

**COMM 4800**  
**Intercultural Communication**  
**Section 001 – T/TR 2:00-3:15pm**

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Instructor: Melinda Weathers, Ph.D.

Office: 410 Strode Tower

Office Hours: T/TH, 11:00am-12:00pm & 3:30-4:30pm,  
M, 2:00-4:00pm (online),  
or by appointment

Location: 407 Daniel Hall

E-mail: mweath3@clemson.edu

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**COURSE OVERVIEW**

**Course Description:**

Intercultural communication is a course in which students will be introduced to the process of communication between and among individuals from different cultures or subcultures. This course emphasizes the effect of cultural practices within various communication relational contexts such as interpersonal, small group, and organizational communication.

Insight into intercultural communication processes is fundamental to finding and implementing solutions to relational problems. Individuals who understand the communication processes and problems that occur in intercultural relationships should be able to achieve mutual satisfaction in their own relationships. At the very least, individuals with a background in communication should be able to assess and increase their own awareness of the importance of intercultural communication in their lives. Class sessions will include some lectures, but will mostly consist of guided discussions, activities, and student presentations.

*Completion of COMM 2010 with a minimum grade of C is a prerequisite for the course.*



**Course Objectives:**

These are the objectives I hope you accomplish in this course:

1. Develop perspectives about the influence of culture on the sending and interpreting of messages.
2. Discover the complexity of communication in an intercultural communication exchange.
3. Become more willing to interact in intercultural message exchanges.
4. Develop a reflective process for improving the analysis of intercultural exchanges.
5. Recognize the influence of our own cultural situation upon the sending and interpreting of messages.

**Course Expectations:**

This is an upper-level course in intercultural communication with a specific concentration on the inextricable relationship between communication and culture. Students are expected to come to class ready to participate and discuss scheduled topics. Therefore, students must complete reading assignments and think about topics *prior* to class.

I expect each student to use me as a resource in and outside of class. If you have any questions or concerns about the class or any specific assignment, please do not hesitate to ask. I acknowledge that students have different interests, needs, and ideas; my intention is for each student to utilize my services as needed.

## CRITICAL THINKING

### **CT2 Description:**

This class is a Clemson Thinks2 (CT2) seminar developed to increase and enhance your critical thinking skills. What is critical thinking? For this class, we will work with the definition from the Delphi report: “We understand critical thinking to be purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based” (Facione, 1990; 1998). The judgments we will focus on are those regarding knowledge claims in research, popular culture, and news.

What are critical thinking skills? Critical thinkers strive to:

1. Determine the relevance of information for evaluating an argument or conclusion.
2. Recognize flaws and inconsistencies in an argument.
3. Evaluate competing causal explanations.
4. Evaluate hypotheses for consistency with established facts.
5. Determine whether an artistic interpretation is supported by evidence in the work.
6. Recognize the salient features or themes in a work of art.
7. Evaluate the appropriateness of procedures for investigating a question of causation.
8. Evaluate data for consistency with established facts, hypotheses, or methods.

### **CT2 Objectives:**

These are the CT2 objectives I hope you accomplish in this course:

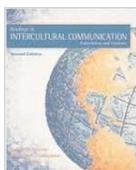
1. Explore complex challenges associated with impacts, meanings, and uses of communication.
2. Analyze communication research, news, and narratives using multiple lenses.
3. Identify historical patterns in communication research, news, and narratives.
4. Communicate complex ideas effectively.
5. Identify, recognize, and describe various approaches to studying communication.
6. Succinctly summarize and present communication scholarship.
7. Demonstrate uses of selected multimedia communication tools.
8. Apply class concepts to current events and news.

## REQUIRED TEXT

The following books are required and may be available at the Clemson University Bookstore. Most online retailers also sell these books.



- Martin, J. N., & Nakayama, T. K. (2008). *Experiencing intercultural communication: An introduction* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.



- Martin, J. N., Nakayama, T.K., & Flores, L. A. (2002). *Readings in intercultural communication: Experiences and contexts* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

**WARNING:** *There are newer editions of the textbooks available. I work from the older editions because (1) the content is identical and (2) they are incredibly less expensive than the newer versions. I would suggest you order them from an online retailer such as Amazon.com. Which ever version you use, please make sure your work corresponds to the chapters as outlined in the syllabus. I will not accept work that does not correspond with the assigned material.*

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

Your course grade will be determined from the number of points you earn over the course of the semester. *There are no extra credit opportunities.*

Final Course Grades, 550 total points

- A. 495+ points
- B. 440-494 points
- C. 385-439 points
- D. 330-384 points
- F. < 329 points

Assignment Points

- |  |            |
|--|------------|
| • In-Class Activities (5)                | 50 points  |
| • Chapter Summary Forms (10)             | 100 points |
| • Discussion Leader Assignment           | 50 points  |
| • Midterm Exam                           | 100 points |
| • Final Exam                             | 100 points |
| • CT2 Assessment (2)                     | 20 points  |
| • CT2 Written Assignments (2)            | 80 points  |
| • Participation and Discretionary Points | 50 points  |
| • Movie Feedback Forms                   |            |
| • Twitter                                |            |
| • Teaching Evaluation                    |            |

Interpret letter grades on assignments and for the course as a whole according to this rubric:

- A. *Excellent.* The student's work and contributions to the class are exemplary.
- B. *Very Good or Above Average.* The student's work and contributions to the class are consistently and remarkably strong.
- C. *Acceptable or Average.* The student's work meets and sometimes exceeds expectations for undergraduate performance in courses of this nature.
- D. *Problematic or Below Average.* The student's work may sometimes meet expectations for undergraduate performance in courses of this nature, but is sometimes deficient or flawed.
- F. *Failing.* The student's work does not meet the expectations for undergraduate performance in courses of this nature.

**In-Class Activities:** There will be five (5) unannounced activities (e.g., quizzes, exercises, surveys, etc.) given during the semester. You must be in attendance at the time the activity is given. Each activity will cover readings assigned for that class period. *There are no make-up activities.*

**Chapter Summary Forms:** For each chapter (10), students are required to fill out a Chapter Summary Form. Filling out the form helps prepare students to successfully participate in class discussion. You will summarize relevant theories, including the theorists, key claims or propositions, applications, and significance. At the end of the summary form, each student is required to raise two thoughtful discussion questions that assess the quality of the readings and how they contribute to learning. You should also answer each question that you pose. See separate handout on Blackboard for detailed instructions. *Late Chapter Summary Forms will not be accepted.*

**Discussion Leader Assignment:** Each student will serve as a class “expert” on one theory or topic area related to a specific week’s readings. The student’s job is to briefly present the theory/topic to the class (5-10 minutes) and lead an exciting class discussion about the topic (45-50 minutes). Students are expected to do some extra reading/research on the topic and **creatively** present the topic to the class. More importantly, students need to develop questions, exercises, or other class activities designed to **engage** the class in thinking critically about the concepts. Students should incorporate additional readings/research into the presentation. The entire presentation and discussion should not exceed 65 minutes. Think about ways of using the time wisely. *There are no make-up presentations.*

Visual aids and creative approaches are **required**. This is not a typical “teaching demonstration.” I do not want you to teach the class about the theory/topic in the traditional sense. Instead, I want you to foster interaction and discussion among students regarding the theory/topic. This is a much harder task to do, and as such should take you and your group some time to come up with creative approaches. Think about experiences that you’ve had in the past or examples that have been used in other classes—what about them helped you better learn the material? These are the approaches that should be taken into consideration for this assignment.

Discussion Leader assignments will be assessed along these lines:

- *Theoretical Connection and Accuracy* – the degree to which your work connects cogently with the reading to which you are assigned, as well as additional readings, and the accuracy and specificity with which your work represents the selected theory.
- *Clarity and Effectiveness* – the degree to which your work effectively translates and applies theoretical principles to a specific practical communication problem.
- *User/Audience Centeredness* – the degree to which your work demonstrates consideration of and appropriateness for a specific user or audience.
- *Creativity* – the degree to which your work demonstrates unique thinking, unexpected connections, innovativeness, novelty, and/or expression outside of convention.
- *Writing and Design Quality* – your writing and design should be effective, organized, and free of errors; it should also present a clear, theoretically informed perspective on communication.
- *Presentation* – your oral presentation to the class should be rehearsed, organized, precise, appropriate for an everyday audience, engaging and/or persuasive, supported as appropriate by thoughtfully crafted visual aids, and no longer than 65 minutes.

