

**Eastern Oregon University**  
**Division of Distance Education**  
**Course Syllabus**

**Number of Course:** SPCH 325

**Name of Course:** Intercultural Communication

**General Education:** Language, Logic & Culture

**Instructor:** Dee McDonald, M.A.  
deemcdonaldolympia@yahoo.com

**Course Description:** Problems in Intercultural Communication arise from differences in the world view, behavior, thinking patterns, assumptions, and values of individuals from different cultures. A deeper understanding of these differences and the ability to look at ourselves from contrasting cultural perspectives will increase our effectiveness in Intercultural-Communication situations at home and abroad. This course will assist students in:

1. Identifying subtle and not-so-subtle ways that culture affects our perceptions and communication
2. Increasing their cultural awareness and sensitivity to diverse worldviews; including ways of perceiving, verbal and nonverbal communication, ways of learning, working, conflict resolution, decision making and negotiation
3. Developing practical steps for communicating with individuals from a variety of backgrounds

**Dates and Times:** Friday Evenings, 6- 9 p.m.;  
Saturdays & Sundays, 9- 4 p.m.

**Class Format:** Professor will travel to Distance Centers throughout Oregon

**Credit Hours:** 2

**Grading Method:** Letter grade

**Prerequisites:** None

**Class Enrollment:** Limited to 25 students

**Course Objectives:** Expectations which meet with General Education Requirements

- SPCH 325 Intercultural Communications meets the mission of General Education by challenging students to become critical, creative thinkers in reading, writing and speaking.
- SPCH 325 Intercultural Communications meets the GE Language, Logic and Culture Component... For outcomes and assessments see below:

Upon completion of this course students should be able to:

1. Identify their own notion of self and what it means to be part of a collective culture
2. Identify their own habitual communication styles and ways in which they are being perceived by others.
3. Recognize differing modes of thought and have an awareness of “other” world views, patterns of thinking, and cultural perspectives and differences.
4. Share an increased awareness of ethnocentrism and stereotyping, and view its effects on communication.
5. Develop new and more appropriate styles of communication that may be used in a multicultural setting or in a variety of contexts.
6. Analyze common communication barriers.

Means of Assessment: Each assessing all objectives and scored holistically according to attached assessment criteria:

- Participation in class discussion and activities
- Pre-Assignment Term Paper and Presentation

**Course Outline:** Intercultural-Communication problems arise from differences in the behavior, patterns of thinking, assumptions, and values of individuals from differing backgrounds. A deeper understanding of how these differences combine, and looking at ourselves from contrasting cultural perspectives will increase effectiveness in intercultural interactions. This class offers students an opportunity to explore other world views and

will assist them in their efforts to work in a bilingual setting and in their sojourns abroad.

An overview of the course will take place in the first class session. The instructor will use lecture, group exercise, media and discussion to illustrate concepts presented in the course. The completed pre-assignment...

“Term Paper and Presentation” (described below) will be presented to the class in the third and final session, and will be turned in to the instructor in written format after the presentation.

**Required Readings:**

**Basso, K. H. (1996). *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache, Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico.***

**Kochman, T. *Black and White: Styles in Conflict, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981.***

**Nisbett, R. E. *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently... and Why, New York, NY: Free Press, 2003.***

**Stewart, E. C., and M. J. Bennett, *American Cultural Patterns: A Cross-Cultural Perspective, Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, 1991.***

**Thich Nhat Hanh, (2002). *Training the Mind in Diversity, Friends on the Path: Living Spiritual Communities***

**Suggested Readings:**

**Anderson, A. (1990) *Streetwise. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.***

**Capra, F (1996). *The Web of Life: A New Scientific Understanding of Living Systems. New York, NY: Doubleday.***

**Gallagher, W. (1993). *The Power of Place: How Our Surroundings Shape Our Thoughts, Emotions and Actions. New York, NY: Poseidon.***

**Hecht, M. L., R.L. Jackson 11, and S.A. Ribeau, *African American Communication: Exploring Identity and Culture, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2003***

**Course Requirements:** Students must complete the pre-assigned activity and participate in the class discussions and exercises. The pre-assignment

must be submitted to the instructor in written form at the conclusion of the last class.

