

COMA 304: Intercultural Communication

Class Information

MWF, 9:15 am - 10:20 am, Ingram 115B

Dr. Marnie Ritchie (ritchier@plu.edu)

M and W, 2-3 pm or by appointment, Ingram 129

Jump to [click]...

ABOUT COMA 304

- Course Description
- Course Objectives
- Required Materials

COURSE POLICIES

- Self Care
- Assignments
- Add/Drop
- Academic Integrity
- Laptops
- Accommodations
- Pronoun Use
- All Gender Bathrooms
- Title IX
- Support for Undocumented Students
- Classroom Inclusivity

ASSIGNMENTS

- Readings
- Participation
- Open Notes Takeaways
- Discussion Leader Groups
- Decolonizing Communication

GRADES

- Explanation of Assessment
- Grade Breakdown

CITATIONAL ETHICS

COURSE SCHEDULE

ABOUT COMA 304

Course Description

This course considers intercultural communication through postcolonial lenses. The ghost of colonialism haunts our communication practices (local, national, and global) and tasks us to think beyond US and European contexts. The “inter” part of intercultural communication raises the question: communication between whom and to whose benefit? If “inter” implies a level of equal exchange, we should hold open the extent to which that mutual connection can ever be fully realized. This class is reading-intensive; the course is driven by close readings of texts. The class culminates in “decolonizing communication” written research projects aimed at applying notions of transnational inequality and postcolonial struggles to the study of communication.

Course Objectives

1. Demonstrate knowledge of translinguistic and transcultural perspectives on the world
2. Apply postcolonial theories to analyze specific global issues
3. Effectively communicate in written and oral work about global problems
4. Actively work to decolonize existing communication scholarship

Required Materials

Articles and Book Chapter pdf's posted on Sakai; bring to class (printed or digital copy)

There is no textbook for this class.

COURSE POLICIES

Self Care

Your personal well-being is essential to your performance in college. Self care is bodily, emotional, spiritual, social, psychological, and *political*—meaning it is not your fault if you find that you simply cannot deal sometimes. Asking for help is a skill. If you need additional resources or feel that you might fall behind in work, I ask that you come speak with me earlier rather than later. I encourage you to contact the Center for Student Success, which can connect you to resources on campus like the Counseling Center, Health Center, Campus Ministry, and Center for Gender Equity. The main hub of the CSS is located on the first floor of the Mortvedt Library building. You can contact them by email (success@plu.edu) or phone (253-535-8870).

Assignments

Assignments should be completed when they are due, according to the course schedule. Written work, unless otherwise specified, should be in Times New Roman, 12-pt font, double-spaced format.

Add/Drop

You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, and similar topics found at <https://www.plu.edu/registrar/curriculum-management/>.

Academic Integrity

All graded work must be the original work of the student claiming credit for it, with proper credit given to outside sources via citations. Students who use unoriginal work or permit another student to use their work will not receive for the course. Students who are uncertain as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult with me. For more information, please see PLU's statement on Academic Integrity: www.plu.edu/academics/integ.html.

Laptops

I allow laptops in class, and I put considerable trust in students to use them responsibly (not texting or emailing, only to take notes and look up additional information if you find it relevant to the class).

Accommodations

Students with medically recognized and documented disabilities and who are in need of special accommodation have an obligation to notify the University of their needs. Students in need of accommodation should contact the Office of Disability Support Services (x7206). If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. The Office of Disability Support Services website contains more information: <https://www.plu.edu/dss/>.

Pronoun Use

We will use one another's personally designated pronouns. Do not assume anyone's gender in the course. Some of our readings use "she and/or he" to the exclusion of a more inclusive "they." I encourage you in your reading to note these exclusions and normalize using "they" in your writing for general use (otherwise, use designated pronouns).

All Gender Bathrooms

There are numerous "all gender" bathrooms throughout the PLU campus available to students. There is one in Ingram Hall, located in the west hallway (down the hall from our classroom, to the right). More information on locations is available here:

<https://www.plu.edu/gender-equity/resources/trans-and-gender-nonconforming-resources/all-gender-restrooms/>. If you do not need to use these bathrooms for your safety and comfort, as some students do, I ask that you please do not use them.

Title IX

I am a mandatory reporter under Title IX. This means that if you disclose sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, or sexual assault to me related to the Pacific Lutheran University community, I must report it to Campus Safety, Students Rights and Responsibilities, Human Resources, and/or a member of the University Dispute Resolution Committee. If you would like to confidentially submit a disclosure, meaning one that does not activate Mandatory Reporting, you can do so via the following resources:

Advocacy Services in Center for Gender Equity (<https://www.plu.edu/genderequity/advocacy-services/> or 253-538-6304)

PLU Health Center (<http://www.plu.edu/health-center/> or 253-535-7337),

PLU Counseling Center (<https://www.plu.edu/counseling/> or 253-535-7206)

PLU University Pastor (<https://www.plu.edu/campus-ministry/staff/> or 253-535-7464)

Support for Undocumented Students

If you are undocumented, PLU offers you a number of resources through the Diversity Center:

<https://www.plu.edu/undocumented-students/>. You should never feel that you have to disclose your status to anyone, especially if this disclosure puts you at risk.