**Midterm and Final Exams:** Dates of exams are listed in the course schedule in this syllabus. *There are no make-up exams.*

**CT2 Assessment:**

CT2 courses are assessed on the basis of their achievement of their learning outcomes, as measured by student improvement on the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST). Taking the CCTST is a mandatory requirement of the class, but your score will *not* have a major impact on your course grade. The test will be administered at the beginning and near the end of the course.

**CT2 Written Assignments:** Two written assignments must be turned in on the days indicated on the course schedule in this syllabus. These must be typed and double-spaced. Explicit instructions for the assignments are detailed below. *Late CT2 Written Assignments will not be accepted.*

This assignment stresses clarity and accuracy of thought. Use the following simple rules:

- If it is possible to cut a word out, always cut it out.
- Never use the passive when you can use the active.
- Never use a foreign phrase, scientific word, or jargon if you can think of an everyday equivalent.
- Ask someone to read a draft and find places where you have been unclear. If they say something is unclear, change it until they understand.

### *First Written Assignment*

You are to choose an intercultural communication related article in which you are interested. The article should be from a peer-reviewed journal or other scholarly source (e.g., Chronicle of Higher Education). Once you have chosen an article, I need to approve it. Read the article so that you thoroughly understand it. Then write a paper that includes:

1. The main issue or problem the author is focusing on in this article.
2. The main purpose of the article.
3. The information being used by the author and its relationship to the main issue.
4. The conclusion(s) being drawn by the author.
5. The implications of the conclusion(s).
6. The main concepts being used in the article which relate to the main issue.
7. The point of view of the author.
8. The author's assumptions.
9. Once you have clearly established the author's logic as detailed in one through eight above, add the following to your paper:
10. Discuss the significance of the issue that is the focus of the article. Why is it important? On what do you base your assertions regarding its significance?
11. What potential problems do you see in the author's reasoning? What potential problems are there with the author's use of information? Does the information used appear relevant, significant, valid, and sufficient for the conclusions being drawn? Do you have enough information to determine whether the information is relevant, significant, valid?
12. What point of view is ignored by this author, or has not been considered in dealing with the issue?

### *Student Assessment of Papers*

On the day the paper is due, students will be assigned to groups. Each group will receive the same number of papers as they have members in their group, to be assessed (but they will receive none of their own papers). Each group will assess the papers (along with the selected articles) they are assigned, providing commentary on each criteria point listed below. The paper will then be returned to the student, with comments.

Papers of the highest quality in this assignment will include the following:

1. Questions outlined above are answered clearly and precisely, with detail and/or examples to support each point appropriately.
2. The main issue and purpose are clearly stated.
3. A clear connection between the information used and the author's main issue is drawn. The author's use of information is made clear.
4. The concepts being used are made clear.
5. The implications actually follow from the conclusions, or any fallacies in the author's reasoning about the implications are clearly described.
6. The point of view and the author's assumptions are clearly stated. The assumptions described are all inclusive. In other words, the student writer has clearly and completely stated all the assumptions on which the author has based his reasoning.
7. The importance of the issue is clearly stated and well thought through, and supported with implications that accurately follow from conclusions.
8. Problems regarding the author's reasoning are clearly and accurately stated. All potential problems with the author's reasoning are included.
9. Opposing points of view are accurately included.

## *Second Written Assignment*

Once the papers are assessed in groups, they will be returned to the writers to be rewritten. You will rewrite the paper, taking into account the group assessment, and modifying the paper for ultimate clarity and precision. You will submit this paper to me, along with the article, original paper, and its assessment, for grading. I will use the same assessment criteria for grading as used in the group assessment process.

**Participation and Discretionary Points:** Students are expected to attend each class session. When you miss class we miss your participation. This class is based largely on an interactive, experiential classroom that fosters meaningful dialogue. In this regard, I do not assume the traditional lecturer role, but instead promote a classroom where I position myself as a guide. In doing so, I intend for you to learn as much from yourself and fellow classmates as you do from me.

## *Movie Feedback Forms*

Throughout the semester, you will be responsible for completing four (4) movie feedback forms. Forms will correspond with the two (2) movies that we will view as a class: “Outsourced” and “Crash”. You will have time in class to completing your movie feedback forms. Dates of movie viewings are listed in the course schedule in this syllabus. *There are no make-up forms.*

You should consider the following questions as you view the film:

1. Describe the context in which the action takes place. Which elements of the film give information about the context? How does the context affect communication patterns between the characters?
2. Describe different social and cultural identities that emerge in the course of the film. How are these identities constructed? How can the communication perspective help in understanding the identities of the characters? What is the relationship between identity and context? Do identities and associated issues change for particular characters over the course of the film? What influences these changes?
3. How does history affect the standpoints of the characters? What do you learn about perceptions of history from the film? What is the relationship between history and the identity issues of the main characters?
4. What can you say about communication styles and language use in the film? What did language reveal about particular characters? What social structures affect the use of language?
5. Analyze the use of nonverbal and spatial codes that are present in the film. How do characters use these codes? How is space constructed? Identify the elements that reveal these elements.
6. What cultural and social issues of power, hierarchy, and political concerns are present in the film? Whose perspectives are considered? Why are those used and not others?

## *Twitter*

You will be required to run a Twitter account throughout the semester. Intercultural communication interactions are unquestionable. As such, **you will** have many experiences (directly and indirectly) that you can link to various intercultural concepts/theories that we discuss throughout the semester. You should “tweet” about these life events – both during class/lecture and on your own time. You will be assessed on the frequency and content of your tweets, the degree to which you incorporate comments from and acknowledge other Twitter users (including re-tweets), your use of hashtags, and the strategy of who you follow on Twitter. You should use #COMM4800 in your course-related tweets. Twitter is a public forum, so please post appropriate content! #thinkB4Utweet

## *Teaching Evaluation*

Students are expected to complete an evaluation form of the course at the end-of-semester. Students may login to MyCLE (i.e., Blackboard) to find links to the Online Course Evaluation.

## COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance Policy:** You are expected to attend every class session, unless otherwise stated in the syllabus or ahead of time by the professor. **Students with more than two absences will be docked 10 points per class.** Attendance will be taken each class. It is your responsibility to ensure that if you are present you are counted as such. If you participate in University activities, please notify me within the first two weeks of class of any classes that you will miss.

Along with attending class, I also expect you to be in class on time. I make an effort to begin and end class on time. I expect the same from you. If you are late, please make all efforts not to disturb the class. Excessive tardiness will result in a grade penalty.

*It is critical that you stay in touch with me by phone or e-mail when you are experiencing illness or difficulty. If you wait until your problems are over to talk to me, I may have no option but to fail you based on course policies. This is a communication course; communicate with me to discuss options!*

**Assignment Deadlines:** All written work is expected in class on the day it is due. I do not accept papers by e-mail, fax, left under my office door, left in my mailbox, or left with the main office. **Late assignments will not be accepted.** All presentations will only be accepted on the day you are assigned to present. If you do not show up on your presentation day your grade will result in a ZERO.

*Papers and assignments should be prepared in MSWord format, 12-point font, with one-inch margins on all sides, stapled in upper left corner, and follow current APA documentation format, unless otherwise noted. Papers that do not meet these guidelines will receive less credit.*

**Cell Phone and Laptop Policy (if needed):** All electronic devices should be *put away (with cell phones turned off or on “silent”)* while class is in session. My cell phone receives CU Safe Alerts, and I will keep it on so that we will be alerted in case of an emergency. This policy means: no laptops; no mp3 players; no IM'ing; no e-mailing; no Tweeting; no YouTubing; no Facebooking; no Instagraming; etc. If it runs on battery power and is not medically necessary, turn it OFF and put it out of sight. Failure to comply with this policy will result in a grade penalty.