#### Statement on Academic Misconduct:

Eastern Oregon University places a high value upon the integrity of its student scholars. Any student found guilty of an act of academic misconduct (including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or theft of an examination or supplies) may be subject to having his or her grade reduced in the course in question, being placed on probation or suspended from the University, or being expelled from the University—or a combination of these. (Please see the *2005-06 on-line Student Handbook: Campus Citizenship - Academic and Behavior*, at the following web address: <http://www.eou.edu/saffairs/handbook.html>)

#### Statement on Americans with Disabilities:

If you have a documented disability or suspect that you have a learning problem and need accommodations, please contact the Disability Services Program in Loso Hall 234. Telephone: 541-962-3081.

### **Pre-Assignment Term Paper and Presentation**

First Step: Contact your instructor by phone (360) 754-6412 or e-mail [deemcdonaldolympia@yahoo.com](mailto:deemcdonaldolympia@yahoo.com) \* upon registering for this class\* to clarify and begin the assignment.

Second Step: Put yourself in the path of difference. Have a new experience! Begin a “meaningful” conversation with someone who is quite different than you perceive yourself to be. This person should be someone who normally you would not be drawn to, or inclined to communicate with. There may be several reasons you would usually not approach this person; their dress or appearance, communication style, age, political or religious affiliation, their culture of origin, race or ethnicity, ability to speak English... step out of your comfort zone and engage with this person. Find out who they are and why they view the world the way they do.

Third Step: Students will write a 10-15 page paper reflecting upon how the assignment is related to the theories, competencies and skills attained in this course. Use the text and readings from the required and suggested reading lists to stimulate your thinking about the content of this paper. There are many different ways you may approach this paper. Please clear your topic with me ahead of time. Describe the person you spoke with. Why did you

choose this person particularly? Other example questions: How did their worldviews differ from your own? What important life decisions have they made that shaped the course of their life? Were there any conflicts or misunderstandings in your communication? Did you find yourself adjusting your own communication style in order to better understand or make this person more comfortable? Why or why not? Did you notice them changing their style in order to better accommodate you? Did this encounter cause you any discomfort? Why? If you were to experience this same situation again, what would you do differently? I am open to alternative meaningful questions you want to ask this person.

Final Step: You will use information in your paper to give a 15-minute presentation to the class. On the last day of class, turn your revised paper in to the instructor. **Students should demonstrate mastery of course materials in the presentation and final draft.**

**\* Means of assessment (each assessing all objectives and scored holistically according to the attached assessment criteria:**

### Assessment Criteria

<b>POOR PERFORMANCE</b> Student demonstrates consistently	<b>AVERAGE PERFORMANCE</b> Student demonstrates consistently	<b>EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE</b> Student demonstrates consistently
<b>Communication</b> Unclear Rambling Poorly organized conceptual flow Errors in spelling, punctuation & grammar  Presentation poorly conceived	<b>Communication</b> Clear Concise Well organized Correct spelling, punctuation & grammar  Presentation neat and well organized	<b>Communication</b> Clear Concise Correct Spelling, punctuation and grammar Well organized  Presentation neat and well organized Presentation uniquely and/or creatively conceived
<b>PERSONAL REFLECTIONS AND SELF UNDERSTANDING</b>	<b>PERSONAL REFLECTIONS AND SELF UNDERSTANDING</b>	<b>PERSONAL REFLECTIONS AND SELF UNDERSTANDING</b>
Superficial self-reflections evidenced by vague descriptions, a lack of examples or unrelated examples  Failure to integrate readings, class lectures and personal experiences into written assignment	Adequate self-reflection and the identification of personal insights, strengths and areas for growth  Integration of readings and class lecture information and personal experiences into written assignment	Deep self-reflection and the identification of personal insights, strengths and areas for growth  Integration of readings and class lecture information and personal experiences into written assignment  Engaged in deep self-learning

<b>POOR PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>AVERAGE PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE</b>
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Student demonstrates consistently	Student demonstrates consistently	Student demonstrates consistently
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<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>	<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>	<b>CRITICAL THINKING</b>
<p>Evidences knowledge of one or two theories and/or concepts presented in course lectures and reading</p> <p>Fails to evidence a growing knowledge and ability to utilize theories and concepts from multiple worldviews in written work and oral discussion</p>	<p>Demonstrates a growing understanding of and ability to utilize many of the theories and concepts explored in the course in written work and oral discussions.</p> <p>Solely uses the technique of comparison to illustrate the similarity between either personal experiences and/or theoretical/worldview perspectives explored in course lectures and reading material.</p>	<p>Demonstrates a knowledge of and ability to use most course theories and concepts.</p> <p>Uses the technique of comparison to illustrate the similarity between either personal experiences and/or theoretical/worldview perspectives explored in course lectures and reading.</p> <p>Uses the technique of contrast to illustrate simultaneously the similarities and differences between personal experience, and/or theories/worldviews.</p> <p>Poses questions that facilitate deep thinking and learning by all</p>
<b>CONNECTING THEORY WITH PRACTICE</b>	<b>CONNECTING THEORY WITH PRACTICE</b>	<b>CONNECTING THEORY WITH PRACTICE</b>

Provides no evidence in written assignment or oral presentation of how theoretical learning is being connected to behavior in the real world (personal and professional).	Provides illustrations in written assignment, and/or oral presentation that theoretical learning is being applied to personal and/or professional practice.	Illustrates in written assignment and oral presentation that theories and concepts presented in class lectures or course readings are being utilized in the real world (personally and professionally).
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<b>UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY</b>	<b>UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY</b>	<b>UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY</b>
<p>Fails to demonstrate in written assignment, oral presentation or class discussion a growing understanding of how course lecture/reading material is illustrated in society or can be used to affect social change.</p>	<p>Occasionally demonstrates in written assignment, oral presentation or class discussions a growing understanding of how course lecture/reading material is illustrated in the society and can be used to affect social change.</p>	<p>Consistently demonstrates in written assignments, oral presentation and class discussions a growing understanding of how course lecture/reading material is illustrated in the society or can be used to affect social change.</p>

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## Dee I. McDonald

### OBJECTIVE

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To acquire work, which will employ my talents to their fullest capacity and utilize skills I have accumulated throughout a lifetime.

### EDUCATION

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B.A., English Literature, University of Alaska, 1993

M.A., Communication Studies, New Mexico State University, 1997

### CAPABILITIES

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- A Dynamic Trainer/ Teacher having given presentations to over 300 associations, universities, corporations and communities
- A Group Facilitator with the ability to motivate others toward positive change
- Film/Documentary Production, Storyboarding, Editing
- Curriculum Development/Instructional Design
- Ability to organize diverse groups of people (volunteers) and resources to bring a project to completion

### WORK EXPERIENCE

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Trainer/Workshop Facilitator, 1993-Present

- Sample topics: Unifying the Language of Your Community, Building a Sustainable Community, Homelessness in Seattle, Diversity in the Workforce, Cross Cultural Communication, Generations in the Workforce, Men and Women in Dynamic Teams, Dealing With Difficult People, Logical Intuition and Transformative Leadership.
- Provided the models, tools and guidance necessary for groups to craft their own vision for their organization/community. Results of these workshops also contributed to staff cohesiveness and improved communication skills.

Adjunct Professor, 1993-Present

- Eastern Oregon University, Bellevue Community College, New Mexico State University, University of Alaska, University of La Verne, Wayland Baptist University, Central Texas College.
- Classroom instruction in: Managerial Communication, Global Diversity (graduate level), Diversity, Power and Privilege (graduate level), Public Speaking and Interpersonal Communication.

Instructional/Program Designer, 1995-Present

- Produced and Directed a documentary film on Homelessness in Seattle

- Primary Consultant in the development of a strategic diversity plan for Alyeska Pipeline Service Company
- Organized the largest Head Start conference held in Alaska
- Developed a Science Curriculum funded by the National Science Foundation
- Wrote 2 Vocational/Career Curriculums (one for the Native Athabaskan population, the other for International women in transition)

#### Instructional/Program Designer, continued...

- Designed a Transcultural Nursing Program for Memorial Hospital staff
- Lead Intentional Communities in their efforts toward establishing and refining their mission or vision for sustainability

#### Vocational Specialist for Fairbanks Native Association, 1992-1995

- Provided individual and group counseling for high-risk individuals relative to vocational/educational goals, interests and barriers.
- Located job openings, on-the-job training opportunities and resources for scholarships.
- Conducted workshops designed to build self-esteem, teach independent living and job readiness skills.
- Acquired knowledge and understanding of the dynamics of chemical dependency, mental health disorders, and family systems including at-risk families.
- Served as a liaison with other community service agencies to insure the availability of resources for clients, compiled and wrote monthly statistical and narrative reports.

#### Foreign Student Advisor of University of Alaska, Fairbanks, 1989- 1992

- Facilitated the orientation of new foreign student/scholars and families.
- Coordinated campus/community programs, counseled students with issues involving cultural adjustment, academic concerns and personal issues.
- Designed a Woman's Program for International Wives, responsibilities included: conducting weekly meetings and providing current information on community resources, as well as coordinating logistics for activities.
- Results contributed to the development of a Host Family Program, and a "Translation Service" between University of Alaska's International Student population and local hospital patients
- Basic understanding of Federal Immigration Regulations and legal status issues.

#### Import Business, 1976-1980

- Extensive travel on the continents of Europe, Africa, Asia, and South America, buying merchandise to be sold in America.

### HONORS AND ACADEMIC AWARDS

2 Outstanding Performance Awards, Fairbanks Native Association, 1996 & 1997  
 Chancellor's Honor List, 1990  
 Recipient of the Jessie O'Brian McIntosh Scholarship, 1991  
 1991 Grant Recipient, National Association of Foreign Student Advisors  
 Dean's Honor List, 1991

Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi  
Keynote Speaker, University of Alaska Baccalaureate Address, 1998

#### SPECIAL INTEREST

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Founder and Executive Director of Honest Eye Productions, a not-for-profit (501C3), Independent Film Company dedicated to producing documentaries that address issues of social injustice and the disenfranchised. Through the medium of film, using metaphor and image, it is our intent not only to bring about awareness of critical social issues but also to inspire groups to charitable action. Our films are honest and informative without trying to evoke sympathy or preconceived responses; rather we seek to capture the essence and depth of nationally and locally pervasive issues. By providing an innovative filming style, dependable research, issue-focused public interest content and passionate advocacy, our documentaries equip audiences to make informed decisions about issues that affect us all.

## Biography

Dee McDonald, is a cross-cultural expert who specializes in the field of divergent populations. She received her Master's degree in Intercultural Communication from New Mexico State University. As a Facilitator, Trainer, and Teacher she has presented seminars and workshops on Communication and Diversity to more than 300 universities, associations and agencies worldwide. Ms. McDonald's accomplishments include designing a Science curriculum for the Native Athabaskan people of Alaska, funded by the National Science Foundation; teaching for the Department of the Navy on location in the Middle East (Sept. 2001); and working with Intentional Communities or Eco-Villages in their efforts to build environmentally friendly, sustainable communities.

While living abroad Ms. McDonald conducted extensive research into the relationships between and within cultures in remote parts of Alaska, Africa, Pakistan, China and South America. She is also a multi-media Producer/Director of Honest Eye Productions a non-profit, independent film company dedicated to producing documentaries which address issues of social injustice and the disenfranchised. Her credits include co-producing and narrating *Seasons of the Castner*, a multi-media production on glaciers and global warming aired by PBS and *City Without a Home*, a documentary on homelessness in Seattle.