

Language & Culture in Classroom
ENG 559 01W
Fall 2025

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COURSE INFORMATION

Required Textbook:

DeCapua, A., & Wintergerst, A. (2016; 2nd Edition). *Crossing cultures in the language classroom*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. (Referred as D & W in course outline.)

Additional Text Required:

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition). Those of you who are not familiar with APA style which is required in the discipline of TESOL/applied linguistics, need to purchase a copy of this manual. You should obtain this book from booksellers of your choice.

Required Readings (Available in the course content):

Atkinson, D. (2004). Contrasting rhetorics/contrasting cultures: Why contrastive rhetoric needs a better conceptualization of culture. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 3, 277-289.

Connor, U. (2002). New directions in contrastive rhetoric. *TESOL Quarterly*, 36, 493-510.

Connor, U. (2011). Intercultural rhetoric in the writing classroom. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press. Chapter 5, pp. 63-89.

Gordon, M., & Newburry, W. (2007). Students as a resource for introducing intercultural education in business schools. *Intercultural Education*, 18, 243-257.

Kelly Hall, J. (2002). *Teaching and researching language and culture*. Harlow, UK: Pearson. Chapter 2 & Chapter 5.

Knutson, E. (2006). Cross-cultural awareness for second/foreign language learners. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 62, 591-610.

Lovelace, S., & Wheeler, T. (2006). Cultural discontinuity between home and school language socialization patterns: Implications for teachers. *Education*, 127, 303-309.

Manke, M. (1997). *Classroom power relations: Understanding student-teacher interaction*. Chapter 6. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

McKinney, C., & Norton, B. (2008). Identity in language and literacy education. In B. Spolsky & F. Hult (Eds.), *Handbook of educational linguistics* (pp. 192-205). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Poole, D. (2005). Cross-cultural variation in classroom turn-taking practices. In P. Bruthiaux, D. Atkinson, & Eggington, W. (Eds.), *Directions in applied linguistics* (pp. 201-222). Clevedon: Multilingual matters.

Riley, K. (2008). Language socialization. In B. Spolsky & F. Hult (Eds.), *Handbook of educational linguistics* (pp. 398-410). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Wolfson, N. (1989). *Perspectives: Sociolinguistics and TESOL*. New York, NY: Newbury House. Chapter 3, pp.55-78; Chapter 4, pp. 79-108; Chapter 5, pp.109-124 ; Chapter 6, pp. 125-139.

Course Description:

Students come to our schools from almost every country in the world, bringing with them an enormous variety of language experiences, belief systems, and behavioral patterns. Such variety in linguistic and cultural background presents many challenges and offers many opportunities. This course examines the relationship between language use, instructional activities, and the development of language and literacy in multilingual and multicultural settings. You will have the opportunity to examine and develop your personal philosophy of language and literacy in linguistically and culturally diverse settings. You will also be encouraged to carefully examine your beliefs and attitudes about your own language and about the language of others who live around you. Being aware of your beliefs and attitudes will help you become more tolerant of the variations in language use from one individual to the next and from one group to the next. It will also help you better understand the change that language constantly undergoes in personal and social use.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will practice critical thoughts in comprehending the notion of culture, its relationship with language, and the key concepts of cross-cultural communication in educational settings.
2. Students will apply key concepts of cross-cultural communication in designing language lessons and classroom tasks.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

- Using the learning management system
- Using Microsoft Word (including the track changes and commenting functions under “Review”) and PowerPoint
- Using online presentation programs such as VoiceThread, Screencast-O-Matic and Youtube by following instructions.

Submitting Papers:

Please place your papers (in Word document format: .doc or .docx) in the *Assignment Submission Folder* specified for each paper. Late assignments (after the cut-off date) will not be graded and will receive a grade of zero. Assignments will not be accepted by e-mail.

Remember that your papers should be submitted using *Microsoft Word* (either PC or Mac). If you are using any other word processor, you must convert your files to MS Word or RTF (rich text format) before submitting them.

You are responsible for submitting a file I can read. If I can't read your first submission, I will alert you and give you the opportunity to correct the problem. After the first time, if you submit work that I cannot read, you will be given a zero on that assignment if the due date has passed.

Weekly Discussions:

You are required to participate in each week’s online discussions, post your reply to each discussion topic and respond to your classmates’ posts. I expect that students will exhibit courtesy toward others in these online discussions. Courtesy means NOT engaging in online rudeness or refusing to focus on class discussion. Courtesy means engaging in such behaviors such as listening carefully to others, accepting that various points of views can be valid, maintaining a focus on the discussion in hand and treating others as you wish to be treated. Online courtesy requires meeting some different standards than face/face situations: a good guide to Netiquette can be found at: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>

Grading Criteria:

Each student's performance in the following areas will determine the student's grade for this course:

Discussions (30%): The weekly discussions provide opportunities for you to interact with your classmates to discuss key concepts and terms targeted in the course readings and

lectures. You are expected to make a minimum number of comments and replies to your classmates' comments for every discussion. There are two deadlines each week: one for posting a reply to discussion prompts (i.e., by Thursday midnight), and one for responding to at least two classmates' posts (i.e., by Sunday midnight). The specific requirements are provided in the description for each discussion assignment.

Journals (30%): You will write a journal entry (about 250-300 words) on a subject/substantive issue in each of the five modules (see course outline) that captures your attention. The purpose of this assignment is for you to reflect on what you have read and connect the issue you have picked to real-life classroom teaching/learning experiences. The completion of the journals is also a good preparation for the final project. Please be sure to include the in-text citations of the texts that you are discussing and label your entry Journal #1, #2, etc.