**Coursework Reuse Policy:** In this class, you may not reuse work (in part or as a whole) that you have submitted or developed for other classes (previous or concurrent). Any exception to this policy must be explicitly negotiated with me in advance. Violations of this course policy will be treated as violations of the Clemson Academic Integrity Policy.

**Classroom Climate and Student Conduct:** At all times, we will maintain a classroom learning environment that is respectful of and safe for a range of people and perspectives. Civility and tolerance of diversity are demanded of students in our class. I will not allow behavior that is violent, threatening, sexist, racist, or otherwise disparaging. Please speak with me immediately if you are uncomfortable with some aspect of your class experience.

Additionally, students should respect the presentation times of their classmates. Students who interrupt a speaker verbally or nonverbally (such as by walking in late during a presentation or working on iPads, laptops, or cell phones) may lose points off their FINAL COURSE GRADE. Students who appear uninterested or uninvolved in a particular presentation (texting, working on a laptop, etc.) may be asked to provide a synopsis of the presentation once it is completed.

**Clemson E-mail Accounts:** Students must activate their Clemson e-mail accounts to receive important messages related to this class. This is the only e-mail account I will use to contact you. Make sure it's activated and you know how to use it! You are responsible for checking your Clemson e-mail account regularly for assignments and information.

**Consultations:** My door is always open to students. E-mail is the most reliable way to reach me. If you cannot reach me, call the department office. Please do not wait until the week an assignment is due to realize that you are unsure of what is expected. It is my intention to do everything I can to help you learn the material of the course. If you do not understand an assignment, ask. Meet with me during my regular office hours or make an appointment. The excuse, "I didn't know what was expected," will not be accepted as justification of poor performance. *Remember, you are responsible for your end of this course: You get out of it what you put into it. If you are having a problem that impacts your performance, it is your responsibility to inform me.*

**Incompletes or Withdrawals:** It is extremely unlikely that an incomplete will be assigned. Students requesting an incomplete must be passing the course, must still complete all of the assignments, quizzes, and exams allowable (not all can be made up if missed), must provide compelling evidence justifying an incomplete, and must sign an incomplete contract with the course instructor. Mid- to late-semester withdrawal requests are evaluated by the Dean's office on a case-by-case basis.

**Waiting Policy:** In the event that I am late for class, please wait 15 minutes. After that time, class will be considered cancelled. In such instances, please check for messages at your email account or elsewhere online (e.g., Blackboard or Twitter).

### **UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE POLICIES**

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Students are expected to live up to the ideals and standards of the Clemson Academic Integrity Policy. Those who violate the policy in any way will face sanction. The policy:

As members of the Clemson University community, we have inherited Thomas Green Clemson's vision of this institution as a "high seminary of learning." Fundamental to this vision is a mutual commitment to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of others. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of a Clemson degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form.

*Academic dishonesty is further defined as:*

- *Giving, receiving, or using unauthorized aid on any academic work;*
- *Plagiarism, which includes the intentional or unintentional copying of language, structure, or ideas of another and attributing the work to one's own efforts;*
- *Attempts to copy, edit, or delete computer files that belong to another person or use of Computer Center account numbers that belong to another person without the permission of the file owner, account owner, or file number owner.*

Any breach of the principles outlined in the Academic Integrity Statement is considered an act of academic dishonesty. All academic work submitted for grading contains an implicit pledge and may contain, at the request of an instructor, an explicit pledge by the student that no unauthorized aid has been received. It is the responsibility of every member of the Clemson University community to enforce the Academic Integrity Policy.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** Clemson University seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need accommodations should make an appointment with Arlene Stewart, Director of Student Disability Services, to discuss specific needs within the first month of classes. Students should present a Faculty Accommodation Letter from Student Disabilities Services when they meet with instructors. Please be aware that accommodations are not retroactive and new Faculty Accommodation Letters must be presented each semester.

