

COM 691 – Fall 2018

Facilitating Intercultural Dialogue

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Contact Information and Office Hours: [See Course Blackboard](#)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on facilitating intercultural dialogue with groups confronting complex issues in settings that involve multiple stakeholders with diverse cultural backgrounds and viewpoints. The emphasis is on principles and methods for building collective understandings of problematic situations and engaging in collective action to bring about meaningful change. Case studies will focus on a wide variety of situations, including protracted conflicts. Various approaches to group facilitation are introduced, with a special emphasis on a structured dialogue process that was originally known as Interactive Management and is recently being recast as Collective Intelligence. Students will gain experience as participants in facilitated workshops in which they will explore issues related to facilitation and will analyze their own communication and group process. In these workshops, participants will simultaneously learn about intercultural/intergroup dialogue while experiencing various methods for idea generation and structuring. As a class, we will design, organize, and facilitate an intercultural dialogue workshop with students at ASU (and perhaps local community members).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide opportunity for participants to:

- Learn about the *nature of dialogue* as a distinctive form of human interaction;
- Examine the *dynamics of the facilitation process*;
- Explore the primary *challenges in facilitating intercultural dialogue*;
- Identify knowledge, attitudes, skills, and style desirable for the *facilitator role*;
- Experience selected *methodologies* that can be potentially useful in facilitating intercultural dialogue;
- Gain *practice in facilitating intercultural dialogue* in natural settings;

COURSE READINGS

Readings for the course will draw from a number of journals and books, most of which are available through the ASU Library. See attached list for the preliminary set of readings (which will likely be modified as the semester progresses). In addition to the assigned readings, students will each read, analyze, and report on a book or book-length monograph that is focused on facilitation of dialogue.

COURSE ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS/REQUIREMENTS

1. **Class Sessions** – It is imperative that everyone prepare for, attend, and actively contribute to all class sessions.
2. **Classroom Workshops** – We will have 2 classroom workshop experiences during the semester. In preparation for these sessions, you will be tasked with collecting information that may involve conducting short interviews with faculty, graduate student colleagues, and others.
3. **Online Discussion Forum** - We'll set up forums as ways to prepare for class, as follow-up to class activities, as spaces to reflect on lab experiences, etc. You are expected to actively participate by responding to questions when they are posted.
4. **Summary and Commentary for Course Readings/Book**– For each assigned reading, and for one unassigned book or training manual, one or more students will be assigned responsibility to provide for the class (a) 250-word summary of the main points of the reading, and (b) a 500-word ‘commentary’ on the reading. In your commentary, you can select specific ideas that align well with your own experiences, claims that don’t hold up in your own experiences, points that helped you frame or reframe your own understanding, potential applications, questions raised, etc. You might also point out links to other readings in the course (or readings not assigned in the course). The summary and commentary should be posted on the course’s online discussion forum by noon on the day of the class meeting in which the reading is assigned. During our class sessions, you will be asked to highlight key points from your assigned reading, and these will be used as the starting point for discussion of each article. Your posted summaries and commentaries will serve a resource for class members that can be useful in teaching, research, and comprehensive exams.
5. **Practicum: Intercultural Dialogue Workshop** – This project provides opportunity for you to be involved in designing, facilitating, reporting, evaluating and debriefing an intercultural dialogue workshop. More information will be provided in class.
6. **Research Project** – My hope is that we will collaborate together as a class in carrying out a research project in which all of us are involved. We will discuss ideas for this project and formulate a plan early in the semester. We may be able to link the research project with the IC Dialogue workshop. We’ll discuss this assignment in more detail in class.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

This is a PhD level course, and everyone is expected to contribute at a high level. The quality of the learning experience should be given primary emphasis. I’ve found that if the anxiety about grading can be minimized, performance generally increases. The pressure to do well should come from internal motivation, and there should be freedom to ‘play’ with ideas rather than worry about getting the ‘right’ answer. To be successful, a PhD seminar class requires a collective effort, and we all have responsibility to ensure an enriching learning experience for self and others. In class, we’ll discuss grades in more detail, but if everyone takes a professional approach to our class, we should be able to lower anxiety about grades and focus our energies on maximizing the learning experience.

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(subject to revision)

Class Sessions on Mondays (6:00 – 8:45 PM)
Design Workshop on Saturday, Oct 13 (10:00 AM – 6:00 PM)
Intercultural Dialogue Workshop on Saturday, Nov 17 (11:00 AM – 4:00 PM)

Introductory Session (Aug 20): Overview, Introductions, Logistics

Unit 1 (Aug 27): Intercultural Dialogue*

Unit 2 (Sept 10): The Facilitation Process

Design Workshop 1 (Sept 17 & 24): Identifying and structuring challenges in facilitating intercultural dialogue; this is an in-class workshop; please post book reviews by Sept 24

Unit 3 (Oct 1): Role of the Facilitator

Design Workshop 2 (Oct 13**): Identifying and structuring characteristics of the facilitator role

Unit 4 (Oct 15, 22, 29): Approaches and Applications in Group Facilitation

Practicum (Nov 5): Design, Preparation, Evaluation of Facilitated Workshop focused on Intercultural Dialogue at ASU

Practicum (Nov 17**): Intercultural Dialogue Workshop with ASU students

Practicum (Nov. 19): Debriefing of Facilitated Workshop

Unit 5 (Nov 26): Theoretical and Research Issues in Facilitation and Intercultural Dialogue

Wrap-up (Dec 3): Discussion of results from our work together over the semester

*See attached reading assignments for each unit

**All-Day (Saturday) Workshop

COURSE POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS

1. Class preparation and participation are important. The nature of the subject of communication demands that learning take place through discussion, illustration, and experiences. Learning in this course revolves around class discussion and group work. Students have a responsibility to prepare, attend, and contribute to class and group work sessions. High quality and consistent class participation will be taken into account in cases where a student is on the border between letter grades.
2. Exams must be taken on time and assignments must be handed in when due. Only in special circumstances and with prior arrangements can late work be accepted. You cannot receive credit for classroom activities if you are not in class, whether or not the absence is excused. However, make-up assignments can be arranged for excused absences, which can be granted for illness or emergencies or observance of religious holidays or university-sanctioned activities, if you notify the instructor via email prior to class time (unless circumstances prevent) and provide proper documentation.
3. Classroom Code of Conduct: It is expected that you will contribute to creating a supportive, respectful, and encouraging classroom environment by your attitude and behavior toward your instructor and peers. If you engage in behaviors that are disruptive, you may be asked to leave the classroom. Disruptive behaviors include: disrespectful comments to your instructor or to fellow students; holding private conversations while the instructor or peers are speaking to the class; texting and other communication through electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, tablets, laptops). → Unless instructed to use them, you should make sure to put away your cell phone, tablet, laptop and other digital devices before class starts; otherwise, you will lose class activity points. Please note ASU Policy on disruptive student classroom behavior: (<http://www.asu.edu/aad/manuals/usi/usi201-10.html>).
4. Student Academic Integrity: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication strongly believe in academic integrity; thus cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated. If a student is charged with academic dishonesty and found to be in violation, disciplinary action will be taken and a student's name will be kept on file at ASU. In the Student Academic Integrity Policy (<http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity/policy>), ASU defines plagiarism as using another's words, ideas, materials or work without properly acknowledging and documenting the source. Students are responsible for knowing the rules governing the use of another's work or materials and for acknowledging and documenting the source appropriately. Disciplinary action may result in the student being suspended or expelled from the college, given an XE on his or her transcript, and/or referred to Student Judicial Affairs.
5. Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <http://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs/students>. As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>, is available if you wish discuss any concerns confidentially and privately.
6. Students must refrain from uploading to any course shell, discussion board, or website used by the course instructor or other course forum, material that is not the student's original work, unless the students first comply with all applicable copyright laws; faculty members reserve the right to delete materials on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement.
7. Incompletes: We will follow university policy, which specifies that incompletes may be given only when a student who is doing otherwise acceptable work is unable to complete a course because of illness or other conditions beyond the student's control. Students requesting an incomplete must download and complete the appropriate request form at <http://students.asu.edu/forms/incomplete-grade-request>.