As noted in the University catalog: If you are absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings (2 classes), I have the option of filing a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent (4 classes), you may be de-enrolled without notice. If the date of de-enrollment is past the last date to withdraw from a class, you will be assigned a grade of W or WF consistent with university policy in the grading section of the catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) in the undergrad student catalog.

**University Approved Absences:** Absences for certain events and obligations recognized by the University (i.e.: participation in sports, debate, music tours, etc.) may be counted as “excused.” Please notify me at least one week prior to such absences with documentation and contact information from the sponsoring program/department. You are responsible for making up all work missed due to absences in a timely manner, to be worked out ahead of time with me.

**Late to Class/Leaving Early:** It is an expectation of this class community that we begin our class time *together*, and complete our class time *together* each day. Instances of habitual lateness are a distraction to our class community and may impact your ability to participate fully in the course. Therefore, I do make note when you are late to class and habitual lateness will negatively impact your participation grade.

Being absent for more than 20 minutes during any part of a class period, whether at the beginning, middle, or end, will constitute an absence. Similarly, it is expected that you remain actively engaged in the classroom activities until the entire class has been dismissed for the day. Failure to do so will result in a deduction of your participation points for the course. If you absolutely must leave early one day for an important/legitimate/emergency reason, please approve it with me at the class period prior or via email. (Please arrange any meetings with your major adviser so that they do not conflict with your class schedule.) If you leave class early without timely notification/approval, it will negatively affect your course participation grade. Please talk to me early in the semester if you have any questions or concerns about this policy.

**Late Work/Make-Up Work:** All work is expected on the planned “due dates” - at the beginning of the class period when they are due. In general, no late or makeup written assignments/presentations will be allowed. In the event of a personal emergency with written documentation and at my discretion, make-up work *may* be accepted for half credit. If you are absent on the day of a test or a presentation, I will only consider a make-up opportunity if you have communicated with me in advance of your absence and you have written documentation of a personal emergency. Depending upon the circumstance, a make-up opportunity may not receive full credit.

**Incomplete:** Incompletes will only be granted under extreme circumstances, given reasonable justification.

**Electronic Devices:** The use of cell phones and laptops/tablets during class is prohibited unless I ask for them to be used as a specific part of a class activity. Please join me in turning off or silencing all cell phones, laptops, and similar electronic devices and keeping them out of sight for the duration of class. This policy was influenced by two important pieces of research: 1. Faria Sana, Tina Weston, and Nicholas J. Cepeda, “Laptop Multitasking Hinders Classroom Learning for Both Users and Nearby Peers,” *Computers and*

*Education* (March 2013): “We found that participants who multitasked on a laptop during a lecture scored lower on a test compared to those who did not multitask, and participants who were in direct view of a multitasking peer scored lower on a test compared to those who were not. The results demonstrate that multitasking on a laptop poses a significant distraction to both users and fellow students and can be detrimental to comprehension of lecture content.” 2. Pam A. Mueller and Daniel M. Oppenheimer, “The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking” (April 2014). In this study, the authors found that students who hand wrote their notes during lectures remembered more material than students who used laptops for notetaking because they could not write everything down verbatim. The extra processing required by the hand writers to select important over extraneous information was beneficial for their retention of the material they were learning.

**Email:** I will frequently use email to communicate with you and I do my best to respond to your emails as promptly as possible. I will respond to emails Monday-Friday from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. If you send me an email over the weekend or holiday, I will respond on the following school day.

**Written Work:** Please type, double-space and staple all written work unless instructed otherwise. It is my expectation that all writing will be clear, coherent, and free of grammatical/spelling errors. Please proof all written work – your grade will reflect both the substance and the style of your writing. When working on the computer, try to plan for the “unexpected” but predictable problems: plan extra time for library printing lines and back up files as you go.

**Student Responsibility:**

It is the student’s responsibility to maintain his/her class schedule. Should the need arise to drop this course (personal emergencies, poor performance, etc.), the student has the responsibility to follow through (provided the drop date meets the stated calendar deadline established by the university), not the instructor. Simply ceasing to attend this course or failing to follow through to arrange for a change of registration (drop/add) may easily result in a grade of F on the official transcript.

**Final Exam Policy:**

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. Final exams will not be given early before our assigned date/time. Please arrange any activities or transportation for the break around this finals schedule so that you can be present to take the test at the assigned time.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. As stated in the university catalog, “Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one’s own when in reality they are the results of another person’s creativity and effort. Such acts include plagiarism, copying of class assignments, and copying or other fraudulent behavior on examinations. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for a) that particular assignment or examination, and/or b) the course.” See [Academic Policies](#) in the undergrad student catalog.

**Academic Accommodations:**

While all students are expected to meet the minimum academic standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic accommodations. At Point Loma Nazarene University, students requesting academic accommodations must file documentation with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center. Once the student files documentation, the Disability Resource Center will contact the student’s instructors and provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual learning needs of the student. This policy assists the University in its commitment to full compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990, and ADA Amendments Act of 2008, all of which prohibit discrimination against students with disabilities and guarantees all qualified

students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities.

**Ferpa Policy:**

In compliance with federal law, neither PLNU student ID nor social security number will be used in publicly posted grades or returned sets of assignments without student written permission. This class will meet the federal requirements by (each faculty member choose one strategy to use: distributing all grades and papers individually; requesting and filing written student permission; or assigning each student a unique class ID number not identifiable on the alphabetic roster.). Also in compliance with FERPA, you will be the only person given information about your progress in this class unless you have designated others to receive it in the "Information Release" section of the student portal. See [Policy Statements](#) in the undergrad student catalog.

**PLNU Copyright Policy:**

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

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## CLASS ASSIGNMENTS & COURSE SCHEDULE

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**Reading Quizzes:** You will have a quiz each week throughout the semester on the week's reading. Reading quizzes may consist of a mix of multiple choice, T/F, fill-in-the-blank, and short response/essay questions. We will take the quiz at the beginning of the class period. If you arrive late to class, you will not be given additional time to take the quiz. At the end of the semester, **the quiz with the lowest score will be dropped.** You may bring one 3x5 notecard (front and back, handwritten – not typed) to each quiz and turn it in with your quiz.

**Quiz Policy: Quizzes will not be given early.** If you are absent (for illness or travel, for example) on the day of a quiz, that first quiz grade will be dropped. If you miss more than one quiz, make-up quizzes will only be given if you have a personal emergency with written documentation *and* you notify me in advance of your absence. Exception to this policy: a first and subsequent missed quiz may be made up only for instances of University approved absences (debate team, athletic team travel, field trip for another class, etc.)

**Cultural Background Report:** In this 2-3 page typed double-spaced paper and 4-5 minute presentation, you will describe your own cultural background. You will need to consult family members and show evidence of those conversations as you attempt to trace your own cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Please include in your paper/presentation: the values, traditions, and beliefs relevant to how you identify your cultural background. Finally, describe how you think your cultural background might affect your communication with others (both people from the same culture as you and those from other cultures). Papers and presentations should be clearly organized. To enhance the visual component of your presentation, please share 1-3 photographs on the doc cam (using your phone/tablet for the photos is okay) that correspond with your presentation. To encourage extemporaneous speaking, you will not be allowed to consult/read from your paper during your presentation. You may speak from memory or from notecards.

**Intercultural Feast Report:** In preparation for this report, you will visit a new (to you) restaurant and/or grocery store that makes/sells food from a culture that is different from your own. Your objective is to try a food that you have never eaten before and write about the experience. You will write a 2-3 page reflection paper and present for 4-5 minutes on your experience of visiting the restaurant/market and trying the food. Papers and presentations should be clearly organized. To enhance the visual component of your presentation, please share 1-3 photographs from your experience on the doc cam (using your phone/tablet for the photos is okay) that correspond with your presentation. To encourage extemporaneous speaking, you will not be allowed to consult/read from your paper during your presentation. You may speak from

memory or from notecards. Extra credit points will be given for students who choose to bring some food back for the class to sample. After the reports, we will feast together!

**Intercultural Event Report:** This assignment asks you to research some of the public (off-campus) activities that involve people from other cultures and to participate in one of them. Before attending your event, you will need to obtain written approval from me to ensure that the event is acceptable for the class report. You will write a paper and deliver a presentation that reflects on your experience of the event, while connecting course concepts. Please prepare visually-engaging slides with photographs/ephemera (tickets, flyers, pamphlets, etc.) that you collected at the event. Further instruction/details on this assignment will be available on Canvas.