- G-20 Redfern Health Center
- <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/sds/>
- 864-656-6848
- [sds-l@clemson.edu](mailto:sds-l@clemson.edu)

**Title IX (Sexual Harassment) Statement:** Clemson University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all persons and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, pregnancy, national origin, age, disability, veteran's status, genetic information or protected activity (e.g., opposition to prohibited discrimination or participation in any complaint process, etc.) in employment, educational programs and activities, admissions and financial aid. This includes a prohibition against sexual harassment and sexual violence as mandated by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

- 111 Holtzendorff Hall
- <http://www.clemson.edu/campus-life/campus-services/access/title-ix/>
- 864.656.3181

**Writing Center:** The Writing Center provides free tutorial sessions for all students needing help with any writing project. It is best to make an appointment to ensure seeing a Writing Center consultant. You can also utilize the ONLINE Writing Center. Your tuition dollars pay for this whether you use it or not—so use it!

- [http://www.clemson.edu/caah/english/about/resources/writing\\_center/](http://www.clemson.edu/caah/english/about/resources/writing_center/)

## Tentative Schedule

Readings should be completed *before* the day on which they are listed. In *every* class, readings will be supplemented with lecture material that is not in the book. Exams are based on *all* course materials.

Aug 20 Introductions, Syllabus, Course Overview, Discussion Leaders Sign-Up

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Aug 25 Class viewing of “Outsourced”  
**Due: Movie Feedback Form**

Aug 27 Class viewing of “Outsourced”  
**Due: Movie Feedback Form**

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Sep 1 **CCTST TESTING**

Sep 3 Studying Intercultural Communication MN 1; MNF 1-2  
**Due: Chapter Summary Form**

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Sep 8 Intercultural Communication MN 2; MNF 3  
**Due: Chapter Summary Form**

Sep 10 . . . cont. Discussion Leaders

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Sep 15 History and Intercultural Communication MN 3; MNF 10-11  
**Due: Chapter Summary Form**

Sep 17 . . . cont. Discussion Leaders

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Sep 22 Identity and Intercultural Communication MN 4; MNF 4-6  
**Due: Chapter Summary Form**

Sep 24 **Group Work Day**

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Sep 29 Verbal Issues in Intercultural Communication MN 5; MNF 13-15  
**Due: Chapter Summary Form**

Oct 1 . . . cont. Discussion Leaders

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Oct 6 Nonverbal Communication Issues MN 6; MNF 18, 21  
**Due: Chapter Summary Form**

Oct 8 **Midterm Review Study Day**  
**Due: Submit CT2 Article for Approval**

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Oct 13 **Fall Break**

Oct 15 Midterm Exam **MN 1-6**  
**MNF 1-6, 10-11, 13-15, 18, 21**

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Oct 20	Popular Culture and Intercultural Communication <b>Due: Chapter Summary Form</b>	MN 7; MNF 22-25
Oct 22	. . . cont.	Discussion Leaders
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Oct 27	Student Assessment of Papers <b>Due: CT2 First Written Assignment</b>	
Oct 29	Culture, Communication, and Conflict <b>Due: Chapter Summary Form</b>	MN 8; MNF 34, 36 Discussion Leaders
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Nov 3	Intercultural Relationships in Everyday Life <b>Due: Chapter Summary Form</b>	MN 9; MNF 31-32 Discussion Leaders
Nov 5	<b>CCTST TESTING</b>	
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Nov 10	Class viewing of "Crash" <b>Due: Movie Feedback Form</b>	Hopson (pdf)
Nov 12	Class viewing of "Crash" <b>Due: Movie Feedback Form</b>	
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Nov 17	Intercultural Communication and Health Care <b>Assign: Teaching Evaluations</b> <b>Due: Chapter Summary Form</b>	MN 13; Perloff (pdf)
Nov 19	<b>Final Review Study Day</b> <b>Due: CT2 Second Written Assignment</b>	
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Nov 24	Final Exam	<b>MN 7-9, 13</b> <b>MNF 22-25, 31-32, 34, 36</b> <b>PDFs</b>
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