Michigan Technological University: Summer 2001

HU 3261
Intercultural Communication

Syllabus

Instructor: Dieter Wolfgang Adolphs
Room: Walker Arts and Humanities Center, Room 119
Time: Mo., Tu., We., Th., 8:00 to 9:35 a.m.
Telephone: 487-3259 (work); 482-3182 (home)
E-Mail: dadolph@mtu.edu
Office: Walker Arts and Humanities Center, Room 340
Office Hours: Mo., Tu., We., Th., 9:35 to 10:00 a.m.
(other times by appointment)

Books/Readings:

* Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication, ed. by Milton Bennett
* Julia Kristeva, Strangers to Ourselves
* Bill Bryson, I'm a Stranger Here Myself
* Thomas Mann, Death in Venice, Tonio Kröger, and Other Writings

Course Description:

This course will use Milton Bennett's collection of articles, Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication, to introduce students to the question of how we communicate with people from different cultural and social backgrounds. This book pays close attention to cultural patterns, attitudes, values, and nonverbal behaviors.

In addition, this course will use selected chapters from Julia Kristeva's book, Strangers to Ourselves, to introduce students to the concept of the stranger and the study of alterity, i.e., a critical examination of discourses, theories and representations of "otherness" or "difference" according to race, gender, sexuality, class, age, nationality, ethnic background, and other socio-cultural categories.

We will move on with a discussion of specific questions of self-representation within and among groups. Our main reference for this endeavor will be Bill Bryson's humorous, yet critical view of North-American culture—perhaps an example of "culture shock" the author experienced when he returned from Great Britain after two decades.
Finally, we will investigate issues of difference in Thomas Mann's works, especially his "rhetoric of exile." We will discuss Mann's exile in the US during World War II as a compelling example of the challenges individuals and groups must face who are expatriated or chose to leave their country for social, economic, religious, and/or political reasons. They therefore have to communicate in another language and readdress their concerns to a different culture.

Every member of this course is strongly encouraged to voice her or his personal opinion and to actively participate in small group and general discussions. The course requirements are:

a) regular attendance and active participation (26 points)
b) regular reading assignments (13 points)
c) ten short reading responses ("log sheets;" 20 points)
d) two oral reports (20 points)
e) optional abstract for final paper (5 bonus points)
f) final paper (4 to 6 pages; 21 points)

Grading Scale:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A/B</td>
<td>87-91.5%</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>82-86.5%</td>
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<td>B/C</td>
<td>77-81.5%</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>62-66.5%</td>
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This course can be taken for partial fulfillment of the general education distribution requirements, and it can also count towards MTU's Modern Language and Area Study Certificate and Advanced Certificate.

Please note: MTU complies with all federal and state laws regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (487-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (487-3310).

Also: this course description and all schedules are tentative and may be changed. If any such changes are made, you will receive a printed update during our regular class meetings.
Tentative Schedule

Week 1

Monday, 21 May  Introduction to HU5116
Beginning of the film, The Emigrants
Tuesday, 22 May  Basic Concepts, pp. ix-xii and 1-34
Further viewing of the film, The Emigrants
Wednesday, 23 May  Conclusion and discussion of the film, The Emigrants
Basic Concepts, pp. 35-52
Thursday, 24 May  Basic Concepts, pp. 1-52
Report A1, Basic Concepts, pp. 53-68
Two reading/viewing responses due at noon tomorrow (25 May):
1. The Emigrants;
2. At least one essay from Basic Concepts

Week 2

Tuesday, 29 May  Basic Concepts, pp. 69-110
Report A2, Basic Concepts, pp. 111-30
Report A3, Basic Concepts, pp. 131-56
Wednesday, 30 May  Beginning of the film,
The New Land
Thursday, 31 May  Basic Concepts, pp. 157-72
Report A4, Basic Concepts, pp. 173-90
Report A5, Essay from part one of Samovar/Porter's reader
Two reading/viewing responses due at noon tomorrow (1 June):
3. At least one essay from Basic Concepts
4. The New Land or one more chapter from Basic Concepts

Week 3

Monday, 4 June  Bryson, pp. 1-54
Continuation of the film, The New Land
Tuesday, 5 June  Basic Concepts, pp. 191-214
Report A6, Basic Concepts, pp. 215-24
Report A7, Essay from part two of Samovar/Porter's reader
Wednesday, 6 June  Conclusion of the film, The New Land
Bryson, pp. 55-120
Thursday, 7 June  Basic Concepts, pp. 225-45
Kristeva, pp. 1-21
Report A9, Kristeva, pp. 41-64
Report A10, Kristeva, pp. 65-76
Two reading/viewing responses due at noon tomorrow (8 June):
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                 Further viewing of the film The Emigrants
Wednesday, 23 May Conclusion and discussion of the film, The Emigrants
                 Basic Concepts, pp. 35-52
Thursday, 24 May Basic Concepts, pp. 53-69
                 Report 1 (Samovar/Porter, chapter 1)