Final Project (40%): The final project will be a synthesis paper (6-8 pages) discussing how you plan to utilize the concepts or theories addressed in the class readings in your own classroom teaching. Specific assignment details will be available on D2L. You will be instructed to submit a prospectus and bibliography before the paper deadline. (**Final paper cannot be revised and resubmitted.*)

Total Possible = 100%

("No curve" grading scale / 100 percent possible, 90-100=A 80-89=B 70-79=C and so on. . .)

COURSE OUTLINE

Note: Schedule is flexible and subject to change.

MODULE	WEEK	TOPIC	ASSIGNED READING	ACTIVITIES/ ASSIGNMENTS
Module 1: Culture	1	Introduction to culture	Atkinson, 2004; D & W Chapter 1	Discussion posts
	2	More on culture	D & W Chapter 2	Discussion posts
	3	Cultural shock	D & W Chapter 3	Discussion posts <i>Journal #1</i>
Module 2: Socialization in educational contexts	4	Introduction to language socialization;	Riley, 2008; Kelly Hall, 2002 (chap 2)	Discussion posts
	5	Socialization in education	Kelly Hall, 2002 (chap 5); McKinney & Norton, 2008; Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006	Discussion posts <i>Journal #2</i>
Module 3: Cultural factors in language classrooms	6	Nonverbal communication	D & W Chapter 4	Discussion posts
	7	Social dynamics	D & W Chapter 5; Wolfson, 1989 (Chap 6)	Discussion posts
	8	Pragmatics and Communication	D & W Chapter 6	Discussion posts
	9	Culture in the classroom;	Knutson, 2006; Gordon & Newbury, 2007	Discussion posts <i>Journal #3</i>
Module 4: Cultural factors in	10	Investigating spoken interaction	Wolfson, 1989 (Chap 3)	Discussion posts
	11	The sociolinguistic	Wolfson, 1989 (Chap 4 & 5)	Discussion posts

spoken discourse		behavior of English speakers		
	12	<i>Final project prospectus & bibliography</i>		
	13	Spoken discourse in academic contexts	Manke, 1997; Poole, 2005	Discussion posts; <i>Journal #4</i>
Module 5: Cultural factors in second language writing	14	Contrastive rhetoric; intercultural rhetoric in writing classrooms	Connor, 2002; Connor, 2011 (Chap 5)	Discussion posts <i>Journal #5</i>
	15	Final Project		

COURSE/ UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Course Ground Rules

Being successful in an online course requires tremendous self-discipline and high motivation. In this course, all work will be completed through D2L. You should log into the course website frequently for the course syllabus, assignments, announcements, and discussions. I strongly recommend dedicating set days/times to completing your work and working in advance so that you are always a day or two ahead. You are expected to put 2-3 hours a day to work on the course materials (involving reading and class assignments). Please note that assignment due dates are crucial and that you are expected to exert your maximum effort to meet these deadlines. We are co-constructing our knowledge in the online community. Please be prepared, read carefully, share thoughtfully, respond respectfully, and engage in all learning processes.

Netiquette

I expect that students will exhibit courtesy toward others in this online class. Courtesy means NOT engaging in online rudeness or refusing to focus on group or class discussion. Courtesy means engaging in such behaviors as listening carefully to others, accepting that various points of views can be valid, maintaining a focus on the discussion in hand and treating others as you wish to be treated. Online courtesy requires meeting some different standards than face2face situations: a good guide to Netiquette can be found at: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/>

Assignment Submissions

- All assignments must be submitted to D2L Brightspace by the designated due date (generally Sunday midnight).

- The submission should be in an appropriate academic format (i.e., APA). Failure to conform to the standards will result in points deducted. To learn more about the APA format, please consult an APA style manual or check the website of Purdue Online Writing Lab (Purdue OWL).
- If you have trouble uploading the assignment to the course site, please e-mail your paper to me at dongmei.cheng@tamuc.edu

Learning Management System D2L (Brightspace)

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact CITE Helpdesk or D2L Support.

Note the following:

- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.
- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.
- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
 - o 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
 - o Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
 - o Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution
- You must have a:
 - o Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
 - o Speakers or headphones.
- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: JAVA web site <http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp>
- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Communication

I encourage you to contact me if you have any questions about the contents of this course. Please send messages directly to dongmei.cheng@tamuc.edu. I generally reply email within 24 hours. If you desire an online conference via Zoom or face-to-face meeting, please always email me first to set up an appointment. If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.asp>. Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the following webpages: <http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Honesty Policy

Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty" includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material.

Avoid Self-plagiarism

Self-plagiarism is reusing one's own previously written work partially or entirely in another piece of work without referring to the previous use. Instructors expect unique coursework for individual classes to demonstrate students' persistent learning and growth. Submitting an assignment that has already been submitted for another class, also called "recycling fraud", is a form of academic misconduct and never allowed. In case you want to further explore a research topic that you have examined in another class, please do ask for the instructor's permission beforehand.

AI Use in Course

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty

13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

Dr. Cheng's guidelines on the use of AI in coursework:

- You cannot trust anything said by an AI tool. If it gives you a number or fact, assume it is wrong unless you can verify it with another credible source. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool. It works best for topics you understand.
- Do not trust AI to supply citation information. Do your own research and include the proper citation information in your writing.
- You are not allowed to use AI to generate an entire assignment.
- You are permitted to use AI to facilitate your completion of the course assignments if you acknowledge your use of it and document how you use it. Please include a statement at the end of any assignment that uses AI explaining what you used the AI for and the link of your chat history. Failure to do so is in violation of academic honesty policies.
- When in doubt about whether your use of AI in a course assignment is appropriate, check with me before submitting your work for a grade.

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all

federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to the Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus document and/or consult your event organizer. Web URL: <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>. Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

Counseling center statement

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel