

**UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY-AFRICA**  
**SEMESTER:**  
**COM 1500A: INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION**  
**TRIMESTER COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**CREDIT: 3 UNITS**  
**LECTURER:**  
**DAY/TIME: ROOM B**  
**CONTACT HOURS:**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Study of cultural issues in their relation to communication, language, society, family, work, education, problem solving, religion, and world views.

**LINK TO UNIVERSITY MISSION OUTCOMES**

The course content for COM1500 directly contributes to the attainment of the university mission outcomes of *higher order thinking, literacy, and global understanding and multicultural perspective outcomes.*

**EXPECTED LEARNER OUTCOMES**

COM1500 is aligned to the following General Education Learning Outcomes.

- a. Demonstrate the ability to reason critically and creatively in an interdisciplinary context.
- b. Demonstrate competence in oral and written communication.
- c. Demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of both diversity and commonality of cultures in a global perspective.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- To understand the concepts of culture, communication and intercultural communication.
- To develop an awareness of one's own cultural assumptions and how they relate to communication.
- To apply creative thinking and problem-solving skills to reduce interpersonal, intergroup problems.
- To respect and feel empathy towards people from different cultural or ethnic backgrounds than one's own.
- To develop increased competence as an international and intercultural citizen.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- Satisfactory and timely completion of all assignments and other work. Marks will be deducted for late submission of work.
- Regular participation in class discussion.
- Group and inter-group interaction.
- Assignments.
- Mid-term examination
- Final examination.

## COURSE CONTENT

### *Week 1*

**Core elements: intercultural communication interaction in a changing world. (Focuses on expected learner outcomes a & b)**

- Definition of Intercultural Communication
- Importance of Intercultural Communication
- International contacts
- Domestic contacts.

### *Week 2*

**Core elements: Communication; sharing who we are and what we know. (Focuses on expected learner outcomes a & b)**

- Defining communication
- Verbal communication
- The components of communication
- The characteristics of communication

### *Week 3*

**Core elements: Non-verbal communication. (focuses on expected learner outcomes a & b)**

- Defining non-verbal communication
- The importance of non-verbal communication.
- Functions of non-verbal communication
- Non-verbal communication and culture
- A comparison of verbal and non-verbal communication

### *Week 4*

**Core elements: Culture our invisible teacher. (Focuses on expected learner outcomes a & b)**

- Definition of culture
- Basic functions of culture
- Characteristics of culture

### *Week 5*

**Core elements: forms of intercultural communication. (focuses on expected learner outcomes a, b & c)**

- Cultural shock

### *Week 6*

**Core elements: cultural diversity in perception. (focuses on expected learner outcomes a, b & c)**

- Understanding perception
- Culture and perception
- Beliefs
- Values

### *Week 7*

**Core elements: Dominant cultures. (Focuses on expected learner outcomes a, b & c)**

- Characteristics of dominant cultures
- Dominant American cultural patterns
- Diverse cultural patterns

## MID QUARTER EXAM

### *Week 8*

**Core element: the deep structure of culture; roots of reality. (Focuses on expected learner outcomes a, b & c)**

- World view
- Religion
- A comparison of World views

***Week 9***

**Core element: Family and History. (Focuses on expected learner outcomes a, b & c)**

- Importance and functions
- Culture and families
- History

***Week 10***

**Core elements: Language and culture. (Focuses on expected learner outcomes a, b & c)**

- The importance of language
- The nature of language
- Language and culture
- Foreign languages and translation
- Language diversity among co-cultures

***Week 11***

**Core elements: Cultural influences on context: the business setting; (focuses on expected learner outcomes a, b & c)**

- Context and communication
- Culture and the business context
- The international business context
- The domestic business context

***Week 12***

**Core element: Cultural influences on context: the educational setting. (focuses on expected learner outcomes a, b & c)**

- Culture and education
- Multicultural education

***Week 13***

**Core element: Accepting differences and appreciating similarities. (Focuses on expected learner outcomes a, b & c)**

- Potential problems in intercultural communication
- Improving Intercultural Communication
- Revision

***Week 14***

**FINAL EXAM (focuses on expected learner outcomes a, b & c)**

**TEACHING METHODOLOGY**

Lectures

Group discussions, workshops

Research and presentation of case studies

Use of audio-visual material

## **COURSE TEXT**

Samovar L. A. & Porter R.E., *Communication Between Cultures*. (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1995)

## **RECOMMENDED READING**

Axtell, Roger, E., *Gestures: The Do's and Taboos of Body Language Around the World*. ( New York John Wiley, 1991)

Harris, Phillip *Managing Cultural Differences* ( Houston: Gulf Publishing, Reprinted. 1991)

Verbug Card, *Ourselves Among Others: Cross Cultural Readings for Writers* (St. Martins Boston: St. Martins, 1991)

Luthers S. Luedtke, *Making America The Society and Culture of the United States* (London: University of NC Press, 1992).

Triandis Harry. C: *Culture and Social Behaviour*. McGraw Hill: New York, 1994.

Ngugi Wa Thiong'o: *Moving the Centre: the Struggle for Cultural Freedoms*. EAEP: Nairobi, 1993.

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

Attendance and Participation	10%
Assignments	15%
Group Work	10%
Research Paper	20%
Mid Quarter	20 %
Final Examination	25 %

## **GRADING**

A	90 - 100
A-	87 - 89
B+	84 - 86
B	80 - 83
B-	77 - 79
C+	74 - 76
C	70 - 73
C-	67 - 69
D+	64 - 66
D	62 - 63
D-	60 - 61
F	0 - 59