**Group Project on Intercultural Friendship:** For this project, each student will use a guided survey to interview two different people who have an intercultural friendship. Then, you will analyze your data with a team of your peers and develop inductive themes/conclusions. You will present your conclusions in a formal group presentation with visuals on the last class meeting before finals. In addition to delivering your presentation, you will turn in: your individual data, a group presentation outline, and your presentation slides.

**Final Exam:** We will have a cumulative exam during finals week. This exam is a written exam, with a series of questions that invite short essay responses. We will create the questions for this exam together as a class so that you will have the opportunity to reflect upon the concepts/theories that you wish to revisit and solidify as a part of your learning for this class.

**In-Class (or take home) Assignments and Participation:** At times, you will be given short assignments or exercises in class (or to take home) that are worth points toward your final grade. These assignments may include written responses/reflections, home learning, group work, etc. The point value for these assignments may vary, but will be clearly designated on the assignment.

The remaining portion of this grade will be designated for your class participation and will reflect your involvement in the course, including (but not limited to): your regular and on-time class attendance, how well/completely you read for the day and incorporate text concepts into the discussion/activities, how "present" you are in class, how readily you volunteer for in-class activities, and how well you generally project respectful involvement such as supportive listening, nonverbal feedback, and thoughtful verbal contributions.

## ASSESSMENT & GRADING

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Grade Scale (% to Letter): Final grades will be calculated as follows and will not be rounded.

93-100	A	73-76.9%	C
90-92.9%	A-	70-72.9%	C-
87-89.9%	B+	67-69.9%	D+
83-86.9%	B	63-66.9%	D
80-82.9%	B-	60-62.9%	D-
77-79.9%	C+	0-59	F

### Point Distribution

COURSE REQUIREMENTS	Number of Points AVAILABLE	Number of Points I EARNED
Reading Quizzes	110	
Cultural Background Report	25	
Intercultural Feast Report	30	
Intercultural Event Report	50	

Group Project on Intercultural Friendship	100	
Final Exam	60	
Additional Assignments & Participation	75	
<b>TOTAL</b> <b>- Absence penalties (12 pts. per absence after 1 absence)</b>	<b>450</b> <b>(e.g., 2 absences = -12)</b>	

### Tentative Course Schedule

- Subject to change with fair notice.
- Please complete reading *prior* to arriving at class on the assigned due date.

WK	Date	Topic	Reading/Assignments Due
1	T 8/29	Welcome/Course Introduction	
2	M 9/4	Labor Day	No Class – School Holiday
3	M 9/11	Introduction to Intercultural Competence <i>Share Cultural Background Reports</i> <i>Discuss Intercultural Event Report</i>	Ch. 1 <b>Cultural Background Report Due</b>
4	M 9/18	Culture and Intercultural Communication <i>Introduce Intercultural Feast Report</i>	Ch. 2
5	M 9/25	Intercultural Communication Competence	Ch. 3
6	M 10/2	Cultural Patterns – Foundations <i>Share Intercultural Feast Reports</i>	Ch. 4 <b>Intercultural Feast Report Due</b>
7	M 10/9	Cultural Patterns – Taxonomies <i>Discuss Intercultural Friendship Project – Form Groups</i>	Ch. 5
8	M 10/16	Cultural Identity and Cultural Biases	Ch. 6
9	M 10/23	Verbal Intercultural Communication	Ch. 7
10	M 10/30	Nonverbal Intercultural Communication	Ch. 8 <b>Final Deadline for submitting Intercultural Event Approval Form</b>
11	M 11/6	The Effects of Code Usage <i>Data Analysis for Intercultural Friendship Project</i>	Ch. 9 <b>Survey Data due for Intercultural Friendship project</b>
12	M 11/13	Interpersonal Relationships	Ch. 10
13	M 11/20	Episodes, Contexts, and Interactions <i>Share Intercultural Event Reports</i>	Ch. 11 <b>Intercultural Event Report Due</b>
14	M 11/27	The Potential for Intercultural Competence <i>Class co-creates final exam</i>	Ch. 12
15	M 12/4	Group presentations	<b>Intercultural Friendship Project Due</b>
16	Finals Week	<b>Final Exam</b> Mon, Dec 11 <sup>th</sup> 3:00 pm – 5:45 pm	<b>Final Exam</b>  Please note: The final will not be given early before our assigned date/time. Please arrange any activities or transportation for the break around this finals schedule so that you can be present to take the test at the assigned time.