Classroom Inclusivity

We will strive to make this class an inclusive space. Here are a few best practices for ensuring our space is actively more just: avoid words with exclusionary histories; try to summarize what a peer is saying in class in your head before responding; do not minimize marginalized identities' negative feelings and need to process; take responsibility for the impact of your ideological beliefs. If you are unsure what might constitute an exclusionary impact in class, let's chat in my office hours further.

ASSIGNMENTS

Readings

Readings should be done before class, and students should bring the readings to class, either in print or digitally.

Participation

Point value: 100 points

Class attendance is required, and participation is essential. I make an active effort to welcome any and all perspectives in class.

90-100 – Creative insights and questions, risked speaking in class on a regular basis, consistent evidence of preparedness, generous openness to other perspectives, excellent insights and questions

80-89 – Adequate thought and effort in class participation, mostly reliable evidence of preparedness, curiosity concerning other perspectives

70-79 – Present in class but little participation, adequate preparedness, acknowledgment of differing opinions

60-69 – Absences from class that affected participation, visible unpreparedness, little acknowledgement of differing opinions

0-59 – Student interfered with peers' learning, disrespectful of class atmosphere, consistent and visible unpreparedness

Open Notes Takeaways

Point value: 200 points

In lieu of quizzes and exams, we will do 10-minute open notes takeaways at the beginning of some classes. You will be responsible for writing down two takeaways from the reading for the week and two critical questions. These will be graded on the basis of depth of reading, identification of main claims within the reading/listening, and creativity and relevance of questions. As the semester progresses, I expect your work in the class to result in an increasingly developed critical approach to the assigned texts. Your takeaways should reflect this development.

Discussion Leader Groups

Point value: 200 points

There are five discussion days at the end of our units. During these classes, our class leaders will lead the class in discussion. It is their class for the day. Discussion questions should accomplish two goals: a) close engagement with the focal reading for that day; and b) connection to every other reading within the unit. Members of the team receive the same grade.

Decolonizing Communication

Point value: 500 points total (outline 100 points, research paper 300 points, presentation 100 points)

For this culminating project, students will write a research paper that actively works to decolonize existing intercultural communication. Students will identify an area of intercultural communication that they believe would benefit from being put in conversation with postcolonial theory, i.e. find a gap in the literature. They will then articulate why postcolonial theory can be beneficial to the particular area of study: What question does postcolonial theory help you answer? The essay will be scaffolded: topic selection, outline (100 points), and final research essay (300 points). The final research essays are expected to be 12-15 pages in length, double-spaced. Students will have the opportunity to revise the outline or final research assignments for further credit if they find they want to improve their work. Students will present their final projects to the class (100 points).

GRADES

Explanation of Assessment

A work is exemplary. It goes above and beyond expectations for assignments.

B work exceeds expectations for assignments.

C work meets expectations.

D work meets most expectations but falls short on some.

E work does not meet expectations for assigned work

Please wait 24 hours before speaking with me about any graded assignments.

Any grade complaints must be submitted within seven days of receiving the grade in writing.

Grade Breakdown

Assignment	Point Value
Participation	100
Open Notes Takeaways	200
Discussion Leaders	200
Essay Outline	100
Final Essay	300
Final Presentation	100
TOTAL:	1,000

CITATIONAL ETHICS

I thank Dr. J. Jackson for inspiration from their “Postcolonial/Global/World” syllabus and Dr. Kate Hoyt for the idea for the “live” syllabus. The banner colors for this course come from the cover of the Grove Press edition of Frantz Fanon’s *Wretched of the Earth* (2004).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please note: the course schedule is subject to change at instructor's discretion

COURSE INTRODUCTION			
W 02/06	Introduction to the Course	---	---
POSTCOLONIAL IMAGINARIES			
Date	Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Due
F 02/08	Unthinking Eurocentrism	"From Eurocentrism to Polycentrism," <i>Unthinking Eurocentrism</i> , Ella Shohat and Robert Stam	---
M 02/11	Colonialism and Racism	Foreword of <i>Black Skin White Masks</i> , Ziauddin Sardar; "The Negro and Language," <i>Black Skin, White Masks</i> , Frantz Fanon	---
W 02/13	Colonialism and Violence	"On Violence," <i>Wretched of the Earth</i> , Frantz Fanon	---
F 02/15	The Subaltern	"Can the Subaltern Speak?" Gayatri Spivak	---
M 02/18	No Class: President's Day	---	---
W 02/20	Feminism and Western Eyes	"Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," Chandra Talpade Mohanty	---
F 02/22	No Class: Professor at Conference	---	---
M 02/25	No Class: Professor at Conference	---	---

W 02/27	Cultural Identity and Diaspora	“Cultural Identity and Diaspora,” in <i>Identity: Community, Culture, Difference</i> , Stuart Hall	---
F 03/01	Writing Workshop: Researching	---	Bring a laptop to class, if you have one; otherwise, you may use the computer lab in Ingram 115A during our class period

THE CRITIC, TEXT, AND IMPERIALISM

Date	Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Due
M 03/04	No Class: Professor Traveling	---	---
W 03/06	Decolonizing Intercultural Communication	“Postcolonial Approaches to Intercultural Communication,” Rae Lynn Schwartz-DuPre	---
F 03/08	Orientalism	“Introduction,” <i>Orientalism</i> , Edward Said	---
M 03/11	The Critic, Text, and Worldliness	“Criticism Between Culture and System,” <i>The World, the Text, and the Critic</i> , Edward Said	---
W 03/13	Discussion Leaders Group 1	“Postcolonial Interventions in the Rhetorical Canon: An ‘Other’ View,” Raka Shome	---

GLOBAL HUMANITARIANISM AND NEOLIBERALISM

Date	Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Due
F 03/15	Cosmopolitanism	“Cosmopolitanism,” Ian Woodward	Topic Selection for Final Essay Due over email (ritchiem@plu.edu) by start of class
M 03/18	Moral Economies of Volunteers	“Cosmopolitan Empathy, New Social Movements, and the Moral Economy of Volunteer	---

		Tourism,” <i>Volunteer Tourism</i> , Mary Mostafanezhad	
W 03/20	Cultural Intelligence	“Multinational Going Cultural: A Postcolonial Deconstruction of Cultural Intelligence,” Mohan J. Dutta and Debalina Dutta	---
F 03/22	Discussion Leaders Group 2	“‘A Delicious Way to Help Save Lives’: Race, Commodification, and Celebrity in Product (RED),” Katherine Bell	---
M 03/25 – F 03/29	No Class: Spring Break	---	---
M 04/01	Writing Workshop: Outlining	---	Bring a laptop to class, if you have one; otherwise, you may use the computer lab in Ingram 115A during our class period
BLACK ATLANTIC STUDIES			
Date	Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Due
W 04/03	The Black Atlantic	“The Black Atlantic as a Counterculture of Modernity,” <i>The Black Atlantic</i> , Paul Gilroy	---
F 04/05	Slave Routes and Migration	“Lose Your Mother,” <i>Lose Your Mother</i> , Saidiya Hartman	---
M 04/08	Intimacies	“Autobiography Out of Empire,” <i>The Intimacies of Four Continents</i> , Lisa Lowe	---
W 04/10	Discussion Leaders Group 3	“Notes on Surveillance Studies: Through the Door of No Return,” <i>Dark Matters</i> , Simone Browne	---
F 04/12	No Class: Professor at Debate Tournament	---	---
M 04/15	No Class: Professor at Debate Tournament	---	---

W 04/17	Writing Workshop: Outlines to Essays	---	Outlines of Final Essay Due, start of class, printed out Bring a laptop to class, if you have one; otherwise, you may use the computer lab in Ingram 115A during our class period
F 04/19	No Class: PLU Holiday	---	---

INDIAN RHETORICS

Date	Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Due
M 04/22	South Asian Diasporic Love	bell hooks and Anuradha Dingwaney Needham, "Review of <i>Mississippi Masala</i> "	Come to class having watched <i>Mississippi Masala</i> (Mira Nair, 1991) (Content Warning: Some Sexual Material and Themes)
W 04/24	Ambedkar	"Pragmatism and the Pursuit of Social Justice in India: Bhimrao Ambedkar and the Rhetoric of Religious Reorientation," Scott Stroud	---
F 04/26	Recursive Racisms	"New Media, Old Racisms: Twitter, Miss America, and Cultural Logics of Race," J. David Cisneros and Thomas K. Nakayama	---
M 04/29	Discussion Leaders Group 4	"'I Need an Indian Touch': Glocalization and Bollywood Films," Shakuntala Rao	---
W 05/01	Writing Workshop: Improving Our Writing	---	(Optional) Revised Outlines Due at the start of class, printed out Bring a laptop to class, if you have one; otherwise, you may use the computer lab in Ingram 115A during our class period

QUEERING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Date	Topic	Readings Due	Assignments Due
F 05/03	Queering Intercultural Communication	“Disidentifications Revisited: Queer(y)ing Intercultural Communication Theory,” Shinsuke Eguchi and Godfried Asante	---
M 05/06	Trans in/as Transnational	“The Persistence of Trans Travel Narratives”, <i>Mobile Subjects</i> , Aren Z. Aizura	---
W 05/08	Intersectionality and Disciplinarity	“Cisgender Privilege, Intersectionality, and the Criminalization of Cece McDonald: Why Intercultural Communication Needs Transgender Studies,” Julia R. Johnson (Content Warning: Racial Epithets Quoted and Sexual Assault)	---
F 05/10	Discussion Leaders Group 5	“Discursive Negotiations of Kenyan LGBTI Identities: Cautions in Cultural Humility,” Dustin Bradley Goltz, Justin Zingsheim, Teresa Mastin, and Alexandra G. Murphy	---
COURSE WRAP-UP			
M 05/13	Presentations	---	---
W 05/15	Presentations	---	---
F 05/17	Presentations and Course Wrap-Up	---	Final Essay Due printed out at the start of class

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